HUSCH BLACKWELL



Hayley E. Hanson

PARTNER

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OVERVIEW

Focused on education law, Hayley guides higher education clients through compliance, governance and operational issues, including the most complex and sensitive matters of campus life.

Hayley has more than 20 years' experience in education law. Private and public universities and colleges, major research institutions and academic medical centers are just a few of the Higher Education clients relying on her guidance. Hayley understands that rigorous compliance audits, policies and training are the way forward to meeting and exceeding benchmarks in this highly regulated environment. She is skilled at helping clients navigate what can be especially challenging issues such as social media, Greek life and sexual assault allegations. Hayley ensures that the firm's Education team stays current on numerous statutes impacting the day-to-day of campus life, including:

- Title IX

> *"With changes in federal law related to many legal issues that our university could face in today's changing higher education environment, we need exceptional leadership and service. That's exactly what we're getting through our relationship with Hayley Hanson and Husch Blackwell."*
>
> — University President

Industries

Education
Healthcare

Services

Collegiate Athletics
Healthcare Providers
Higher Education
Pay Equity
Title IX

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- Title VI
- Title VII
- Clery Act
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act
- Title IV Federal Student Aid

When disputes arise, Hayley works with clients to map best paths forward. She is a skilled investigator, leading experienced teams through sophisticated analysis and meticulously gathering information on uneasy matters. In litigation, arbitration and mediation, she seeks not only to best position institutions for optimal outcomes, but to close gaps in compliance so as to mitigate future exposure and create best possible student experiences.

Hayley's advocacy extends beyond her legal work with clients and as sole outside counsel to myriad institutions. A nationally recognized speaker, Hayley presents at webinars and conferences for leading industry organizations including the National Association of College and University Attorneys (NACUA), Higher Learning Commission, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), Campus Safety Summit and Jana's Campaign. Hayley also regularly collaborates with United Educators on presentations that help institutions proactively manage and mitigate risk.

Experience

- *Proactive Programming* – Hayley's experience with college and university compliance programs includes legal compliance auditing of institutional systems, creating or revising policies and procedures, and guiding development of compliance systems, as well as establishing and delivering institution-wide training programs. Her services enhance institutional processes to help ensure full compliance with required guidance and regulations.

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Experience

- *Title IX* – Hayley applies her deep understanding of issues surrounding gender equity and sexual misconduct to guide institutions in preventing and responding to allegations of sex discrimination in their programs and activities. She has conducted investigations on behalf of institutions, guided numerous institutions in responding to U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights complaints, represented colleges and universities in Title IX litigation, and conducted legal compliance audits surrounding discrimination prevention response systems at a range of institutions.
- *Government Investigations and Federal Student Aid Program Review* – Hayley applies her experience with government investigations (including U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights investigations), program reviews and audits to assist institutions in demonstrating compliance and administrative capability.
- *Litigation* – Through more than a decade of litigation experience representing educational institutions, Hayley has developed the skills and insight to best position institutions should suits arise. She has repeatedly succeeded in obtaining dismissals and summary judgment for institutions in student and employee litigation, as well as in alternative dispute resolution and trial settings.
- *Accreditation* – Hayley assists in matters of accreditation, securing initial approvals, preparing for site visits, structuring changes of control and responding to accreditor concerns and sanctions.

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Recognition

- *Benchmark Litigation*, Local Litigation Star, 2025 and 2026
- *Chambers USA*, Higher Education, Nationwide, 2024-2026
- *The Legal 500 United States,* Education, Recommended lawyer, 2023-2026
- *Corporate Counsel*, Women, Influence & Power in Law, Mental Health & Well Being Initiative, 2024
- *Ingram's* 250, 2023
- Missouri & Kansas Super Lawyers, Schools & Education, 2013-2019
- *Kansas City Business Journal*, Best of the Bar, 2017-2018
- *Missouri Lawyers Weekly*, Up and Coming Lawyer, 2008, Women's Justice Awards, 2017
- *Ingram's* magazine, "40 Under Forty," 2013
- Nonprofit Connect, Rising Star of Philanthropy, 2013
- *Debate Kansas City*, Volunteer of the Year, 2012
- Northwest Missouri State University, Young Alumni Award, 2008

Education

- J.D., Drake Law School
  - with high honors
  - *Drake Law Review*, executive editor
- B.A., Northwest Missouri State University
  - *magna cum laude*

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Admissions

- Missouri
- Kansas

Community Leadership

- Debate Kansas City, Board of Directors, 2005-2016
- Kansas City Friends of the Zoo, Board of Directors, 2008-present
- Teach for America/Kansas City, Board of Directors, 2013-present



2026 Benchmark Litigation - Litigation Star

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