



DOMINIQUE N. NELSON

PARTNER

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KOPKA
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Practice Areas

- Automobile Accident Defense
- Construction Defect Litigation
- Elevator Liability
- Excess Liability Claims
- Real Estate Closings
- Real Estate (E&O)
- Sexual Abuse Defense
- Transportation Defense
- UM/UIM
- Wrongful Death Defense

Dominique N. Nelson concentrates her practice in civil litigation in the areas of automobile, premises liability, professional liability, home insurance claims, and general litigation. Prior to joining Kopka, Dominique spent more than two years at the Marion County Prosecutor's Office where she sat first and second chair on numerous cases, as well as bench trials. In addition, she argued in many suppression hearings, contested hearings, and bail review hearings.

Dominique was selected for inclusion in The National Black Lawyers – Top 40 Under 40 in Indiana, an honor given to a select group of lawyers who excel in their profession. She makes meeting her clients' needs her number one priority. She excels at understanding client goals and concerns and provides strategic advice and guidance for her clients.

Dominique earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Notre Dame, where she was a varsity track & field and cross-country student-athlete. She received the Zora Zorich Memorial Scholarship and was the President of the Africana Studies Club. While attending law school at Indiana University Maurer School of Law, Dominique was extremely active with the Black Law Students Association, serving as the Midwest Region Director of the Thurgood Marshall Mock Trial Competition for two years. She competed in the Sherman Minton Moot Court Competition and was an Executive Editor of the Indiana Journal of Law & Social Equality. For two years, Dominique also served as Class Representative on the Student Bar Association.

When Dominique is not at the office advocating for her clients, she is active in the local community. She facilitates workshops with the Center for Leadership Development, which is a program committed to preparing minority youth to attend college and become leaders in the community. Dominique also volunteers with the Upward Bound

Program, which is a program that serves first-generation, low-income, high school students and helps them prepare for college and higher learning.

Memberships

- Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
- Indiana State Bar Association
- Indiana University Alumni Association
- Marion County Bar Association
- Notre Dame Alumni Association

Trial and Case Highlights

- Dominique was assigned a claim after a judgment against the defense was entered in Small Claims court. Our client immediately wanted to appeal, and we began the case *de novo* in the Marion County Superior Court. The initial claim arose out of a contract dispute. Plaintiff contracted with our client to install a pool liner in Plaintiff's pool. During the installation, our client noticed an issue with Plaintiff's pool that could cause a major leak. Our client offered a recommendation that would have fixed the issue. Plaintiff declined the service. After about a year of use, Plaintiff reported a leak in his pool. Our client made multiple attempts to determine whether its pool liner installation was the cause of the leak and ultimately determined that it was not. Plaintiff claimed that our client failed to properly install the pool liner, thus causing his pool to leak. The defense successfully proved that there was no evidence that the installation of the pool liner was defective and that it was most likely an issue that was present before our client ever serviced Plaintiff's pool. The Court entered a defense verdict.
- Dominique successfully settled this complex underinsured motorist case a month before its scheduled trial date. The plaintiff was a delivery driver pulled over on the side of the road when an intoxicated driver hit his truck head on. The plaintiff underwent neck fusion surgery for his injuries, failed to return to work, and claimed substantial future loss wages for the remainder of his work-life. Ultimately the case successfully settled for \$390,000, which was well under the \$1,000,000 demand and policy limits.
- This case involved a biking accident in which the plaintiff rode his bicycle into the side of our insured's vehicle. The plaintiff underwent several procedures to his left and right hips, A/C joint, and groin. Prior to the accident, he was an avid marathoner and Iron Man competitor, and was unable to compete after the accident. Therefore, the plaintiff claimed permanent damages, even though there were no medical findings to support his claim. She successfully settled the matter for \$240,000, which was hundreds of thousands of dollars below the \$500,000 demand.
- In a case involving a rear-end collision wherein the defendant, while out delivering pizzas, struck the bumper of the plaintiff's vehicle, Dominique successfully negotiated a settlement at mediation. Liability in the incident was not contested, and the plaintiff complained of back and knee injuries, eventually undergoing a total knee replacement surgery. Plaintiffs' counsel initially demanded \$550,000 for medical expenses and lost wages; the matter settled for \$248,000.

Admissions

- Indiana
- Missouri
- U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Indiana

Education

- Indiana University Maurer School of Law, J.D.
- University of Notre Dame, B.A. & B.S.