

Michael Pignato

Partner

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Minneapolis – 612.340.5643



Mike structures and negotiates tribal finance and commercial gaming transactions so that lenders, tribes, developers and operators can close complex deals with confidence.

Mike's tribal finance practice is among the most active in the country. He represents lenders, tribes, and other transaction participants in connection with the construction and expansion of casino, lodging, and entertainment facilities, health care facilities and other economic and governmental projects and initiatives. His work in this space spans Indian Country and facility types, including bilateral, syndicated and tax-exempt financings, with individual credit facilities ranging in size from one to over a billion dollars. Chambers USA has recognized Michael in Native American Law: Finance at the national level.

Mike also has an active commercial gaming finance practice, which includes the representation of lenders, developers and operators in transactions involving commercial casinos, route operators, gaming equipment manufacturers and vendors, and gaming development and management companies throughout the United States

In addition, Mike serves as outside general counsel for a public power agency, regularly advises end-user clients with respect to interest rate, foreign exchange and commodity derivatives, represents lenders in commercial finance transactions in a wide range of industries, and also has experience in project finance transactions across multiple industries, including energy (gas, coal, wind, solar, hydroelectric, battery storage), ethanol and other biofuels and mining.

Within Dorsey, Mike currently serves as the Minneapolis Office Co-Head and the Co-Chair of the Banking and Financial Institutions Industry Group. He was previously the Co-Chair of the Energy and Natural Resources Industry Group.

Select Experience

- Represented tribally-owned commercial gaming developer and operator in the

Education

- University of California, Santa Cruz (B.A., 1991)
- University of California College of the Law, San Francisco (J.D., 1994)

Bar Admissions

- Minnesota
- California

development, financing and refinancing of its three commercial gaming projects located in Nebraska, in an aggregate amount of approximately \$700 million in senior secured credit facilities.

- Represented administrative agent in connection with a \$1 billion senior secured credit facility for a gaming equipment finance company with extensive routes in Indian Country.
- Represented administrative agent in connection with a \$300 million senior secured credit facilities for a tribal gaming enterprise and tribal economic development enterprise in Washington to provide expansion and acquisition growth capital.
- Represented tribal corporation located in Arizona in connection with a \$46 million taxable bond issuance for the construction of health care facilities.

Court Admissions

- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit
- U.S. District Court for the Northern and Eastern Districts of California

Professional Affiliations

- Board of Directors, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law

Accolades

- Chambers USA, Native American Law: Finance, National, 2025 – 2026
- Best Lawyers in America®, 2021 – 2026
- Minnesota Lawyer, Legal 250, 2026
- Minnesota Monthly, Top Lawyer in Banking & Financial Service Law, 2024
- MSBA, North Star Lawyer, 2012 – 2014, 2016, 2018, 2020 – 2022, 2024
- Minnesota Lawyers of the Year, 2012

Select Speaking Engagements

- Managing Risk Through Derivatives: Don't Be Afraid, It's Not *That* Complicated: Dorsey & Whitney LLP Corporate Counsel Symposium 2024, November 7, 2024
- LIBOR + SOFR = Confusion: What Tribes Need to Know About Treasury Management and Loan Interest Rate Agreements, NAFOA's 37th Annual Conference, April 14-16, 2019
- Construction Seminar: An Owner's Challenges, April 12, 2007 - April 12, 2007

Insights

November 3, 2020

2020 Election Protection

September 14, 2020

Dorsey Lawyers Gear Up for Vote

September 19, 2019

Preparing for LIBOR Substitution-Commercial and Consumer Lending
Considerations