

# MELISSA H. ESTERHOLM

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## EDUCATION

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL, Nashville, TN

J.D., May 2013; GPA: 3.767

*Honors and Activities:* Order of the Coif (top 10%); Vanderbilt Scholastic Excellence Award: Property, Energy Law (Highest Grade); VANDERBILT LAW REVIEW, Articles Editor; Dean's List; Chancellor's Scholar; Moot Court Board, Executive Problem Editor; Moot Court Intramural Competition, Semifinalist, Fall 2011; Mock Trial, Spring 2011; Professionalism in Practice; Phi Delta Phi

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY, Harrisonburg, VA

M.A., English, June 2009; GPA: 4.0

*Honors and Activities:* President, English Graduate Organization 2008-2009; Paper Presentation, New Jersey College English Association, March 2009; Paper Presentation, Madison Conference, April 2008

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY, Lynchburg, VA

B.A., English, *magna cum laude*, 2007; GPA: 3.8

*Honors and Activities:* Dean's List; Honors Program; Liberty University Policy Debate Program, 2002-2006; American Debate Association National Novice and JV Champion, 2003-2004; American Debate Association National Novice and JV Top Speaker Award, 2003 – 2004; Sigma Tau Delta

## WORK EXPERIENCE

### UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON LAW CENTER

*Lecturer, August 2023 - Present*

### HOGAN THOMPSON LLP, Houston, TX

*Senior Associate, July 2020 – July 2023*

- Associate representing clients in civil litigation, with a focus on representing oil and gas companies.
- Assisted in drafting motion for summary judgment on behalf of large oil and gas company in dispute regarding lease cancellation.
- Assisted in drafting motion for summary judgment on behalf of large oil and gas company in dispute regarding retained acreage clauses.
- Successful resolution of tort claim against large oil and gas company.
- Managed document review projects for major oil and gas companies in lease disputes.
- Drafted multiple successful appellate briefs.



**STOKLEY, PLLC, Dallas, TX**

*Associate, July 2018 – July 2020*

- General associate working remotely to represent clients in civil litigation, contract preparation, and general corporate advice.
- Drafted successful appellate brief in class action settlement appeal to the United States Fifth Circuit.
- Handled various matters for a small oil and gas company, including drafting motions to dismiss, for multiple FLSA claims.
- Assisted in preparing purchase, sale and water agreements for a small oil and gas company.
- Successful resolution of employment discrimination case for sales company.
- Advised oil and gas company on resolution of subcontractor claims, avoiding mineral liens and litigation.

**BAKER BOTTS, Dallas, TX**

*Associate, October 2014 – June 2018*

- General litigation associate representing clients in a wide range of civil litigation matters in both state and federal court.
- Handled various matters for major oil and gas companies, including drafting motions in limine, motions for sanctions, and various legal research memoranda.
- Drafted successful motion for summary judgment filed in defense of a major natural gas producer in an arbitration proceeding.
- Drafted successful motions to compel arbitration in a breach of contract suit.
- Represented a major gas producer in a successful Bankruptcy dispute.
- Drafted successful appellate brief in a major tax appeal to the United States Fifth Circuit.
- Drafted successful appellate brief in an appeal from summary judgment in New York.
- Representative engagements:
  - Large oil and gas company in a breach of contract and tortious interference dispute;
  - Large pipeline construction company in a breach of contract dispute;
  - Large municipal fund in a theft of trade secrets and breach of contract dispute;
  - Renewable energy company in a breach of contract dispute;
  - Non-profit company in a trademark dispute;
  - Communications company in an employment dispute; and
  - Major technology company in a patent dispute.
- Composed firm-wide CLEs, including update to Federal Rules of Civil Procedures.

**HONORABLE CATHARINA HAYNES, Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, Dallas, TX**

*Clerk, August 2013 – August 2014*

- Researched and drafted proposed opinions and bench memorandums.

**ADMISSIONS AND AFFILIATIONS**

State Bar of Texas

United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas