GRAYROBINSON



Nicole A. Vele

Shareholder

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Focus

- Administrative and Regulatory
- Construction
- Government Contracts
- Higher Education
- Litigation

Drawing on tenure with the U.S. Air Force to navigate complex government contracts and high-stakes litigation. Driving risk reduction, dispute resolution, and resource protection across multifaceted programs.

With a career spanning government contracting, fiscal law, and high-stakes litigation, Nicole Vele provides strategic legal guidance on complex matters that affect national and international operations. During her service in the United States Air Force, she led a team of government contract attorneys reviewing billions of dollars in acquisitions, while mitigating legal and financial risk across hundreds of projects worldwide. She provides strategic guidance on contracting issues, including solicitations, source selections, modifications, terminations, and claims, ensuring compliance and operational success for diverse missions.

Beyond her advisory role, Nicole has extensive trial and litigation experience. She directs teams handling government contract disputes and protests, achieving timely resolutions under high-pressure conditions. As an Air Force Judge Advocate General, she prosecuted and defended serious criminal cases, including sexual assault, securing justice for victims and accountability for offenders. She also played a key role in cross-functional investigations that uncovered fraud and mismanagement, protecting government resources and mission integrity.

Nicole combines sharp legal judgment with strategic leadership, managing multi-billion-dollar contracting matters and delivering clear, practical guidance to acquisition teams. She has been recognized for her ability to reduce risk, recover resources, and implement solutions that strengthen compliance and improve operational performance in complex, high-stakes transactions. Working seamlessly with GrayRobinson's Government Affairs and Lobbying, Construction, Transportation, and Business Law Practices, Nicole crafts integrated strategies that position clients for success, making her a trusted advisor in the federal contracting space.

Notable Work

- Successfully resolved a $26 million federal debt demand within one week by reviewing the agency's claim, coordinating documentation, drafting client communications, and advising on government engagement, resulting in full withdrawal of the demand and removal of all special conditions.
- Secured correction of a contract pricing error worth $100,000 per month over five years by engaging government specialists, developing targeted communications, and guiding strategic negotiations, delivering a favorable contract modification within weeks that preserved the client's government relationship and fully restored their position.

Recognition

- 412th Test Wing, Wing Staff Agencies, 2019 Field Grade Officer of the Year
- Air Force Legal Operations, Agency Directorate for Acquisitions, Fiscal Law, and Litigation
  - Field Grade Officer of the Year, 2021
  - Field Grade Officer of the Fourth Quarter, 2021
- Air Force Test Center, Edwards Air Force Base, Albert M. Kuhfeld Outstanding Young Judge Advocate, 2019
- The George Washington University Law School
  - Moot Court Best Overall Competitor, 2021
  - Patricia A. Tobin Government Procurement Law Award, 2021
- National Contract Management Association, Outstanding Academic Achievement Award, 2021

Insights

- "The Dos and Don'ts of the U.S. Fiscal Law," The Right Thing CLE (TRTCLE) Webinar, October 1, 2026
- "From Zero to GovCon: Winning Opportunities in a Changing Market," Panelist, 14th Annual NoVA B2G Matchmaking Conference and Small Business Expo, May 28, 2026
- "Shutdown Survival Tactics for GovCons: Finance, Workforce, and Compliance Moves you Can Make Now," Piper Strategies Webinar, October 30, 2025
- "Federal Contracts: Navigating Communication, Authority, and Compliance," TRT CLE Course, August 28, 2025
- "Key Executive Orders and How They Are Likely to Impact Government Contractors," Panelist, The National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA) Cybersecurity Meeting, June 4, 2025
- "A Defense Contractor's Guide to CMMC, DFARS, and FAR Requirements," *CyberNINES*, June 3, 2025
- "Legal Observations Panel," Midwest NDIA Compliance Conference, May 14, 2025
- "A New Era of Government Contracting: Federal Updates and Their Impact on Small Business," Keynote Speaker, 2025 Idaho Small Business Contracting Symposium, May 13, 2025
- "Under Attack: An Examination of the False Claims Act's Whistleblower Provisions," *The Procurement Lawyer*, American Bar Association, March 6, 2025
- "Appropriations and Fiscal Law in An Increasingly Uncertain and Evolving World," *The Procurement Lawyer*, American Bar Association, March 4, 2024
- "How Appropriations and Fiscal Law is Adapting to an Increasingly Uncertain and Rapidly Changing World," Panelist, ABA Public Contract Law Fall Meeting, November 2, 2023

- "Eliminating Corruption? How the FCPA and Corporate Compliance Programs Fail to Deter Greed Amongst the Most Challenging Offenders," *Wake Forest Journal of Law and Policy*, Vol 11:3, June 2021

Media

- "Personnel File --- People on the Move, October 27, 2025," News Service of Florida, October 27, 2025
- "GrayRobinson Brings On Pair Of Military Vets In Fla., DC," *Law360 Pulse*, October 21, 2025
- "Personnel note: Procurement law powerhouse Nicole Vele joins GrayRobinson's D.C. office," *Florida Politics*, October 17, 2025
- "Playbook: Talk of the Town," *Politico*, October 16, 2025
- "Nicole Vele Joins GreenCardGuysTV Podcast Discussing Government Contracts and Procurement," *GreenCardGuysTV*, April 24, 2025
- "From JAG to BigLaw: Military Attys Share Their Career Paths," *Law360*, August 31, 2023

Affiliations

- American Bar Association, Public Contract Law Section
  - Commercial Products and Services Committee
    - Co-Chair
    - Vice-Chair, 2022
  - Debarment and Suspension
    - Vice-Chair
  - Procurement Fraud and False Claims Committee
    - Vice-Chair, 2024, 2025-2026
  - Battle Space and Contingency Procurement Committee
    - Vice-Chair, 2022-2025
  - Diversity Committee
    - Vice-Chair, 2024-2025
  - Fall Forum Committee
    - Co-Chair, 2025
- National Contract Management Association
- Autism Society of America
  - Board Member, 2023-2024
- Highland High School Mock Trial Team, Volunteer Attorney Coach
- Space Coast Chamber
  - Board of Directors

Credentials

- LL.M., The George Washington University Law School, 2021, With Highest Honors
- J.D., University of Wisconsin Law School, 2011
- M.S., University of Wisconsin, 2011
- M.S., Marian University, 2008
- B.A., Marquette University, 2003

Admissions

- District of Columbia
- New York
- Wisconsin
- U.S. District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit
- U.S. Court of Federal Claims