

## Judicial Survey Responses (43)

**#43 - Marialyn Barnard**

**marialyn.barnard@gmail.com**

Q1

What is your formal education?

St. Mary's University School of Law, J.D. – 1992 • Texas Supreme Court Internship – Justice John Cornyn Texas Court of Criminal Appeals Internship – Judge Charlie Baird United States Attorney's Office WDTX Internship • University of Texas School of Law, 1991 summer and fall • Texas A&M Commerce 12 semester hours – Masters in Public Administration • Texas A&M Commerce, B.S. – 1983 University of Texas San Antonio – attended 1979 Abilene Christian University – attended 1971 – 1972 San Antonio College – attended summer 1971

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Because the Texas Fourth Court of Appeals handles a large variety criminal and civil appeals a justice on this court should have very broad based work experience before being on the court. I am the only candidate and sitting judge with this needed experience. Fourth Court of Appeals, Justice – 2009 – present • Prichard, Hawkins, McFarland, & Young – 2007 – 2008 • Law Office of Marialyn Barnard – 2006 • CPS Energy Corporate Counsel – 2001 – 2005 • KPMG, LLP – 1999 – 2001 • United States Attorney's Office, Western District of Texas – 1995 – 1999 • United States District Court Federal Law Clerk, Justice Orlando Garcia – 1994 – 1995 • Fourth Court of Appeals Briefing Attorney, Justice Orlando Garcia – 1992 – 1994

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Prior to being a ten year appellate justice, I have tried cases (direct and cross examined witnesses on the witness stand and in depositions in multiple jurisdictions) as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in federal courts and a private practice

attorney in state court. I have also argued appeals including in the special Texas Multi-District Litigation (MDL) court.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

My real life experiences include a multitude of experiences as a mother, grandmother, non-profit volunteer and a variety of non-legal employment opportunities as listed below. Non-Legal Employment: • Lackland I.S.D. High School and Middle School Teacher – 1987 – 1989 • Northeast I.S.D. High School Teacher – 1985 – 1987 • Texas Department Human Services Social Worker – 1984 – 1985 • Texas A&M Commerce Graduate Teaching Instructor - 1984 • Commerce I.S. D. High School Texas – 1983 – 1984 • Barnard Insurance Agency Auto Rater and Receptionist – 1976 – 1980 • World Saving Assoc. Assistant Branch Manager – 1975 -1976 • Taylor County Extension Agent's Office Secretary 1973 – 1975 • Bank bookkeeper, variety store cashier, and waitress 1968-1973 Personal and Community Involvement: • Married to Dr., Gary Barnard, PhD. Psychologist for a lot of years (my high sweetheart) • Adult daughter (USAF Lt. Col. married) and son (financial IT health care services married); three grandchildren total My father was retired US Air Force and my mother immigrated from Italy to the USA after WWII (she was a WWII war bride)

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

Rotary Club of San Antonio Board President 2015-2016 • UTSA Great Conversations Co-chair 2014-2016 • Advisory Board Member, San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind 2010-present • San Antonio FBI Citizen's Academy Founding Board Member 2009 – 2010 • San Antonio Chapter of Infraguard Board Member-General Counsel 2005 - 2008 • Firstmark Credit Union Board Member 2004 – 2008 • Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce Board Member 2006 - 2007 • San Antonio Women's Chamber of Commerce Board Member 2007 - 2008 • Big Brothers Big Sisters Board Member 2005 • Child Advocates of San Antonio (CASA) Board Member 2007 – 2008 • San Antonio Metropolitan Ministries (SAMM)

volunteer 1989 – 1995 • Habitat for Humanity building volunteer two homes 1990's • CPS Energy Weatherization volunteer – low income households 2001 – 2005 Awards and Honors: • San Antonio Young Lawyer Association 2016 Honorary Young Lawyer • Girl's Inc. 2015 Raise Your Glasses Honoree • Honorary Commander 2011-2012 433rd Alamo Wing, Lackland A.F.B. • United States Army War College National Security Symposium Class of 2016 • United States Air Force War College National Security Forum Class of 2010 • La Prensa Foundation 2010 "Outstanding Women in Action" Legal Award • San Antonio Bar Association President's Award 1998 • United States Attorney's Office WDTX "On the Spot" Award "Time Off" Award I also have law student interns every semester that I mentor. Teaching and mentoring as a high school teacher and now in helping law school students and new attorneys is a life long passion.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

1. I am the most experienced justice both in civil and criminal law, state and federal court, and trial and appellate court. 2. I have a very strong work ethic-- showing up at work regularly and my productivity as a judge is the excellent. 3. I respect everyone who comes before the court, I care about every person, every case, and every employee, listening intently and following the impartially. 4. I love the law and I love the work I have now done for a decade--applying the law fairly, impartially to all.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

Early in my legal career I worked as an attorney for judges on this court-Texas Fourth Court of Appeals, particularly Justice Orlando L. Garcia, who is now Chief Judge of the Western District of Texas. I also worked for him when he was first appointed as a United States District Judge WDTX. I learned from him and I was mentored by him. As a result, I learned that I truly love the cases both criminal and civil that come before this court, and I secretly knew--some day--I wanted to come back and be a justice as I had been mentored and trained by my then boss Justice Orlando Garcia. I also knew how important it would be for me to have a diverse legal experience--both in criminal law and civil law, both trial and appellate law,

both state and federal law in order to be the best justice on this court I could be. So, I did just that over more than seventeen years in preparation for doing the work on this court and serving the people of Texas for the last ten years.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

N/A because I am the incumbent.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

I uphold and maintain the dignity of this court by treating everyone with respect, following the law, being impartial, having a strong work ethic, having excellent judicial temperament, and being thankful for the opportunity to serve the people.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

No matter who comes before the court, they deserve a judge who knows the law well, is experienced in the courtroom, and is completely fair and unbiased ensuring justice for all. I am that judge! The rule of law is critical to individuals and businesses that make our country and state a great place to live and raise families.

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**#42 - Grace Uzomba**

**[GRACE4JUDGE@GMAIL.COM](mailto:GRACE4JUDGE@GMAIL.COM)**

Q1

What is your formal education?

Juris Doctorate in 2005 Master of Science (MS) Degree Master of Arts (MA) Degree Bachelor of Science Degree Associates in Applied Science Degree

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Military service retiree after 20 years of service to the United States of America in the Army Medical Department. Three years of service to the nation as the Deputy Director of the Center for Terrorism Law, established at St. Mary's University School of Law Ten years of service to the San Antonio and Bexar County community as a Defense attorney in the Problem-Solving Courts that has proven to reduce recidivism by 96%, thus keeping the community safe by restoring lives and reuniting families.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I have tried a variety of cases as a first chair or second chair ensuring that the protections provided in the United States and Texas constitutions are applied equitably for citizens accused of murder, sexual assault, domestic violence and simple assault cases as well as driving while intoxicated, theft, possession of drugs, etc. I have also has trial and contested hearings in Family law cases, Child Protective Services and Child Support cases. I don't think that these are unique qualifiers, however, it demonstrates that one knows the courtroom and how it functions as well some elements of substantive and procedural law.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

All the volunteer work I have done with a variety of groups and agencies, the most fulfilling have been: Initiating the Veterans Treatment Court in Bexar County, Other problem-courts that I have been involved in, to include Re-Entry, DWI, and Drug Courts. Serving as leader with the Girl Scouts of America, medical explorer group. Deploying to the former Yugoslavia as part of the Force Medical Operations in Zagreb, Croatia supporting over 42 countries that came together under the United

Nations flag to assist in the combative dissolution of Yugoslavia as a member of United Nations Peace Keeping Force.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

Member of the Therapeutic Justice Foundation General Counsel for the Texas Association of Pre-trial Services. Interim Counsel for the Infragard association in San Antonio, TX Member of the San Antonio Black Lawyers Association

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

My very committed and extensive experience with the Problem-Solving Courts. I believe that the criminal justice system is rightly and reasonably moving towards a more restorative system. This paradigm shift is what will cause for safer communities now and in the future, by perhaps helping to reduce the demand for drugs and alcohol which may lead in a withering of the supply? This vision is in step with keeping hope alive. The immediate, interim and long-term goal is the realization of the increasing success of these problem-solving specialty courts; I do believe that we need to expand the number of them in Bexar County and I am willing to contribute to its proliferation.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

My belief in the need for proliferation of restorative justice and access for all.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

I am not running against anyone. I am running to be elected as a Judge under the democratic system well established in Texas and the United States.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

Through my proven leadership and team work approach I want to ensure the dignity of the court where citizens seek redress of their complaints.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

In sharing with citizens who appear disillusioned by the political process and disenfranchised with the importance of their vote, I have stressed this: "The judicial branch is the bastion where you will ultimately submit to have your grievance redressed, it is important that you understand the power you possess in your VOTE to ensure that your courts are functional and will apply justice evenly, equally, and blindly in accordance with the law the legislature branch promulgates." This is the understanding we need to have in the words: "of the people by the people for the people;" no matter what your walk or work in life on this earth is.

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**#41 - Kevin M. O'Connell**

[koconnell92@yahoo.com](mailto:koconnell92@yahoo.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

Univ. of Texas at Austin, BA St. Mary's University JD

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

24 years as a prosecutor in Bexar Co

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

@4 years of trying cases 22 in Felony courts

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Use all life experiences both professional and personal

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

NA

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

24 years of trial experience and 4 as a District Court Judge

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

Judge retired and I was ready for the challenge

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

NA

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

Treat everyone who walks in the doors of the 227th with respect. From attorneys , Law enforcement and defendants

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

Crime affects business. Theft, Graffiti, Drugs, Prostitution. All of these crimes and their consequences can wreak havoc on valuations and the ability to do business. I

know this and have endeavored to implement solutions to help these business areas while treating the causes of these behaviors.

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**#40 - Lisa K. Jarrett**

**[lisajarrett436@aol.com](mailto:lisajarrett436@aol.com)**

Q1

What is your formal education?

Graduated in 1986 from Northwest Academy in Houston, Texas. Received a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Texas in 1990. Received Juris Doctorate from the University of Houston Law Center in 1993.

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Having been a prosecutor, defense attorney and judge, I recognize that the job of a juvenile judge is one of the most important positions in our judicial system. As the judge of the 436th District Court, I strive to rehabilitate when possible, but do not hesitate to punish when necessary. I am also Board Certified in Juvenile Law.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

In my career as a prosecutor and defense attorney I tried over 100 jury trials from misdemeanor offenses to capital murders.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Serving the juveniles and citizens of Bexar County the last nine years, I implemented a Family Enrichment docket focusing on rehabilitating juvenile

offenders with a history of family violence and a Crossover docket which consolidates cases for those who are also involved with Child Protective Services. I have also inherited Restore Court, assisting the survivors of domestic minor sex trafficking.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

Vice Chair of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department Board. Fellow of the Texas Bar Foundation. Fellow of the San Antonio Bar Foundation. Friend of Communities in Schools.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

See number 2.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

Respondent skipped this question

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

N/A

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

I will continue to bring a hard work ethic to the position. I also show respect to everyone who appears in front of the court.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

Respondent skipped this question

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## #39 - Wayne Christian

[judgewchristian@aol.com](mailto:judgewchristian@aol.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

JD, St. Mary's School of Law, 1979 BA, Economics, Trinity University, 1974 U.S. Army Command & General Staff College, 1993

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Texas State Judge, (14) years Colonel, U.S. Army, JAGC, (30) years (Retired) Certified Texas Peace Officer, (30) years (Inactive) Felony Prosecutor, U.S. Army, 82d Airborne, (4) Years Criminal Defense Counsel & Family Law Trial Lawyer (22) Years

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Over (500) Jury Trials as Prosecutor, Defense Counsel or Trial Court Judge Over (200) DWI Jury Trials as a Defense Counsel Over (160) Court-Martials as a U.S. Army Prosecutor

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

See All Above Answers . . .

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

As a Texas State Judge, the Code of Judicial Conduct does not allow Judges to participate in leadership roles in other than Judicial organizations.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

See All Above Answers

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

As a retired Army Special Forces JAG with a combat deployment to Afghanistan, I wanted to use my experience to help Justice-Involved Veterans in the Bexar County Veterans Treatment Court, now the largest of its' type in the nation . . .

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

N/A

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

The same way I have for my prior (14) years as a Texas State Judge . . .

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

During my terms as a County Court at Law Judge, my courts have disposed of more criminal cases, tried more jury trials and recovered more restitution for victims than any other county court in Bexar County history for that amount of time . . .

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## #38 - Monique Diaz

[monique@moniquediazforjudge.com](mailto:monique@moniquediazforjudge.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

My name is Monique Diaz and I am a candidate for judge of the 150th District Court. I graduated a National Hispanic Scholar in the top 10% of my class from Churchill High School here in San Antonio. In three years, I successfully earned my undergraduate degree in Sociology with a minor in Business Administration from the University of Texas at Austin. I then returned to my hometown where I earned my law degree from St. Mary's University School of Law, specializing my coursework and training in trial advocacy and the application of our rules of procedure and evidence as a national competitor on the External Advocacy Mock Trial Team.

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I waited tables in Austin to help pay for college before landing a job with Dr. Harriett Romo in the Sociology Department at UTSA, commuting from UT to UTSA every other day to work with underprivileged families and children through sociological research on early childhood education in low-income populations. In law school, I continued serving disadvantaged communities with the Child Support Division of the Office of the Attorney General, and expanded my civil law experience with the Civil Division of the United States Attorney's Office. Almost 8 years ago, I started my own general law practice here in town. Family law, my passion, comprises the majority of my cases, but I also practice business, contracts, criminal, probate, administrative and appellate law. I am both a plaintiff's attorney and a defense attorney. I have tried hundreds of cases and served as lead counsel on 4 jury trials. I also served as a city attorney & prosecutor for 8 cities where I led our litigation in civil district courts like this one, wrote codes of ethics for city officials, investigated complaints filed against them, and served as prosecutor for municipal and truancy courts. I've represented small businesses, non-profits, low-income families, victims of domestic violence, our veterans, the elderly and disabled, and I have been recognized by the State Bar of Texas for the pro bono work I do to address the vast unmet needs of the poor. My depth and variety of experience representing almost every type of litigant in almost every matter that could come before this court, coupled with my ethical standards, uniquely qualify me for this position.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

My well-rounded legal career has best prepared me to be able to see and understand the wide array of issues that arise in this civil district court. My focus on litigation has allowed me to handle over 300 trials and hearings, giving me the experience needed for a good district court judge. I have tried family law, civil, criminal, probate, administrative, and truancy cases. Importantly, I have tried cases on both sides of the aisle as a plaintiff's attorney and a defense attorney. This experience better equips me to see both sides of an argument and to set aside personal biases for one side or another, while the variety of my trial experience better prepares me to understand and appreciate the arguments on most cases that could come before this civil district court.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

My parents met in San Juan, Puerto Rico when they were in fourth grade. Their story is like many others: they fell in love, wanted to start a family, and moved to the United States to give their future children every opportunity possible. When I learned of the sacrifices they had made for my brothers and I, I promised myself I would take advantage of the opportunities they had

provided me. In 2009, I was the first member of my family to graduate from college, a goal I was proud to complete with no financial assistance from my family, but through scholarships, grants, student loans, and part-time work. I didn't come from much, but at a young age, I knew I was blessed to have a roof over my head, shoes on my feet, food on my plate, a loving family, and an education -- and that too many families and children across the world did not have one or any of those things. As a child, I decided I wanted to devote my life to helping the less fortunate, and I have taken that with me my whole life. When I started my own firm after completing law school, I set out to dedicate my legal career to working for disadvantaged populations in Bexar County. Since then, a significant portion of my legal work has been pro bono. This work has qualified me for recognition through membership in the Pro Bono College of the State Bar of Texas. I have also committed to providing pro bono legal services to Puerto Rican victims of Hurricane Maria attempting to make new lives for themselves in San Antonio, and to DACA recipients desperate for a sense of certainty amidst significant changes to our immigration laws. I am also a member of the Texas State Bar College, which recognizes lawyers committed to continuing their legal education beyond that which is ordinarily required. I am honored to be a member of both organizations, and they each represent my commitment to justice for all the citizens of Bexar County. My upbringing, professional and personal experiences will provide me with a uniquely compassionate perspective as a civil district court judge.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

I serve on San Antonio Mayor Ron Nirenberg's Commission on the Status of Women as the member representing San Antonio's City Council District 8. I am also a Board Member for the Maestro Entrepreneur Center. I am a member of: the Pro Bono College of the State Bar of Texas, the College of the State Bar of Texas, the San Antonio Westside Chamber of Commerce, the San Antonio Bar Association, the Mexican American Bar Association, the San Antonio Trial Lawyers Association, and the Bexar County Women's Bar Association. For several years, I have been a member of the American Association for Justice, the San Antonio Young Lawyers Association, and the World Affairs Council. But the most rewarding membership of all, is my role as a Big Sister to my little sister Martha through the Big Brothers Big Sisters Program. I was a board member of the Texas Exes San Antonio Chapter for one year. During law school, I was President of the St. Mary's School of Law Family Law Association for one year.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

I believe judges must be fair, level-headed, impartial, and have a keen understanding of and respect for the rule of law. In my general law practice, I have served as a civil and criminal defense attorney, a civil plaintiff's attorney, a city prosecutor, and a city attorney. I have experience in almost every area of law, and on almost every side of a case. It is in my nature to

try to see things from every perspective, which enables my ability to be fair and impartial. As a City Attorney, I was often placed in high pressure situations in City Council meetings where I demonstrated my ability to be level-headed amidst discord by demanding civility, encouraging solutions, and promoting practicality. I do not believe in legislating from the bench. Our founding fathers created three branches of government for a reason, and I am running to be a representative of one, not two. I believe in applying the law as written to the facts as presented, and reaching a decision on a case by case basis -- no matter what. I have the self-awareness to know my role. As a City Attorney and City Prosecutor for eight municipalities, I demonstrated my ability to seamlessly switch between the roles of an advocate, a writer of municipal laws, an investigator, and an arbiter of issues. That training prepared me to step into the job of judge, while allowing litigators and legislators to do their jobs. In my practice and as a City Attorney, I have been charged with managing and heading all civil litigation. That requires an extensive understanding and appreciation for the rule of law, in particular for our rules of civil procedure and evidence. I am a dedicated student of the law and have shown my commitment to the study of it's ever-evolving nuances as a member of the Texas Bar College. Most importantly, I appreciate that although my experience is wide-ranging, I will never know everything. I have successfully utilized and have a healthy respect for the Writ of Mandamus: I will take the time to ensure my decisions are grounded.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

Born in San Antonio to my Puerto Rican mother and Dominican father, I was raised to always be thankful for my blessings, and to pray for the less fortunate. I didn't come from much, but I knew at a young age that I was blessed with an education, food, shelter, and family, and that I wanted to devote my life to helping those in need. As a District Court Judge, I believe I can create the biggest and lasting impacts on our most vulnerable and greatest hopes - our children and the families that support them. I believe the system is as strong as we make it, via the judges we elect, and I hope to bring compassion and impartiality as your next 150th District Court Judge.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

I spent a long time speaking with attorneys and community members to determine which court to run for. In private conversations, the lawyers who practice in our District Courts consistently expressed that the 150th is the court with the most room for improvement -- which was later validated in a recent survey of practicing lawyers in Bexar County from every area of law, where 419 attorneys who practice in our courthouse ranked the 150th District Court 13/14 of the Civil District Courts and 39/44 overall of the courts in Bexar County on every one of six different areas: works hard, punctual, follows the law, good judicial temperament, impartiality, performance. The survey reached out to all practicing attorneys in Bexar County, and was conducted by the San Antonio Criminal Defense Lawyers' Association.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

I will maintain a respectful, patient, resolute, & even-keeled demeanor while serving justice on a case-by-case basis, uninfluenced by a litigant or attorney's history or affiliations.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

I am a Board Member for the Maestro Entrepreneur Center, which, in partnership with the Hispanic Chamber, helps local small, minority, women and veteran-owned businesses succeed. I am also a Commissioner on the Mayor's Commission on the Status of Women, currently working with our female City Councilmembers to establish a Gender Equity Resolution aimed at, among other things, increasing support of female entrepreneurship. I volunteer my time with these organizations, because I believe in their missions as a small, woman, minority-owned business owner myself. As a small business owner, I want to acknowledge the challenges and sacrifices that we make every day to create something tangible and worthwhile. I understand how difficult it can be, from the extra hours to the personal investments that we each make to see our businesses succeed for ourselves and for our families. This work ethic -- particularly in women -- is what makes us exceptional entrepreneurs -- but it also makes us powerful forces within our community. I am running because of my commitment to help others with the same drive and passion for the work we do.

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### #37 - Stephani Walsh

[swalshrn@sbcglobal.net](mailto:swalshrn@sbcglobal.net)

Q1

What is your formal education?

BS Nursing-UTHSC-Nursing 1977 JD-St. Mary's University School of Law 1985

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Working 7 years as Emergency room nurse on the night shift at the County ER gave me perspective as people from all walks of life go through a major trauma center. Attending law school while working weekends as a nurse taught me how to manage my time and resources. In my second year of law school I accepted employment at the Law Offices of Pat Maloney and continued there after graduation. My nursing skills as I assessed and managed medical negligence cases and was the named attorney on over 150 Workers Comp cases being managed

by a non-lawyer litigation administrator. Opening my own practice in 1991 I shifted my focus to Family Law and in 1996 became Board Certified in Family Law. I continued to litigate when necessary however I also became a certified mediator and am a strong proponent of mediation. Licensed since 1985 I have practiced law for more than 29 years before I was sworn in as the Judge of the 45th District Court on 1-1-15.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Significant jury trial experience beginning at the Law Offices of Pat Maloney while still in law school I was allowed to actually sit at the table in a major jury trial involving medical negligence. While at LOPM I appeared at many administrative hearings for Workman's Comp and assisted with the medical management of the jury trials for other attorneys in the firm as well as my cases with the firm. Working alongside the attorneys in this firm gave me experience that was and is priceless. It enabled me to handle a medical negligence jury trial in Houston by myself while 7 months pregnant. My last jury trial in 2014 was a two week jury trial in a divorce involving criminal actions, a significant business estate and at which the media attended daily.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

As one of 12 children in a blended family raised in San Antonio, I am aware of the nuances required when rendering decisions regarding possession and access between families with step-children on both sides of a divorce. I was one of the first five girls allowed to enroll in Vocational Agriculture and the FFA in 1970 and after graduation I worked in a field traditionally held by men as I trained dogs to locate land mines or bomb dogs. Losing my mother at the age of 22 to a violent crime forced me to become suddenly mature and focused as I finished nursing school and then provided a home for my younger brother who was 15 when he came to live with me. Marrying at 36 for the first time I have raised two children born at age 38 and 40 and as an older mother I learned the ins and outs of Special Education as I advocated for one of my sons beginning in fourth grade. I carry all of this information, knowledge and experience with me to the bench and utilize it daily.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

Master in Leadership Program Board Member currently. I have been a Mentor to other non-family law attorneys as they each accepted a pro bono family law case from the Criminal Justice Program. This was program developed in early 2004 to provide services to the underprivileged. For many years I was a Pool Board Member for our neighborhood pool. I have been for 26 years a member of the Medical Legal Liaison Committee of the San Antonio Bar Association.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

I am the current judge of the 45th District Court and I am the only District Court judge in Bexar County that is Board Certified in Family Law. This is significant in that with over 100,000 attorneys in Texas there are only 853 who are Board Certified in Family Law. Prior to 1-1-15 I litigated and appealed several cases involving family law issues that resulted in new case law as well as statutory law. Two that are significant involve grandparents rights and the statute of limitations on paternity.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

After the Honorable Barbara Nellermoe announced her intent to retire making this an "open bench" I announced my candidacy for the 45th District Court and was elected in November 2014.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

I am the incumbent.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

I will continue to treat everyone with respect as I listen to the facts, apply the law and render rulings decisively.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

That with my experience in managing many divorces involving the dissolution, valuation or management of businesses both in my practice and as a judge I am aware of the law and the realities involved in such cases. Since becoming a judge I have addressed the issue of business dissolution both between partners and spouses in a divorce. I am well versed in the law involving Temporary Restraining Orders and the need for confidentiality and preservation of property orders. I have significant experience with experts chosen or appointed to value a business.

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## #36 - Mary Lou Alvarez

[mlalvarezlaw@gmail.com](mailto:mlalvarezlaw@gmail.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

I am Mary Lou Alvarez and I'm running for the 45th District Court in Bexar County. I am a Stanford University graduate with a Bachelors of Science in Industrial Engineering and Engineering Management. After working as manufacturing engineer for two years, I attended law school at Seton Hall University School of Law with the specific purpose to become a public interest lawyer.

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I believe all my work experience uniquely qualifies me to become the next District Court Judge of the 45th District Court. In all the positions I've had during my working life, my goal has been to solve the problems and to attempt to resolve conflict in the most compassionate way. Of course, as an attorney, I have spent the majority of my 15 year career as an advocate. I began my advocacy and dedication to public service while I was still in law school. I was fortunate enough to be awarded a Public Interest Fellowship to come back home to San Antonio after my first year of law school to work at Texas RioGrande Legal Aid, Inc. on the family law team. Since that first summer, it was clear I could use my legal talents to passionately serve my Bexar County community. I was able to develop my skills as a trial lawyer during numerous internships, externships, and a juvenile justice clinic during law school. Once I graduated, I was fortunate enough to be selected to serve as a federal law clerk for the Eastern District of Texas working for the Honorable Ron Clark. I then worked as a product liability litigation associate representing primarily GM, and Toyota. Coming back home to San Antonio as a staff attorney for Texas RioGrande Legal Aid, Inc. in 2006 was pivotal for my litigation career as I was able to transition from being one of several attorneys to represent a corporate interest to becoming the lead attorney to representing an indigent person's interest. Even in private practice, I have had the privilege to represent a broad spectrum of clients, from the very wealthy to the very destitute and I have learned and I develop my litigation skill set with every case I have worked. Even as a private practitioner, I continue to dedicate a portion of my practice to community service as a Court Appointed Ad Litem for the Bexar County Children's Court. I have spent my legal career in the courtroom practicing and perfecting trial skills in an effort to help my clients obtain justice in courts. I believe my working experience gives me the background and demonstrated

commitment to provide true access to justice as the next District Court Judge for the 45th District Court.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

As a family law trial attorney, my trial experience includes trial experience at temporary orders hearings, protective order hearings, and final order hearings. Each and every trial has allowed me to reflect on what I could have done better and what the judge could have done better to ensure the result of the hearing was truly Justice for the litigants. I have also had the opportunity to practice before dozens of different judges and plan to adopt the very best practices I have experienced into the 45th District Court if I am fortunate enough to be elected. Given the cases that are heard in the 45th District Court, I know I have the broad scope of experience, qualifications, and service to best serve Bexar County as the next Judge for that Court.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

One of the most profound life experiences that I have had in my adult life is becoming a mother to my Mari & Javi. Motherhood is something I was fortunate enough to finally experience (as a “geriatric mother”) and it has made me a better woman. I believe my experiences and blessings will allow me to remain humble and bring genuine compassion to the Court while trying to resolve family conflicts in a judicial manner. Motherhood has played a key role in making me a more compassionate and patient person, but it’s not the only thing that has brought me to where I am today. In 2006, I left a corporate firm to become a public interest lawyer and fulfill my calling to public service. The adjustments that came with that transition were tough, but they reinvigorated my commitment to better my communities and our judicial system.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

I am a member of a number of legal associations: the San Antonio Bar Association, San Antonio Bar Association Family Law Section, Mexican American Bar Association of San Antonio, and the San Antonio LGBT Bar Association. During my days as a manufacturing engineer, I was involved in raising funds for a group home for girls in foster care. Along with the group home, we established a mentorship program for the girls that included weekly tutoring and long-term correspondence. Since 2014, I have served as a teaching assistant for Sunday School classes at Laurel Heights Methodist Church. Last year, I became involved in helping to establish a Parent-Teachers Association at Nathaniel Hawthorne Academy and am now helping the school revise their charter.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

I believe that the best judges bring a variety of perspectives to the bench with them. Over the course of my career, I have been fortunate enough to foster diverse experiences that I believe have prepared me for the job. As a manufacturing engineer, a trial attorney, a federal law clerk, and a private practitioner, I have seen the judicial system from nearly every angle. It is not a coincidence that each of those experiences has been centrally preoccupied with my calling for public service. My legal philosophy has always emphasized the need to understand the law and the justice system outside of a vacuum - the decisions I make in the courtroom (both now as a lawyer and in the future as a judge) have material consequences for everyone who comes through the court. That's why my experience representing the same people who come through our District Courts is so important - our judges must be committed to being involved in their communities - without experience outside of the courtroom, we will never be able to ensure justice inside of it.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

During my time with Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid, I spent the majority of my career representing victims of domestic violence during divorce, custody, and protective order litigation as a staff attorney. No matter where I have worked, everyone I have ever represented has only wanted to have their cases handled with compassion and fairness. Favoritism, bias, discrimination, and intolerance have no place at our Courthouse, and I launched my campaign in hopes of ensuring that the 45th District Court would again be a place where everyone would have access to justice without exception. I believe in justice without exception -- I have worked for children and families in this court, and I know they deserve better than what they are getting from the 45th District Court right now.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

Simply put, I am concerned that the 45th District Court is failing the citizens of Bexar County. For our judicial system to work at its best, people must have faith that when they step into the courtroom, they will be treated with compassion. Right now, that is not the reality - the citizens who come through this particular courtroom instead see their cases handled too quickly in the name of efficiency. Efficiency is important, but it can not come at the cost of compassion and justice without exception. When it does, faith in our judiciary is tested, something we simply can't afford right now.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

I will run an empathetic, humble, and respectful courtroom. I will commit time and resources to ensure every case is provided the patience & compassion they deserve.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

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Over my career, I have represented corporations and their employees - I understand the perspective of a business owner, particularly as the owner of a small firm myself. My courtroom will pair that experience with the compassion and patience that must undergird our judicial system. A justice system overly preoccupied with efficiency does a disservice to everyone in Bexar County, including business owners, which is why I will make it my mission to ensure that I approach cases with the patience necessary to familiarize myself with the relevant information, and to not make a decision until I am certain I understand the relevant context. While a lot of this sounds like a given, I worry that the 45th District Court is currently failing business owners because it is not granting cases the time and resources they need for justice to be served.

### #35 - Tom Rickhoff

[judgetomrickhoff@gmail.com](mailto:judgetomrickhoff@gmail.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

I had the privilege of graduating from St. Mary's University in San Antonio, Texas also receiving my law degree from the St. Mary's University School of Law. I was a Master's Candidate at the University of Texas and attended the National Judicial College in Reno, Nevada as well as the Judicial College in Huntsville, Texas, and courses at the Universidad de Guanajuato.

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Having served as a District, Juvenile, Appellate, and Probate judge, I should be the most experienced judge in the courthouse.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Have tried jury cases as a prosecutor and civil lawyer in 3 Federal courts, District and State court. As a judge heard over 50 jury trials in 1 year.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I worked my way through school employed cleaning washrooms to editing books.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

Have been on the boards of over 2 dozen charities as well as the school, San Antonio Fire Department and Police Department boards.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

I was a Federal prosecutor for the Department of Justice Organized Crime and Racketeering Strike Force trying mafia cases in New Orleans, LA.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

I first became a Military Judge in 1970, in Vietnam, and my father was a judge.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

Sadly, he is not the same as he once was. He has taken over \$100,000 out of the Hidalgo Fund, a charity established for abused and neglected children.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

As I always have.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

1. Bexar County has the largest debt of any governmental entity in Texas, \$3.6 BILLION.
  2. Appraisals are irrational and inequitable. A computer program that sweeps for inequities could easily be devised, but the tax authorities fear this.
-

## #34 - Melissa Vara

[melissavara10@gmail.com](mailto:melissavara10@gmail.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

I graduated as the Salutatorian of Thomas Jefferson High School here in San Antonio. I furthered my education at The University of Texas at Austin where I majored in Government and graduated with the highest honors. After college I moved back to San Antonio and attended St. Mary's University School of Law, where I graduated at the top of my class.

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I have been in private practice the majority of my career practicing a mix of criminal defense and civil law. County Court No.15 hears predominately Class A and B criminal misdemeanor cases. The bulk of my criminal practice has been representing people charged with these offenses. Additionally, I have practiced in front of all the sitting County Court at Law Judges and I have interacted with the probation department, district attorney's office, public defenders office and all other necessary parties in the courtroom. It is this experience and knowledge of courtroom procedure that uniquely qualifies me for this bench and to run an efficient court.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I have both bench and jury trial experience in both civil and criminal matters. While County Court No. 15 hears predominately criminal misdemeanors (class A and B), I would be open to hearing civil matters as well when time permits. I believe that having trial experience in both civil and criminal law uniquely qualifies me for this position.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I am born and raised in San Antonio. I grew up in the inner city down the street from St. Mary's University. As someone from this community, I can identify with the majority of the people that pass through the doors of this courtroom. I know that sometimes there are other factors that may be contributing to an individual becoming involved in the criminal justice system. I understand that judges need to be fair and impartial, but I also appreciate the notion that a judge needs to be compassionate. Someone who is going to treat everyone the same regardless of race, gender, socioeconomic status, political affiliation or any other factor that should have no bearing in the courtroom. It is that level of compassion that I intend to bring to the bench that uniquely qualifies me for this position.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

I am presently a member of the San Antonio Bar Association, the Mexican American Bar Association and the Children's Court Attorney Association. I am also a member of Phi Delta Phi International Legal Honor Society. In my spare time I enjoy volunteering at my church and tutoring elementary school children at Madison Elementary School through their after school program.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

As a practicing attorney I have been the attorney of record in over 200 civil cases and over 200 criminal cases. I have both bench trial and jury trial experience, a knowledge of the law and the rules of evidence, and a sound legal temperament. I believe these qualifications I have as an attorney make me well suited to serve this community as judge.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

San Antonio is home to me. I have spent the majority of my career representing indigent members of the community in both civil and criminal law. That dedication to community is what propelled me to seek the office of Judge of County Court No. 15. I am from this community, I am dedicated to this community, and if elected I vow to be an elected official my community can hold accountable.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

I chose to run in County Court No.15 against the incumbent because it was a Court that needed attention. The frequent absences and late arrivals from Judge Behrens is a cause of concern. When a judge is not there to preside over his own docket, it leads to a lack of efficiency and becomes a drain on other Courts. The San Antonio Express News Editorial Board highlighted this problem in this Court in particular and endorsed me over the incumbent. If elected, I will bring a strong work ethic to the bench to ensure that tax payer funds are being spent most efficiently.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

I vow to follow the Judicial Code of Conduct, be respectful and compassionate to all, and be an elected official that can be held accountable.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

I will bring the strong work ethic that I have demonstrated in my law practice to the bench to ensure that County Court 15 is run most efficiently.

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### **#33 - Michelle Slaughter**

**[405thjudge@gmail.com](mailto:405thjudge@gmail.com)**

Q1

What is your formal education?

J.D., University of Houston Law Center, cum laude (top 15%) B.A., University of Houston, magna cum laude Mediation Certification, A.A. White Dispute Resolution Center

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

While in law school, I interned for two federal district judges and a First Court of Appeals justice. I also clerked for three different law firms. After law school, I worked several years for two large, international law firms and had my own successful law firm. As an attorney, I litigated cases in state and federal courts throughout Texas and across the United States and took cases up on appeal. For the past six years, I have served as state district judge in the 405th District Court where I have presided over thousands of felony criminal and civil cases.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

As an attorney, I tried cases to judges and juries in state and federal courts and have taken cases up on appeal in both state and federal courts. I am admitted to practice in all state and federal trial and appellate courts in Texas.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I grew up in a multi-cultural, lower middle-class home with my mother, father, and grandmother. My grandmother, who was born and raised in Mexico, helped raise me because both of my parents often worked long hours. My father was a teacher, coach, and school administrator at an exclusive private school that I was able to attend for free. As a faculty child, I was bullied mercilessly because we were not wealthy. In high school, my father lost his job and we were forced to accept governmental assistance. Despite these and other obstacles, I flourished

academically and socially through hard work, determination, and by the grace of God. The breadth, depth, and variety of my life experience helps me every day in my position as a judge.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

Over the course of my life I have volunteered countless hours and donated tens of thousands of dollars to a wide variety of charities and civic organizations. I have also been an active member in numerous organizations including the Lion's Club, Rotary Club, and several legal industry organizations. I served as Vice President of The Galloway School Board of Trustees, Secretary of the Galveston County Bar Association, Director of The Rotary Club of Galveston, Vice President of the Bay Area Bar Association, just to name a few. A full list of memberships and community involvement is available on my website.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

First and foremost, I have served the past six years as a district court judge where I have presided over thousands of felony criminal cases ranging from state-jail felonies to capital murder cases. My opponent has never been a judge. The position we seek is for the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals. That Court is the supreme court for criminal cases in Texas.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

As a judge, I have had some frustrations with opinions coming from the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals where I do not believe the law has been properly applied. I am person of action. Rather than complain, I like to get things done. Therefore, I seek this position to address what I believe are problems in the Court.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

I am seeking an open seat and am not running against an incumbent.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

I will maintain the dignity of the Court through hard work, diligence, efficiency, effectiveness, and by showing respect towards all that come before the Court.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

Criminal law issues impact business owners. Whether it is theft of goods or services, credit or debit card fraud, forgery, or employees who get arrested - almost every business owner will be effected. It is critical to elect knowledgable, fair, impartial, and hard-working judges who adhere to the rule of law and are committed to justice. You choose your law-makers (legislators), so it is just as important, if not more so, to choose those judges who interpret the law enacted by your elected law-makers. We are blessed in Texas to elect our judges, and that right should not be wasted.

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**#32 - Julie Bray Patterson**

[julieforjudge5@gmail.com](mailto:julieforjudge5@gmail.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

MacArthur High School - 1988 The University of Texas at Austin - B.A. Government - 1992 The University of Texas School of Law - 1996

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I have been licensed to practice law for 22 years. My legal career began as a prosecutor in the Dallas District Attorney's Office. I currently practice criminal and juvenile law. Additionally I am the alternate prosecutor for the City of Olmos Park and the staff attorney for the 436th District Court's Family Enrichment Court which focusing on breaking the cycle of family domestic violence.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I have participated in 67 jury trials, from small thefts up to murders. Additionally I trained young prosecutors in Dallas how to try a case.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I am a mother of 2 teen age sons. I know consequences are important, but I also know that consequences need to fit the crime and should start small.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

Community Involvement Morningside Ministries Board Member - Morningside Ministries is a non-profit, faith based organization focusing on elder care. Alamo Heights United Methodist Church - Youth leader and Burundi, Africa team member. Metropolitan Methodist Hospital Advisory Committee Seton Home - Annual Dr. Leslie Parks luncheon volunteer (7 yrs.) Texas Exes Lifetime Member Professional Memberships San Antonio Bar Association San Antonio Criminal Defense Lawyers' Association Bexar County Women's Bar Association University of Texas Law Alumni Association Awards Endorsed by the San Antonio Police Officers' Association Endorsed by the Bexar County Adult Probation Officers' Association Named in S.A. Scene Magazine as one of the best Criminal Defense lawyers in 2014, 2015, 2016 & 2017. Personal Married to James ("Jamie") Patterson, local family law attorney and mediator, sons McCoy (17) and Mitchell (15). Daughter of Clarence, local family law attorney, and Carol Bray.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

I believe this court is in need of fresh energy to address all the work a judge must handle. I have been licensed for 22 years and have worked on both the prosecution and the defense side. Frankly, I believe those who work in the courthouse want change and have been encouraged to step forward and be that vehicle of change.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

I am running for County Court at Law #5 to make positive change. I have been encouraged by attorneys, courthouse staff, friends, and family to run for this specific bench, and I have the skills and the temperament to make this court one of the best in the courthouse. If elected, one of my main priorities will be to operate all morning business in an efficient and timely manner. I will treat all staff, defense attorneys, state's attorneys, defendants, and bailiffs with dignity and respect.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

This court needs someone to can run the day to day docket efficiently. This is my motivation, to make positive change.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

My goal is to be a good listener, be above party politics, and be fair. I will also seek advice from judges who I uphold as good role models for advice.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

You want judges who you can trust downtown. While you might not come into County Court at Law #5, a criminal misdemeanor court, you might have employees or friends that do. Your local courts matter and it is important that you vote. [www.julieforjudge5.com](http://www.julieforjudge5.com)

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### #31 - Helen Petry Stowe

[hpstoweforjudge@gmail.com](mailto:hpstoweforjudge@gmail.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

\*Bachelor of Arts in English, Minor in Humanities: December 1999 \*Texas Secondary English Teaching Certificate in March 2002 \*St. Mary's University School of Law- Juris Doctor- May 2007

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I have worked as a criminal prosecutor (assistant district attorney) for over 10 years. I was recently appointed Judge of County Court 1, a Criminal Misdemeanor Court. Additionally, I am a former public school teacher.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

In my ten years as a prosecutor, I have tried dozens of cases to jury verdict, and handled more than 20 post-conviction appeals. Additionally, I have tried more than 50 non-jury trials.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

My life experience would be a great benefit to the people of Bexar County. I was a teen mom who made the hard choice to drop out of high school, in order to get my GED and start college at 17. I worked my way through school, waiting tables, while raising my daughter. I was able to

graduate a semester before my high school peers. I went on to teach in San Antonio public schools before returning to law school.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

My husband and I have started a non-profit organization to focus on health and safety in our community. It is called the Live Like Rollin Foundation.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

I am currently the Judge of Bexar County Court 1. As a former prosecutor, I have a wide breadth of criminal law experience.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

As a prosecutor, I am acutely aware of the work ethic of our local judiciary. I saw a need in this particular court for a harder-working judge.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

I am running against an incumbent who has recently resigned, after extensive absences. Even though he has resigned, he will remain on the ballot and is designated the incumbent.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

I will run an efficient docket, treat everyone with dignity, and do everything possible to ensure the best outcomes on a case by case basis.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

Business owners benefit from an efficient court process, as well as rehabilitation of people in their community.

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## #30 - Susan Skinner

[susanskinnerlawyer@gmail.com](mailto:susanskinnerlawyer@gmail.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

EDUCATION: St. Mary's University School of Law, San Antonio, Texas, Juris Doctor, Cum Laude – Top 10 % Licensed by the State Bar of Texas – November 1992 American Jurisprudence Awards: Criminal Procedure, Commercial Paper, Juvenile Law Criminal Justice Administration, Trial Advocacy Phi Delta Phi Legal Honor Society, John Harlan Honor Society, Finalist Mock and Moot St. Mary's Court Competitions INTERNSHIPS: Texas Court of Criminal Appeals Bexar County District Attorney's Office Texas Rural Legal Aid, Kerrville, Texas Our Lady of the Lake University, San Antonio, Texas M.S.W. Texas State University, San Marcos, Texas B.S.W. Theodore Roosevelt High School, San Antonio, Texas 1976

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

My prior work experience in the criminal justice system, as a probation officer, prosecutor, criminal defense attorney and Judge, uniquely qualifies me for this position. I am the rare candidate that has been on every side of a criminal case. I began my professional career as a Child Protective Service Caseworker for the Texas Department of Human Services, where I provided casework services for families and when necessary initiated legal action for the removal of children from situations of severe abuse and neglect. After receiving my Master's degree in 1982, I spent seven years with the Bexar County Adult Probation Department. My invaluable work experience as a former supervising probation officer has served me well in my role as a Judge, in handling daily probation sentencing dockets, motion to revoke probation hearings. I fully understand the objectives in supervising a defendant within the framework of the crime and issues unique to that defendant. Upon graduating from law school, I began my career with the Bexar County District Attorney's Office. Most notably, I was a violent crime prosecutor specializing in the prosecution of gang-related crimes and drive-by shootings that plagued the community. As a felony first-chair prosecutor I was responsible for the prosecution of child death cases, domestic murders, serious child abuse cases, and sexual assault cases against children and adults. My legal experience was not confined to the prosecution side. In 2007 I established my own law practice as a criminal defense attorney, practicing in all Bexar County misdemeanor and felony courts until being elected to the Bench in January 2015. As Judge, I have resolved over 8000 cases and reduced the docket by 40%. I created the only Animal Abuse docket in Bexar County, upon seeing the needs of the community. All misdemeanor animal cruelty case are assigned to my court and now have access to timely trials and dispositions. As your elected Judge of County Court No. 14, a misdemeanor criminal court, I bring well-over 30 years of well-balanced work experience that's been dedicated entirely to our criminal justice system.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

In my 25 years experience as a prosecutor, criminal defense attorney and judge, I have handled thousands of misdemeanor and felony cases and have extensive trial experience. My trial experience ranges from misdemeanor trials, such as animal cruelty, DWI, assault and theft cases up to felony trials, such as capital murder, murder, aggravated robbery, aggravated sexual assault and aggravated assault with a deadly weapon.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I have three priorities, 1) my relationship with God, 2) my family, and 3) to be of useful service in the community. These priorities have shaped my life experiences. Through my Christian faith, I bring respect for all, compassion and fairness to the bench. I have worked with many Christian outreach programs and have traveled extensively to other countries. I feel these experiences have equipped me in a unique way by seeing the needs of the poor and disadvantaged. My age, 60, has provided an opportunity to gain much wisdom from living a full life, including raising two well-accomplished daughters.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

Bexar County Women's Bar Association, San Antonio Bar Association, Texas State Bar, St. Mary's University School of Law Alumni Association, Alpha Delta Pi Alumni Association, King William Association, The British Society of San Antonio, Texas State Alumni Association, League of Women Voters, Bexar County and San Antonio Republican Women, Friends of Ronald McDonald House, 100 Club, Member of Community Bible Church. I have completed community service projects with Food for the Poor, Children's Association for Maximum Potential, and Volunteer for Community Development Nepal. I enjoy traveling with a purpose and have volunteered on service projects ranging from sea turtle conservation to chaperoning local high school students who volunteered at a orphanage for children with physical and developmental disabilities in Antigua, Guatemala. Most recently I helped build a school in Kingston, Jamaica. Locally, I volunteer with Church Under the Bridge and Helping Hands Homeless Outreach.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

I think my well-rounded experience, which has allowed me to see a case from all sides, has specially prepared me to serve as judge. As a child protective service caseworker, I assisted people who were victims of crime. As a probation officer, I have supervised people who have

been convicted of crimes. As an Assistant District Attorney, I have prosecuted people who have committed crimes. As a defense attorney in private practice, I have represented people who were charged with crimes. And, as a judge, I have presided over numerous trials and court proceedings. Add it all up and I think it is fair to say I have worked on every side of a criminal case.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

I was raised to be of useful service to the community and I wanted to bring my experience to the Bench in order to make a difference. I picked this particular misdemeanor court, because a misdemeanor court judge is in a unique position to strongly impact first offenders from re-offending and advancing to the felony level.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

Not Applicable

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

I maintain the dignity of the court by being a conscientious and fair judge committed to keeping recidivism down and protecting victims' rights.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

Not only does our community deserve a judge who is experienced in the courtroom, knows the law well and is fair, but also a judge who is efficient in managing a court docket and court staff. A well-run court saves tax dollars. I dispose of cases in an efficient and timely manner. I have collected \$3,318,611 in court costs, fines, fees and restitution for victims of crimes, including hot checks written to business owners. Lastly, I have managed a successful law practice and was a small business owner\partner of Revamp, an antique and design store.

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## #29 - Crystal Chandler

[crystal@judgecrystalchandler.com](mailto:crystal@judgecrystalchandler.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

Based on my life experience discussed in my response to Question 4, I knew the best way to improve my circumstances was through hard work and with an education. I graduated summa cum laude from Winston Churchill High School in 1990. I put myself through college at the University of Incarnate Word where I graduated magna cum laude in 1994. I was the first in my family to obtain a college degree. At the encouragement of professors, I went on to obtain my law degree from St. Mary's University School of Law.

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I'm running for re-election as Judge of Bexar County Court #13, a countywide misdemeanor court specially created to hear criminal domestic violence cases. My experience uniquely lends itself to these cases because I have devoted a majority of my 20+ year legal career to public service and the practice of criminal law focusing on criminal family violence and child abuse cases. Since becoming judge of County Court 13 on January 1, 2015, I've handled over 7,000 criminal family violence cases. I have streamlined the docket, reduced the overall number of cases and decreased unnecessary delays. My number one priority is ensuring the safety of the community while treating everyone fairly. To increase community safety, I worked with other agencies to coordinate police access to orders of protection, enforced compliance for firearm surrender in violent cases and created two initiatives to help break the cycle of violence. One of the two initiatives is an early intervention program – "Young Adult Aggression Re-Direction" or "YAARD". This initiative targets young probationers between the ages of 17-25 and requires frequent meetings with me and the court probation officer to closely monitor their progress and improve the potential for rehabilitation. Many of these young people lack structure in their lives, did not graduate from high school, and became parents at a young age. The initiative, which continues to evolve, provides structure, encouragement and personal accountability. There is no additional funding for this initiative, rather it is a commitment from my staff and me to pour additional time and compassion into the lives of these young people. Before I was elected judge, I served as a prosecutor with the Bexar County Criminal District Attorney's Office for more than 15 years. For many years, I handled felony family violence cases at all stages of litigation, from grand jury indictment, trial and appeal. After graduating from law school, I worked as a judicial briefing attorney for the highest criminal court in the state, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals. I assisted the Honorable Sue Holland in drafting opinions that impacted the law in criminal cases for the entire state.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

As an assistant criminal district attorney, I worked on thousands of criminal cases from misdemeanor assaults to murders. While in the Felony Family Violence and Victim Protection Unit, I tried numerous jury trials to verdict, including murders, kidnappings, aggravated assaults, enhanced family violence assaults and crimes against children (sexual and physical abuse). Later, as an appellate prosecutor, I continued to work on these family violence and child abuse cases on appeal by presenting legal briefs before the intermediate appellate courts, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, and the United States Supreme Court. Since I became the presiding judge of County Court 13 on January 1, 2015, I have presided over more than 65 criminal family violence jury trials to verdict (with no reversals on appeal) and seated more than 100 juries. In addition to trials, I have handled numerous contested hearings dealing with complex legal issues in domestic violence cases like "Forfeiture by Wrongdoing" and "Crawford" hearings.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I grew up in a tiny Texas town that had just one blinking yellow light. I was raised by my grandmother because my birth parents struggled with addiction. I knew the best way to improve my circumstances was through hard work and with an education. As a teenager, a loving cousin in San Antonio opened her home to me so that I could attend a high school with more opportunities, pursue a degree, and ultimately rise above my circumstances. I put myself through college and became the first person in my family to get a degree. It is this commitment to hard work, dedication to education, and ultimately, faith, that prepares me to continue serving our community. I want to help all who come before me to realize that they, too, can make a change for the better.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

Along with family violence, another tragic epidemic in our society is that of human trafficking. That's why, along with a few other women, I helped start a non-profit organization to stop domestic human trafficking. The organization eventually grew and spawned a national anti-human trafficking organization which has been recognized as one of the top 100 anti-human trafficking organizations in the world. Some of the other organizations I am also honored to support and serve include: Bexar County Domestic Violence Task Force, Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Texas, Battered Women & Children's Shelter, Family Violence Prevention Services, Bexar County Family Justice Center, Ransomed Life, Youth Transitioning Into Adulthood (YTIA), City Year San Antonio - AmeriCorps, Blessed Angels Community Center Emergency Food Pantry, Shriners, SA Threads, San Antonio Humane Society, Daisy Cares, Dress for Success, Pregnancy

Care Center, and Great Hearts Monte Vista - Parent Service Organization. In the legal field, I am a member of several local and national association, including the Texas Bar Association, San Antonio Bar Association – Criminal Law and Procedure Committee, Bexar County Women’s Bar Association, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, and the Texas Center for the Judiciary. I’m also proud of my reputation for being a leader in the field of criminal family violence and human trafficking. I’m frequently asked to speak on these topics and appreciate the opportunity to educate the public and attorneys for continuing legal education credit on these topics.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

As stated previously, my 20+ year professional career has been dedicated to the practice of criminal law with a focus on family violence and child abuse. County Court #13 is a serious criminal court and it deserves a qualified judge with extensive criminal law experience. Electing someone judge of this court who lacks the necessary experience and knowledge puts lives at risk. Unlike my opponent, I have dedicated by professional career to criminal law. Significant experience in this field is imperative because domestic violence cases are complex for several reasons – the intimate nature of the crimes, the intricate family dynamics involved, and because the evidentiary and legal issues that arise in these types of cases differ from other legal cases and are constantly evolving. An attorney that has marginal criminal law experience would be ill-equipped to handle this unique and busy criminal court. My opponent’s practice primarily consists of civil law (not criminal) cases, including divorce, adoptions, child support, juvenile cases, and the termination of parental rights. In fact, in a recently published candidate questionnaire, my opponent admitted to having minimal legal experience in criminal domestic violence. None of the civil cases my opponent handles fall within this specialized criminal court. The law relating to criminal domestic/family violence is unique and complicated. Since County Court 13 handles family violence cases, the citizens of Bexar County deserve a Judge with experience handling family violence cases, and that is what I have brought to this bench since first elected in 2014.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

My life circumstances put a desire in my heart to help stop the cycle of violence and to help families in crises. Because my legal career has been focused on criminal family violence and child abuse, it was a natural fit for me to pursue this Court when the previous judge retired. I saw this as the best way for me to serve the community. For this reason, I have been working to protect victims, rehabilitate offenders, and educate the community on the horrible cycle of domestic violence.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

I am the incumbent.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

By continuing to treat every person in the courtroom with the respect and dignity they deserve and by treating every case with fairness and equality.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

Family violence is not just about the people in the courtroom, it affects our entire community. Studies show that 75% of your members know someone who is a victim of intimate partner violence, whether it be personally, a family member, friend, neighbor or co-worker. Domestic violence, which knows no boundaries, affects all members of our community, regardless of their race, sex, religion, socioeconomic standing, sexual orientation, or any other identifying factors. The societal and economic effect of domestic violence is enormous. Given its wide impact across a range of issues, including healthcare costs, reduced earning and lower work-place productivity, studies estimate that the total annual cost of domestic violence in the U.S. economy exceeds \$5.8 billion annually. Homicide is the leading cause of death for women in the workplace. Business owners certainly play an important role by developing workplace policies that facilitate early prevention and response strategies to domestic violence. However, it is also important for business owners to vote in judicial elections to ensure that the most qualified candidate is elected to the bench. In this race, this court is about making home a safe place for citizens in Bexar County, and I am the most qualified candidate.

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**#28 - Melisa Skinner**  
[skinner.melisa@gmail.com](mailto:skinner.melisa@gmail.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

I graduated from Providence High School in San Antonio, Tx. in 1980 with honors. In 1984, I graduated Cum Laude from the University of Texas at Austin. I earned my Doctorate of Jurisprudence from St. Mary;s School of Law in 1993, once again graduating Cum Laude.

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

The 290th Judicial District Court is a court with criminal felony jurisdiction. I have been the presiding judge of the 290th Judicial District Court for 8 years during which I have presided over 158 jury trials to verdict, including a death penalty case, and presided over thousands of criminal felony cases. Prior to becoming the Judge of the 290th Judicial District Court, I served as an Assistant Criminal District Attorney for 15 years and a criminal defense attorney for 2 years. As a trial attorney, I tried 200 cases to jury verdict, including 4 death penalty cases and handled thousand of cases. I have a proven record as one of the most efficient and hard-working District Court Judges in Bexar County. I have dedicated my entire 25 year career to the practice of criminal law.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

As I stated above, I have tried 200 criminal cases, including 4 death penalty cases to jury verdict as a trial attorney and 158 felony cases to jury verdict, including a death penalty case as the judge of the 290th Judicial District Court. This is a court with felony criminal jurisdiction.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

My 4 siblings and I were raised in a small 2 bedroom house in a tough neighborhood near downtown San Antonio. My parents worked hard to send us to private school because they valued our educations. My childhood neighborhood was burdened with unemployment, poverty, drug abuse, alcohol abuse and violence-usually on the weekends when we heard frequent gunshots. I learned how fortunate I was to have parents who were hard-working and who loved and protected me. After being blessed with my college education, I worked in the banking industry to save money to reach my goal of attending law school. During my second year of law school, I gave birth to my first son and, despite the challenge, graduated with honors. I have raised 3 excellent children while working 25 years practicing criminal law. I know the challenges

that face the people who come before me and recognize that there are many who are not as fortunate as I have been.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

I am a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church and a member of the Beethoven Dammendor. I am the chair of the Bexar County Purchasing Agent Board, and I serve as a member of the Bexar County Jail Population Oversight Committee, the Bexar County Courts and Rules Committee and the Bexar County Juvenile Probation Board. I am also the Adult Probation Department Liaison to the Bexar County District Courts.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

The 290th Judicial District Court is a court of criminal felony jurisdiction. I have a proven record as an efficient judge who knows the law and follows the law. In my 25 year career, I have tried to jury verdict hundreds of criminal cases including 5 death penalty cases and handled thousands of felony cases. This experience distinguishes me from my opponent. I have tried every type of violent offense to juries, including capital murders, murders, aggravated sexual assaults of children, aggravated robberies, and burglaries of habitations. I have also tried to juries and handled non-violent drug offenses and enhanced prostitution cases. I have the experience to recognize when someone poses a threat to the safety of the community versus an offender who needs treatment and can be rehabilitated. This is not a court that has jurisdiction over only non-violent offenders who may benefit from treatment. I am the candidate who has the experience and knowledge to address both violent and non-violent offenders who are faced with prosecution in this court, and, I have the experience to protect and assist this community, victims and offenders alike.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

I sought this office when I had attained every goal I had as a trial attorney. I recognized that I needed to take my experience and apply it to the goal of service as a jurist to insure that justice would be accomplished in this court. That was 8 years ago. I am even more committed to this service than I was when I first took office. I recognize the effect that my decisions have on every person involved in every case in this court. I am seeking to continue my service to this community.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why? Not applicable.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

The dignity of every court is maintained by treating everyone who appears before me with dignity and respect.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

I believe that it is important for businesses that experience loss as a result of criminal offenses be compensated for their loss. My husband is a small business owner and my father was, as well. I know, first-hand, how devastating financial loss can be to a company. I am committed to insuring compensation to all businesses from defendants proven guilty of causing such loss during the commission of a criminal offense.

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## #27 - Oscar Kazen

[kazen.law@gmail.com](mailto:kazen.law@gmail.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

B.A. in Government, University of Texas at Austin Juris Doctor, Thurgood Marshall School of Law  
National Drug Court Institute

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

A good judge must be able to empathize with and respect the life experiences of each person who finds themselves in a court of law. A Probate Court deals in the everyday lives of people at a time when either a loved one has passed away or become ill. I've worked as a carpenter, electrician's assistant, in the oilfields, a United States Marine, Attorney and Former Judge. As a former Family Law Master I had assisted with the Child Protective Courts. As a former Criminal Court Judge I had presided in over 100 trials, thousands of cases without reversal or complaint, and implemented one of our county's first therapeutic drug courts. For almost a decade I had served as this county's Associate Probate Judge where I assisted in probate, guardianship and mental health matters, and oversaw the implementation of a therapeutic Mental Health Court which is now recognized as a national model.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

During my tenure as Judge and as a practicing attorney, I have been entrusted with many thousands of cases and have participated or presided in over 100 jury trials, to verdict, without reversal or complaint; presided in thousands of mental health hearings coming from 51 south and central Texas counties, without reversal or complaint; and, assisted with the probate and guardianship docket. I have come to learn that each of those cases were the most important things in their lives and Judges should seek to be a neutral, calming, and a helpful influence in the process. Each of those many cases have taught me to never disregard any one person's experience or story but rather to seek the truth and an understanding of the situation. What I carry from those many trials is that a true professional should treat everyone with courtesy and respect.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I am the grandson of immigrants who came to this country with nothing but a desire to work hard and succeed. My Father was a public-school teacher and my mother was a public-school clerk. They instilled in me that we each can touch and better the lives of others. I dropped out of school after the bombing of the Marines in Beirut; it was a life changing experience. Honor, Courage, Commitment, isn't just another motto: it's a way of life. These are the values we will restore to this court

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

Former Board Member: San Antonio State Hospital, Rape Crisis Center, Local Teen Crime Commission, Jefferson-Woodlawn Neighborhood Community Development Board, Metropolitan Planning Organization (B.M.A.C. Advisory Board). Mental Health Subject Matter Expert/Lecturer for the Treatment Advocacy Center. Professional education instructor in Mental Health and Guardianship. Mental Health Probate Court Consultant who has educated several other states in the creation of their courts and programs. National Drug Court Institute. Graded, reviewed and made recommendations on National Mental Health Grant Applications for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Drafted, educated and help pass several different laws which protects, respects and bring dignity to those who appear in probate court. Member of the State Bar of Texas and the Western Federal District Courts.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

I have had the honor to have served this community as a judge for 14 years. As your County Court at Law Judge or Associate Probate Judge, I have always tried to go beyond simply "banging the gavel" but instead try at every turn to improve the lives of those involved. In either of those positions, I had received among the highest ratings for a judge and have never received a complaint, admonishment, or sanction. I have traveled across this State and Nation to help other courts create programs and process which improve the lives of others rather than simply punish them. A court works best with a Judge who sees the litigants, attorneys, stakeholders and community as valued participants in our system of justice. Together, we created one of our county's very first Therapeutic Drug Courts. Together we created a Mental Health treatment court which now serves as a national model. Together we have fought to protect and improve the life of those in need of help.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

I had the privilege of serving for almost 10 years as our community's former Associate Probate Judge, I remember a court known for its collaboration and goodwill. It was a court known for its compassion, patience and courtesy. Hardly a week went by without after hour community meetings. It was part of what the Boston Globe referred to as a model of how things should be. We made a difference. After the retirement of our Judge Poly Jackson Spencer, the new judge of this court abandoned these efforts and is instead occupied with repeated ethics violations, numerous judicial complaints and investigations, and serious admonishments from our State Commission on Judicial conduct. Together, we can fix a very broken court.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

The Texas State Judicial Conduct Commission has found that Judge Cross failed to treat others with patience, dignity and courtesy, referring to a disabled man as "Mr. Maggot" or "Maggot Man; challenged the IQ of an intellectually disabled daughter, in front of her parents "by comparing it to the I.Q. of a pen"; and, interacted in a manner which lead multiple others "to feel disrespected." In a poll of almost 500 Lawyers and Judges, Judge Cross was selected the worst Judge in the courthouse... in every category. How is that even possible? As a former Judge of 14 years, courtesy, respect and empathy are my touchstones. We can and must do better. I pledge to restore this court by making community outreach, education, patience, courtesy and professionalism once again the priority.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

Honor, courage, commitment, compassion, respect and professionalism aren't just words or slogans. A good judge should live them. It's my pledge and promise.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

There are only two reasons that anyone finds themselves in a Probate Court; someone we love has passed or become seriously ill. It comes at the most difficult time in our lives. When anyone find themselves in a probate court, they should know to their core that the Judge they encounter is one know for courtesy, compassion and professionalism. I have been endorsed over the incumbent, by Law Enforcement, Probation workers, the AFL-CIO, numerous organizations, and the San Antonio Express News. Help me fix this broken court. I humbly ask for your vote.

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**#26 - Rebecca Simmons**

[rs@simmonsforjustice.com](mailto:rs@simmonsforjustice.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

Austin College B. A. Baylor University School of Law J.D. Durham University, England post-graduate study

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I was in private practice over 20 years before becoming a district court judge. In addition to my practice I became an adjunct professor at St. Mary's Law School where I have continued to teach for the past 24 years. My work as an attorney on a wide variety of cases, and my service as a professor and trial judge give me a unique understanding of the types of cases that come before the 4th Court. More importantly, I previously served on the 4th Court of Appeals for 7 years until I lost the election in 2012. I continue to serve as a visiting judge to several appellate courts including those in Houston, Ft. Worth, Waco and Eastland.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I had significant trial experience in my private practice and presided over many trials as a trial judge. However, appellate experience gained by working on appeals and appearing before appellate courts is more relevant than trial experience for the 4th Court of Appeals. My appellate experience began as a briefing attorney for the Texas Supreme Court and continued as I

represented clients before state and federal appellate courts. I have authored over 1,000 appellate opinions, and that makes me uniquely qualified to be on the 4th Court.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Growing up in a small town and having to work my way through school, I understand the barriers to justice experienced by a growing number of citizens. As a lawyer I often represented those who could not afford legal representation and won a San Antonio Bar Pro-Bono Award for working on the most pro-bono (free) cases in a year. I continue to promote access to justice through the advisory board of Caritas Legal Services which provides legal services to the poor. My background makes me respectful of all those who access our court system regardless of their circumstances.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

Chair, Texas Judicial Committee on Information and Technology 2009 – present (Advises the Texas Supreme Court on technology issues) Council Member, Texas State Bar Litigation Section 2014 – present Director, State Bar of Texas District 10, place 1 2015 - 2018 Member, State Bar of Texas Rules Committee 2009-2018 Former President, San Antonio Bar Association 2013 – 2014 Former Chair, Texas Bar Foundation with an endowment of over \$20,000,000 Former President of the Bexar County Women’s Bar Association 2006 Former Chair of the William S. Sessions American Inns of Court 2008 Trustee, Austin College 2012 – present Board Member, Hope for the Future (providing scholarship funds for catholic schools) Advisory Board Member, Catholic Charities Caritas Legal Services Member: San Antonio Zoo San Antonio Botanical Center McNay Museum San Antonio Museum of Art Monte Vista Historical Society

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

My judicial experience and temperament make me uniquely qualified for the 4th Court of Appeals. I am a former Justice on the 4th Court and former Judge of the 408th District Court. After losing the election in 2012, I continued to sit as a visiting judge at both the appellate and trial levels in criminal and civil matters. I have served as associate general counsel for a medical device company; and have been an adjunct professor at St. Mary’s law school for the past 24 years. My experience and proven record warrant my election to the 4th Court.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

I am seeking the open seat on the Fourth Court of Appeals currently occupied by Justice Angelini who is retiring after more than 20 years of service. This depth of experience is hard to replace. I believe the court and the community deserve an experienced justice with a proven record who requires no on-the-job training. I have a commitment to justice and hard work and my 13 years of appellate court experience, handling criminal and civil appeals, will be an asset to the court.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

I am not running against an incumbent.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

A justice must show up to work each day prepared to address each case with an open mind and respect for all litigants.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

Having worked in a business setting, I understand the frustrations that the legal system brings. I believe in the rule of law and treating each case fairly and impartially without regard to politics. In a recent state bar poll lawyers were asked to vote for their preferred candidate for the 5 spots on the 4th Court. I was honored to receive the most votes of any candidate or incumbent on the Court. Among my proudest achievement was receiving the San Antonio Association of Corporate Counsel's "Ethical Life" award.

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## #25 - Eugenia "Genie" Wright

[geniejwright@gmail.com](mailto:geniejwright@gmail.com)

Q1 What is your formal education?

BSEd MEd JD

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Teacher Private Practice Attorney Judge

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

As Judge I have presided over almost 100 jury trials. I have been affirmed in all cases appealed including one taken to the US Supreme Court

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

involvement in my community in political, charitable, and social organizations. Wife, mother and friend. Bi-lingual and multi-cultural experiences

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

Delta Zeta Sorority, Impact San Antonio, Board Member of the Blood and Tissue Center, San Antonio Chamber Music Society, Art League of San Antonio, Patron of both the Houston and Santa Fe Operas, Life Member of the San Antonio Gun Club, Silver Life Member of the NAACP, Member of the HRC, Board Member of BEAT Aids, Texas and San Antonio Bar Association, Texas Association of County Court Judges, Bexar County Women'Bar, NOW, League of Women Voters. These are my current memberships

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

Experience matters. I am the judge. 18,000 cases handled since January 2011, almost 100 jury trials, continuous judicial education, and constant oversight of every facet of the court have resulted in a well run efficient court. I invite you to come and see what we do.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

After several years as a criminal/family law attorney the opportunity to run for a Domestic Violence Court was a logical fit for my skills and interest. I knew this court needed a better judge and I was confident I could provide that leadership. My record in this court sustains this.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

I am not.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

Work, presence, oversight of the process, fairness and an even temperament are crucial. Availability to attorneys is a must. Never forget, I work for you.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

I am efficient, honest, fair, available and I understand that I am spending your money.

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## #24 - Stephanie Boyd

[srboyd@sbcglobal.net](mailto:srboyd@sbcglobal.net)

Q1

What is your formal education?

B.A., Political Science MBA J.D.

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

For approximately 21 years, I have worked as a criminal defense attorney and an assistant district attorney. I have defended and prosecuted numerous high-profile felony criminal cases.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

The 187th Judicial District Court has jurisdiction of criminal felony cases. I have defended and prosecuted numerous high-profile felony criminal cases.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

It has been my privilege to have been the first attorney selected for the felony drug court, a treatment program designed to bring sobriety to those suffering from drug addiction. I was also the first attorney selected for the Esperanza Court, a court designed to bring dignity and stability to victims of sex trafficking.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

I have been president and am currently a board member of the San Antonio Black Lawyers Association. I am a board member of Youth Transitioning into Adulthood, an organization which helps foster children who have aged out of the foster care system. I have also participated in many pro bono wills and estate programs to help the elderly. I have participated in "just take" one program, which helps low-income persons obtain civil clarification in their life. I have also helped with the local read programs, which encourage and foster reading among elementary-aged children. I have also tutored students in algebra and geometry. I have served as Director of numerous continuing legal education courses. I have personally presented several education courses (Competency/Sanity, Trial, Voir Dire, the Ethics of Plea Negotiations, Child Abuse and Neglect) for attorneys.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

A judge must have a balance of experience. I have been a defense attorney and a prosecutor. I am extensively familiar with all treatment options available to an accused. I have represented or defended individuals across the criminal legal arena.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

Our community has extensive issues with drug addiction, teenage pregnancy, domestic violence and an extremely high-rate of child abuse. My professional experience in these areas make me uniquely qualified for this position.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

N/A

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

I will follow the judicial code of conduct. Most importantly I will show respect and treat each party fairly.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

Criminal district courts are extremely important. At some point your life will be touched by a criminal district court. You may be before the court as a witness, a support system for someone or as a juror. It is imperative that business owners come to these public courtrooms to observe our criminal justice system.

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## #23 - Daphne Previti Austin

[dp@daphnpreviti.com](mailto:dp@daphnpreviti.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

Juris Doctor, St. Mary's University School of Law, 1996; B.A. International Relations, University of Delaware, 1989.

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I have consistently worked in the Juvenile Courts since I was a student attorney for the Center for Legal and Social Justice at St. Mary's University in 1995. I have experience as a judge, prosecutor, and defense counsel bringing balanced experience to this bench. I have been Board Certified as a juvenile law practitioner since 2002 by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. Of all the thousands of attorneys that practice in Bexar County, only eight of us have earned this recognition.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I worked for the Bexar County District Attorney for more than ten years and practiced criminal and juvenile defense for seven years in State and Federal court. During that time, I tried more than 100 trials learning the ins and outs of advocacy on both sides of a case.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I am a parent of teenagers.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

President, Alamo Heights ISD Friends of Strings, 2012-2015; Member, Alamo Youth Center Advisory Board Sept 2016-Oct 2017; Member, Collaborative Council of the Judicial Commission on Mental Health May 2018- present; Member, Impact San Antonio 2015-present; Mentor Feb 2013-Dec 2014 and Member, San Antonio Bar Assoc.; Mentor Feb 2013-Dec 2014 and Member, San Antonio Criminal Defense Lawyers; State Bar of Texas Criminal, Juvenile and Judicial sections; Texas Bar Foundation 2015-present

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

I am the more experienced candidate in this race. In addition to the lawyer experience that creates an environment where a judge is comfortable making rulings, I now also have the judicial and administrative experience to continue this work. When I ran the first time, I vowed to follow the law and treat everyone with dignity and respect. I remember that promise and I make it again.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

I am the sitting judge in the 289th District Court. I am seeking re-election to the same court to continue the work of protecting our community while rehabilitating the juveniles in Bexar County who have made a poor choice.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

N/A

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

Court is formal and orderly. Courtesy is expected. I wear a robe and address the parties by their title and last name.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

I, too, have been a business owner. I run the finances of the court as if it were a business. My staff is cross-trained to cover for each other and we coordinate vacation schedules so there is less of a need to hire substitute court reporters and juvenile law referees.

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## #22 - Richard Price

[judgerichardprice@yahoo.com](mailto:judgerichardprice@yahoo.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

I received my Bachelors of Arts from Trinity University; Masters of Business Administration from Incarnate Word University; Juris Doctor from Washington and Lee University School of Law; Mediation Training and Family Law Training from Texas Women's University in Dallas, Texas.

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I have been a licensed attorney for over 29 years and I have served as a Civil District Court Judge for over 9 years. I have presided over more than 47 jury trials. Also, I have acted as a Mediator of over 800 cases. I have consistently been one of the highest rated Civil District Court Judges of Bexar County in the Judicial Surveys and Polls. When there is so much at stake, you rely on the Judicial System to hear your case. I have extensive experience in the many areas of the law that include personal injury, family law, premises liability, mold, foundation law, contractual, employment and business law. I feel that my knowledge and experience can provide each person their fair day in Court.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

In my over 29 years as a licensed attorney I have tried cases involving products liability, personal injury and business law. I have tried cases throughout the State of Texas. As a Judge, I have presided over 47 trials involving personal injury, family law, business law, contractual law, employment law and premise liability cases.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I was my mother's sole healthcare giver while she was undergoing cancer treatment for over 12 years. My father become ill with MS when I was 6 years old and therefore witnessed and

experienced the hardships that my family endured while he was ill. My personal experiences educated me in LIFE and provided me with the compassion and understanding of such matters. When there is so much at stake, you need a Judge who is experienced, knowledgeable of the law as well as fair and compassionate in order to provide each person with their fair day in Court.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

State Bar of Texas since 1989; San Antonio Bar Association, which I was a Director from 2014 to 2018; Texas Bar Foundation; San Antonio Bar Foundation; Juvenile Board of Bexar County 2011-Present; Bexar County District Courts Jury Assignment Clerk Oversight Committee 2011-Present; Bexar County District Courts Infrastructure Liaison Committee 2011-2015; San Antonio Bar Association District Courts Committee; San Antonio Bar Association Alternate Dispute Resolution Section; San Antonio Bar Association Construction Law Section; San Antonio Bar Association Family Law Section; San Antonio Bar Association Litigation Law Section; San Antonio Bar Association Membership Committee 2007-2008; State Bar of Texas Judicial Section 2005-Present; William S. Session, Jr. American Inns of Court 2004-Present; Board Member of Any Baby Can 2006-2008; Chairman-Giving Society Luncheon, Any Baby Can 2007; San Antonio Academy Distinguished Alumnus-2014; Best Lawyers in San Antonio 2005, 2008, 2009, 2010; Speaker at Continuing Legal Education Seminars included Advanced Civil Trial and Advanced Personal Injury Seminars; Bench Motions and Trials Seminar Course Director -2017 and 2018; Speaker for Bench Motions and Trials Seminar 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

I have served the citizens of Bexar County as a Civil District Court Judge for over 9 years. As Judge, I have presided over hundreds of cases and over 47 Jury Trials. I am consistently rated high in the Judicial Polls. The most recent Judicial Poll in 2017 rated me with 92% in area of Temperament; 90% -Works Hard; 91% Punctual; 90% in area of Performance. The 2014 Judicial Poll rated me the highest Civil District Court Judge in the area of Good Temperament and second highest in the areas of Performance, Follows the Law; Punctual, Rules Impartially and Works Hard.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

My love of the law and desire to serve the community lead me to seek election in 2010. I find it an honor and a privilege to serve the people of Bexar County. I find it essential to have the knowledge and experience necessary in order to be able to serve the people of Bexar County. When there is so much at stake for you, your family and your business, experience, knowledge,

integrity and fairness are what each person deserves when they come before the 285th District Court. I feel I have the experience, knowledge proven integrity and fairness to continue serving as Judge of the 285th District Court of Bexar County.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

No.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

When there is so much at stake, each person deserves their fair day in Court before a Judge who is experienced and knowledgeable of the law and will follow the law.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

I have extensive knowledge of business litigation in addition to having a Masters in Business degree. As an attorney, I have practiced throughout the State of Texas litigating in insurance, business, employment law and products liability cases. I have presided over a large number of business cases as a Bexar County District Court Judge, which have included very complex business matters. Prior to being elected Judge, I mediated over 800 cases, which a significant number also involved complex business matters.

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**#21 - Kelly M. Cross**

[reelectjudgekellycross@gmail.com](mailto:reelectjudgekellycross@gmail.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

· Saint Mary's University School of Law, San Antonio, Texas. (JD - 1992) · Xavier University, Cincinnati, Ohio. (MBA - 1988) · University of Louisville, Kentucky. (BBA - 1986)

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I have 22 years as an elder law attorney encompassing guardianship law, probate, and mental health.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I have presided over 100s of bench trials as a Judge. Jury trials are scheduled timely so the parties can receive their day in Court as soon as practicable.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I've experienced mental illness and death in my family. I have friends who are currently mentally ill and friends who are currently under guardianship.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

· 2017 – National Guardianship Association: Star Achievement Award · 2009 – SABA Elder Law Section: Vice President · 2008 – SABA Elder Law Section: President · 2007 – National Master Guardian: Center for Guardianship Certification · 2007 – SABA Elder Law Section: Vice-President, · 2006 – SABA Elder Law Advocate – Elder Advocate Award · 1996 – Volunteer Attorney of the Year: Guardianship Services Bexar County · Medical Directors Round Table & Mental Health Consortium · San Antonio Bar Foundation – Life Fellow · National Guardianship Association · Texas Guardianship Association · San Antonio Bar Association: Elder Law Section: Elder Fraud 2002 Co-Chair, 2007 V.P.; 2008 President, 2009 V.P., Public Forum Director 2002 - 2009, · St. Gregory the Great Alter Society · Friends of Hospice · Elks Lodge 216 (Past Presiding Judge & Member) · San Antonio Women's Bar: (Past Member) Founder Pro Bono Wills Clinic · College of the State Bar of Texas (Past Member)

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

I am a civil attorney and expert in my field. I am proud to have received the 2017 National Guardianship Association: Star Achievement Award. I have 4 years and 50,000 case dispositions over the 3.5 years that I have served as Judge of Probate Court 1.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

I ran for this open seat because I am passionate about protecting the elderly and the mentally ill.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why? I am the incumbent.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

This Court is built on trust. Trust that the Judge will follow the law. Trust to protect due process and civil rights to ensure an impartial ruling.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

Our county's growing population coupled with our aging population creates a need for a skilled and experienced Probate Judge. I hear housing issues, intergenerational transfer of wealth cases, eminent domain cases, among other matters. All these important matters effect our business owners. Experience matters!

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**#20 - Jason R. Garrahan**

[Jason.garrahan@gmail.com](mailto:Jason.garrahan@gmail.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

Texas A&M University and St. Mary's Law School

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Over 150+ jury trials, civil and criminal. Reduced active caseload from 1600 to 900 per month.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

150+ jury trials, criminal and civil

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I owned and operated my own business for 12 years, and I was an Assistant Criminal District Attorney for 10 years.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

San Antonio Zoo member, San Antonio Bar Association member, San Antonio A&M Club member, Witte Museum member, Advisor to Buckner Fanning School at Mission Springs, and Harp and Shamrock Society member.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

Extensive trial experience and have worked on thousands of dwi cases throughout my career as attorney, which at county court level is the majority of cases. And as sitting Judge of County Court 4 have reduced jury trial wait time from 1 year to 30-45 days.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

I believe county courts need an experienced and ethical judge.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

Respondent skipped this question

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

Follow the law, not politics.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

I operated my own business, Hungry Farmer Steakhouse on Blanco road, for 12 years. I know the work that an individual must put forth to succeed and the dedication that is required. I respect that drive and I follow the law, not politics.

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## #19 - J. Frank Davis

[jfrankdavislaw@gmail.com](mailto:jfrankdavislaw@gmail.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

MacArthur High School 1980, U.T.S.A. B.B.A. 1985, St. Mary's University School of Law J.D. 1992.

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

From 1996-2011 I litigated a variety of cases for the Texas Department of Public Safety. This put me in hundreds of courtrooms across the State and all of its appellate courts. This experience has given me strong examples of Judges behaving with respect to all parties, considering all relevant evidence and making a correct ruling based upon the law.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Most trials in the civil courts are bench trials; that is, they are tried solely to the Judge. I have successfully tried thousands of bench trials across the State.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Several years ago, I left my career at DPS in Austin to be closer to Mom after Dad's passing. Of course, I learned a lot about compassion and patience. But what truly surprised me was how many people attempt to victimize the elderly. Because of this, I believe a litigant's age should be considered in setting a case for trial. With an elder person, justice delayed can quickly become justice denied.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

I am a member of the San Antonio Criminal Defense Lawyers Association and often speak at their Continuing Legal Education seminars. I attend St. David's Episcopal Church, where I have served as a member of the Vestry and the church treasurer.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

Having advocated for both the State and the defense, the plaintiff and the defendant, the Appellee and the Appellant, I have a balanced legal career. I will respectfully listen to both sides before making any decision.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

Judge Crouch is the only Judge in Bexar County I've had to appeal twice. Like many of my colleagues, I have questions about her work ethic, temperament and ability to follow the law.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

There is a need for change in County Court Ten. In a recent judicial survey by local attorneys, Judge Crouch's performance is ranked near the bottom in every regard.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

I will always remember I serve those who are appearing before my court. They have come seeking justice and I will treat all sides fairly.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

Businesses, like any other citizen, deserve equal treatment under the law. Whether the business is large or small, local or international, a corporation or a sole proprietor it will be treated with respect and compassion.

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**#18 - Julie Hardaway**

[j.hardaway@att.net](mailto:j.hardaway@att.net)

Q1

What is your formal education?

BA International Studies - Southwestern University JD Texas Tech University School of Law

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

2 years private practice 6 years as staff attorney for Probate Court 1 Judge Polly Jackson Spencer  
13 years at Broadway Bank serving estates and trusts

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

My work in the probate court as staff attorney gave me a first hand look at trials from beginning to end. In addition, at the bank I am tasked with overseeing litigation matters for my department.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I am a mom to 2 wonderful daughters. I have lived through the death of my father at a young age along with probate and a lawsuit. I know how vulnerable people are when they come to probate court. They deserve to be heard and treated with respect.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

San Antonio Estate Planners Council - Vice President Rotary Club of San Antonio Real Estate and Probate Section of the State Bar Elder Law SABA Bexar County Women's Bar

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

I have over 20 years of relevant experience in Probate matters of all kinds. I have worked in the court and also as a fiduciary in front of the court. I have a unique combination of experience that will allow me to serve the citizens of Bexar County well.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

I love the law. I enjoy probate and the relationships it fosters. I want to make sure that our probate courts are the best in the state.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why? No incumbent

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

I will treat each attorney and all citizens with respect and dignity. I will make sure that everyone is genuinely heard and assisted. I will engage professionally with everyone in court.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

I work in a family owned bank and know how important relationships and customer service is. I hope to bring these ideas to the court.

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**#17 - Lorina Rummel**

[jlrummel@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jlrummel@sbcglobal.net)

Q1

What is your formal education?

Judge Lorina Rummel - 144th D. Ct. I graduated High School in 1985 - Friendly H.S., Friendly, MD. I graduated from University of Texas with a Business Degree in 1988. I graduated from Baylor Law School with my J.D. in 1992.

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I have been practicing criminal trial for over 26 years, all here in Texas, and mostly in Bexar County. I have handled thousands of felony cases and have tried everything through a capital murder death penalty case throughout my career. All the matters that come before me on the bench are matters that I have experience having tried. All of the defenses and arguments I hear, I have argued and handled as well. I think it is extremely important to have an extensive trial experience background, as I rely on this knowledge every day as a judge in making my decisions. I was a prosecutor for over 17 years, a defense attorney for over 5 and have been on the bench for over 4 years. I have handled over 250 jury trials to verdict in my career. The majority of my experience is in felony criminal trial with over 24 years handling those type of cases. I also have experience handling capital murder death penalty cases, having tried those matters to verdict as well. I also think it is important to have experience both as a prosecutor and a defense attorney, thereby giving me the knowledge of arguments from both sides. I use my knowledge and experience I have gained through all my years to make me and efficient and effective judge. And having practiced before so many different judges, I utilize that experience to help me effectively run the 144th D. Ct.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

As indicated in #2, my work experience that uniquely qualifies me for this position, is my trial experience. Having this extensive trial experience means that I have also handled countless interviews of all sorts of witnesses for trial preparation. These include law enforcement, adult victims, sexual abuse victims, children, expert witnesses and on and on. I think this breadth of experience makes me a better judge on a daily basis.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I am a working wife and mother to four children and always have been. As all working mothers know, this requires extensive juggling of family life, children, work, events, church, etc. I also am very involved in a variety of philanthropic activities and try to instill in my children the importance of giving back to the community. These experiences help me to run an efficient and effective court. I have been able to take the largest trial docket of all the 10 felony district courts, the longest wait to trial and the most defendants in jail awaiting trial and turn these statistics around. The court now has the lowest number of pending cases, is consistently one of the quickest to trial and has one of the lowest jail populations. This is a result of consistency from the judge, an amazing staff and attorneys willing to work hard. My life experiences help me be empathetic when issues arise with attorneys and handling of their cases. But it also helps me move cases along in an effective and efficient manner because that's how working mothers are required to operate. Also my life experiences as a mother, attorney, church member and citizen help me know when to be lenient and empathetic if the case/ defendant calls for leniency, but harsh and strict in sentencing when the facts and defendant's background calls for a severe sentence.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

I was one of the founding members of our local YMSL - Young Men's Service League - that pairs mothers and high school sons for community service in philanthropic organizations. It started with 30 mother/son teams when my son was a freshman in a local S.A. high school. Each year a new class was added. Today, there are 120 mother/son teams at my son's alma mater. I was in charge of finding the philanthropies and to date there are over 25 organizations that are served - including Alzheimer's and Elder care organizations, church organizations, children shelters, food pantries, clothing organizations, local pet shelters and more. I am also very involved in my church and have taught religious education for over 15 years in the Catholic Church. I have also taken over the Esperanza Court, which supervises those defendants on felony prostitution probation. I have come to learn that these individuals are victims of human trafficking, sexual , physical and

mental abuse and treat them as such. We offer a 2 1/2 year probation, requiring mental health treatment, drug treatment, and trauma based counseling. I have created a clothing closet for these participants, as they leave Bexar County jail with the clothing on their backs. I have partnered with numerous housing facilities, food pantries, local charities and local schools to offer services to these participants. After the successful completion of this program, the participants are drug free, not committing offenses, working or going to school full time, reintegrated into society as successful participants. I also have been very involved in Catholic Charities and the Board of Boy Scouts as well.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

My legal experience is almost exclusively criminal trial experience. I am currently a felony criminal trial judge, so my experience falls squarely within the parameters of the particular court over which I preside. I think that is extremely important. Also, having been a prosecutor, defense attorney and judge, gives me perspective from all sides of legal arguments that are heard before me on a daily basis.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

I have practiced criminal law in Bexar County for over 26 years. I waited until my children were older before I ran for the bench. I wanted to make sure I could devote my full attention to this court, without the worry of little ones that may need attention at home. To run for judge, you need very limited experience, four years being licensed and no trial experience required. After practicing criminal trial for so many years, an attorney certainly appreciates judges that know the law and understand all legal arguments. I was approached in that manner by friends who suggested that I run. I think it is beneficial to practice before a judge with a background such as mine, as opposed to one with extremely limited or no trial experience.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

I am the incumbent.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

I treat everyone in the 144th with complete dignity and respect at all times, regardless if they are a defendant, defense attorney, victim or family .

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

Business owners should appreciate someone who runs a successful and efficient business. That is how I have run the 144th D. Ct. It was not a very efficient court when I first took over the bench. My first trial, within the first week on the bench, involved a defendant in jail almost three years. That is inefficient and ineffective. Everyone suffers with delays that long. It is not good for society, victims, or tax payers. The only person who benefits is a guilty defendant. I have been able to reduce the cases awaiting trial by over 50 percent in less than four years. The number of defendants awaiting in Bexar County Jail went from the highest of all 10 district courts to one of the lowest. The wait for trial went from the longest to one of the quickest of all the courts. This saves taxpayers money, keeps our streets safe and protects society as a whole.

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## #16 - Patricia Alvarez

[patricia.alvarez@txcourts.gov](mailto:patricia.alvarez@txcourts.gov)

Q1

What is your formal education?

University of Texas at Austin, J.D., 1987. University of Texas at San Antonio, B.B.A. 1982; MBA studies (degree not obtained) Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila, Monclova, Coahuila, México 1974-1979

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

25 years of experience as a trial defense attorney. I represented defendants in oil and gas, transportation, property, commercial and personal injury cases. I tried many cases. In addition, five and-a-half years as an appellate judge in criminal and civil cases.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

All my career as an attorney was mostly trial related. Being a trial attorney gives me a very different perspective in the appellate court -- that is, have been in the trenches, rather than in a law library, allows me to look at evidence and the law from a different perspective than judges who have not tried cases. I bring that unique experience to the court.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I was a single mother and worked hard to support my son. To support my son, I worked as a hostess, a waitress, a teller, a rent-a-car agent, a blood-bank recruiter and many other jobs. Through all my work-days, I maintained a high work ethic. This life experience, I bring to the court.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

Trustee of the Texas Bar Foundation (2005-2008); Member of the Board of Directors of the College of the State Bar of Texas (2010-2014); Sustaining Member of the Texas State Bar College and the Foundation (1994-present); Member of the Grievance Committee District 12 (2008-2012; Panel Chair 2010-2012); Member of the Hispanic Issues Section of the Texas State Bar (Secretary 2007-2008; Chair 2013-2014); Texas Bar Director for the 12th District (2002-2005; PDP Chair, 2003-2005); 4TH COURT OF APPEALS 300 Dolorosa, Ste. 3200 San Antonio, Texas 78205 (210) 335-2635 Member of the Continuing Legal Education Committee (2000-2003); Member of the Pattern Jury Charge Volume 2 Committee of the State Bar of Texas (1991-1992); Member of the Pattern Jury Charge Volume 1 Committee of the State Bar of Texas (1993-1994); Member of the Pattern Jury Charge Civil Special Committee (1995-1996); Member of the Pattern Jury Charge Oil & Gas (2014- present). PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES American Board of Trial Advocates "ABOTA" (National Representative Laredo Chapter 2009- 2014; secretary San Antonio Chapter 2018-present); American Bar Association (Chair Commercial Transportation Litigation Committee, 1997-1998; Vice-Chair 1998-2002); Mexican-American Bar Association of Texas (President 2008-2009); MABA-San Antonio (Director 2013-2014); Litigation Counsel of America (2007-present); San Antonio Bar Association and Foundation; Bexar County Women's Bar Association; Kendall County Bar Association; Kerr County Bar Association; Maverick County Bar Association; Webb County Bar Association; and Laredo Women's Bar Association. Past member of: International Bar Association; International Association of Defense Counsel; Defense Research Institute (National Director 2004-2007; Vice-Chair Membership and Publications 1997-2002 of Trucking Committee; Vice-Chair Trucking Committee 1999-2001); Association for Trial Defense Attorneys; Federation of Defense and Corporate Counsel; Texas Association of Defense Counsel (Director 1998-2001; Vice-President 2001-2002; Vice-President 2008-2011); Transportation Lawyers Association; Trucking Industry Defense Association; Hidalgo County Bar Association (Director 1994-1997). COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES Member of the UTSA Alumni Board of Directors (2013-2015); Member of the Advisory Board for the Institute for Law and Public Affairs (2018); Member of the Advisory Board for UTSA Council of the College of Public Policy of UTSA (2014-present); Member of the Alumni Board for the Texas International Law Journal (2018); SA-100; Member of the Advisory Board of Texas Migrant Safe Heaven (2008-2014);

Member of Leadership Texas (Class of 2008) and of the Foundation for Women's Resources; Member of San Antonio Rotary Club; Member of Holy Redeemer Catholic Church, San Antonio, Texas (2012-present); Member of the City of Laredo Commission for Women (2007-2011).

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

After graduating from law school and for the next 26 years, I worked passionately as a trial attorney in the Texas border, eventually making my home in Laredo, Texas. Within a few years of practicing law, I was recognized by my peers as an AV-Rated attorney (a nationally recognized "preeminent" peer review by Martindale-Hubbell) and was a Texas Monthly Super Lawyer each year from 2003 to 2012. I also obtained my Board Certification in Personal Injury Trial Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. I am admitted to practice law in Texas, Florida and the District of Columbia, as well as in the United States Supreme Court, the Fifth Circuit and all four federal district courts in Texas. My experience in all these courts distinguishes me for consideration to be re-elected as a justice in the Fourth Court of Appeals

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

I mainly wanted to serve the public the last few years of my legal career.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

I am the incumbent.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

I will follow and apply the law, regardless of who the parties are or of politics. I strongly believe that a judge should not make law; if a judge does, that separation of powers merges and our democracy disappears. On another level, I will continue to contribute to the dignity of our court through my judicial temperament, my hard work and by being civil to the parties, the attorneys and my fellow justices.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

When analyzing cases before me, I call a ball a ball, and a strike a strike regardless of who the parties are, regardless of political affiliation.

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## #15 - Shane Stolarczyk

[shane@shane4justice.com](mailto:shane@shane4justice.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

I received my bachelor's degree in Biology-Psychology from Skidmore College (Saratoga Springs, New York). I received my Juris Doctorate with honors from Albany Law School (Albany, New York).

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I served for 10 years as a Staff Attorney for the Chief Justice of the 4th Court of Appeals, which is the Court to which I am seeking election. As a Staff Attorney for ten years, I participated in the drafting of over 300 legal opinions, including cases involving criminal, juvenile, governmental immunity, personal injury, medical malpractice, insurance defense, commercial litigation, probate, and family law. After ten years with the Court, I opened a small business with my wife focusing on appellate law throughout the State of Texas. For the past seven years since leaving the 4th Court, I have represented both civil and criminal litigants in state and federal appellate courts. In fact, I am the only candidate running for the 4th Court that practiced criminal and civil appellate law. During this same time, my wife and I also opened a small business involving real estate. Also during this time, I have served as an Assistant Judge Advocate General for the United States Air Force Reserves, where I have served as a military prosecutor and counselor to commanders, soldiers, and veterans. Additionally, I was hired by Saint Mary's University School of Law to be an Adjunct Professor of Appellate Advocacy, where I taught law students how to write appellate briefs.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

During my ten years at the 4th Court of Appeals, I reviewed the trial transcripts of numerous jury and bench trials and assessed those transcripts for errors made by trial lawyers and judges. After leaving the 4th Court, over the past seven years, I have served as a law lawyer to civil trial lawyers who take cases to trial before a jury or trial court. Additionally, I have served as a trial lawyer during my service as an Assistant Judge Advocate General, where I was a military prosecutor trying cases before a military tribunal.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I am a father of two children, a husband, a small business owner, and currently serving our country as an Assistant Judge Advocate General in the United States Air Force Reserves. Wearing all of these varying hats will make me a more informed, well-rounded justice on the 4th Court.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

In addition to serving our country as an Assistant Judge Advocate General in the United States Air Force Reserves, I have also served as a coach of my children's sports teams and a volunteer of my children's 4-H clubs through the Kendall County 4-H Club.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

I am the only candidate for the 4th Court of Appeals that has practiced exclusively civil and criminal appeals, so I have experience as a litigant practicing before the Court in varying types of appeals coming before the Court. Additionally, I am also the only candidate for the 4th Court that has knowledge of the inner workings of the 4th Court for a decade (I worked for the 4th Court for longer than my opponent). On day one, I will be able to hit the ground running because I spent 10 years analyzing every type of case coming before the Court and have participated in appeals from the first day it is filed and followed it until the day the Court disposes of the appeal.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

Like my father and both grandfathers, I was called to serve our country. Serving as an Assistant Judge Advocate General has fulfilled me in a way I never imagined. So, when I saw the way the 4th Court of Appeals was deteriorating both in its handling of cases, its reversal rating by the Texas Supreme Court, and its stature in the State of Texas, I decided I wanted to do something about it. Who better to serve on the Court than someone who knows the Court inside and out? I believe my service to our State as a justice on the Court will give me a similar sense of fulfillment as I have received in serving our country.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

The rulings made by my opponent have been reversed by the Texas Supreme Court on numerous occasions. When judges like my opponent refuse to follow the law, litigants (and citizens in general) lose faith in our judicial system. Ruling based on a political agenda, instead of on the rule of law, costs our judicial system integrity and taxpayer dollars.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

A judge's role is to be faithful to our constitution and the laws. Judges should apply the law as written – not create law from the bench. Judges who legislate from the bench waste resources and undermine the public's confidence in the rest of our judiciary.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

I own two small businesses that I started with my wife from the ground up. So, not only do I understand the Court from the perspective of an administrator/justice from my ten years there, but I will also understand what it is like to be a small business owner who may need to appear before the Court or a business owner whose business dealings are affected by the Court's rulings.

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## #14 - Jason Pulliam

[jason@jasonforjudge.com](mailto:jason@jasonforjudge.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

Brooklyn College, City University of New York, Bachelor of Arts, Political Science, 1995 – cum laude. Brooklyn College, City University of New York, Master of Arts, Political Science, 1997 Texas Southern University, Thurgood Marshall School of Law, Juris Doctor, 2000 – cum laude. I graduated number 33 out of a class of 168 students. I was in the top 20% of my graduating class. I served on the school's Law Review - exclusive academic institution focused on legal research and writing.

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I currently work for the law firm of Prichard Young, LLP and represent clients in civil litigation and appeals. I serve as a mediator for all civil matters. I served as a Justice on the Fourth Court of Appeals in 2015-2016. The Texas Supreme Court heard five cases (two majority opinions and three cases in which I authored dissenting opinions) and the court agreed with my opinions in all five cases. I served as a trial judge for over four years and presided over approximately 100 civil and criminal trials. I began my career as a JAG or military lawyer in the United States Marine Corps. I was the recipient of the 2002 Defense Counsel of the Year Award - given each year to the top rated criminal defense lawyer.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I have tried civil and criminal cases to jury verdict. As a trial judge, I presided over approximately 100 civil and criminal trials. As an appellate justice, I authored approximately 200 opinions.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I am the first person in my family to graduate from college, graduate school, and law school. I was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York and came of age during a very difficult time in the city's history. As a graduate student, I had the opportunity to serve as a graduate intern in the New York State Legislature. I gained a greater appreciation for the distinction between the three branches of government. The law-making or legislation function of government is completely different from the role of the judiciary. This experience solidified my drive and desire to go to law school and gave me firmer understanding of the rule of law.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

I was appointed by Governor Abbott to serve on the Public Safety Commission which consists of five statewide gubernatorially appointed commissioners who oversee the 10,000 member Texas Department of Public Safety (state police). I am a member of the San Antonio Downtown Rotary Club. I am a member of Resurrection Baptist Church and I have served on the church's Christian Business Network. I recently gave two college students in the church \$500 each for school supplies for the fall semester.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

The breadth, depth, and scope of my experience distinguishes me from other candidates seeking judicial office. I have been civil litigator, a criminal litigator, a trial judge (hearing both civil and criminal cases), an appellate justice, and a mediator. My legal and judicial experience in handling both civil and criminal cases as a practicing attorney, trial judge, and appellate justice makes me uniquely qualified to serve on the court of appeals.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

The court of appeals hears all civil and criminal appeals for a 32-county region that covers most of south Texas (including Bexar County). The Texas Supreme Court and the Court of Criminal

Appeals hear only two to five percent of appeals from the 14 intermediate courts of appeal. Therefore, it is imperative that intermediate appellate courts, like the Fourth Court of Appeals, answer legal questions correctly. These decisions become the law for the 32 counties that the court serves. I believe my unique background, training, knowledge, and experience qualifies me to serve on this court. I have a passion for service. I served our nation as a Marine, our state as a DPS Commissioner, our county as a trial judge, and our appellate district as an appellate justice. I am seeking another opportunity to serve on the court of appeals to ensure that the makes the decisions the law requires.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

As referenced in an earlier response, the court of appeals hears all civil and criminal appeals for a 32-county region. I have civil law experience and criminal experience. My opponent had no criminal law experience prior to serving on the court of appeals. I served as a trial judge and presided over approximately 100 trials. My opponent has never served as a trial judge. I won the state bar judicial poll between myself and my opponent (the only non incumbent to win the state bar judicial poll). I have been endorsed by the San Antonio Police Officer's Association and the Probation Officer's Association. I was the highest rated County Court at law Judge on all of the 2014 Judicial polls. Finally, I believe the court can benefit from my very broad and diverse legal and judicial experience.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

The Court of Appeals needs judges who engage in robust, scholarly debate while maintain respect for the other judges and staff. I served in a respectful manner before and will gain.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

The business community needs judges who know the law and will apply the law as written. I have a clear and consistent track record for following the law. My record before the Texas Supreme Court reflects my commitment to following the law and not legislating from the bench. Business owners need judges who interpret their contracts, insurance agreements, oil and gas leases, other business documents based on the text of the documents. Applying the law as written to private documents as written leads to judicially sound decisions.

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## #13 - Jeff Wentworth

[ejeffrey@swbell.net](mailto:ejeffrey@swbell.net)

Q1

What is your formal education?

BA, Texas A&M JD, Texas Tech Law School

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Six years as a judge, presiding over 100 or so jury trials and disposing of thousands of cases, both civil and criminal. In addition, 20 years in the Texas Senate where I served as chairman of the Jurisprudence Committee and six years as a member of the Texas Judicial Council.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Licensed to practice law in Texas for over 40 years. In private practice for decades where I tried cases, both civil and criminal, before both a judge alone and before a judge with a jury.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I'm married and the father of two sons and a grandson. Worked both as a sole practitioner and later for a national law firm.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

Trustee, World Affairs Council of San Antonio; Trustee, United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County; Director, San Antonio A&M Club; President, San Antonio Young Lawyers Association; Trustee Emeritus, Texas Tech Law School Foundation; Director, Rotary Club of San Antonio; Member, Quillin Society, Witte Museum; Member, San Antonio Museum of Art; Life Member, San Antonio Livestock Association; Life Member, San Antonio Gun Club; Member, San Antonio Board of REALTORS, and others.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

Over four decades of public service in all three branches of government: executive, legislative and judicial.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

My desire to dispense justice with evenhanded impartiality as well as with courtesy and respect to everyone appearing before my court.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

I am the incumbent.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

The same way I've managed to do so for the past six years— with courtesy and respect for both lawyers and litigants.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

That I follow the law and treat everyone fairly.

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## #12 - John Longoria

[campaign@johnlongoria.com](mailto:campaign@johnlongoria.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

i earned a Doctor of Jurisprudence from St. Mary's University School of Law. + years of continuing legal education

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I have 30 years in public office; 4 years as judge of CC # 5. Fellow judges have unanimously elected me as their Administrative Judge. Many years of service in the civic arena. 3 page resume.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

41 years of trial experience prior to election to the judgeship.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Blessed to be married 51 years to my wife, Pat. Blessed with 5 children. Served in a variety of public offices. Many years of service in Church and Civic activity. Ran a law office for 41 years.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

I have an extensive resume that is too large for this space.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

45 years of practice, including 4 years as Judge. Running a law practice for 41 years. Extensive trial experience in criminal law and family law.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

My love of the career in law. My age and experience. Life of service at all levels that is now blessed with the opportunity to combine law experience with love of community.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

NA

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

Respect the oath of office. Determine to protect the community. Subject to the first two, care for the accused.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

I have been in the career of a solo lawyer for 41 years. I have had to worry about all the needs of a business: personnel; taxes; clients.

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## #11 -Liza Rodriguez

[lizarodriguez.law@gmail.com](mailto:lizarodriguez.law@gmail.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

Bachelor of Arts Degree from the University of North Texas  
Juris Doctor from St. Mary's University School of Law

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Assistant District Attorney for 10 years, assigned to the trial division, with upwards of 100 jury trials; Former elected County Court Judge in a court of general jurisdiction, solo-practitioner with a focus on criminal defense, family law and cases involving parental terminations. Criminal matters and family law matters, especially parental terminations make up at least 50% of the appeals heard by the 4th Court. I have unique trial experience including legal research involving these areas of law.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I have extensive trial experience as both an attorney and a judge. I have upwards of 100 jury trials to verdict as an assistant district attorney for 10 years, as well as over 100 jury trials as an elected judge. I have also tried numerous criminal law cases as a defense attorney and family law cases including those involving parental terminations.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I was born and raised in Laredo, Texas, which is a border town. The 4th Court hears cases involving appeals from 32 counties in southwest Texas, yet there has never been a representative from Laredo on the Court. I have been a single parent for 12 years, and have owned my own business in solo practice. I understand the struggles of everyday working people. I have struggled to make ends meet and have worked hard to provide for my family. I have been

on both sides of the bar as a practitioner and as a judge and understand that decisions made by the Court have real repercussions on people's lives.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

Mexican American Bar Association of San Antonio, Board Member San Antonio Bar Association, Member San Antonio Bar Foundation, Fellow Texas Center for the Judiciary, DWI Curriculum Committee, Chair and member

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

I have the unique experience of being both a trial practitioner in criminal and civil law, as well as a former trial court judge. I was also a former court administrator where I learned about the inner-workings of running a court, including budget planning and personnel matters.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

Although upwards of 50% of the appeals involve matters of criminal or family law, specifically parental terminations, there are currently no former practitioners on the 4th Court in these areas. As someone who has actually tried numerous criminal law cases, as well as parental terminations, I believe I would bring a much needed perspective in these very important areas.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

I am not running against an incumbent. The seat is open because the former Justice is retiring.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

Showing up every day on time and treating every person from the litigants to the staff, in a respectful and dignified manner.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

Every litigant will be treated fairly and each case with the care and consideration it is due in our justice system.

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## #10 - Veronica Vasquez

[veronica4probate2@gmail.com](mailto:veronica4probate2@gmail.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

The University of Texas School of Law, Austin, Texas - Doctor of Jurisprudence, May 2008  
University of Texas, Austin, Texas - B.S in Communication Studies, Corporate Communication, May 2002

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Currently I work for the non-profit Catholic Charities Archdiocese of San Antonio. I have served as both a staff attorney and as the Director of their guardianship and probate department. As such I go throughout our community educating the public on the law regarding Guardianships, Wills, and Powers of Attorney. Additionally, I appear in court on behalf of our clients to establish guardianships and to probate wills. I also draft wills and other estate planning documents for our clients. I have been a member of the private sector and owned and operated my own law firm, focusing on elder law and probate. Before that I was an equity partner at a law firm. Additionally, I have served the public as a Game Room Hearing Examiner, which is an administrative law judicial position. All of these experiences have given me an expansive and well rounded view of the law and those who come before the court. I feel that this uniquely and best qualifies me to serve as Judge of Bexar County Probate Court #2.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

As a practicing probate attorney I am in the courtroom on a regular basis. Additionally, I have presided over trials as a Game Room Hearing Examiner, I have issued rulings based on the facts and the law. I have also litigated hundreds of cases in over a dozen counties throughout the state of Texas.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

During my last semester at the University of Texas I interned at the Texas Civil Rights Project. It was here that I began to understand the power that attorneys hold to make a positive difference in our society. It was then that I decided to attend law school. After graduation I worked two part-time jobs, as a waitress and as an assistant to an event planner, until I was able to find full-time employment. I was then accepted to UT Law. After graduation from law school I moved to New York and interned at the New York Legal Assistance Group, assisting the indigent of New

York with wills, powers of attorney, and advanced directives. I believe that all of these life experiences qualify me because I have had to work hard for every opportunity that I have earned. I also believe by representing the working-class (the majority of the people who come before this court) I possess a compassion and understanding that only comes with life experience.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

2014-2017 UT Law San Antonio Region Alumni Steering Committee, Co- Chair; 2015-2016 UT Law Alumni - Executive Committee Ex-Officio Member; 2015 UT Law Diversity Weekend Committee Member 2016 President of the Mexican American Bar Association of San Antonio, 2017 Immediate Past President San Antonio Bar Foundation Fellow 2016-2020 Annie's List Board Member 2015-2016 Founding Chair of New Leaders Council San Antonio

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

I am an actual practitioner in the Probate Courts, there is no substitution for courtroom experience. Being in the courtroom day-to-day has helped me understand the needs, anxieties, and fears that my clients experience. As a good attorney you learn how to effectively communicate the processes of the court and ease the anxiety and fears of your clients. I believe this legal experience distinguishes me because I can effectively communicate with the people who come before this court. Additionally, I practice in Bexar County as well as the surrounding counties. Through my experience I have seen the effectiveness of best practices of other counties and will bring that knowledge with me as a Judge to the Bexar County Probate Courts. I also currently go throughout our community educating the public on the importance of wills, estate planning and guardianships. This has helped me to understand the importance of educating our community. As a Judge I will prioritize educating the public on the importance of probate.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

Upon hearing of Judge Rickhoff's vacancy I decided to run for this office because this is the area of the law that I am passionate about and the only area that I practice in. I believe I can make a lasting and positive impact on this court.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

Bexar County Probate Court #2 is an open seat.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

Individuals who come before this court are in the most difficult time of their lives. As judge I will treat them with compassion, dignity and respect.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

Before I held my current position at Catholic Charities I owned and operated my own law firm, that focused in the areas of elder law and probate. Thus I understand the demands and sacrifices that need to be made by small business owners. I also understand the importance of customer service, managing staff, a balanced budget, and the efficiently using your resources. I will bring this experience to my courtroom.

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## #9 - Ashley Foster

[ashley@fosterlawcenter.com](mailto:ashley@fosterlawcenter.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

I have attended and graduated from: University of Texas at Austin - 1994, B.A. English University of North Texas - 1995, M.A. in English Literature St. Mary's University School of Law - 2000, J.D. St. Mary's Institute on World Legal Problem - 1998

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I served in the Bexar County District Attorney's Office from 2001 - 2012 as an Assistant Criminal District Attorney. I was assigned to trial divisions throughout my tenure, starting off as a misdemeanor prosecutor, then a felony prosecutor assigned to the Felony White Collar Crime Division and, finally, the Felony Trial Division, primarily serving in the 379th District Court during that time. Currently, I am a managing partner at Foster & Foster, P.L.L.C., a firm that focuses on civil litigation. I am also a qualified Mediator in the State of Texas.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I have extensive trial experience. I have been seasoned and tested in my 80+ jury trials, as well as multiple bench trials and motion work.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Owning my own law firm has given me a new and practical insight into the day-to-day struggles of the individuals who come before the court. I am very much in touch with the actual issues real world business people and consumers face and this has afforded me a compassion and understanding that only actual business experience can give. Additionally, I became a mother relatively late in life. I was 42 years old when my son was born. This experience has, no doubt, increased my patience and understanding for people in general, in the unique way that becoming a parent does.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

I am a member of my church family as well as a Daughter of the Republic of Texas, Alamo Mission Chapter.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

I have been a paralegal for a very large firm, a prosecutor, a solo practitioner, and, now, a partner and mediator in my own firm, along with my husband. I have fought for both the plaintiff and the defense. I know what it is like in nearly every role in a trial. I have represented thousands of victims as a prosecutor and handled a variety of complex and important issues in my career as a civil attorney.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

I refuse to accept financial contributions from attorneys. Justice should not come at a price. Every individual deserves equal access to fair and impartial judges. The majority of judges and candidates running for judicial benches ask for and accept campaign contributions from the very attorneys who stand before them in court. We should expect better from our judiciary. Judges should strive to avoid even the appearance of impropriety. I am running for judge to be the kind

of judge that the community can rely upon to be fair and impartial without any question that I may have been unduly influenced by anyone's money.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

As my opponent reported on his financial disclosures, he accepted \$109,829 to date in the last two election cycles. Of that money, \$105,949 of which came from attorneys and PAC organizations made of attorneys. Further, of that \$105,949, 47.5% came from only 23 attorneys.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

I will not accept attorney contributions. I will hold to the rule of Law. I will allow equal access to justice for everyone.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

It is important to understand that I am a business owner too. I actually understand what it means to have to worry about overhead and employee development, monthly taxes, payroll and all the other day-to-day challenges of running a successful business. I have been tested and seasoned as an attorney. I will be the kind of judge who does not need to be told to do the right thing, to do the right thing.

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**#8 - Todd McCray**

[htmcc@msn.com](mailto:htmcc@msn.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

I graduated in 1990 with a J.D. (Juris Doctor) from St. Mary's University School of Law, San Antonio, Texas. I graduated in 1986 with a B.B.A.-Finance from the University of Texas, Austin, Texas.

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I have 28 years of extensive experience practicing criminal law representing both individuals accused of crime and as lead prosecutor for two different district attorneys in Texas. I represented the State of Texas as lead assistant district attorney in the Grayson County Attorney's Office with felony jurisdiction and in the Bexar County District Attorney's office. As lead attorney for the State of Texas and as lead defense counsel I have tried over 100 jury trials and resolved 1,000s of criminal law cases in every aspect of criminal law including capital murder, appeals and post-conviction writs and remedies. I am a designated Special Prosecutor in Bexar County and have been Board Certified in Criminal Law since 1997. I am presently in private practice representing individuals accused of crime.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

As lead attorney for the State of Texas and as lead defense counsel I have tried over 100 jury trials and resolved 1,000s of criminal law cases in every aspect of criminal law including capital murder, appeals and post-conviction writs and remedies. I tried my first murder case as lead prosecutor in 1992 and my first capital murder death penalty cases a lead defense attorney in 1996.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I am fifty-five years old, a fourth generation Texan, a fifth generation member of the Church of Christ and an Eagle Scout. I spent the majority of my free time growing up working on the high school farm in the Future Farmers of America program, participating in summer church camp and working on staff at regional the Boy Scout Summer Camp.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

1997, Board Certified - Criminal Law, Texas Board Legal Specialization 1999, United States Supreme Court 1999, Fifth Circuit, United States Court of Appeals 1994, Western District, United States District Court

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

I have been Board Certified in Criminal Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization since 1997. I have trial experience both as a prosecutor and defense attorney handling habitual and repeat offenders and capital murder cases. I have appellate experience representing the State and accused individuals before Texas Courts of Appeal since 1990.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

The judicial system should be fair, impartial, independent and based upon the rule of law and judicial values. Judges should have substantial, relevant experience and tested demonstrated competence in applying the rule of law to the kinds of cases that come before the court. The community deserves true public servants in the courts with significant experience, maturity and temperament. Without qualified judges serving as public servants the courts, the judicial system and the community will suffer from lack of an experienced, competent judiciary.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

No, the incumbent has retired after serving the court for 30 years.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

I will follow the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct. A judge should be patient, dignified and courteous and perform his/her duties respectfully and without bias or prejudice. All parties before the court should be accorded an opportunity to be heard and matters before the court should be disposed of promptly, efficiently and fairly.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

I am seeking public office for judge of a criminal district court. The court presides over cases returned by the grand jury and has jurisdiction over cases involving significant crimes against property such as thefts from businesses, homes and individuals in our community. Restitution is a significant condition of community supervision in appropriate cases.

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## #7 – Renee Yanta

[renee.yanta@gmail.com](mailto:renee.yanta@gmail.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

B.S. Education, University of Texas at Austin Juris Doctor (summa cum laude), St. Mary's University School of Law

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I have 9 years experience as a public school teacher. I then went to law school with 2 young children, graduating summa cum laude and serving as Editor in Chief of the Law School I practiced law for 17 years before taking the Bench and have served as judge for 7 years. I am board certified in Civil Appellate Law, teach law to students, lawyers, and judges, and have written 400+ legal articles. I have also served as a mediator and private judge.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I have tried cases all over the State of Texas before taking the bench, including 8 cases to the Texas Supreme Court, over 10 cases to federal appellate courts, and almost every appellate court in Texas. As a judge, I have handled over 3000+ hearings and well over 400 trials.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I have worked since I was 17 years old. I was a public school teacher for 9 years before going to law school. I attended law school and built my practice balancing the demands of a busy law practice with raising my children. So I truly understand the challenges families face, which is especially helpful when considering family law and child protection cases.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

State Bar of Texas Special Committee on Pattern Jury Charges —Malpractice, Premises & Products 2004

State Bar of Texas Special Committee on Pattern Jury Charges —Business, Consumer, Employment 2005-2018

San Antonio Bar Association

Member

Law Day Chair 2004

Board of Directors 2002-06

Appellate Practice and Advocacy Section

Program Director 1995-96, 2001-02

Special Events Coordinator 1996-97

Chair of Section 1997-98, 1998-99

San Antonio Bar Foundation Fellow

Board of Trustees 2001-09

Peacemaker Award/Gala Chair 2005

Secretary 2005-06

Treasurer 2006

Chair Elect 2006-07

Chair 2007-08

Past Chair 2008-09

William Sessions American Inns of Court

Member

Program Leader 1999-2000

Secretary 2000-01

Treasurer 2001-02

Vice President 2002-03

President-Elect 2003-2004

President 2004-05

Past President 2005-06

Program Leader 2006-09, 2015-16, 2016-17

Bexar County Women's Bar Association and Foundation

President 2001, raising and distributing \$110,000 to local charities

President-Elect 2000

Board Member 1996-2002, 2011-present

Bench Brunch Chair 2000, raising and distributing \$100,000 to local charities

Bench Brunch Committee Chair 1995-99, 2001-07

St. Mary's University School of Law Alumni Association

Board of Trustees 2001-07

Secretary of Board of Trustees 2002-03

Vice President of Board of Trustees 2003-04

President Elect 2004-05

President 2005-06

St. Mary's University Board of Trustees, Subcommittee 2018

USLAW Network

Board of Directors (one of only two women serving on this national board)

Secretary 2004, 2005

Treasurer, 2006, 2007

Vice Chair 2008

Chair 2009

University Health System Foundation

Board Member 2016-present

University of the Incarnate Word Development Board 1999-present

President 2006-08

President Elect 2004-06

Chair, Swing In Auction 2004

Chair, Swing In 2003

Co-chair, Swing In 2002

Chair, Student Relations Committee 2001

Speaker for various student leadership events

San Antonio Women's Chamber of Commerce 2006-10, 2012-present

Bexar County Dispute Resolution Center Advisory Board, 2015-present

Rape Crisis Center 2012-15

Board Member

St. Mary's University Board of Trustees 2006-07

United Way of San Antonio

Women's Leadership Council 2001, 2002, 2004-10

Program Review Leader 1998-2000

Program Review Team Member 1996-98

Child Guidance Center 2003-2007

Golf Tournament Co-Chair (2005)

Winston School Board of Directors 2006-08

Rotary 2006-11

Hidalgo Foundation 2002-05

Monte Vista Historical Association

Member

Board of Trustee 2006-10

Treasurer 2008

Corresponding Secretary 2009

Community Volunteer

Mayor's Task Force to Address Teenage Pregnancy 2010-11

Community Justice Program

GALS — Girls in Life Sports (project of the BCWBA, the San Antonio Sports Foundation and Harlendale I.S.D., mentoring at-risk girls)

Working Parents' Guide to Summer Survival

Wills Clinic

Elder Law Handbook

SAMM Shelter

Call-A-Lawyer

John Jay High School — Established Peer Mediation Program

Fox Tech High School — VoTexas Project, Supreme Team

Churchill High School, Reagan High School

Roosevelt High School, Shattered Dreams Program

San Antonio Council of Girl Scouts

Volunteer

Gold Award Review Committee

Troop Leader

Boy Scouts Troop Leader

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

I have had a broad base of experience, from mediating family law cases to handling large-scale commercial litigation. I have loved the law, continuing to be involved in legal scholarship since graduating from St. Mary's. I routinely speak and write regarding legal issues. I have the great honor of teaching law to students, lawyers, and judges. And I am a co-author of a book that every lawyer and judge uses when trying a civil case in Texas. As a judge, I have worked hard to create peace and safety around children involved in family law matters, and especially child protection cases. I've innovated a healing court program to make the court system be a place of positive change for teen girls in Foster Care. And I've developed several strategies to improve the efficiencies of the civil district court, including creating streamlined new Local Rules, procedures to ensure that orders are entered in a timely manner, and strategies to streamline the Presiding Court system. I am deeply committed to serving the people of Bexar County and applying the law as written.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

I love the law and this Court permits me the opportunity to handle legal issues for all kinds of civil cases. The most important goal, however, has been to build a healing court program for teen girls stuck in Foster Care. Within months of taking the Bench, I partnered with Girls Inc., the Children's Shelter, and others to build a therapeutic court called PEARLS, which we hold at night and on weekends (after I have finished the rest of my docket). We have been able to change the lives of these special girls by providing them trauma-informed care, mentoring, and life skill training.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

I am the incumbent.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

I treat all who appear in my court with deep respect. I maintain high expectations that attorneys will represent their clients with honor and dedication.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

As a commercial litigator and a former partner of a law firm, I have a strong business background. I understand how important it is for the business community that the law be followed as written so the all are treated fairly and consistently. I also deeply appreciate that the litigation process should be as efficient as possible so that the cost of litigation will not be a barrier to justice.

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## #6 - Jason Wolff

[keepjudgewolff@gmail.com](mailto:keepjudgewolff@gmail.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

UTSA - 2001. Summa Cum Laude UT Law - 2004. With Honors

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

As a Bexar County Assistant District Attorney from 2004 to 2010, I prosecuted thousands of cases ranging from Driving While Intoxicated and drug possession to Aggravated Robbery and Murder. I was also involved in prosecuting employee thefts and embezzlement cases within the White Collar Crime Division of the D.A.'s Office. Upon election to the Bench in 2011, I have dedicated myself to running an efficient, fair, and respected Court.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Before assuming the bench in 2011, I tried almost 100 jury trials. In the first year alone, as the sitting judge of County Court 2, I presided over 40 plus jury trials, with a current total of over 160 jury trials since taking the bench.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I have been married for 22 years, have three children and three grandchildren. I have washed dishes, bussed tables, waited tables, worked in door-to-door sales, worked on a ranch, acted in plays and was a member of the Screen Actors Guild. I graduated from college and law school while raising a family and working to put food on the table and pay the bills. I know what dedication and perseverance can achieve, and am also aware of my faults. Misdemeanor Courts are filled with individuals who have made a mistake, take responsibility for that mistake, and need the supervision of a judge who can achieve justice without foreclosing their futures.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

In my second year on the bench, I was elected as the Administrative Judge for the County Courts at Law. Additionally, my focus has been to help raise funds for the San Antonio Food Bank through my position as a judge by allowing probationers to donate to the Food Bank as a way of satisfying their community service. Also important to me is ensuring that probationers complete their high school education or obtain a G.E.D. to increase their potential and indirectly make society better.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

I have presided over criminal and civil matters since 2011 and have yet to be overturned on appeal. I am one of the very few misdemeanor courts in Bexar County that consistently hears both criminal and civil matters. It is important to keep a judge on the bench who has experience in a wide variety of legal matters.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

County Court 2 was by far the biggest back-logged court in the Bexar County with over 3000 criminal cases and 1600 jury trial settings. Hundreds of defendants had been waiting years to get

their jury trial. I ran on the promise to bring efficiency and justice back to the Court. Within the first 2 years on the bench, I reduced the docket by over 60% and the trial docket by 90%. Court 2 literally went from worst to first and no one will ever wait years for justice again.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

I am the incumbent.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

I show up on time, work hard, study the law, treat everyone with respect, and remain patient. I expect the same from everyone else.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

Business owners can find themselves dealing with criminal and civil matters. From customer and employee thefts to contract disputes and consumer suits. Having a judge with the experience to rightly and justly settle these matters can save owners both time and money.

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## #5 - Rebeca Martinez

[rebeca@rebeca4judge.com](mailto:rebeca@rebeca4judge.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

Boston University School of Law, Faculty Award Southern Methodist University, University Scholar Incarnate Word Academy, Honors

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

After law school, I clerked for a federal judge and state appellate judge, followed by over twenty years of trial experience in civil and criminal courtrooms across the district. I have been an associate at a large defense firm, a mid-sized plaintiff's firm, and ran my own firm for over ten years before taking the bench. I have both significant and practical trial experience, together with 6 years as a jurist on the Court of Appeals.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I am the only sitting justice and candidate for Place 7 who has over twenty years of significant civil and criminal trial experience as a first-chair litigator, having tried everything from multi-party toxic tort class actions to aggravated sexual assault and murder, having made appearances as lead counsel in every courtroom in Bexar County and a number of counties within the 4th Court of Appeals judicial district.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

As the proud daughter of a Vietnam Veteran, I've lived in naval bases all around the country, moving to Texas at the age of 12 with my parents, who had 5 children each earning a college education. Now 51 years old, after a successful career as a lawyer and entrepreneur, a business owner, a godmother, a volunteer, mentor and friend, I offer the Court a diverse professional and personal perspective which serves to promote the public's confidence in the judiciary. Most importantly, a military brat, I was raised to be strong, independent, law abiding and principled, with a strong work ethic, and I am committed to adhering to the principles of honesty, integrity and impartiality in compliance with the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

Dean's Advisory Board, Boston University School of Law Community Advisory Board, University of Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine Participant, Harvard Law School, #MeTooNowWhat Sexual Harassment Workshop/The Purple Campaign BOARD, National Association of Women Judges; San Antonio Bar Association; Mexican American Bar Association MEMBER, William Sessions Inns of Court; College of the State Bar; Pro Bono College of the State Bar; Texas Center of Judiciary Curriculum Committee; ; Bexar County Women's Bar Association; Texas State Bar Appellate Section, Litigation Section, Criminal Justice Section. Speaker, LEAP Law Enforcement Action Partnership.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

Legal experience derived from practical and significant courtroom experience is essential to deriving a professional perspective that assists the Fourth Court in resolving the legal matters brought before it, without partisanship, bias or interest. Over 26 years as a lawyer, I believe that my service these last 6 years has promoted public confidence in the judiciary, improves the legitimacy of the court. Judicial temperament is derived from significant courtroom experience,

maintaining respect for the integrity of the court, and demanding the preservation of a fair and independent judiciary.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

At the time I first ran in 2010, the 4th Court of Appeals, I had believed, lacked diversity both professionally and personally at the table, where matters were deliberated and rules of law applied. No sitting jurist offered a perspective of someone with my professional background with significant civil and criminal litigation experience. With encouragement from my husband (career law enforcement) and colleagues, I first sought to join the Court in 2010.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

N/A I am the incumbent.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

To earn the public's confidence, we preserve the integrity of the process, challenge any appearance of bias, and conduct ourselves with respect and civility.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

Texas is one of 6 states that elect their judges in a partisan race. Most Texans believe judges should be based on merit and qualifications, yet we gain and lose judges based almost solely on voter turnout during a given election year. Thank you for your efforts to be an informed voter, and for allowing me an opportunity to provide some insight into my race for reelection. I answer these questions at a time when women and men watch the hearings relating to a Supreme Court nominee. As one tweet put it -- "it's hard not to feel the impact Dr. Ford's testimony has on the greater American public." As a former woman business owner, a woman who is still the "first" or "only" in many situations, and one who now wears a robe but still suffers from what my mother used to pray her daughter would never experience, the rule of law as determined by the judiciary makes my point -- that the judiciary is the most important branch of government. Thank you again for shining a light on it. Please feel free to visit [www.Rebeca4Judge.com](http://www.Rebeca4Judge.com) for further information.

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## #4 - Michael De Leon

[michael@deleonforjudge.com](mailto:michael@deleonforjudge.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

Graduate of Thomas A. Edison High School, B.A.- Political Science from the University of Texas at San Antonio, and Doctorate of Juris Prudence from South Texas College of Law.

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

17 years as a prosecutor with the Bexar County District Attorney's Office. Handled over 1000 felony domestic violence cases and tried over 100 jury trials including sexual assault, murder, and capital murder. My experience in domestic violence makes me the best candidate for a domestic violence court.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Tried over 100 jury trials in felony domestic violence assaults, aggravated assaults, murder, and capital murder. You should want a judge with significant jury trial experience.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

As a public servant for 20 years, I have helped children and families in the area of domestic violence. It is my passion to help our community to stop domestic violence. I train police officers on domestic violence, I train nurses regarding sexual assaults, and I work with victims of crime. I hope to improve a domestic violence court with my experience.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

My main focus is being a domestic violence prosecutor for the past 17 years.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

I think questions #1-5 answer this question. Thanks.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

I saw the need for a domestic violence court to have a judge who had the proper temperament, experience, and knowledge for this type of specialty court. As a prosecutor at the courthouse, I saw that this domestic violence court needed better leadership.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

See question #7.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

I am a fair and reasonable prosecutor who works well with all. I will take that to the court as judge.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

Domestic violence affects workers performance. You need employees who are not living in fear every day. We should all want violence-free homes and workplaces.

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### #3 – Clint Lawson

[clint@clintlawsom.com](mailto:clint@clintlawsom.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

BA - Temple University, Philadelphia, Pa. MBA - University of Houston, Houston, Tx. JD - South Texas College of Law, Houston, Tx.

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Family Law cases dominate the docket of the 288th District Court and my 22 year family law career and qualifications exceed those you would expect of a judge of this court. I am rated "AV Preeminent" by Martindale Hubbell's Peer Review Rating Service and am "Family Law Board Certified" by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. I am a leader within in the Bexar County legal community. For example I am: 1.) a past president of the San Antonio Family Lawyers Association; 2.) a "2016 Pro Bono Partner" with Disability Rights Texas for my work with disabled Texans and 3.) I am a fellow of both the Texas Bar College and the American Academy of

Matrimonial Lawyers. Prior to becoming an attorney I had a 16 year corporate career during which time I earned an MBA. My corporate career has given me a focus on the the early pretrial settlement of cases through alternative dispute resolution processes. Which I support. I am a certified mediator and frequently assist litigants in the "out of court" resolution of their disputes. I have participated at all levels of the the litigation process, including the presentation of an oral argument to the Texas Supreme Court. (see: In re Stephanie Lee)

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

My 22 year legal career is litigation oriented with a focused on complex family law matters. On a daily basis I am at the courthouse litigating cases whenever settlement negotiations fail. In addition, I have participated at each level of the appellate process, including the presentation of an oral argument to the Texas Supreme Court. (see: In re Stephanie Lee)

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I have been married for more than 17 years and am a stepfather to our six children. For the past 8 years I have had the pleasure of working with Andrea (daughter), who is my associate attorney. I am the proud grandfather of 4. My life experience as a stepfather provides me a unique perspective on the real world challenges facing parents raising children after divorce.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

Fellow - American Association of Matrimonial Lawyers Fellow - Texas Bar College Past President - San Antonio Family Lawyers Assoc. Pro Bono Partner - Disability Rights Texas (2016) Member - San Antonio Bar Assoc Family Law Section Member - State Bar of Texas Member - Supreme Court of the United States Bar Member - Texas Academy of Family Law Specialists Texas Superlawyer (2013 - Present) Texas Monthly Magazine "Top 50 Attorney" (2014)

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

I have been recognized for excellence within the legal community as evidenced by 1.) Family Law Board Certification, 2.) a peer review rating of "AV Preeminent" by Martindale Hubbell, and 3.) a designation of "Fellow" by the American Academy of Matrimonial Attorneys.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

My intellectual interest in the law and a sincere belief that I can make a positive contribution to our community.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

This court is open due to the upcoming retirement of Judge Sol Casseb.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

I believe that the efficient resolution of contested cases is a team effort, including attorneys, judge and court staff. I will encourage the pretrial settlement of cases through Alternative Dispute Resolution methods, including mediation. My expectation is that all attorneys will follow the goals set forth in the "Texas Lawyers Creed" which sets forth our standards for conduct. My decisions will be based upon a strict application of the law and will not be arbitrary.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

My prior corporate career and current career as an attorney provides me with unique perspective into the challenges faced by business owners as they navigate complex regulations and simultaneously meet payroll. I have an MBA and understand how to read an income statement and balance sheet.

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## #2 - Bob Behrens

[bobforjudge15@gmail.com](mailto:bobforjudge15@gmail.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

B.A., Criminal Justice UTSA 1989 M.P.Aff., Public Affairs UT LBJ School 1992 J.D., St. Mary's University School of Law 1994

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

In undergraduate school, I interned with Target as a store security officer. In graduate school I had a computational fellowship for which I assisted students in the computer lab with IBM and Macintosh computers. In law school was the intern assigned to the Drug Impact Court in the Bexar Co. DA office from 12/92 - 12/94. I had a 3rd yr bar card and tried felony jury trials and pretrial motions to suppress while in law school. After that I was an ADA a short time, then I worked as a solo practitioner for 20 years, handling about 2500 criminal cases and trying dozens of aggravated felony jury trials as well as a lesser amount of misdemeanor trials. I also handled about 200 family law cases and some wills/probate, bankruptcy, and other cases.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

As stated, I tried dozens of felony jury trials and some misdemeanor jury trials.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Before obtaining my degrees, I held many other jobs growing up that gave me experience that helps me identify with the situations of people appearing before me.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

At various times I've been a member of ABA and SABA and admitted to the Western District of Texas. In undergraduate school I was admitted to Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society. In the past, I had served at the old SAMM shelter. I am a past director of my homeowner association. I am a member of the Fellowship of San Antonio.

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

The citizens of Bexar County elected me to this position. I have been licensed four times longer and have substantially more trial experience than my opponent.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

I was encouraged by a friend to run in 2014. I thought my 20 years of experience including many trials qualified me to do so.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

I am the incumbent.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

By continuing the work my staff and I have done for almost 4 years. We reduced the trial backlog about 90% and pretrial docket about 75% and kept the numbers steady. In the first 15 months I was on this bench we ran 2 trial dockets and 2 pretrial motion dockets in order to reduce the numbers to a point where we could then hold one of each docket per week. Recently our trial docket is about a dozen cases per week (77 total as of 9/27/18) and four pretrial hearings per week (24 total). By continuing to educate myself and follow the law as I see it. By continuing to be fair and seek the most effective outcome for the rehabilitation of defendants who appear before me and the best interest of the community.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

I don't handle many civil cases but you should know I will seek to educate, informed, and fair on the issues of any case you might bring before me.

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## #1 – Aaron Haas

[aaron@salmonhaas.com](mailto:aaron@salmonhaas.com)

Q1

What is your formal education?

B.A., University of Chicago J.D., Harvard Law School

Q2

Beyond your formal education, what WORK EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

12 years as a practicing attorney. Staff attorney, Texas RioGrande Legal Aid, 2006-2010. Board Certified in Immigration and Nationality Law.

Q3

Beyond your formal education, what TRIAL EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

Hundreds of trials. 2 jury trials to verdict.

Q4

Beyond your formal education, what LIFE EXPERIENCE uniquely qualifies you for this position?

I have spent my career working with ordinary people. I taught english in Bulgaria as a member of the Peace Corps. Worked in housing, consumer and immigration law at Texas RioGrande Legal Aid. Started an immigration clinic at Washington and Lee University School of Law. Private practice for the last 5 years.

Q5

Please list membership and leadership roles in associations and communication/trade organizations and civil philanthropy efforts:

Respondent skipped this question

Q6

What distinguishes your legal experience that warrants election to judge?

I have a well-rounded legal career, having worked in several different areas. But I have always taken on hard cases, worked with ordinary people, and taken many cases to trial.

Q7

What drove you to seek this office in particular?

I believe I am well-qualified because of my well-rounded work experience, strong academic credentials, and lifelong commitment to public service.

Q8

If you are running against an incumbent, why?

I believe I am the most qualified candidate in this race.

Q9

In 25 words, how would you uphold and maintain the dignity of the court?

I would treat every person who came before me with dignity and respect.

Q10

What do you think is important for us, as business owners, to know?

I would treat everybody fairly and with respect, and work hard to make the right decision in every case.