

E. MICHELLE DRAKE

BERGER MONTAGUE



PIONEER SPIRIT Michelle Drake originally planned to become a public defender dealing with death penalty cases. But after working on them in Massachusetts and Atlanta, she decided to move back to Minnesota. "As I was interviewing, I quickly realized that I would only be happy on the plaintiffs' side because it aligned with how I see the world."

TRAILS BLAZED Drake started Berger Montague's Fair Credit Reporting Act department, which has resulted in record-setting FCRA settlements and groundbreaking injunctive relief and uncapped mediation programs with credit bureaus. Under a section of the FCRA, the reporting of information that is more than seven years old, such as arrests not leading to convictions and civil infractions, including traffic violations and other lesser offenses, is limited. "The promise of the statute is that it is wiped clean for anything except when a crime is committed and the party has been convicted. I am working to keep that as it is promised against numerous credit agencies." Drake has represented clients against multinational and national consumer credit reporting companies, including Experian PLC, TransUnion and Equifax in cases involving the reporting of tax liens and judgments as being unpaid when they may have been satisfied or dismissed. "These cases were often missing public record updates or misattributing them. We obtained three successive judgments that prevented the agencies from reporting them, which ultimately led to a change in the way they are reported for millions of consumers."

FUTURE EXPLORATIONS Drake sees a rise in fair credit reporting litigation due to business incentives favoring cost-effective reporting over accuracy. "Big data is big business, and the three big credit reporting agencies will continue to make mistakes. And more companies are selling data, so the Fair Credit Reporting Act is becoming more important to change the incentives and make sure consumers are treated fairly."

ROGGE DUNN

ROGGE DUNN GROUP, PC.



PIONEER SPIRIT Rogge Dunn began his career as a defense attorney and has taught business classes for more than 20 years. He decided to move to the plaintiffs' side after taking on an employee race discrimination case involving four of his former students' wives. "I always thought that being a lawyer was about helping people, but many big firms are often more about money. I want to help people's lives."

TRAILS BLAZED Dunn represented financial advisor Chris Barra against Goldman Sachs, alleging discrimination against active military personnel in one of the largest FINRA awards against the multinational investment bank. "The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act says that if you get called up for active duty and are gone for a year, you can come back to your job. And if the job was promoted up, you have to give them that job. Chris was fired for taking a leave for reserve duty." Dunn secured Barra, a West Point graduate and lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve, a \$7.8 million settlement. "Chris didn't even care about the money. He just wanted to help servicemen and women not suffer discrimination." Dunn also served as the lead attorney representing subrogating carriers in a New Orleans Fair Grounds racetrack fire, resulting in a \$58 million verdict. "At the time, it was cutting edge in terms of fire suppression and safety design."

FUTURE EXPLORATIONS Dunn sees continued corporate abuse cases on both the product side and employment side and increasing LGBTQ discrimination. He also expects the continued use of virtual technology, with his firm investing in a Zoom broadcast room. "When you dressed up and went to court, it was about how you presented yourself. This is about how you present yourself in a remote environment to effectively persuade a judge and jury."