



The Defender

The North Carolina Association of Defense Attorneys • Vol. XVII No. 4 / Appellate 2010

Appellate Elections 2010

Candidates for the North Carolina appellate courts were invited to submit a statement regarding their candidacy to *The Defender*. We are pleased that nearly all candidates took the opportunity to provide information about themselves and why they believe they should be elected. The information they submitted is presented below, arranged according to the various seats set up for this election year.

Candidates for the North Carolina Supreme Court

Brady Seat

Judge Robert C. "Bob" Hunter

I would like to thank the North Carolina Association of Defense Attorneys for this opportunity to address you and share some information about my candidacy for the NC Supreme Court in the non-partisan November 2nd election. I especially appreciate the NC Association of Defense Attorneys for your endorsement of me in this race. I have been honored to serve the citizens of North Carolina for most of my career, and I hope to continue that record of service on the Supreme Court.

As our state's highest appellate court, the Supreme Court shapes the jurisprudence of the state and has the final say over numerous legal issues that directly affect the everyday lives of our citizens. Accordingly, we need experienced Justices on the Supreme Court who are committed to a fair, balanced approach to the law that favors no individual, group, or agenda. Justices must have demonstrated a commitment to the people of North Carolina through fair interpretations of the law.

This year marks my twelfth year serving as a Judge on the North Carolina Court of Appeals since first being appointed to the position by Governor Jim Hunt in 1998. I was elected to an eight year term on the Court in November 1998 and another eight year term in November 2006. I am pleased that during my 2006 re-election, I carried 99 of North Carolina's 100 counties.

Before joining the Court of Appeals, I practiced law for twenty-nine years in Marion, North Carolina, at Hunter & Ev-



Hunter

ans, P.A. I was also an Assistant District Attorney, and served as county attorney for McDowell County for twenty-four years. In addition, I was elected to 9 terms in the North Carolina House of Representatives, where I chaired the House Judiciary Committee and the North Carolina Courts Commission. My experience at the General Assembly instilled in me a deep respect and appreciation for the independence of the legislative branch. It is the branch which directly enacts the will of the people. As a judge, I am ever mindful of the important distinction between making the law and interpreting the law. An effective judiciary must be firmly independent from legislative politics, and instead analyze the law as it is written.

During my time at the Court of Appeals, I have decided more than thirty-six hundred cases and authored over twelve hundred opinions. These decisions are part of the public record and speak for themselves. They demonstrate my dedication as a jurist to a deliberate and levelheaded approach to the law, grounded in common sense. I am proud to be supported by citizens of all backgrounds and political affiliations, with endorsements from every major legal group, former Chief Justices of the Supreme Court Burley Mitchell, Henry Frye, and Jim Exum; former Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals Sid Eagles; former Judges of the Court of Appeals Loretta Biggs, Al Thomas, John Arrowood, Jim Fuller, and Eddie Greene; former Governor Jim Hunt; and others listed below.

I enjoyed attending the NC Association of Defense Attorney's Annual Meeting in Hilton Head. I am proud to have the support of members of the NCADA like Mike Mitchell, Gary Parsons, Leslie O'Toole, Richard Bennett, Sharon Parker, David Allen, Mike Robinson, Clark Smith and many others.

I am deeply honored to have had the unique privilege

Appellate Elections, *continued from page 1*

of serving the citizens of North Carolina as a prosecutor, attorney, representative, and appellate judge. I hope you will help me continue this record of public service as a Supreme Court Justice. Again, I thank you for your endorsement and would appreciate any support you could provide.

www.judgebobhunter.org

Judicial/Legal Experience:

1998-present: Elected Judge, North Carolina

Court of Appeals

Founding partner, Hunter & Evans, PA

County Attorney, McDowell County

Assistant District Attorney

Representative Activities:

Representative, 49th District

Chair, NC Courts Commission

Judge Barbara A. Jackson

I want to thank the North Carolina Association of Defense Attorneys for their endorsement of my candidacy and for this opportunity to discuss my campaign for the Supreme Court.

Twenty years ago, I began my legal career at the Supreme Court of North Carolina. I am now in my 5th year of service as a Judge on the North Carolina Court of Appeals and I can think of no better way to continue serving my state and my fellow citizens than to return to the Supreme Court as a Justice.

After receiving both my bachelor's and law degrees from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, I had the privilege of serving as a law clerk for former Chief Justice Burley B. Mitchell, Jr. Following my clerkship, I served as associate general counsel in Governor Jim Martin's administration working on a wide array of issues including the Voting Rights Act, the Public Records Act, riparian water rights, and Executive Clemency. I then joined the Governor's Advocacy Counsel for Persons with Disabilities where I represented clients with disabilities from all over the state in counties as diverse as Henderson, Buncombe, Pitt, Beaufort, and Mecklenburg. After four years, I entered private practice, concentrating on land use and municipal law.

When Cherie Berry was elected Commissioner of Labor in 2000, I joined her administration as General Counsel, where I had the opportunity to work extensively with issues involving the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the Wage and Hour Act, and the State Personnel Act. In addition,

as a member of the Commissioner's senior management team, I was actively involved in all phases of the department's legal policy development and implementation, including proposed legislation and rulemaking.

In 2004, I ran for the North Carolina Court of Appeals based upon my record of broad based experience. I was honored to be elected with the support of 55% of North Carolina's voters. Since joining the Court, I have participated in deciding over 1,500 cases and authored over 500 opinions.

The Supreme Court of North Carolina is the highest court in North Carolina; its Justices must possess both the necessary judicial temperament and a wide range of legal experience. As the guardian of the state's constitution, I firmly believe that the Supreme Court of North Carolina is no place for judicial activism. It is the sole duty of the judicial branch to judge fairly and impartially, within the limitations provided by the constitution and laws of the state. Put simply, I believe that legislators should legislate and judges should judge. By putting these beliefs into practice as a judge, I hope I have gained a reputation as a fair, thoughtful jurist who has the utmost respect for the rule of law.

Thank you for taking the time to learn about my campaign. For more information, please visit my campaign website at www.judgebarbarajackson.com. I would appreciate your support and your vote on November 2nd.



Jackson

Occupation:

Associate Judge, North Carolina Court of Appeals

Education:

UNC-Chapel Hill - J.D. 1990

Meredith College Legal Assistants Program (1986)

UNC-Chapel Hill - B.A. 1984

Oxford University, Summer Study

Experience:

Elected Judge, NC Court of Appeals 2005-present

General Counsel, NC Department of Labor 2001-2004

Associate, Holt York McDarris, LLP, 1997-2000

Deputy General Counsel, GACPD, 1992-1996

Associate General Counsel to Governor Jim Martin, 1991-1992

Law Clerk to Former Chief Justice Burley Mitchell, NC Supreme Court, 1990-1991

Former Chair, Administrative Law Section, NC Bar Association

Former Board Member, Wake County Bar Association
NC Dispute Resolution Commission

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Order of the Long Leaf Pine, 1992

NC Court of Appeals

Calabria Seat

Judge Ann Marie Calabria

As I seek a second term on the NC Court of Appeals, I want to thank the North Carolina Association of Defense Attorneys for providing an opportunity to discuss the November 2nd Election. North Carolina has been my home for over 31 years. My husband, Colonel Robert D. Calabria, a retired Army officer, and I have three children and three grandchildren. As a military spouse, I graduated from Campbell University, Norman Adrian Wiggin School of Law, J.D., in 1983.



Calabria

It has been my honor to serve our state and nation in several capacities. In 2002, I was elected to the NC Court of Appeals and have continued to serve as both a judge and a mediator. In 1996, I was elected District Court Judge for the 10th Judicial District (Wake County) and re-elected in 2000. Prior to presiding as a Judge, I practiced law in both Cumberland and Wake Counties. My previous experience as a solo practitioner in private practice, unlike my government service, presented the challenges of all business owners. I did not receive a paycheck until everyone on my staff was paid. The experience of running a law firm, along with maintaining a client base, prepared me for the deadlines required to complete and circulate my opinions in a timely manner.

I am the only candidate for this Court of Appeals seat who has served as an appellate court judge, a mediator, a district court judge and a juvenile court judge. For nearly 14 years, I have handled over 2,000 appellate cases and authored over 700 opinions. I strive to write my opinions so parties will understand how the law was applied in their case.

Along with my experience, I have a consistent judicial philosophy. I believe the United States and North Carolina Constitutions established federal and state governments of limited powers. I believe our Founders intended to guarantee freedom, property rights and individual rights. I believe in judicial restraint, not judicial activism. Attorneys know what to expect from me: fair treatment from a judge who sticks to the law and will not legislate from the bench. My service as a Judge on the Court of Appeals has been the greatest privilege of my professional life. I hope to contin-

ue this service and would be honored by your vote. Please visit my website www.judgecalabria.com. Thank you, in advance, for your vote for Judge Ann Marie Calabria, NC Court of Appeals on Tuesday, November 2nd.

Judicial Experience:

NC Court of Appeals Judge and Mediator

2003-present

District Court and Certified Juvenile Court Judge,

10th Judicial District (Wake County), 1996-2002

Legal Experience:

Private Practice:

Cary, 1991-1996

Fayetteville, 1988-1989

Associate, Hutchens & Waple, Attorneys at Law,

1990-1991

Contract Specialist, United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1989-1990

Associate Professor, University of Maryland, Overseas Division, Heidelberg, Germany, 1986-1987

Education:

While my husband, Col. (Ret.) Robert Calabria served in the U.S. Army at Fort Bragg, I attended Campbell University, School of Law, J.D., 1983.

Undergraduate: Fairleigh Dickinson University, Summa Cum Laude, B.A. History, 1977

University of Pennsylvania, School of Dental Medicine, Certificate of Proficiency in Dental Hygiene, 1967

Representative Activities:

Board of Directors, Bar Cares

Council for the Zoning, Planning and Land Use Section, NC Bar Association

Vice President, NC Bar Association (2000-2001)

Board of Directors, Wake County Bar Association (2002-2004)

Chairperson of the Juvenile Outreach Literacy Team, Literacy Council of Wake County

Board of Directors, Campbell University Alumni Association

Honors:

2009 Volunteer of the Year, Literacy Council of Wake County

2007 James Iredell Award, Campbell University's Chapter of the Phi Alpha Delta Legal Fraternity

2003 Distinguished Alumna Award, Campbell University

2002 Woman of Today Award, Pines of Carolina

Girl Scout Council

Judge Jane Gray

Thank you to the North Carolina Association of Defense Attorneys for the opportunity to share my qualifications and my reasons for seeking a seat on the North Carolina Court of Appeals. I am running for this seat on the NC Court of Appeals because I have been encouraged by a number of people I respect to do so, because I have the experience to do the job well, and because I have a strong work ethic that will serve the people of this State and the Court.



Gray

It has been my privilege to serve as a District Court Judge in Wake County for the past eight and a half years. The District Court has jurisdiction over the widest array of cases of the trial courts – including misdemeanor and felony criminal matters; juvenile delinquency; abuse, neglect and dependency; child custody, equitable distribution; and general civil contract disputes. At the General Assembly for three years, I was directly involved in drafting legislation and getting it passed. I spent 19 years with the Attorney General's Office where I briefed and argued many civil and criminal appeals, along with my other client responsibilities. While in the A.G.'s office, I was selected to serve on the Capital Case team, which handled exclusively first degree murder cases. I earned the AV rating from Martindale-Hubbell. This combined 31 years of experience in all three branches of government uniquely prepares me for the Court of Appeals.

I am pleased to have the endorsements of former Chief Justices James Exum and Burley Mitchell and former Chief Judges Sidney Eagles and Gerald Arnold. I am also pleased to be endorsed by Wake County District Attorney Colon Willoughby and Public Defender Bryan Collins. I have also received endorsements from the Charlotte Observer, the Winston-Salem Journal, and the Greenville Daily Reflector as well as a wide array of professional and citizen organizations.

I am committed to improving our legal system and have been recognized for my abilities by being appointed to the inaugural NC Judicial Council and serving under Chief Justices Frye, Lake and Parker. I serve as a current appointee of Chief Justice Parker to the NC Courts Commission. I am also a member of the Bench Bar Liaison Committee of the NC Bar Association and a former Vice President of that organization. I am very proud to have been the first public sector attorney elected as President of the Wake

County Bar Association.

I believe in the rule of law as decisions cannot be based on political considerations or popular opinion. I am aware that there are real people and businesses behind the names on appellate records. It is critical that the Court's opinions are well researched, well written, and consistent. It would be an honor to continue serving this state as a Judge of the Court of Appeals and I would appreciate your vote on November 2 or you can vote early beginning October 14. Please learn more about my record at www.judgejanegray.com. Thank you.

Judicial Experience:

Appointed to the Wake County District Court,
February 1, 2002

Unopposed for reelection to the Wake County District
Court, 2004 and 2008

Legal Experience:

Associate, Assistant and Special Deputy Attorney
General, 1980-1991

Special Deputy Attorney General for Policy and
Planning, 1992-1998

General Counsel to the Speaker of the House,
1999-2001

Summer Clerk, United States Attorney's Office,
Eastern District, 1978

Education:

B.A., Sociology; University of Florida 1972

J.D., Campbell University School of Law 1979

Professional Admissions/Memberships:

United States Supreme Court, 1984

Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals

US District Courts; all North Carolina state Courts

NC Bar Association – Vice President 2007-2008, Bench
Bar Liaison Committee 2005-present

Wake County Bar Association - President 2001

NC Judicial Council – 1999-2007

NC Courts Commission – 2007-present

NC State Bar – Board of Continuing Legal Education
1996-2003

State Judicial Council 1999-2008

NC Courts Commission 2008-present

Criminal Justice Information Network Governing
Board 2004-2007

State Drug Treatment Court Advisory Council
1999-2005

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Community Activities:

Highland United Methodist Church 1976-present
Women's Forum 1999-present
Altrusa International of Raleigh, Inc. 1993-present
Altrusa District Three Foundation Board 2002-2009
Urban Ministries volunteer at the Open Door Clinic
and Helen Wright Center for Homeless Women,
1993-present

Awards/Recognitions:

Silver Service Award for 25 years (or more) of legal
service, NC Association of Women Attorneys, 2008
Dean's Professionalism Award, Campbell University
School of Law 2006
Women in Business award winner, 2001
Nominee for Governor's Distinguished Woman in
Government 1991.

Elmore Seat

Judge Rick Elmore

I want to express my appreciation to the North Carolina Association of Defense Attorneys for their endorsement of my campaign and for the opportunity to write about my current race for reelection to the North Carolina Court of Appeals. It has been an honor to serve the citizens of North Carolina for the past 8 years as a Judge at the Court and I hope to continue my service for the next 8 years as well.



Elmore

Service on the second highest court in North Carolina necessitates a certain level of professional experience in order to effectively fulfill the duties of the office. I began my legal career almost three decades ago after attending North Carolina Central University School of Law, where I was a member of the Law Review. I spent the next 20 years practicing law in my hometown of Greensboro focusing primarily in criminal defense and real property.

While in Greensboro, I served a four year term on the Guilford County Board of Elections and three year term on the Guilford County Planning Board. In order to give back to the community, I volunteered for the state and federal indigent appointment lists. I also served as legal counsel for the Greensboro Jaycees and for the Greensboro AAU Basketball team while my son was involved. All of these professional and volunteer experiences have proved invaluable for performing that work that I currently do at the court.

In 2002, I was elected statewide to the North Carolina

Court of Appeals. During my 8 years on the bench, I have written over 700 opinions and decided over 2,100 cases. I was appointed as the Court's representative to serve on the North Carolina Sentencing Commission. I have also been selected to serve on the North Carolina Bar Association's Appellate Rules Committee.

I firmly believe that an appellate court is no place for judicial activism. I have a reputation as a fair, courteous, and diligent judge who closely adheres to the rule of law. I have written opinions that uphold the law and Constitution of North Carolina, even when it conflicts with my personal views. It is for this reason that I have been endorsed by four former Chief Justices of the Supreme Court of North Carolina.

Experience counts. I am the only candidate for this seat who has judicial experience, who has practiced law, or who has represented a client in a courtroom. The Court of Appeals is not an entry level position and I proudly stand behind my record of fairness and impartiality. Please visit my website to learn more about my candidacy and campaign: www.judgeelmore.com. I would greatly appreciate your vote on November 2nd.

Occupation:

Associate Judge, N.C. Court of Appeals

Education: North Carolina Central University

School of Law, J.D. 1982

Guilford College, B.S. 1974

Experience:

2003- Present, Elected Judge, North Carolina
Court of Appeals

1982 – 2002, General Practice of Law, Greensboro

2008 – Present, NCBA Appellate Rules Committee

2006 - Present North Carolina Sentencing Commission
Greensboro and Raleigh Bar Associations.

Stephen Walker

At the time of printing, The Defender had not received a statement from Mr. Walker.

Geer Seat

Judge Martha Geer

I want to thank the North Carolina Association of Defense Attorneys for its commitment to providing its membership and North Carolina's citizens with the information necessary to make an informed choice when voting for ap-



Geer

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pellate judges. The appellate races appear at the bottom of the ballot with no information about the candidates other than their names. Too many voters arrive at the voting booth with no additional information, and they either skip the appellate races or select one of the candidates as a result of stereotypes based on the names. Thank you for doing your part to educate the public about these very important races.

It has been my honor to serve the State of North Carolina on the Court of Appeals since January 2003. The Court of Appeals is where the rubber hits the road – the Court handles between 1,800 and 2,000 appeals a year, with each judge responsible for writing more than 100 majority opinions each year. I have participated in deciding more than 2,000 appeals and have written more than 700 majority opinions. The Supreme Court has reversed my opinions less than 2% of the time. Without a doubt, the most difficult aspect of serving on the Court of Appeals is the fear of “getting it wrong” – writing a decision involving an unfamiliar area of law that ends up wreaking havoc for those practicing in that area. This fear drives me – and those who work in my chambers – to thoroughly review and research each appeal and to strive to draft opinions that are as precise and carefully crafted as possible.

Every time I pick up the briefs in an appeal in a new area of law, I am grateful for the eclectic nature of my 19 years of private practice. I doubt that there is another judge on either appellate court who has been a tobacco defense attorney, a plaintiff’s employment lawyer, an appellate advocate, a commercial litigator for major corporations, a constitutional rights advocate, and both a defense and a plaintiff’s attorney for securities fraud and shareholder derivative actions. I have found that my knowledge of the practical realities of both trial and appellate litigation, regardless of the subject matter of the litigation, has informed my opinions over the past seven years more than any other factor.

Because of the work I did in private practice, I am one of only a few judges on either the North Carolina Supreme Court or the North Carolina Court of Appeals who has the experience to handle not only appeals deciding individual citizens’ rights, but also appeals addressing complex disputes involving businesses critical to our state’s economy. With the increasing volume of complex civil litigation coming from our business courts, it is critical that our appellate courts have judges experienced in that type of litigation.

I have been surprised by the number of compliments I have received from attorneys and trial judges regarding the quality of my opinions. Attorneys have told me that they value my opinions because they set out the rules clearly.

Trial judges have mentioned how easy it is to transform my opinions into a jury instruction when there is no existing pattern instruction. This feedback means a great deal to me as it suggests that I am achieving one of my primary goals: writing clear and concise opinions that accurately set out the appropriate legal analysis in a way that can be readily applied by the bench and bar.

I am also extremely proud that while I was in private practice, my peers felt my work was of such a quality that I was included in The Best Lawyers in America in 2002 and was identified as one of the top 200 lawyers in North Carolina by Business North Carolina in 2002 and 2003. Today, as I seek reelection, I am just as proud to have statewide, bipartisan support from the bar. I hope that you will also decide that my work has been of a quality warranting my reelection. I ask for your support in November.

Website: www.JudgeMarthaGeer.com

Judicial Experience:

2003-present, Judge, N.C. Court of Appeals

Practical Experience:

1991-2002, Founding Partner, Patterson, Harkavy & Lawrence, LLP, Raleigh, NC

1986-1991, Partner and Associate, Smith, Patterson, Follin, Curtis, James, Harkavy & Lawrence, Greensboro and Raleigh, NC

1983-1986, Associate, Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison, New York, NY

Education:

1983, J.D. with high honors, UNC School of Law (Morehead Fellow, Managing Editor of the N.C. Law Review)

1980, A.B., Bryn Mawr College, summa cum laude with honors in Sociology

Representative Professional Activities:

Appellate Practice Specialization Committee

Member, Appellate Rules Committee,
North Carolina Bar Association

Member, Medico-Legal Liaison Committee,
North Carolina Bar Association

Council Member, Labor & Employment Law Section
North Carolina Bar Association

Editorial Board, Judges Journal, American Bar
Association

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Dean Poirier

I Thank you for providing me with an opportunity to present information to you regarding my background, experience, qualifications and judicial philosophy. I am currently an Appeals Referee with the North Carolina Employment Security Commission and an Adjunct Professor of Law at Mount Olive College, North Carolina Wesleyan College, Kaplan University and Liberty University.



Poirier

I am a Christian, constitutional, conservative, who believes that the essential role of a judge is to render a just and impartial decision, based on the facts and the law. However, I am also aware that a judge must be ever mindful of the fact that his decisions are not mere academic exercises, but that they seriously affect the lives of real people. A judge must therefore demonstrate sincere respect and compassion for all those parties who come before him and all those people whose rights and welfare will be impacted by his decisions.

I believe in "judicial humility" as opposed to "judicial arrogance," "judicial restraint" as opposed to "judicial activism." I believe that judges have no popular mandate to act as policy makers nor any right to promote personal social agendas through the backdoor of the courthouse. I believe that judges should instead defer to the other elected branches of the federal and state governments with respect to policy so long as they stay within the confines of their powers as defined by the U.S. and state constitutions.

I am the proud husband to DeAnn Gray Poirier, formerly of Charlotte, and proud father of 4 beautiful girls, Heather Lee, Jessica Grace, Elizabeth Hope and Charlotte Faith. I am also an active member and Adult Sunday School Teacher at Adamsville Baptist Church in Goldsboro, NC.

I invite you to learn more about my background, experience, qualifications and judicial philosophy by visiting my website at Poirier4justice.com.

Professional Qualifications:

13 Years Experience as an Appeals Referee (Have presided at over 13,000 contested case evidentiary hearings to determine eligibility for unemployment benefits and have issued as many written legal decisions relating thereto, containing findings of fact and conclusions of law consistent with state & federal law and agency regulations. Have also conducted fraud hearings as a Special Deputy Commissioner.)

8 Years Experience as an Adjunct Instructor of Law for Mount Olive College, North Carolina Wesleyan College, Kaplan University and Liberty University (Have taught courses in Business Law, Business Ethics, Business Policy & Strategy, Legal Environment of Business, Administrative Law, Criminal Law, Constitutional Law, Family Law, Principles of Real Property, Real Estate Law, Real Estate Transactions, Wills, Trusts & Estates, Legal Philosophy, Intellectual Property, Legal Ethics/Professional Responsibility, Advanced Legal Research & Writing, Intelligence Analysis, Terrorism and various Legal Capstone Courses).

3 Years Experience as a Legal Research Trainer for Lawyers Cooperative Publishing/West Publishing (Trained legal professionals throughout the state of North Carolina and parts of Virginia and conducted training seminars for government and legal officials, including some for CLE credit.)

4 Years Experience in Private Law Practice (Practiced in the areas of Real Estate Law, Wills, Trusts & Estates, Business Law, and General Civil Litigation.)

Admitted to practice, North Carolina, 1993, U.S. District Court, Eastern District of North Carolina, 1993
Member, 8th Judicial District Bar and New Hanover County Bar

Former Member, NC Bar Association, YLD Committees on Law and Aging & Arts & Entertainment Law, Wake County Bar Association Technology Committee, 1996

Certified in International Humanitarian Law by American Red Cross, 2000

Graduate of the Institute for Political Leadership, 2004
Received the Chairman's Award for Outstanding Service in Appeals in 2008.

Received the Governor's Award for Excellence in 2009.

Education:

University of North Carolina School of Law, Chapel Hill, NC, J.D., May, 1993

Jessup International Moot Court Team, Best Overall Oralist Intraschool Competition, 1991, Third Best Oralist & Third Best Memorial, Southeast Region, 1992, Team Coach

Student Intern, Immigration Law Project, 1993

Fairleigh Dickinson University, Teaneck, NJ, M.A.,

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International Studies, May, 1981 (G.P.A. 3.86)
Bridgewater State College, Bridgewater, MA, B.S.,
Political Science, May, 1979 (G.P.A. 3.65)
Political Science Award as Top Student

Steelman Seat (unopposed)

Judge Sanford L. Steelman, Jr.

I want to thank the North Carolina Association of Defense Attorneys for two things. First, for giving all of the appellate judicial candidates the opportunity to share their qualifications and speak to your members. Your candidate forum is always one of the highlights of the campaign. Second, for the personal and financial support that I received from your members in my campaign for re-election this year. Your support was critical in assuring that I would not be opposed in this election.



Steelman

It is essential that we have judges and justices on our appellate courts that have a deep knowledge of the law, have a strong background in the trial courts of our state, and will be fair and impartial to all litigants, regardless of their status or background.

My 35 years in the practice of law have given me qualifications that no other candidate for the appellate courts this year possesses. I spent 18 years litigating in the trial and appellate courts of North Carolina, as well as in the federal courts. During that time I tried hundreds of cases, including civil and criminal trials to jury verdicts. My representation was of defendants, as well as plaintiffs, and included personal injury, corporate, will caveats, foreclosures, construction, domestic, civil rights, real property, environmental, government, and insurance cases. I served for 9 years on the Weddington Town Council, where I participated in the drafting and enactment of land use ordinances. For three years, I served as Union County Attorney. For 12 years, I represented the Union County Sheriff, successfully defending lawsuits in federal court.

In 1994, I was elected to the Superior Court bench, and was re-elected in 1998. During those 8 years, I held court in 32 counties, as far east as Onslow County, and as far west as Macon County. I presided over 4 capital murder cases, and was assigned by the Chief Justice to preside over 3 exceptional cases under Rule 2.1.

Since 2003, I have authored over 700 opinions on the Court of Appeals. In addition, I served for 6 years on the Dispute Resolution Commission, working to strengthen the alternate dispute resolution mechanisms in North Carolina. Presently I am serving on the Appellate Rules Committee

and as a Vice-President of the North Carolina Bar Association.

Your cases are important to both you and your clients. I commit to each of you that I will continue to apply my vast background and experience in writing these important opinions. Each opinion will be written carefully and clearly so that the intent of the court will be clear to both bench and bar. Each opinion will be written fairly and impartially. I will continue to work to improve our system of justice, and make it more responsive to the needs of the people of North Carolina in the 21st century.

Website: judgesteelman.org

Judicial Experience:

2003-present: Elected Judge, North Carolina Court of Appeals

1994-2002: Elected Resident Superior Court Judge, District 20-B (Stanly and Union Counties)

Practice Experience:

1992-1994: Partner, Steelman & Long, Monroe, NC

1988-1992: Sanford L. Steelman, Jr., Monroe, NC

1980-1988: Partner, Griffin, Caldwell, Helder & Steelman, P.A., Monroe, NC

1976-1980: Associate Attorney, Griffin, Caldwell & Helder, Monroe, NC

Education:

UNC-CH School of Law, J.D. 1976

Davidson College, A.B. 1973
(cum laude)

University of East Anglia, Norwich, England, 1971-1972

Representative Activities:

Eagle Scout Award, 1965

Council Member and Mayor Pro Tempore, Town of Weddington, North Carolina, 1985-1994

Union County Attorney, 1991-1994

North Carolina Dispute Resolution Commission, 2003-2008, Chair 2004-2008

North Carolina Bar Association Administration of Justice Task Force 2003-present

Chief Justice's Commission on the future of the North Carolina Business Court 2003-2004

Appellate Rules Committee, 2008-present

Wynn Seat

John F. Bloss

At the time of printing, The Defender had not received a statement from Mr. Bloss.

J. Wesley Casteen

It is always a privilege to be considered by professional colleagues for any position or office, and I would like to thank the North Carolina Association of Defense Attorneys and its members for the opportunity to provide information about my candidacy to the North Carolina Court of Appeals.



Casteen

Being both an attorney and CPA, I have a unique background among the judicial candidates. My background includes an advanced academic law degree and years of training and experience in finance, business, and commercial matters. This breadth of experience makes me singularly qualified to provide a fresh reasoned perspective to the matters that come before the court.

My law practice has placed me before all divisions of our North Carolina Courts, including the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court. I also have represented clients before the United States Bankruptcy Court and the United States Tax Court. While a zealous advocate for my clients, I have always endeavored to remain faithful to the laws of this State and to the guiding principles upon which those laws are founded.

North Carolina's continued growth will inevitably stress the legal fabric that binds all of us together. As our lives become more complex, the role of the judiciary becomes even more important. Judges neither live nor do they apply the law in a vacuum. They must look and consider the particular facts and life experiences of the parties, and each judge relies upon his own reason and life experiences in order to apply the laws of the State in a fair and equitable manner.

Our courts are arbiters of life altering issues, and I am privileged to have advocated issues that have influenced the lives of my clients in a positive manner. A position on the Court of Appeals presents an opportunity to apply and shape the laws of this State for the protection and benefit of all of its citizens.

I thank you for your consideration, and I hope to have your vote and support on November 2, 2010.

Website: www.casteen.org

Education:

Wake Forest University, B.S. in Accountancy, 1989
Campbell University Norman A. Wiggins School of Law, J.D., 1994
University of Alabama School of Law, LL.M., 2010

Experience:

| | |
|----------------|--|
| 2004 – present | Attorney, Carolina Legal Counsel, Wilmington, NC |
| 2001-2004 | Attorney & CPA, Wishart Norris Henninger & Pittman, PA, Burlington, NC |
| 1995-2001 | Attorney, Ludlum & Casteen |
| 1994-1995 | Senior Accountant, Carroll's Foods, Inc. |
| 1990-1991 | Staff Accountant, Barton W. Baldwin, CPA |
| 1989 | Staff Accountant, Scharf-Pera & Co., CPA's |

R. Christopher Dillon

I want to thank you for your interest in my candidacy and for the opportunity to provide information about myself. I am running for the Court of Appeals for three main reasons:

(1) I will apply the laws of our State faithfully and impartially. To paraphrase Chief Justice Roberts, a judge's job is to call "balls and strikes" without regard to what teams the pitcher and batter play for. If given the opportunity to serve, I will write opinions in a clear and concise manner and without expounding on issues not properly before the Court which could give rise to unintended interpretations in future cases that could lead to uncertainty in the law. Also, I will get my opinions out in a timely manner.

(2) The Court would benefit if at least some of the 15 judges had real life work experiences outside of working in the legal community and government. All of the candidates have many years of working directly in the field of law. I have handled hundreds of matters at all levels from Small Claims Court up to our Supreme Court. However, I am unique among the 13 candidates in that I have also run a small business, and I currently interact daily with professionals and business owners at the community bank that I helped start in 2006. I see and experience daily how the law and the decisions of the Court can impact lives of people working in a variety of fields. Again, if elected, I would apply the law to the facts, but I would bring a deeper under-



Dillon

Appellate Elections, *continued from page 9*

standing of many of the factual situations that often come before the Court.

(3) Finally, I have a true desire to serve the people of this State as an appellate judge. I am endorsed and supported by attorneys and non-attorneys alike.

I would appreciate your serious consideration of my candidacy and I would appreciate your vote. You can learn more at my website dillonforjudge.com. Thank you.

Website: www.dillonforjudge.com

Education: J.D., University of North Carolina School of Law, 1990
B.S., Business Administration, UNC-Chapel Hill, 1987

Experience:
2006-present Senior Vice President of CapStone Bank, a North Carolina-based community bank.
2000-2006 Vice President, SouthTrust/Wachovia Bank
1996-2000 Solo Private Practice and Part Owner of Fountain & Dillon, a Real Estate Services Company.
1990-1996 Young Moore & Henderson, Private Practice

Community:
2004-present Chairman of Living Memorial Scholarship Fund, providing \$30,000+ annually in college scholarships.
2007-present Board of Directors of The Vineyard Camp and Retreat Center, a non-profit, international Christian sports camp in Stokes County, NC.
1987-2009 YMCA and Salvation Army, Youth and Children's basketball coach.
1996-2002 Board of Directors, DHIC, Inc. (non-profit, low-income housing provider) – appointed by the Raleigh City Council.
1990-present Edenton Street United Methodist Church, Sunday School teacher and Youth Leader.

Personal:
Born 1965 in Raleigh, North Carolina to C. A. and Mildred Dillon. Married 1995 to the former Ann Finley. Ann and I have five children ranging from 8 to 14 years of age.

Jewel Ann Farlow

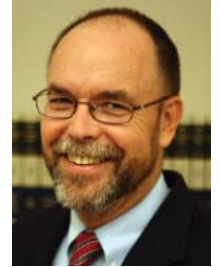
At the time of printing, The Defender had not received a statement from Ms. Farlow.

Daniel E. Garner

Thank you, members of the North Carolina Association of Defense Attorneys, for this opportunity to address you. This is an unusual election in an unusual era. Many of our fellow North Carolinians are in severe stress; state and local governments (including our courts) have had to make painful downward adjustments. Given our present circumstances, it is to the great credit of the bench and the bar of North Carolina that our justice system continues to serve the people of our State as well as it does. I am very pleased to be a part of our system of justice, but I seek greater participation as a judge on the Court of Appeals.

Lawyers are a source of great stability in our society. In good times and bad, advocates press forward on behalf of their clients. Trial court judges and hearing officers labor in courthouses and agencies across the state, serving both the particular and the general—administering justice in each case, one by one, one after the other, but also contributing their efforts to the maintenance and operation of a tried and true system of justice. We truly have much to be grateful for.

When I reflect on my own path as a lawyer, 28 years now, I realize again just how abundant are the blessings. I taught high school in Greensboro between college and law school, then after entering the bar, I practiced in Durham from 1982 to 1989. I enjoyed a varied practice—tax, business, real estate, litigation, estates, even some securities work. In 1989, I founded my own firm; the recession of 1991 did us in, and I became an appeals referee for the Employment Security Commission. The law was not complicated, but the factual settings were various, and the pace was fast—as many as eight contested hearings and written decisions in a day. Over seven plus years there, I estimate I heard 6,000 cases. I learned to respect the parties and their rights; I learned to listen. I found new appreciation for my fellow North Carolinians, employer and worker. I realized that the very best thing I could do was to hear them out fairly and impartially and attentively. I also learned that sometimes I did not like the outcome as I applied the law to the evidence presented. I concluded, however, that an honest judge must decide each case in accordance with the law and the evidence rather than bend the law or the



Garner

Appellate Elections, *continued from page 10*

evidence to reach a particular result.

After my time with the ESC, I became counsel to the Commissioner of Banks. In that capacity over the last 11 years, I have served as a hearing officer in administrative enforcement actions; managed appeals to the Commission and to the courts; negotiated and drafted legislation and seen it enacted. I have done rulemakings, declaratory rulings, numerous interpretive letters construing laws and regulations, and so on. Occasionally, in my role, I found myself thinking that the law should be different, but lawyers for agencies are bound to the law just as those regulated. Neither judges nor regulatory agencies should go beyond the law.

No, if we lawyers are to serve the system of justice well, we cannot and must not ask that it do what it was never intended to do. This takes self-restraint and even humility on the part of trial judges, but also on the part of advocates and appellate court judges as well.

My work as a lawyer has not been very public, not very widely known. It has been a broad and enriching experience, however, and one that has prepared me to serve on the Court of Appeals. I know how to read and study the law and think through complex matters; I know how to write; I know how to listen; I know how to cooperate and work with others in doing legal work. My "judicial philosophy," if you will, rests on a deep respect for other people, a deep respect for the law, and a deep desire to do what I am supposed to do—nothing more and nothing less will do.

I am grateful for all that I have enjoyed as a lawyer, and I would like very much to serve on the North Carolina Court of Appeals. Thank you again for this opportunity. I hope you'll visit my website, www.GarnerforJudge.com, and I hope you will support me on November 2.

Education:

M.B.A., Kenan-Flagler School of Business, UNC, 1982
J.D., University of North Carolina School of Law, 1982
B.A., University of North Carolina, 1974

Experience:

1999–present, counsel to the Commissioner of Banks;
1991–1998, Appeals Referee, Employment Security
Commission;
1982–1991, private practice of law, Durham

Personal:

Married since 1975 to the former Cheryl DeJong of Raleigh; 11 children, aged 14 to 30, all home-schooled; 14 grandchildren. Attend Sovereign Grace Church in Apex, NC. Lifelong resident of North Carolina, currently

in Wake Forest, NC.

Stanley F. Hammer

I thank the North Carolina Association of Defense Attorneys for inviting me to present my reasons for seeking a seat on the N.C. Court of Appeals. Through the years, I have enjoyed working with numerous members of this organization, as co-counsel, opposing counsel and mediator.

In 25 years of practice, I have always maintained an interest in appellate work. The Court of Appeals is frequently the sole forum for review of trial court judgments. Based on my temperament, training, and experience, I am well qualified to serve on the North Carolina Court of Appeals.

Early in my career, I served as a clerk to the late Louis B. Meyer, Associate Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court, where I was exposed to the the internal workings of an appellate tribunal. I enjoyed my work as a law clerk, respected the justices, and aspired to have the kind of legal career that would lead the People of North Carolina to one day entrust me with an appellate judgeship.

In 1987, I joined the Greensboro law firm of Clark and Wharton, which specialized in civil litigation and represented clients in a variety of civil trial and appellate matters. In late 1989, I was appointed to represent a number of criminal defendants in federal court. I had two jury trials in short order, and, in 1990, accepted a position as an assistant public defender in the 18th Judicial District.

As an assistant public defender, I tried countless cases in District Court, and approximately 8 to 10 Superior Court jury trials each year. I learned the challenge of handling a heavy caseload and representing sometimes unpopular clients. I also experienced the difficulty of being retained by one entity, the State of North Carolina, to represent a criminal defendant who had been charged with committing an offense against the State. When I returned to private practice, I saw the parallel between the work of an insurance defense attorney, and that of an assistant public defender: heavy caseloads, often unpopular clients, and the ethical tensions associated with being hired by one party to represent another to whom you owe a primary duty.

Although I had a heavy caseload as an assistant public defender, I also handled appeals. I was in the first group of attorneys to be certified as a criminal appellate specialist by the North Carolina State Bar Board of Legal Specialization.

In 1995, I returned to private practice and joined the



Hammer

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firm of Wyatt Early Harris Wheeler, where I have been a partner since 1997. The bulk of my work is now in the area of civil litigation and appeals, representing both individuals and small businesses. I understand the role of the business litigator as counselor and advocate, and the impact of the law on a client's bottom line. As a Superior Court mediator I have heard the concerns of litigants navigating an unfamiliar legal system.

I have been counsel in more than 40 cases in the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court of North Carolina and actively served for 15 years on the Bar Association's Appellate Rules Committee, where I chaired sub-committees studying and recommending changes to rules related to citation of unpublished opinions, and the abolition of assignment of errors.

In addition to extensive appellate experience, I have tried more than 25 cases to jury verdict. I understand the dynamics of trial practice, and I am confident that my experience in the courtroom will well serve me as an appellate judge.

My late father, Henry Hammer, was a successful and well-respected trial lawyer and a truly stellar appellate advocate. I have always been inspired by his honest work ethic and passion for the law. I am certain that his example will continue to be a reminder that the law commands respect only when administered with an even hand. If elected, I will be guided by the principle that the law works only when judges make decisions without regard to their own political beliefs or biases or the popularity of the parties.

Education:

J.D., Campbell University School of Law, 1984

M. Lib., University of South Carolina, 1977

B.A., University of South Carolina, 1974

Experience:

1995-present, Litigation Partner, Wyatt Early Harris Wheeler

2001-2005, Instructor of Business Law, Guilford College

1990-1995, Assistant Public Defender, 18th Judicial District

1986-1987, Law Clerk to the Honorable Louis B. Meyer, Associate Justice, N.C. Supreme Court

1985, Director of Research and Assistant Professor of Law, Campbell University School of Law

Service to Profession:

Guilford Inn of Court, President, 2009-2011

Guilford Inn of Court, Vice President, 2007-2009

Guilford Inn of Court, Secretary/Treasurer, 2005-2007
N.C. Bar Assoc., Member, Appellate Rules Committee, 1990-2010

Judge Mark E. Klass

Senior Resident Superior Court Judge Mark E. Klass is a native of Lexington, North Carolina. He received his B.A. degree from The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and his J.D. degree from Campbell University, Norman A. Wiggins School of Law.



Klass

Judge Klass served as an Assistant District Attorney in the Twenty-second Judicial District from 1984 – 1986.

From 1986 – 1994 he practiced law in Davidson County and from 1994 – 1998 he practiced law in Davidson County and Memphis, Tennessee.

In 1999 he was elected Superior Court Judge for the Twenty-second Judicial District and in 2001 he was appointed by Chief Justice I. Beverly Lake to Senior Resident Superior Court Judge of Judicial District 22B. He is currently serving his second term of office.

Judge Klass is a member of the North Carolina State Bar and the Davidson County Bar Association.

He is married to Becky Parker Klass of Memphis, Tennessee and they have one daughter.

"Judges must treat all parties fairly, with respect, and free of outside influences. I believe in our system, founded on equal access to justice, and believe that judges must apply, not make, the law. I will continue upholding these principles as an appellate judge. I also feel there is a need for justices to have a wide variety of experiences. I hope to bring experience from the types of law that I've practiced, experience from working in the District Attorney's office, and also through the common sense experiences I have gained as a judge trying cases across the State.

The attributes that qualify me to hold this position are that I am fair, even-tempered and hard working. I will give each case careful review, and I will render fair decisions; something I have done while serving as a judge for the past twelve years. Also, being a native North Carolinian from a small rural area, I can give a different perspective, as most of the current judges hail from metropolitan areas.

I hope you will look at my record and see that I have the reputation of being fair, hard working, and willing to do what is right for the judiciary. I would be honored by your vote. Please visit my website at www.voteklass.com."

Senior Resident Superior Court Judge

Appellate Elections, *continued from page 12*

Education:

B.A., UNC-Chapel Hill, 1979

J.D., Campbell University, Norman A. Wiggins School of Law, 1984

Experience:

1984 – 1986, Assistant District Attorney,
Twenty-second Judicial District

1986 – 1994, Practiced law in Davidson County

1994 – 1998, Practiced law in Davidson County and
Memphis, Tennessee

1999 – 2001, Resident Judge, Superior Courts of
North Carolina, Twenty-second Judicial District

2001 – Present, Senior Resident Superior Court Judge,
Superior Courts of North Carolina, Judicial District 22B

Judge Doug McCullough

I wish to thank the North Carolina Association of Defense Attorneys for this opportunity to write about my candidacy to return to the North Carolina Court of Appeals.

In February 2001, I was sworn in as a member of this Court and by December, 2008 had issued approximately 800 opinions while participating in several thousand more decisions. These decisions have affected nearly every area of practice. Thus I believe most lawyers are familiar with the work I did while on this Court. Since leaving the Court of Appeals I have been practicing law with my old firm of Stubbs and Perdue in New Bern focusing on litigation, bankruptcy and criminal defense.

While serving on the Court of Appeals, I also served on the North Carolina Sentencing Commission, the Medico-Legal Guidelines Subcommittee of the North Carolina Bar Association, taught in the UNC Law School legal writing program, and mediated over 25 cases, most successfully, in our appellate mediation program. In private practice I have continued to mediate cases.

Prior to joining the Court, I practiced law in the New Bern firm of Stubbs and Perdue to which I have now returned. Prior to that, I was a career prosecutor with the U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of North Carolina, serving as the Acting U.S. Attorney on two separate occasions.

I have participated in jury trials as a prosecutor, as a criminal defense attorney, and in civil trials. I also argued numerous appellate cases where I represented both the government and individuals or corporations.

If I am returned to the Court I will decide cases fairly

and impartially, respectful of all parties who appear before the Court.

I respectfully ask for your support for my campaign this November.

Website: www.citizensforjudgemccullough.com

Education:

University of South Carolina, J.D.

(Managing Editor Law Review)

University of North Carolina, A.B. History

Occupation:

Attorney, Stubbs and Perdue, January, 2009-date

Experience:

Judge, North Carolina Court of Appeals 2001-2009

Stubbs & Perdue, 1996-2001

U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of North Carolina
1981-1996

Counsel, U.S. Senate 1977-1981

Philadelphia Organized Crime Strike Force 1974-1977

U.S. Marine Corps 1970-1974

Col. United States Marine Corps Reserve (Ret.)

Personal:

Married, with two daughters

Methodist church

Anne Middleton

My experience and dedication to the work of the Court of Appeals, my personal standards of fairness and professionalism, and my knowledge of the true demands of serving as a judge on the Court of Appeals make me uniquely qualified to sit on the Court of Appeals.

My practice of law – all day, every day – involves appellate matters before the North Carolina Court of Appeals and North Carolina Supreme Court. As a member of the Appellate Section at the Attorney General's Office for the past 11 years and as the State's lead appellate attorney for crimes against children, I have handled hundreds of matters before the Court of Appeals. As an advocate before the Court of Appeals, I have handled six times the number of matters before the Court than all the other candidates combined. I have 13 years of appellate experience to the next closest candidate's eight years of appellate experience. I am the only candidate out



McCullough



Middleton

Appellate Elections, *continued from page 13*

of 13 who – win or lose – will regularly appear in the Court of Appeals after November 2nd. My practice is and will remain centered in the Court of Appeals: I am devoted to the work of this Court.

In making a decision about who fits the job best, it is important to know what the job is. On my webpage at www.middletonforjudge.com, I outlined the important function of this Court and how my experience makes me the best qualified candidate for this judgeship. The Court of Appeals decided some 2400 matters last year alone. It is a busy, heavily-burdened Court. I have the record to prove that I can effectively meet the demands of the work and serve the Court as a productive, efficient judge from the first day forward.

Because I know what it takes to be an advocate before the Court, I also know how important it is that the judges we elect truly be fair and impartial to every advocate and every party to an action. Every party with an interest before the Court of Appeals deserves that their issue or controversy be heard on its merits and not with an eye toward a personal or political agenda. I pledge to be fair and impartial on each and every case on which I sit. My reputation sustains this pledge.

I have devoted my life to the things that are most important to me: my family and my career as an advocate before the Court of Appeals and Supreme Court. You could not elect a more diligent, fair, and devoted Court of Appeals judge than I will be.

Henry E. Payne, Jr.

My trial experience came early in my career. I graduated Law Review from Wake Forest University, passed the bar, and set up my own practice without interviewing with a firm. I feared that I would be hired for my writing skills and just had to know if I could compete in the courtroom when someone's freedom, assets or children's custody were on the line.

Politics and a run for the NC House became my opportunity to force myself to climb as many mountains as I could at once. Thought I'd try a jury of 120,000 to make the 12 easier. In the court of public opinion, only I was being judged. To my surprise, I loved it and, even more addictive, it was a real chance to make a different kind of difference.

I was able to blend 15 years of growing a law firm in my hometown with 12 years of legislative responsibility representing it.

As candidate, I was free to campaign on how I could

change the law. As a six-term legislator, I devoted every moment to keeping those promises. My perspective became broader than the focused demands of a particular case. Though the job of legislator requires one to stretch and be conversant in the full spectrum of legal issues, the reality is that a public body rewards some degree of specialization.

I chose the law of the workplace and, after twelve years of building expertise, the role of NC Commissioner of Labor was a natural next step. After election my knowledge in this area was shaped and tested for eight more years beneath a bright public light that seemed half the distance between the Legislature and the General Court of Justice. I also learned the challenges of being a large employer. Trust me, there is no group of employees more aware of their rights under the law than those who enforce it every day.

By 2001, I could not return to elective politics without conflicting with my wife's journalism career. I was appointed to Chair (CEO) the North Carolina Employment Security Commission where I served seven years. While the Commission could and did hear important cases, the vast number of cases and appeals was a daily challenge. There were broad complex legal issues we faced affecting the viability of our rating system and your Unemployment Trust Fund.

Since the end of my ESC term, I have become the manager of compliance of the billions of recovery dollars coming to North Carolina. I have also been the point person of the NC Office of Economic Recovery and Investment regarding the spectrum of bond offerings.

My path now leads me to the Court of Appeals. This court offers time to study and reflect on tough issues distant from the passions of the trial with the benefit of collective judgment. My background has been perfect training for this and it is in that study and reflection where I have comfort and confidence. That I don't present to you with either a bloody nose or a victory dance from a recent case should be some source of confidence that I can approach the questions in a dispassionate way.

I lay down my previous burdens of advocacy and policy fully understanding the role of the Court of Appeals. I retain however the depth of experience, judgment and season that comes from a life of legal service and offer a unique understanding of the laws that touch the lives of working people.

Experience:

1. Manager of Compliance, North Carolina Office of Economic Recovery and Investment (present)
2. Chairman, North Carolina Employment Security Commission (7 years)
3. Commissioner, North Carolina Department of Labor,



Payne, Jr.

Member North Carolina Council of State
(two terms)

4. Legislator, NC House of Representatives (Six terms)
5. Private practice of law (solo practice that became Scott, Payne, Boyle and Swart, Wilmington NC)
15 years

Educational background:

B.A UNC-Chapel Hill (1974)

Psychology and Political Science

J.D. Wake Forest University School of Law (Law Review)

Personal:

I am married to Ruth Sheehan and we have three sons: Harley (age 14), Tucker (age 12) and Franklin (age 7).

John C. Sullivan

At the time of printing, The Defender had not received a statement from Mr. Sullivan.

Judge Cressie H. Thigpen

Cressie Thigpen Jr. is a product of North Carolina. He grew up in Greensboro, Raeford, and Fayetteville N.C. His parents, both educators, taught him the value of education and hard work.

He earned a BA in Business Administration with a minor in Spanish from North Carolina Central University.

While there, he was selected as one of six students to work with the Peace Corps during the summer. After graduating from NCCU he became a Peace Corps volunteer in India.

He attended Rutgers University School of Law.

After graduating from law school he started a solo practice. Two years after opening his solo practice he and a friend, Dan Blue, formed the law firm later known as Thigpen, Blue, Stephens & Fellers.

Judge Thigpen's broad legal experience uniquely qualifies him to serve on the NC Court of Appeals.

- He is presently a Judge on the North Carolina Court of Appeals, having been appointed by Governor Beverly Perdue on August 23, 2010
- He has been a Special Superior Court Judge for over two years. During this time he held court in 39 counties and earned a reputation as a fair, impartial and hardworking judge.
- He has 35 years as a trial lawyer representing both


plaintiffs and defendants in real estate, domestic, criminal, civil, and business cases.

- President of the North Carolina State Bar. He was the first African American elected to this position in the 66 year history of the State Bar. During his tenure as State Bar President he was able to increase the number of women and African Americans serving on various committees and boards of the State Bar.
- NC Bar Association General Practice Hall of Fame
- NC Board of Law Examiners
- Adjunct Instructor - North Carolina Central University.
- Board of Trustees, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- Chairman- Board of Trustees, North Carolina Central University.

Judge Thigpen's judicial philosophy is simple. He believes in the rule of law, the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of North Carolina. He believes in dispensing justice fairly, impartially and without favoritism. He believes that every person has a right to have his or her day in court.

His philosophy of life is also simple. Treat people as you would have them treat you. Look after the very young and the very old because they are the most vulnerable in our society. Believe in God. The most important things in life are faith, family and friends.

Pamela M. Vesper

At the time of printing, The Defender had not received a statement from Ms. Vesper. 



Thigpen