

**The Chicago Council of Lawyers Evaluation Report:
Judges Seeking Retention in the November 2020 General Election and
Judicial Candidates Seeking to Fill Judicial Vacancies**

September 15, 2020

The Chicago Council of Lawyers, in this report, releases its evaluation of the judges seeking retention in the November 3rd general election. We also include in this report our evaluation of the candidates who won their primary election held in March 2020 and who are on the November ballot.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY FOR RETENTION CANDIDATES

The criteria for the Council's evaluations are whether the retention candidate has demonstrated the ability to serve on the relevant court in the following categories:

- fairness, including sensitivity to diversity and bias
- legal knowledge and skills (competence)
- integrity
- experience
- diligence
- impartiality
- judicial temperament
- respect for the rule of law
- independence from political and institutional influences
- professional conduct
- character
- community service

If a candidate has demonstrated the ability to perform the work required of a judge in all of these areas, the Council assigns a rating of "qualified." If a candidate has demonstrated excellence in most of these areas, the Council assigns a rating of "well qualified." If a candidate has demonstrated excellence in all of these areas, the Council assigns a rating of "highly qualified." If a candidate has not demonstrated that he or she meets all of the criteria evaluated by the Council, the Council assigns a rating of "not qualified." As part of the evaluation process, we require candidates to provide us with detailed information about their backgrounds, including any complaints filed against them with the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission

(“ARDC”) or the Judicial Inquiry Board (“JIB”).

In conducting these evaluations, the Council has participated in a joint investigation and interview process with the Alliance of Bar Associations for Judicial Screening (“Alliance”). The Alliance includes the following bar associations: Arab American Bar Association, Asian American Bar Association, Black Women Lawyers Association, Chicago Council of Lawyers, Cook County Bar Association, Decalogue Society of Lawyers, Hellenic Bar Association, Hispanic Lawyers’ Association of Illinois, Illinois State Bar Association, Lesbian and Gay Bar Association of Chicago, Puerto Rican Bar Association, and the Women’s Bar Association of Illinois.

The Council’s evaluation process includes:

- (1) a review of a written informational questionnaire provided to the Alliance by the candidate, including details of the candidate’s career and professional development and information on any complaints filed against the candidate with the JIB or the ARDC;
- (2) a review of the candidate’s written responses to the supplemental essay questionnaire;
- (3) interviews of judges, attorneys, and others with personal knowledge about the candidate, including those who have and those who have not been referred to the Alliance by the candidate, and not restricted to Council members;
- (4) a review of the candidate’s professional written work, where available;
- (5) an interview of the candidate done jointly with the Alliance;
- (6) review of any information concerning the candidate provided by the ARDC or the JIB;
- (7) a review of any other information available from public records, such as the Board of Election Commissioners and prosecutorial agencies; and
- (8) an evaluation of all the above materials by the Council’s Judicial Evaluation Committee;
- (9) submission of the proposed evaluation and write-up to the candidate prior to its public release, to provide an opportunity for comment, correction, or reconsideration.
- (10) the candidate is given a reasonable period of time to submit a written appeal of the Council’s rating and written findings. The appeal is a written response to concerns discussed in the proposed write-up. The appeal is reviewed by both members of the original committee and by individuals who work with the Committee exclusively for appeals. Appellate decision-making is done by consensus.

The Council places special importance on interviews with attorneys who practice before

the judge, particularly those who were not referred to the Council by the candidate. Most evaluations are based on information gathered and interviews held during the few months just prior to the general election.

In evaluating candidates, the Council expresses written reasons for its conclusions. Without knowing the reason for a recommendation concerning a candidate, the public cannot use the bar's evaluations intelligently to draw its own conclusions.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RETENTION ELECTIONS

The retention elections provide the voter with an opportunity to remove those judges whose judicial performance has been, in some respect, unsatisfactory. Retention elections provide the only practical opportunity for the voters as a whole to focus on the performance of judges, with a realistic opportunity to defeat those candidates who deserve to be defeated.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY FOR JUDICIAL CANDIDATES IN CONTESTED ELECTIONS

Judicial candidates seeking election must run for specific vacancies. Candidates seeking election to the Circuit Court – which is the County's trial-level court for both civil and criminal matters – may run in either a countywide or a subcircuit race. Legislation creating the subcircuits provides that approximately one-third of the judges are elected by voters of the entire County, and each of the remaining judges elected by voters runs in one of fifteen geographical districts into which the County has been arbitrarily divided. Once elected, there is no distinction between a "countywide" judge and a "subcircuit" judge. Either kind can be assigned to any judicial post in the County.

The Council rates candidates as "*highly qualified*," "*well qualified*," "*qualified*," or "*not qualified*." If a candidate refuses to submit his or her credentials to the Council, that candidate is rated "*not recommended*" unless the Council is aware of credible information that would justify a "not qualified" rating. Because we believe a willingness to participate in bar association and other public evaluations is a key indicator of fitness for public office, no candidate who refuses to be screened can be found "qualified."

We apply higher standards to candidates for the Supreme Court and the Appellate Court. Because these Courts establish legal precedents that bind the lower courts, their work has a broad impact on the justice system. Moreover, qualities of scholarship and writing ability are more important to the work of the Supreme and Appellate Court justices than they are to satisfactory performance as a trial judge.

The Council does *not* evaluate candidates based on their substantive views of political or social issues. Nor do we take into account the particular race in which a candidate is running or the candidates against whom a candidate is running. We apply a uniform standard for all

countywide and subcircuit elections because judges elected through either method can be assigned to any judicial position in the Circuit Court.

It should be noted that a lawyer might be performing well or even very well without being qualified to be a judge. A good lawyer may be unqualified to be a judge, for instance, because of a narrow range of prior experience, limited trial experience, or limited work doing legal research and writing. A lawyer may have the temperament and intelligence to be a judge without yet having worked in a position that would allow the candidate to demonstrate that capacity. Accordingly, it should be recognized and expected that we will rate some good lawyers “not qualified.”

Retention Elections (all ballots)

John M. Allegretti--Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, First Municipal District, Non-Jury Civil Section

Elected to Circuit Court in 2014

Judge Allegretti was elected to the bench in 2014, and now sits in the First Municipal District, Non-Jury Civil Section. Before becoming a judge, Hon. John Allegretti served as General Counsel to the Office of the Cook County Assessor’s Office, as a hearing officer for the Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board, as a Cook County Assistant State’s Attorney doing civil rights and tort litigation defense work, and in private practice doing domestic relations and bankruptcy work.

Judge Allegretti is generally praised for his substantive knowledge of the law and patience in managing a call that includes a substantial number of litigants unrepresented by legal counsel. He is considered to have a calm demeanor and is reported to treat litigants fairly and with respect. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Mauricio Araujo—Not Recommended

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, First Municipal District. Now on administrative leave due to disciplinary

charges now pending.

Elected Circuit Court Judge in 2008

Judge Araujo refused to participate in the evaluation. The Council finds him Not Recommended for retention to the Circuit Court.

Edward A. Arce-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Domestic Relations Division, Calendar D

Elected Circuit Court Judge in 2008

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Edward A. Arce had been a partner at the general civil litigation firm Whitcup & Arce since 1986. Judge Arce was elected to the bench in 2008, and sits in the Domestic Relations Division. Judge Arce is praised for his strong command of family law. He is considered to have good legal ability and is diligent about staying knowledgeable about the law. He is considered to be exceptionally patient and treats everyone with respect and dignity. He is reported to have a good temperament. He is widely respected as a jurist. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Margaret A. Brennan-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Supervising Judge, Circuit Court, Law Division, Calendar N
Commercial Calendar Section

Elected to the Circuit Court in 2002

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Margaret A. Brennan was Assistant General Counsel for Exelon Business Services. She has also served as an Assistant Corporation Counsel for the City of Chicago. Judge Brennan is generally considered to be a solid jurist with good legal ability and she is praised for her courtroom management skills. She is described as being prepared and having full understanding of the issues before her. Respondents say she expects lawyer before her to also be prepared and knowledgeable. She is also reported to issue legal issues which are well-reasoned. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Janet Adams Brosnahan-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Law Division, Trial Section

Elected to the Circuit Court in 2002

Judge Brosnahan currently is assigned to the Law Division. She was retained in 2014. Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Janet Brosnahan was a senior associate at the general practice firm James J Roche & Associates from 1997 to 2002. Judge Brosnahan began civil litigation work as an associate at Whitfield, McGann & Ketterman in 1994. Before that she had been an associate at the now dissolved Hugh J McCarthy & Associates firm for four years.

Judge Brosnahan is generally described as having excellent legal knowledge and praised for being fair and extremely hardworking. She is reported to have a good temperament and is praised for the management of her courtroom. She is reported to be adept at handling complex trials with patience and competence. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Andrea M. Buford-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Child Protection Division, Calendar 4D

Elected to the bench in 2014

Hon. Andrea Michele Buford is assigned to the Child Protection Division. She was admitted to practice in 1986. She was appointed to the Circuit Court by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2011. Before becoming a judge, she had been a sole practitioner since 2001. She served as a Hearing Officer with the Illinois State Board of Education, a Commissioner with the Illinois Court of Claims, and a Hearing Officer with the Illinois Department of Human Services. From 1998 to 2001 she was a Partner with Buford Peters Ware & Zanzitis, and was an Associate and then a Partner with Jones Ware & Grenard from 1986 to 1998.

Judge Buford is considered to have a good knowledge of the law and is praised for her courtroom management skills. She is reported to be fair and respectful to all parties. She is punctual and demands that all parties be the same. She is a well-respected jurist. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Thomas J. Byrne-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Criminal Division

Elected Circuit Court Judge in 2008

Judge Thomas Byrne is assigned to the Criminal Division. Prior to becoming a judge, he served as an Assistant Cook County State's Attorney, and was the supervisor in the Third Municipal District for 5 years. Judge Byrne is currently sitting at the Criminal Division of Cook County. Judge Byrne's previous judicial assignments included the Misdemeanor Branch Court of the First Municipal Division from 2008 to 2013.

Judge Byrne is considered to have good legal ability and is praised for his knowledge of the law. He is praised for his courtroom management, and for his temperament. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Thomas J. Carroll-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Supervising Judge, Circuit Court, Sixth Municipal District

Appointed as Circuit Judge by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2011 elected to the bench in 2014

Hon. Thomas Joseph Carroll is a Supervising Judge in the Sixth Municipal District. He was admitted in 1988. He was appointed to the Circuit Court by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2011. He was an Assistant Public Defender for four years, moving from juvenile to misdemeanor to felony work. He had been a sole practitioner specializing in criminal defense.

Judge Carroll is considered to have good legal ability and is praised for his temperament and his fairness. His rulings are reported to be well-reasoned and thoughtful. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Cynthia Y. Cobbs-Well Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Illinois Appellate Judge, First District, Third Division

Appointed as Judge to the Circuit Court in 2011, elected to the Circuit Court in 2014, assigned to the Appellate Court in 2015

Hon. Cynthia Y. Cobbs was admitted to practice in 1988. In 2014, she was appointed to the First District Appellate Court, and she remains in that position. Originally, appointed as a Circuit Court Judge in 2011 and then elected in 2014, her previous judicial duties included Forcible Entry and Detainer (2012-2015), Civil Jury Trials (2014), Pro Se Court (2012-2013), Small Claims/Debt Collector/Breach of Contract (2012), and Traffic Court (2011). Prior to becoming a judge, she served in a variety of positions at the Supreme Court of Illinois's Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts, including Director of (2002-2011), Chief Legal Counsel (1999-2002), and Secretary to the Supreme Court Rules Committee (1997-1999). She is a member of a number of bar associations, including the Illinois State Bar Association, the Black Women Lawyer Association, and the Illinois Judicial Council, where she has served as Chair (2018-2019).

Judge Cobbs lacked litigation experience when she took the trial court bench, but has since established herself as both a solid trial court jurist and as an appellate court judge. She is praised for her legal ability and for always being prepared. She is reported to have good temperament. She is also praised for the quality of her written decisions. The Council finds her Well Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Mary Ellen Coghlan-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Illinois Appellate Court, First District, Second Division

Appointed Circuit Court Judge in 1995; elected to the Circuit Court in 1996; assigned to the Appellate Court in 2019

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Mary E. Coghlan was an Assistant Attorney General for the Illinois Attorney General's Office, working in the General Law Division. She was also an Assistant Public Defender in the Cook County Public Defender's Office. Before that, Judge Coghlan was in private practice. In 2010, Judge Coghlan became Presiding Judge of the Probate Division. She was first assigned to the Criminal Division in 1995 and transferred to the Probate Division in 2003. She was appointed by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2019 to fill a vacancy on the Illinois Appellate Court. On the Appellate Court, Judge Coughlin is reported as having a good temperament as always being prepared. As a trial judge, she was reportedly knowledgeable about the law, was well-prepared, and ruled promptly. She was praised for her temperament. She is very involved in systemic reform efforts. The Council finds her Qualified for retention.

Ann Collins-Dole-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Law Division, Trial Section

Elected Circuit Court Judge in 2008

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Ann E. Collins-Dole served six years as Chief Assistant Corporation Counsel for the City of Chicago. She has also worked as a supervising attorney, trial attorney and municipal 7 prosecutor for the city. Judge Collins-Dole was first elected to the bench in 2008. She is considered to be a knowledgeable jurist with an excellent temperament. She is praised for the quality of her opinions. Lawyers generally consider her to be a solid jurist. The Council finds her Qualified for retention.

Donna L. Cooper-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Juvenile Justice Division, Calendar 76, Sixth Municipal District

Elected Circuit Court Judge in 2008

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Donna L. Cooper was an Assistant Corporation Counsel in the City of Chicago Department of Law's Torts Division and Municipal Prosecutions Division. She has also worked in the Chicago Park District Law Department, and as a Cook County Public Defender. Before that, she was a technical advisor for the Illinois Industrial Commission. Judge Cooper is currently sitting at the Juvenile Justice Division, to which she was assigned in 2009. Judge Cooper was assigned to the juvenile calendar in the Sixth Municipal District in 2010. Judge Cooper is praised for her knowledge and legal ability by most lawyers; there are lawyers who question her knowledge but also say she does the work necessary to make well-reasoned rulings. She is reported to have a temperament which is stern but professional. She demonstrates good court management skills. The Council finds her Qualified for retention.

Patrick K. Coughlin-Well Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Sixth Municipal District

Elected to the bench in 2014

Judge Patrick K. Coughlin was elected to the bench in 2014. He was admitted in 1996. Prior to

becoming a judge, he served as a career Cook County Assistant State's Attorney. Lawyers express respect for Judge Coughlin's legal knowledge and ability. He is reported to be hard-working and shows patience toward those before him, including those unrepresented by legal counsel. He is praised for his courtroom management skills. He was also praised for his initiatives in helping the Markham courthouse respond to the pandemic. The Council finds him Well Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

John J. Curry Jr.-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Law Division
Tax and Miscellaneous Remedies Section

Elected to the Circuit Court in 2014

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. John Curry was a shareholder and attorney with Polsinelli, PC., a national law firm, where he focused on business litigation matters. From 1983 to 1986 he served as a trial attorney in the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice. From 1981 to 1983 he was an Illinois Assistant Attorney General where he was assigned to the Special Litigation Section. From 1995 to 1998, he was an Illinois Special Assistant Attorney General assigned to prosecute eminent domain cases. Judge Curry was elected to the bench in 2014. Judge Curry is considered to be very knowledgeable and is praised for his courtroom management skills. He is reported to be well prepared and has a calm demeanor. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Anna Helen Demacopoulos-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Chancery Division, General Chancery Section

Elected Circuit Court Judge in 2008

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Anna H. Demacopoulos was a career Assistant Cook County State's Attorney. Judge Demacopoulos was elected to the bench in 2008 and is currently sitting in the Chancery Division. Judge Demacopoulos is considered to have good legal ability and knowledge of the law. She is praised as a willing and quick study of topics with which she is not familiar. She is considered to be exceptionally hard-working and is reported to have good courtroom management skills. A few attorneys noted she can be short-tempered on the bench, but most praised her temperament. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Peter A. Felice-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Fifth Municipal District

Elected Circuit Court Judge in 2002

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Peter A. Felice was in private practice. Judge Felice is currently sitting at the Fifth Municipal District Judge Felice's previous judicial assignments included the First Municipal District and the Domestic Violence Division. Judge Felice is considered to have good legal ability and knowledge of the law. He is praised as a hardworking and his praised as being fair and respectful to all parties. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

James P. Flannery, Jr.-Well Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Presiding Judge, Circuit Court, Law Division, Trial Section

Elected to the Circuit Court in 1988

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. James P. Flannery worked as assistant corporation counsel in municipal and federal litigation for the City of Chicago until 1980, when he was hired as an associate attorney for Murphy, Preston & Jaffe. Judge Flannery worked in corporate, real estate, and labor law for two years before establishing a general practice as an associate at John T. Mitchell & associates. In 1984 Flannery worked as a solo practitioner maintaining his general practice before being hired as chief assistant attorney general where he was assigned to the Land Acquisition division in 1985.

Judge Flannery's current assignment is Presiding Judge of the Law Division, where he has served since January, 2014 and supervised approximately 50 judges in the Law Division. His administrative duties include handling assignment and motion calls, as well as hearing contested motions involving the Law Jury section, Motion section, Commercial section, Tax and Miscellaneous section, and Individual calendar section of the Law Division of the Circuit Court. Previous judicial assignments include an assignment to the Law Division, Jury Section in 1997, where he presided over jury trials primarily involving personal injury and commercial cases. Before that, Judge Flannery spent 5 years assigned to the Criminal Division of the Circuit Court of Cook County where he heard every type of felony case, including death penalty cases, with as many as 300 cases on his docket at any given time.

Judge Flannery is considered to have very good legal ability and an excellent knowledge of the law. He has introduced improvements in the Law Division. He is praised for his administrative function, as well as for his performance as a trial judge. He is reported to offer thorough and accurate legal analysis of often complex issues and is reported to serve as a mentor to many other judges. He is also praised for his fairness and integrity. He has an excellent demeanor and many respondents noted that he treats all parties fairly while having a calm yet effective temperament. The Council finds him Well Qualified for retention.

Megan E. Goldish-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Domestic Violence Division

Elected as Judge to Circuit Court in 2014

Prior to becoming a judge in 2014, Hon. Megan Goldish served as Assistant Cook County State's Attorney. She worked as a First Chair prosecutor in a felony trial courtroom, and served as the First Chair in the WINGSS Felony Prostitution Call, a well-respected diversion program. As a judge, she is currently assigned to the Domestic Violence Division. She is praised for her knowledge of the law and for the respect she shows all persons in her courtroom. She is reported to have a calm and patient demeanor. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Robert E. Gordon-Well Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Illinois Appellate Judge, First District, Fourth Division

Appointed Circuit Court Judge in 1996; elected to the Circuit Court in 2002; appointed to the Illinois Appellate Court in 2006.

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Robert Gordon spent 5 years working as an Associate Partner doing Insurance Defense work at Gordon & Brustin, followed by 10 years as a Partner and Insurance Defense litigator for Gordon Brustin. He then spent another 5 years as a Partner at Gordon, Schaefer, & Gordon, Ltd. where he represented both plaintiffs and defendants in litigation. Gordon then became President of Gordon & Gordon, Ltd. where he spent 15 years in General Litigation.

Justice Gordon is currently a Circuit Court judge sitting by appointment by the Illinois Supreme

Court to the Illinois Appellate Court, First District since 2005. Prior judicial assignments also included presiding over jury cases as a Jury trial Judge in the Law Division at Richard Daley Center, and presiding as a Jury Trial judge in the Municipal Division.

Justice Gordon is considered to be a highly knowledgeable Appellate Court Justice who is praised for the quality of his written opinions and for the quality of his questioning during oral argument. He is considered to be exceptionally hard-working and prepared. He is widely praised for his temperament and for his integrity. He was also praised as an excellent trial judge before 2005. The Council finds him Well Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Anjana M.J. Hansen-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Second Municipal District

Elected to Circuit Court in 2014

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Anjana Hansen was a contract attorney with the City of Evanston, conducting administrative hearings in the areas of police, property standards, health, and fire. She had served as the Alderman for the 9th Ward of the City of Evanston, and was a former Assistant Cook County State's Attorney. She was in part responsible for establishing an administrative hearings unit within the State's Attorney's Office, which included educating potential witnesses about the legal requirements. Judge Hansen is assigned to the Second Municipal District in Skokie. She is considered to have good legal ability and knowledge of the law. She is respected for her courtroom management and for her temperament. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Michael B. Hyman-Highly Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Illinois Appellate Judge, First District, Second Division

Appointed to the Circuit Court in 2006; assigned to Illinois Appellate Court in 2013

Hon. Michael Hyman was admitted to practice in 1977, Prior to taking the bench, he spent two years with the Illinois Attorney General's Office, and then began a career with the law firm of Much Shelist. Since 2013, he has been on the Appellate Court by appointment, including his appointment to the seat vacated when Justice Neville was appointed to the Supreme Court in 2018. He was appointed to the Circuit Court in 2008, elected in 2008, and retained in 2014.

Justice Hyman is considered to have excellent legal ability and is reported to be always prepared. He is reported to be an active and thoughtful during oral arguments. In addition to opinions, he has published extensively. Respondents spoke highly of his professionalism and temperament. The Council finds him Highly Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Kerry M. Kennedy-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Fifth Municipal District

Elected to the Circuit Court in 2002.

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Kerry Kennedy worked as Assistant Cook County Public Defender from 1979 to 2002. Currently Judge Kennedy is assigned to the Fifth Municipal District hearing felony trials. Judge Kennedy is considered to be a knowledgeable jurist with a good temperament. He is praised for his fairness and for his courtroom management skills. The Council finds him Qualified for retention.

Diana L. Kenworthy-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Criminal Division

Elected Circuit Judge in 2008

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Diana Kenworthy was an Assistant Cook County Public Defender from 1996 to 2000. In 2004, she began working as an arbitrator for the Circuit Court's Mandatory Arbitration Program before becoming a hearing officer in the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District. Between 2000 and 2008 she also developed her practice as a partner at Jester, Kenworthy and Eagle LLC. She was elected to the bench in 2008. Currently, Judge Kenworthy sits in the Criminal Division. Judge Kenworthy is considered to be a knowledgeable judge with a good temperament. She is praised for the quality of her opinions. She is reported to be fair to all parties. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Maureen Ward Kirby-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, County Division, Calendar 10

Elected Circuit Court Judge in 2008

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Maureen Ward Kirby was partner at Bell, Boyd and Lloyd (now known as KL Gates), after spending seven years there as an associate and summer associate between 1989 and 1995. Judge Kirby was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2007, and was elected to the bench in 2008. Currently she is assigned to the County Division where she has served since 2009. Judge Kirby presides over adoptions, civil mental health proceedings, election disputes, tax disputes and other matters.

Judge Kirby is praised for her knowledge of the law and for her well-reasoned opinions. She is described as “meticulous” in her work as a jurist and is always well-prepared. She is courteous and polite on the bench and is reported to be respectful to every party appearing before her. She is praised for her courtroom management skills. She is considered hard-working and diligent. The Council finds her Qualified for retention.

Daniel J. Kubasiak-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Law Division, Calendar T
Commercial Calendar Section

Elected as Judge to Circuit Court in 2014

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Daniel J. Kubasiak had been in private practice for most of his career with the exception of serving as Chief Administrative Officer for the City of Chicago between 1983 and 1987. He was appointed to the Circuit Court by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2012 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2014. He is currently assigned to the Law Division. Judge Kubasiak is considered to have good legal ability and knowledge of the law. He is reported have a good temperament. The Council received a few comments questioning his equitable treatment of lawyers appearing before him. But in these situations, others who had witnessed the interactions disagreed that Judge Kubasiak had acted inequitably. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Robert D. Kuzas-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, First Municipal District – Misdemeanor/Ordinance

Elected as Judge to Circuit Court in 2014

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Robert Kuzas was a solo practitioner where he focuses on criminal defense, personal injury, and labor relations cases. He had been in private practice throughout his career. Judge Kuzas is considered to have good legal ability and knowledge of the law. He is reported to have a good temperament and is reported to be fair to all parties and is praised for his courtroom management. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Anthony C. Kyriakopoulos-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Chancery Division, Calendar 52
Mortgage Foreclosure / Mechanics Lien Section

Appointed as a Circuit Judge by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2010 and again in 2012. Elected to the bench in 2014.

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Anthony C Kyriakopoulos had served as an Assistant State's Attorney in the Money Laundering Unit of the Narcotics Bureau. He was appointed to the court by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2010, appointed to another vacancy in 2012, and was elected to the bench in 2014. He is currently assigned to the Chancery Division, Mortgage Foreclosure/Mechanics Lien Section. Judge Kyriakopoulos is considered to be exceptionally knowledgeable about mechanics lien law, with a good judicial temperament. He is a respected jurist. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Christopher E. Lawler-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Law Division, Calendar R
Motion Calendar Section

Elected as Circuit Judge in 2014

Before becoming a judge, Hon. Christopher E. Lawler was in private practice focusing on insurance defense work. From 1991-1995 he was an Associate Attorney for Coleman & O'Halloran, and from 1988-1991 he was an Associate Attorney for Law Offices of Clifford P. Mallon. He was with the firm of Hilbert, Lawler & Power, Ltd from 1995 to 2013. Judge Lawler is currently assigned to the Law Division, Motion Calendar Section. Judge Lawler was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2013 and elected to the court in 2014. Judge Lawler is praised for his legal knowledge, even temperament, and his courtroom management skills. Lawyers report that he is fair to all parties, and is well-prepared. The Council finds him Qualified

for retention to the Circuit Court.

Cassandra Lewis-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Law Division, Trial Section

Elected to the Circuit Court in 2002.

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Cassandra Lewis spent nine years in private practice and two years as an Assistant Kane County State's Attorney. She was elected to the bench in 2002. Judge Lewis is assigned to the Law Division, Trial Section. Judge Lewis is reported to be a hard-working with a good temperament. She manages her courtroom well, and is praised for being fair to all parties. Attorneys note that she is diligent in doing the research necessary to always being knowledgeable about the area of law being tried before her. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Pamela E. Loza-Well Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Domestic Relations Division, Calendar 99

Elected Circuit Judge in 2008

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Pamela Loza was a partner at Loza & Associates, Ltd., where handled mostly divorce and criminal cases in numerous counties in Illinois. She also spent time as partner at Cameron, Loza & Associates and Cameron, Loza and Walsh, P.C. from 1987-2002 and 1984-1987 respectively. As an associate at Marder & Seidler Ltd. she practiced in divorce and criminal court after four years working as a Cook County assistant state's attorney.

Judge Loza is currently assigned to the Domestic Relations Division. Judge Loza is considered to have very good legal ability and is described as being very knowledgeable about the law. She is praised for her courtroom management skills and for being fair and respectful to all parties. She has participated in major efforts to bring about systemic reform of the Domestic Relations Division. The Council finds her Well Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

John J. Mahoney III-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Fifth Municipal District

Elected as Judge to Circuit Court in 2014

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. John J. Mahoney served as an Assistant Cook County State's Attorney, and was the Supervisor of the Public Corruption and Financial Crimes Unit in the Special Prosecutions Bureau. He is currently assigned to the Fifth Municipal District. Judge Mahoney is considered to have good legal knowledge and legal ability. Lawyers generally report that he has good judicial temperament. Issues have been raised about whether he is sufficiently sensitive to diversity and bias, but our investigation uncovered no examples of these issues. On balance, the Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Patricia Martin

Judge Patricia Martin informed the Alliance of Bar Associations that she is retiring from the bench. Her name, however, remains on the ballot.

Maritza Martinez-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Domestic Relations Division, Calendar 97

Elected to the Circuit Court in 2014

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Maritza Martinez was an Associate in the Law Offices of Victor J. Cacciatore where she had a litigation practice in criminal defense, civil law, and administrative matters. She was a Commissioner for the Illinois Court of Claims, and had been an associate at the Law Offices of Robert Fisher doing criminal defense work. In 2004, she was at a small firm doing insurance defense and catastrophic loss work, and from 1991 until 2004, she was with the City of Chicago Department of Law doing prosecution and civil rights defense. Judge Martinez was elected to the bench in 2014. She is currently assigned to the Domestic Relations Division. Judge Martinez is well-respected for her knowledge of the law and for her temperament. She did not have substantial experience in domestic relations issues when she took the bench, and lawyers noted that she had worked hard to reduce the learning curve. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Terrence J. McGuire-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Probate Division, Calendar 11
Decedent Estates

Elected to the Circuit Court in 2014

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Terrence J. McGuire was a solo practitioner focusing on estate planning, probate, and real estate transactions. He was also an administrative law judge in ordinance enforcement proceedings. He had little litigation experience in more complex matters. He was elected to the bench in 2014. He is currently assigned to the Probate Division. Judge McGuire had little experience in probate law when he was assigned to the Probate Division. By all accounts, he worked hard to reduce the size of the learning curve and today is a well respected jurist. He is considered knowledgeable and is praised for the fairness and respect that he shows all parties. He is praised for being decisive. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Pamela McLean Meyerson-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Chancery Division, Calendar 11
General Chancery Section

Elected to the Circuit Court in 2014

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon Pamela McLean Meyerson had been a sole practitioner, handling civil and commercial litigation in the Circuit Court of Cook County. She also organized and advised small businesses. Between 1983 and 1985 she was in private practice at Antonow & Fink and was an associate with Goldberg Kohn Bell Black Rosenbloom & Moritz between 1985 and 1989. She was appointed to the Circuit Court by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2013, and currently sits in the Chancery Division. Judge Meyerson is a well-respected jurist who is praised for her knowledge of the law and for being exceptionally hard-working. Lawyers noted that she had to deal with a learning curve when she was assigned to Chancery and was able to handle the caseload, including reducing a substantial backlog of cases. She is considered to be a knowledgeable jurist with a good demeanor. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Bridget A. Mitchell-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Circuit Court, Law Division, Trial Section

Elected as Judge, Circuit Court, 2014

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Bridget Anne Mitchell spent her career in private practice, with an extensive record of civil litigation in more complex matters. Judge Mitchell was elected to the bench in 2014. Judge Mitchell is considered to be a knowledgeable judge and is praised for her temperament. Her rulings are detailed and considered to be well-reasoned. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Caroline Kate Moreland-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Chancery Division, Calendar 10

Appointed as a Circuit Judge by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2010 and 2012. Elected to the bench in 2014

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Caroline Moreland served as an Assistant Cook County State's Attorney. She was appointed to the bench to fill a judicial vacancy in September 2010. She was appointed to another vacancy in 2012 and elected to the bench in 2014. She is currently assigned to the Chancery Division. Judge Moreland is considered to have extensive knowledge of the law and is praised for her courtroom management skills and innovations. She is reported to be fair and respectful to all parties. She is also praised for her punctuality in starting her court calls. She is a well-respected jurist. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Lewis Michael Nixon-Well Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Supervising Judge, Circuit Court, Chancery Division, Calendar 53

Mortgage Foreclosure / Mechanics Lien Section

Elected Associate Judge by Circuit Judges in 2001; elected to the Circuit Court in 2002.

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Lewis Nixon was regional counsel for the United States Department of Housing & Urban Development from 1983 until 2002. Before that, Judge Nixon was a trial attorney for the Burlington Northern Railroad Council Law Department until 1983, after which he was an associate at Conklin & Adler from 1979-1980. Judge Nixon began his professional career as an assistant to the Northern District of Illinois State's Attorney from 1975 to 1979. He became an Associate Judge in 2001 and was elected to the bench in 2002. Judge Nixon is currently the Supervising Judge of the Mortgage Foreclosure/ Mechanics Lien Section of the

Chancery Division. Judge Nixon's previous judicial assignments included sitting at the Chancery division hearing Mechanics Lien cases until 2008, when he was appointed Supervising Judge. Judge Nixon is considered to have very good legal ability and is exceptionally knowledgeable about the law. He is praised for his courtroom management. He is reported to be fair to all parties and treats everyone with respect. The Council finds him Well Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

James N. O'Hara-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Law Division, Calendar A
Motion Section

Elected Circuit Judge in 2008

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. James O'Hara was a solo practitioner in Chicago and also served as an Assistant Cook County Public Defender and as an Assistant Illinois Attorney General. Judge O'Hara is currently sitting at the Law Division hearing motions cases. Judge O'Hara is praised for his legal knowledge and legal ability. He is reported to have a good temperament and is fair to all parties. He is praised for his courtroom management skills and for the thoroughness and quality of his decisions. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

James Paul Pieczonka-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Third Municipal District

Elected as Circuit Court Judge in 2014

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. James Paul Pieczonka spent most of his career as a sole practitioner doing both transactional work and litigation. In addition to his legal practice, he had been involved in real estate development matters. From 1985 to 1996, he also worked as an Administrative Law Judge for the Illinois Department of Revenue in the Hearings Division. Judge Pieczonka had limited litigation experience when he was elected to be a judge in 2014. But lawyers say that he has overcome that weakness and has become a respected jurist. He is consistently described as being prepared and having a full understanding of the issues before him. He is praised for the thoroughness and quality of his rulings. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to

the Circuit Court.

Jackie Marie Portman-Brown - Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, First Municipal District

Elected Circuit Judge in 2008

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Jackie Marie Portman-Brown was general counsel at the Independent Police Review Authority from 2005 to 2008. From 1998 to 2005, she served as an Assistant Cook County State's Attorney Judge Portman-Brown has served as thee Presiding Judge of Adult Redeploy Illinois for the First Municipal District as well as the Presiding Judge of the State's Attorney Office Deferred Prosecution Program. Some attorneys report that she is knowledgeable about the law and innovative, and that she applies the law with compassion. But other attorneys noted a pattern of judicial behavior demonstrating a lack of professionalism and some accused her of pre-judging cases.

In 2020, the Executive Committee of the Circuit Court referred a matter to the Judicial Inquiry Board. In a highly publicized situation Judge Portman-Brown had her grandniece locked in the lockup behind her courtroom as part of a discipline. Judge Portman-Brown has expressed regret for her actions; the JIB investigation is ongoing.

Her behavior on the bench has been described by some as quirky, but effective. Some lawyers praised her fairness on the bench in criminal law matters – particularly during the time after 2018 when she was assigned to a primarily narcotics courtroom in the Felony Trial Criminal Division. Her detractors say she is erratic and unpredictable. The Council has balanced the positive reviews Judge Portman has received against those who question her judgment. The Council on balance finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Joan E. Powell-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Law Division, Trial Section

Appointed Circuit Judge in 2006 and was elected to the bench in 2008

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Joan Powell was an Assistant State's Attorney for the Civil Division of Cook County from 2000 to 2006. Between 1996 and 2000 she served as judicial law clerk for two Circuit Court judges. Judge Powell began her professional legal career in 1992 as a

solo practitioner of contract cases and family law. Judge Powell was elected to the bench in 2008. She is currently sitting at the Law Division. Judge Powell's previous judicial assignments included the Commercial Calendar in the Law Division. Before the Law Division, she heard Forcible Entry and Detainer jury cases. Judge Powell is considered to have good legal ability and is calm and respectful to all persons in her courtroom. She works hard to be prepared. There are some lawyers who say she is too often indecisive in making her rulings, although most of these critics say she ultimately comes to the right decision. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Aurelia Pucinski-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties:

Judge, Illinois Appellate Court, First District, Second Division

Elected to the Circuit Court in 2004, elected to the Appellate Court in 2010

Hon. Aurelia Pucinski became a trial judge in 2004. After serving in Traffic Court, she was assigned from 2005 to 2008 to Domestic Violence Court and was then assigned to the County Division where she heard cases involving tax deeds, tax objections, adoptions, mental health, and elections. Before becoming a judge she was the Chairman of the Illinois Environmental Regulatory Review Commission. She is the former Director of the Illinois Department of Professional Regulation, and the former Director of Administration and Marketing for Abacus Financial Group, an asset management firm. From 1988 to 2000, she served as the elected Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County. Before that, she served as an elected Commissioner of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago. She was elected to the Appellate Court in 2010. Justice Pucinski has worked hard to prepare herself to be an Appellate Justice. She has overcome a steep learning curve and is now considered to be well-respected appellate jurist. She is reported to be well-prepared, having read all materials and demonstrating an understanding of the issues before her. Lawyers report that her opinions are thorough and well-reasoned. She has worked on reform proposals regarding unrepresented litigants. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Appellate Court.

William B. Raines-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Fifth Municipal District

Elected as a Circuit Judge in 2014

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. William B. Raines worked in law enforcement and served as an Assistant Cook County State's Attorney for a little over one year, from January 1994 through June 1995, in the Narcotics Division. He was Special Counsel to the Fremont Corporation Insurance Company from May 1995 through May 2001. He then became Special Counsel to the National Insurance Crime Bureau's criminal and civil fraud prosecution department. He remained in this last position until November 2001 when he opened his law practice. He was elected to the Court in 2014 and is currently assigned to the Fifth Municipal District.. Judge Raines is considered to have good legal ability and is reported to have good court management skills. He is considered fair to all parties and is patient and respectful on the bench. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Judith C. Rice-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Fourth Municipal District with a Domestic Relations call

Elected to the Circuit Court in 2014

Before becoming a judge, Hon. Judith Rice was senior vice president of Community Affairs and Economic Development at BMO Harris Bank and from 2007 to 2010 she was Vice President and Director of Government Relations for BMO Harris Bank. For six years prior to becoming a lawyer she worked at the Cook County State's Attorney's Office in the Community Services Unit handling citizen inquiries and assisting crime victims with obtaining counseling, medical care, and judicial process. After law school she worked for one year as an Assistant State's Attorney and for one year as an Assistant Chicago Corporation Counsel. She did preliminary hearings, appeals, and trials in the juvenile division. She handled criminal housing division cases for the City of Chicago From 2006 to 2007 she was Deputy Chief of Staff for the Mayor of Chicago, and served as the Chicago City Treasurer from 2000 to 2006. Judge Rice was elected to the court in 2014 and currently is assigned to the Fourth Municipal District hearing domestic relations matters.

Judge Rice is considered to have very good legal ability and is praised for her knowledge of the law. She is reported to be fair to all persons before her, and lawyers note her extensive community involvement. She is reported to have good judicial temperament and is praised for her courtroom management. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Kristal Royce Rivers-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Juvenile Justice Division

Elected to the Circuit Court in 2014

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Kristal Royce Rivers served as an Assistant Illinois Attorney General where she practiced in the Sexually Violent Persons Bureau. She served as a Dallas County, Texas Assistant District Attorney from 1996 to 2000. In 2000 she returned to Illinois and from 2001 to 2010 practiced law as a solo practitioner and then as a member of a small firm before joining the Illinois Attorney General's Office. Judge Rivers was elected to the bench in 2014 and is assigned to the Juvenile Justice Division. Judge Rivers is reported to have good knowledge of the law and manages her courtroom efficiently and with respect for all persons. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Mary K. Rochford-Well Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Illinois Appellate Court, First District, Fifth Division

Elected Associate Judge by Circuit Court in 1991, elected to the Circuit Court in 2006, elected to the Appellate Court in 2010

Prior to being elected to the Appellate Court in 2010, Justice Rochford was an Associate Judge in 2001 and was elected to the bench in 2006. She has served in the Chancery Division, and had also been assigned to the Law Division in the Second Municipal District where she presided over bench and jury trials involving both civil and criminal law matters. Before becoming a judge, she was in private practice and then worked for the Chicago Department of Law in the Appeals Division, where in 1985 she rose to the position of Chief Assistant Corporation Counsel. Justice Rochford serves as chair of the Illinois Supreme Court Access to Justice Commission and serves on the Supreme Court's Committee on Equality. She is praised for her extensive career as a trial and appellate judge, and as a person working for improving access to the courts for all persons. She is highly praised for her preparedness and for the quality of her opinions. She is also praised for her integrity and for being exceptionally hard-working. The Council finds her Well Qualified for retention to the Appellate Court.

Abbey Fishman Romanek-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Domestic Relations Division, Calendar 94

Elected as Circuit Court Judge in 2014

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Abbey Romanek served as a Senior Assistant Attorney General in the Medicaid Fraud Division. From 1987 until 2004, she was in private practice first handling

criminal defense matters and focusing for the next eleven years on medical malpractice cases. Judge Romanek was elected to the Court in 2014 and is assigned to the Domestic Relations Division. Judge Romanek is considered to have good legal ability and knowledge of the law. She is praised for being prepared and for having a good temperament. She reportedly has good courtroom management skills and is fair to all persons in the courtroom. The Council finds her Qualified to be retained to the Circuit Court.

Diana Rosario-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Domestic Relations Division, Calendar 55

Elected Circuit Court Judge in 2014

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Diana Rosario was in-house Counsel for the City of Chicago Department of Family and Support Services, advising the Department on legal issues. She has served as an Assistant Cook County State's Attorney, and from 1992 to 1995 she worked as an Administrative Hearing Officer for federal aviation violations. Judge Rosario was elected to the bench in 2014 and is assigned to the Domestic Relations Division. Judge Rosario is reported to be calm and thoughtful on the bench. She is reported to have good courtroom management skills in a courtroom where there are often heated disputes. Most lawyers say she has good legal ability and knowledge of the law, but some say she needs more experience when it comes to complex matters in her current assignment. On balance, the Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Dominique C. Ross-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Domestic Relations Division, Calendar 34

Elected Circuit Court Judge in 2008

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Dominique Ross was a solo practitioner. She was elected to the bench in 2008. She currently serves as a trial judge in the Domestic Relations Division. Judge Ross is considered to have good legal ability and temperament. She is praised for being respectful of unrepresented litigants and is praised for her courtroom management skills. She is reported to be good at getting the parties to resolve disputes. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Kristyna C. Ryan-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Fourth Municipal District

Elected Circuit Judge in 2008

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Kristyna C. Ryan was in private practice. Judge Ryan is currently sitting at the Fourth Municipal District where she hears misdemeanors and is assigned to the Mental Health Treatment Court and the Veterans Treatment Court. Judge Ryan was elected to the bench in 2008. She was assigned to the Fourth Municipal District in 2010. Judge Ryan is considered to have good legal ability and knowledge of the law. She is praised for her courtroom management and for her temperament. She is considered to be a solid jurist. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Patricia O'Brien Sheahan-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Law Division, Calendar D
Motion Section

Elected to the Circuit Court in 2014

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Patricia O'Brien Sheahan was the Associate General Counsel of the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, where she oversaw all litigation and claims made against her employer and its employees. From 1996 to 1999 she was a litigation associate with Baker & McKenzie in Chicago, working in the litigation and employment litigation practice groups. Judge Sheahan was elected to the Circuit Court in 2014 and is assigned to the Law Division. Judge Sheahan is considered to be a solid jurist with good legal ability and knowledge of the law. Lawyers say she understands even complex issues and has a calm demeanor on the bench. She is also praised for her courtroom management. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Patrick J. Sherlock-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Law Division, Calendar Q
Commercial Calendar Section

Appointed Circuit Court Judge in 2007 and was elected to the Court in 2008.

Evaluation

Judge Patrick J. Sherlock was appointed to the Circuit Court in 2007 and elected to the Court in 2008. From 1994 to 2007, Judge Sherlock worked as a sole practitioner specializing in commercial litigation. From 1990 to 1994, he worked for two private law firms doing commercial litigation. He is assigned currently to the Commercial Calendar Section of the Law Division. His past assignment includes the First Municipal District where he heard post-judgment enforcement matters. Judge Sherlock is reported to have a good temperament with good courtroom management skills. He is praised for treating all parties in his courtroom with respect and professionalism. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Laura M. Sullivan-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, First Municipal District – Felony Preliminary Hearings

Elected to the Circuit Court in 2002.

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Laura Sullivan served as an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney as both a trial attorney and as a supervisor. Judge Sullivan is currently sitting at the First Municipal District, where she presides over preliminary hearings. She was first elected to the bench in 2002. Judge Sullivan was assigned to the bond court for an extended period of time and was voluntarily re-assigned at the time when Chief Judge Evans implemented bond court reforms. She is considered to have good legal ability and knowledge of the law. She is reported to be well prepared and hard working. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Shelley Sutker-Dermer-Well Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Presiding Judge, Circuit Court, Second Municipal District

Appointed Circuit Court Judge in 1995; elected to the Circuit Court in 1996

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Shelley Sutker-Dermer served as an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney. Judge Sutker-Dermer is currently the Presiding Judge of the Second Municipal District. Judge Sutker-Dermer was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in 1995 and was elected in 1996. Judge Sutker-Dermer is considered to have very good legal ability and respondents to this evaluation say she is as doing an excellent job as Presiding Judge. She is praised

as being fair to those who are in her courtroom. She is described often as polite but no-nonsense on the bench and is praised for her courtroom management. Lawyers report that it is their perception that the Skokie Courthouse (Second Municipal District) runs efficiently. The Council finds her Well Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Michael P. Toomin -- Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Presiding Judge, Circuit Court, Juvenile Justice Division

Elected Associate Judge by Circuit Judges in 1980; elected to the Circuit Court in 1984

Prior to becoming a judge, Judge Michael Toomin was in private practice. He also served as an Assistant Public Defender for Cook County. Judge Toomin is currently sitting at the Juvenile Justice Division as a Presiding Judge. He became an Associate Judge in 1980 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 1984. His previous judicial assignments include the Appellate Court of Illinois, the Criminal Division of the Circuit Court of Cook County, and the Second Municipal District of the Circuit Court of Cook County. As a trial judge and as an Appellate Justice, Judge Toomin has been respected as an excellent judge. He has very good legal ability and temperament. He is praised for being exceptionally hard-working, and his rulings are considered well-reasoned and decisive. The Council, however, is concerned about reports regarding the way he has been administering his Division during the pandemic. Yet other reports are supportive of his role as a Presiding Judge, and many lawyers note the totality of his mostly very positive career as a jurist. On balance, the Council finds him Qualified for retention.

Raul Vega-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Presiding Judge, Circuit Court, Domestic Violence Division

Elected to the Circuit Court in 2002.

Evaluation

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Raul Vega was in private practice. He was also a staff attorney for Alderman Luis V. Gutierrez of the 26th Ward. He serves as the Presiding Judge of the Domestic Violence Division. Before his current assignment Judge Vega had been sitting at the Domestic Relations Division since 2003. He was elected to the bench in 2002. Judge Vega has extensive knowledge of the law. He is reported to be fair to all parties. The Council finds him Qualified for

retention to the Circuit Court.

Kenneth J. Wadas-Qualified

Present judicial assignment

Supervising Judge, Circuit Court, Criminal Division

Elected to the Circuit Court in 1996.

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Kenneth Wadas served as the Director of Court Services for the Circuit Court of Cook County. He was also in private practice doing criminal defense work, and has served as an Assistant State's Attorney at the Cook County State's Attorney's Office. Judge Wadas is currently sitting at the Criminal Division, where he has been a Supervising Judge since 2009. Judge Wadas has served in the Criminal Division since his election to the bench in 1996. Judge Wadas is considered to have good legal ability and knowledge of the law. He is reported to be fair to all those in his courtroom and is praised for his courtroom management skills. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Debra B. Walker-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Domestic Relations Division, Calendar E

Elected Circuit Court Judge in 2008

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Debra B. Walker was a partner at the firm Clausen Miller PC, litigating professional liability cases from 1996 until 2008. After working as an associate at Williams & Montgomery for 6 years, Judge Walker was a Senior Associate at Brydges, Riseborough, Peterson, Franke and Morris from 1993 to 1996. Judge Walker was elected to the Circuit Court I 2008 and is currently assigned to the Domestic Relations Division. Judge Walker is considered to have good legal ability. She is praised for her temperament, particularly in light of the challenging emotional environment of the cases over which she presides. Most lawyers praised her courtroom management skills. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Ursula Walowski-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Criminal Division

Elected Circuit Court Judge in 2008

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Ursula Walowski was an Assistant Cook County State's Attorney from 1994 to 2008, at which time she was elected to the bench. Judge Walowski is currently sitting in the Criminal Division. From 2009 to 2016, she was assigned to the Domestic Violence Division. Judge Walowski is considered to have good legal ability and is praised for her knowledge of the law. She is reported to have a good temperament and good courtroom management. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Steven Gregory Watkins-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Criminal Division

Elected as Circuit Court Judge in 2014

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Steven G. Watkins was a sole practitioner focusing on criminal defense, civil litigation, and real estate work. Between 1991 and 2000, he was the founding partner of a three-lawyer firm. He was elected to the Circuit Court in 2014. He is currently assigned to the Criminal Division. Judge Watkins is considered to be doing a good job on the bench with sufficient legal ability and knowledge of the law. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Gregory J. Wojkowski-Qualified

Present Judicial Duties

Judge, Circuit Court, Law Division
Trial Section

Elected to the Circuit Court in 1996.

Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Gregory Wojkowski worked at the City of Chicago Corporation Counsel's Office in litigation for 16 years. He was elected to the Circuit Court in 1996 and is currently assigned to Law Division. Judge Wojkowski's previous judicial assignments included civil jury trials in the First Municipal District from 1998 until 2011. Judge Wojkowski is reported to have good legal ability and knowledge of the law. He is praised for his courtroom management

skills. He is reported to be even-tempered and treats everyone in the courtroom fairly. He is also reported to be well prepared and punctual. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Chicago Council of Lawyers Report on Judicial Candidates in the November 3, 2020 General Election

For Vacancies on the Supreme Court and Appellate Court, First District, Countywide Vacancies on the Circuit Court of Cook County, and Subcircuit Vacancies on the Circuit Court of Cook County

*(Candidates are listed in ballot order. In contested races, those designated with an (R) are
Republican candidates and those designated with a (D) are Democratic candidates.)*

Illinois Supreme Court 1st District – Freeman Vacancy

Hon. P. Scott Neville, Jr. – Well Qualified

Hon. P. Scott Neville, Jr. was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1974. In 2018, he was appointed to serve as a Justice on the Illinois Supreme Court. He has also acted as a liaison to the IPI Civil Instructions Committee, the Illinois Rules of Evidence Committee, and the Pretrial Practices Committee. Previously, he served as Judge of the Appellate Court of Illinois (2004-2018) and as a Judge on the Cook County Circuit Court (1999-2004).

Justice Neville has been praised for his legal ability and for his diligence throughout his judicial career. His questioning during oral argument reflect his thorough preparation and understanding of the issues. He is generally praised for his integrity. Justice Neville has been involved in community activities and reform-minded efforts throughout his career. He is considered to be an excellent jurist with an understanding that judges can be active supporters of reforms aimed at improving the effectiveness and fairness of our courts. He actively works for improving the fairness and effectiveness of Illinois courts, and he is praised by social justice advocates for positions he has taken as a Supreme Court Justice. The Council finds him Well Qualified for the Illinois Supreme Court.

Illinois Appellate Court – Neville Vacancy

Hon. Michael Hyman – Highly Qualified

Hon. Michael Hyman was admitted to practice in 1977, Prior to taking the bench, he spent two years with the Illinois Attorney General's Office, and then began a career with the law firm of Much Shelist. Since 2013, he has been on the Appellate Court by appointment, including his

appointment to the seat vacated when Justice Neville was appointed to the Supreme Court in 2018. He was appointed to the Circuit Court in 2008, elected in 2008, and retained in 2014. Justice Hyman is considered to have excellent legal ability and is reported to be always prepared. He is reported to be an active and thoughtful during oral arguments. In addition to opinions, he has published extensively. Respondents spoke highly of his professionalism and temperament. The Council finds him Highly Qualified for the Appellate Court.

Illinois Appellate Court – Simon Vacancy

Hon. Sharon O. Johnson -- Qualified

Hon. Sharon O. Johnson was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1996. Since 2010, she has served as a Cook County Circuit Court Judge, where her assignments have included the Sixth Municipal District (2015-present), the Domestic Relations Division, Daley Center (2015), Domestic Relations – Parentage and Child Support (2011-2015), and the Traffic Division (2010-2011). Prior to becoming a judge, she was Sole Practitioner at the Law Office of S.D. Oden, P.C. (1999-2010), where she handled real estate, contract, corporate, and family law matters. She was also an Adjunct Professor at Olive Harvey College (2002-2006), where she taught business law.

Judge Johnson is considered to have good legal ability and temperament. She is praised for being thoughtful and hard-working. Overall, she is reported to be an excellent jurist. The Council finds her Qualified for the Appellate Court.

Circuit Court – Countywide – Bellows Vacancy

Tiesha L. Smith – Not Recommended. Did not participate in the evaluation process.

Circuit Court – Countywide – Coghlan Vacancy

Kelly M. McCarthy -- Qualified

Kelly M. McCarthy was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2001. She works as a supervisor in the First Municipal Division of the Law Office of the Cook County Public Defender. Other positions that she has held at the Public Defender’s Office include Assistant Public Defender in the Homicide Task Force (2 years); Felony Trial Division (12 years); and Civil Division (1 ½ years). She is a former board member of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers and the Illinois Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers. She has volunteered as an evaluator and coach for mock trial and moot court competitions.

Ms. McCarthy is considered to have good legal ability and temperament. She is reported to be knowledgeable and hard-working. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Countywide – Ford Vacancy

Laura Ayala-Gonzalez -- Qualified

Laura Ayala-Gonzalez was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2003. For the past 14 years, she has worked as an Assistant State's Attorney in the Cook County State's Attorney Office. Currently she is a first chair in the Felony Trial Division.

Ms. Ayala-Gonzalez is considered to have good legal ability and is praised for her trial skills. She has substantial trial experience in complex matters. She is reported to have a very good temperament. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Countywide – Funderburk Vacancy

Hon. Celestia L. Mays – Well Qualified

Hon. Celestia L. Mays was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1990 and was appointed to the Circuit Court by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2019. She was elected to the bench by the Circuit Judges as an Associate Judge in December 2019. Before taking the bench, she was principal of Celestia L. Mays, P.C., where she practiced in family law and probate law, and handled real estate closings. She previously worked as an associate at Bourgeois & Bourgeois (1994-1997); and at the Los Angeles County law firms of McIntosh, Schmidt & Long (1991-1994, law clerk); and Mercer & Zinder (1988-1991, law clerk). She has served on the board of directors of the Black Women Lawyers' Association of Greater Chicago; as the deputy regional director and treasurer of Region VII of the National Bar Association; and in a variety of offices at the Cook County Bar Association, including president. She is a former board member of Legal Aid Chicago. Judge Mays is considered to have very good legal ability and is praised for her temperament. She has substantial litigation experience and is reported to be an excellent practitioner with great integrity. She is praised for her litigation skills. She is exceptionally active in community activities. The Council finds her Well Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Countywide- Larsen Vacancy

Hon. Levander Smith, Jr. -- Qualified

Hon. Levander Smith, Jr. was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1993 and was elected by the Circuit Judges in December 2019 to be an Associate Judge. Before taking the bench, he was a litigation attorney at the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS). Previously he was supervisory regional counsel for DCFS (2011-2015) in St. Clair County, Illinois; Assistant Attorney General in the Office of the Attorney General in Missouri, Labor Division (2006-2011); associate at Cordell & Cordell, P.C. (2005); Assistant State's Attorney in the Cook County State's Attorney Office (2003-2004); intermediate attorney in the St. Louis (Missouri) Family Court (2000-2003); and regional counsel and field regional counsel at DCFS in Cook County (1993-1999) and St. Clair County (1999-2000).

Judge Smith has substantial litigation experience and is considered to have good legal ability. He is praised for his trial skills. He is reported to have good temperament. The Council finds him

Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Countywide – Mason Vacancy

Christ Stanley Stacey – Qualified

Christ Stanley Stacey was admitted to practice in 1982. He is a sole practitioner focusing on civil litigation. He is exceptionally active in community affairs. Mr. Stacey is considered to have good legal ability and his praised as a solid practitioner with substantial litigation experience and good trial skills. He is reported to have a professional temperament, and his praised for his diligence and integrity. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Countywide – McCarthy Vacancy

Hon. Teresa Molina -- Qualified

Hon. Teresa Molina was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2001. Since July 24, 2019, she has served as a Cook County Circuit Court Judge, where she is assigned to the Traffic Section of the First Municipal District. Before becoming a judge, she served as Chief of Prosecutions for the Division of Real Estate in the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (2016-2019) and as an Assistant State’s Attorney in the Cook County State’s Attorney Office (2001-2016), where she prosecuted criminal felonies and misdemeanors as well as civil cases related to the enforcement of child support.

Judge Molina is considered to have good legal ability. She had received good marks as a hard-working prosecutor before taking the bench. She is considered to be a good jurist in the limited time she has been on the bench. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Countywide- Murphy Gorman Vacancy

Sheree D. Henry -- Qualified

Sheree D. Henry was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1994, Since 1999, she has been an Assistant Public Defender in Cook County Public Defender's Office, where she represents indigent clients in felony cases. She has also worked as an Assistant Public Guardian in the Cook County Public Guardian’s Office (1995-1999), where she represented abused and neglected children in Juvenile Court.

Ms. Henry is considered to have good legal ability with substantial bench and jury litigation experience in a variety of criminal law matters. Respondents generally say that she is a good lawyer with good trial skills. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Countywide- O’Brien Vacancy

Elizabeth A. Walsh -- Qualified

Elizabeth A. Walsh was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2006. Since 2007, she has been an Attorney at Bruce Farrel Dorn & Associates, where she handles insurance defense cases. From 2006 to 2007, she was an Associate Attorney at Paul H. Wharton & Associates, where she defended personal injury actions.

Ms. Walsh is considered to have good legal ability. She is praised for her temperament and for her responsiveness to opposing counsel. She has substantial litigation experience. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Countywide – Patti Vacancy

Lynn Weaver Boyle (Lynn K. Weaver) – Qualified

Lynn Weaver Boyle was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1990. She is a partner at Grotefeld, Hoffmann, Schleiter, Gordon, Ochoa, & Evinger, where she has worked since 2007. There, she handles commercial litigation matters with a focus on contract, tort, product liability, and construction defects. Previously she was a partner at Grotefeld & Denenberg (1999-2007), and an Assistant State's Attorney at the Cook County State's Attorney Office (1990-1999), where she worked in the Felony Trial Division, as well as the Narcotics Unit and Gang Crimes Unit of the Special Prosecutions Bureau. She provides pro bono services for Wills for Heroes.

Ms. Boyle is considered to have good legal ability. She has substantial trial experience, particularly while an Assistant Cook County State's Attorney, and has had litigation experience more recently, as well. She is a respected practitioner with a good temperament. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court- Countywide – Roti Vacancy

Lorraine Mary Murphy – Qualified

Lorraine Mary Murphy was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2003. She is an Assistant State's Attorney at the Cook County State's Attorney Office, where she currently is First Chair in a felony courtroom at the George Leighton Criminal Courthouse. She is a member of several bar associations, including the Chicago Bar Association, where she served on the Judicial Evaluation Committee.

Ms. Murphy is considered to have good legal ability. She is reported to have a good temperament and is praised for her trial skills. She has substantial experience in complex litigation matters and is currently a lead prosecutor in a felony trial courtroom. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court- Countywide – C. Sheehan Vacancy

Maura McMahon Zeller -- Qualified

Maura McMahon Zeller was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1993. For the past 15 years she has been is an Attorney and Solo Practitioner at Maura McMahon Zeller, Attorney at Law, where she focuses on Child Representative, Guardian Ad Litem, and mediation matters. Prior to that, for ten years she served as an Assistant Public Guardian at the Office of the Public Guardian in Chicago, Illinois.

Ms. Zeller is considered to have good legal ability and she is praised for her temperament. She has substantial litigation experience, although her area of practice is narrow. However, she is highly respected for her knowledge and for her skills, including her work in a Special Litigation Unit in the Office of the Public Guardian where her office filed Section 1983 civil rights actions on behalf of children who were injured or killed while in foster care. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Countywide – K. Sheehan

Jill Rose Quinn – Qualified

Jill Rose Quinn was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1983. Ms. Quinn began her career at Michael Barford as an associate. She then spent three years at Mevorah and Associates. In 1988, she worked at Jegen and Associates handling municipal law matters. She worked there until she started a solo practice in 1996, focusing on real estate. Additionally, she has worked as a Cook County arbitrator and a DuPage County arbitrator.

Ms. Quinn is considered to have good legal ability and temperament, and has substantial litigation experience in more complex legal areas. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – First Subcircuit – Brooks Vacancy

Krista D. Butler – Not Recommended. Did not participate in the evaluation.

Circuit Court – First Subcircuit – Crawford Vacancy

Tyria B. Walton – Well Qualified

Tyria B. Walton was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1997. She serves as an Assistant Public Defender and a Grade IV Murder Task Force Attorney at the Law Office the Cook County Public Defender.

Ms. Walton is considered to have very good legal ability with substantial litigation experience in complex matters. She is praised for her trial skills, her diligence and for her integrity. She is considered to be exceptionally knowledgeable and serves as a mentor to less experienced

attorneys. The Council finds her Well Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Second Subcircuit – “A” Vacancy

Hon. Sondra Nicole Denmark – Qualified

Hon. Sondra Nicole Denmark was admitted to practice in 2004 and was appointed to the Circuit Court by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2018. Before taking the bench, she served as an Assistant Will County State’s Attorney since 2008, and was an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney from 2004 to 2007. Ms. Denmark is considered to have good legal ability and temperament. She has substantial litigation experience. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Third Subcircuit – Filan Vacancy

Hon. Daniel Edward Maloney -- Qualified

Hon. Daniel Edward Maloney was admitted to practice in 2001. He was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2019. Before taking the bench, Judge Maloney served as an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney. He was assigned to the Complex Narcotics Unit of Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office. For two years, he had been the sole Assistant State’s Attorney assigned to the DEA/HIDTA (High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area) Strike Force. While there, Mr. Maloney assisted law enforcement agencies in the investigation and prosecution of high level narcotics dealers. Judge Maloney had been employed within the Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office from 2001 to his appointment to the bench. He has also worked within the Special Prosecutions Bureau and the Criminal Prosecutions Bureau.

As a lawyer, Judge Maloney is considered to have good legal ability and has substantial experience in prosecuting complex criminal law matters, including murder cases. He is praised for his courtroom skills and for his temperament. He is reported to be an excellent mentor to less experienced lawyers. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court- Third Subcircuit – Flynn Vacancy

Regina Mescall -- Qualified

Regina Mescall was admitted to the Illinois bar in 2008, but has practiced since 2004. Since 2008, she worked as an Assistant State’s Attorney in the Cook County State’s Attorney Office, where she currently serves as a First Chair in the Felony Trial Division and previously served in the Felony Review Unit (2018—Jan. 2019, 2015-2016, 2008-2009), the Felony Trial Division (2016-2018, 2012-2015), and the Preliminary Hearing/Grand Jury Unit (2009-2012). Prior to that, she was Assistant District Attorney in the state of New Mexico (2004-2008). She is a member in good standing of the National District Attorney’s Association.

Ms. Mescall is considered to have good legal ability and handles some of the most complex matters in the State's Attorney's Office. She is praised for her litigation skills and for her professional demeanor. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Third Subcircuit – Murphy Vacancy

Hon. Erin Haggerty Antonietti – Qualified

Hon. Erin Haggerty Antonietti was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1991. She was appointed to the Circuit Court by the Illinois Supreme Court in June 2019. Prior to taking the bench, she worked as an Assistant State's Attorney in the Criminal Division of the Cook County State's Attorney Office, where she was assigned to Central Bond Court, a position she held for more than 17 years. Between 1991 and 1994, she was an associate at Bresnahan & Garvey, an insurance defense firm. Since June 2019 she has been assigned to the First Municipal District assigned to traffic, civil non-jury, eviction, and pro se courtrooms. She has presided over bench trials, motions to dismiss, motions for sanctions, and motions to quash arrest and suppress evidence.

As a lawyer, Judge Antonietti has spent most of her professional career in Central Bond Court, where she was praised as professional, knowledgeable, and organized. She had litigation experience in more complex matters earlier in her career. As a Judge, she is reported to demonstrating good legal ability, temperament, and the ability to manage high volume courtrooms. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Sixth Subcircuit – Nega Vacancy

Jamie Guerra Dickler -- Qualified

Jamie Guerra Dickler was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2005. Since that time, she has worked as an Assistant State's Attorney at the Cook County State's Attorney Office, where since 2013 she has been assigned to various felony courtrooms and has served as lead counsel on over one hundred bench trials. Her other assignments at the State's Attorney Office include various preliminary hearing courtrooms and the Grand Jury, Sex and Homicide Unit, as well as the Felony Review Unit. She also handled various misdemeanor cases there, including domestic violence.

Ms. Dickler is praised for her legal ability and for her integrity in negotiating with opposing counsel. She is reported to be highly professional and always well prepared. All reports indicate that Ms. Dickler is an ethical prosecutor with good abilities. She is active in the community. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Sixth Subcircuit – Pantle Vacancy

Eileen Marie O'Connor – Qualified

Eileen Marie O'Connor was admitted to practice in 2006. She specializes in civil litigation and has worked in several private law firms. Her focus is in personal injury, medical malpractice, product liability, railroad and construction negligence, workplace injuries, and civil rights matters. She has handled other cases including criminal law on child abuse matters pro bono. She is considered to have good legal ability and is praised as being hard-working. She has substantial motion practice in more complex legal matters. She is considered to have a good temperament and to be diligent and punctual. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Seventh Subcircuit – Jackson Vacancy

Pamela Reaves-Harris – Qualified

Pamela Reaves-Harris was admitted to practice in 1992. She is an Illinois State Representative for the 10th District. From 1996 to 2015 she was a sole practitioner and served as Assistant Vice President/Compliance Officer for Citibank between 1993 and 1995. She has served as an Administrative Law Judge for several municipalities. She is considered to be smart and knowledgeable. She has an extraordinary record of community service and is well respected for her work as a practicing attorney and as an administrative law judge. She has an exemplary temperament. The Council is concerned that she has little litigation experience but we note that her overall experience demonstrates the ability to be a good judge. On balance, the Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Eighth Subcircuit – Fleming Vacancy

Jonathan C. Green – Qualified

Jonathan C. Green was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1986. He is senior counsel/supervisor of the Department of Law at the City of Chicago, Federal Civil Rights Litigation Division, where is responsible for all aspects of civil rights and torts litigation. From 2003 to 2013, he worked as a principal of the Law Offices of Green and Green, P.C., and of counsel at Rock, Fusco & Garvey Ltd. At both firms his practice included domestic and international civil litigation, including business and construction litigation, real estate and commercial transactions, and international law.

Mr. Green is viewed by many respondents as knowledgeable about substantive and procedural law with good legal ability. To these lawyers, he is a solid practitioner. Most respondents report that he has a good temperament. In general, he has had an impressive legal career with substantial litigation experience in more complex matters. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Eighth Subcircuit – Gubin Vacancy

Hon. Michael A. Forti -- Qualified

Hon. Michael A. Forti was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1980. In 2016, he was appointed a Circuit Judge by the Illinois Supreme Court and was elected by the Circuit Judges in 2019 as an Associate Judge. He is currently assigned to the Domestic Relations Division of the Circuit Court of Cook County. Previously he was Chief Counsel and Ethics Officer at the Illinois Department of Transportation (2012-2015); Deputy Corporation Counsel (1999-2012) and Chief Assistant Corporation Counsel (1994-1998) for the City of Chicago Department of Law; and associate (1980-1988) and equity and income partner (1988-1994) at Bell Boyd & Lloyd (now K&L Gates), where he handled commercial litigation and antitrust counseling.

Judge Forti was considered to be a good attorney with good legal ability and temperament. As a judge, he continues to receive very positive marks. He has demonstrated his ability to handle a high volume call and is praised for his handling of pro se litigants – respectful and informative without going beyond the role of judge. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Ninth Subcircuit – Axelrood Vacancy

Hon. Thomas Maloney Cushing – Well Qualified

Hon. Thomas Maloney Cushing was admitted to practice in Illinois in 1988. He was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2019. Before taking the bench, he was of counsel to the offices of Christopher A. Kreid and Associates, focusing on commercial and chancery litigation. From 2006-2010, Mr. Cushing was Senior Vice President for Membership at the Chicago Climate Exchange, applying his legal skills in a business/environmental policy role. From 2005-2006, he was principal in his own law practice, specializing in personal injury practice. During this time, he also assisted Counsel to the Shakman Decree Monitor. From 1988-2005, he was an associate at Ambrose & Cushing, specializing in civil trials, particularly personal injury, professional malpractice, and municipal liability. Since 2013, he has volunteered as a Hearing Board Member at the Illinois Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission.

As a lawyer Judge Cushing is reported to have been a solid practitioner with very good ability and an excellent temperament. He has substantial litigation experience in complex matters, and is praised for his litigation skills and for his temperament. He has been involved with numerous community activities, including teaching and environmental advocacy. The Council finds him Well Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court- Ninth Subcircuit – Luckman Vacancy

Julie Bess Aimen – Well Qualified

Julie Bess Aimen was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1984. She has had a solo private practice since 1986, specializing in criminal, family, municipal, and civil rights law. From 1984 to 1986, Ms. Aimen was an Assistant Appellate Defender with the Office of the State Appellate Defender (OSAD). She has also been a Hearing Officer for the City of Chicago Department of Revenue (1992-1997). She has taught Trial Advocacy and, since 1999, has been a judge for the National Trial Advocacy Competition. Ms. Aimen has been a chair-qualified Cook County Arbitrator since 1990 and is a past president of Illinois Attorneys for Criminal Justice.

Ms. Aimen is considered to have very good legal ability and a good temperament. She has extensive complex litigation experience in the areas of criminal law, family law, civil rights, and appellate law. She is considered to be a zealous advocate for her clients. Her integrity is unquestioned. Ms. Aimen is highly regarded as an excellent practitioner and she is praised for her work in improving the administration of justice through her pro bono efforts. The Council considers Ms. Aimen to be Well Qualified to serve in Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Tenth Subcircuit – Allen Vacancy

Hon. John Mulroe – Qualified

Judge John Mulroe was admitted to practice in 1988. He was appointed to the Circuit Court by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2019. Before being appointed to the bench, he served in the Illinois legislature as a Senator from 10th Senate District. Judge Mulroe has served as an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney, a hearing officer with the Chicago Park District and an arbitrator with the Cook County Mandatory Program. His professional background includes working as a Certified Public Accountant.

As an attorney, Judge Mulroe was considered to have good legal ability and was respected for his trial skills and for his integrity. He was reported to have a very good temperament. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Tenth Subcircuit – McGing Vacancy

Maire A. Dempsey -- Qualified

Maire A. Dempsey was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2002. Since 2016, she has served as a Partner at Hughes Socol Piers Resnick & Dym, Ltd., where she is a medical malpractice defense litigator. Previously, she also handled medical malpractice defense matters at Hickey Mella & Associates, where she was an Associate Attorney (2008-2015).

Ms. Dempsey is considered to have good legal ability. She is praised for her temperament and

her litigation skills. She has substantial litigation experience in more complex matters. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Tenth Subcircuit - O’Brien Vacancy

Mary Catherine Marubio -- Qualified

Mary Catherine Marubio was admitted to practice in 1997. Ms. Marubio is currently an Administrative Law Judge within the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation for the State of Illinois. She presides over formal adversarial hearings throughout the state involving various licensed professionals, such as physicians, real estate brokers and public accountants. Ms. Marubio also serves as an ethics officer for IDFPR employees and professional boards, where she provides guidance on the interpretation and implementation of the State Employees and Officials Ethics Act. From 1997 to 2012, she was a sole practitioner focusing on criminal defense and immigration matters. She participates in numerous pro bono and charitable community activities.

Ms. Marubio is considered to be a smart, solid practitioner with a variety of litigation experiences. She is praised for her temperament. She is praised for being able to master the various areas of law that her career has involved, including financial regulation, criminal defense, and immigration. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Twelfth Subcircuit – Hanlon Vacancy

(D) Patricia Maria Fallon -- Qualified

Patricia Maria Fallon was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2001. Since 2017, she has served as Chief of Human Resources for the Cook County Recorder of Deeds. From 2004 to 2017, she worked for the Labor and Employment Unit of the Cook County State’s Attorney Office, where she served as an Assistant State’s Attorney and also as a Supervisor (2015-17) and Deputy Supervisor (2013-2015).

Ms. Fallon is considered to have good legal ability with litigation experience in both state and federal court. She is described as hard-working with good temperament, and is praised for her supervisory skills. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

(R) Frank Rocco DiFranco – Qualified

Frank Rocco DiFranco was admitted to practice in 1987. He has been in private practice as a sole practitioner or as a lawyer within a small firm since 1995 handling criminal defense and personal injury cases. From 1987 to 1995 he served as an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney.

Mr. DiFranco is reported to have good legal ability. He enjoys a reputation of being a zealous

and knowledgeable advocate. Most respondents say he has a good temperament. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Thirteenth Subcircuit – Kulys Hoffman Vacancy

(D) Susanne Groebner –Qualified

Susanne Groebner was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2000. Since 2001, she has worked as an Assistant State’s Attorney in the Cook County State’s Attorney Office, where she currently works in the Felony Trial Division in Rolling Meadows, IL (2013-present). She previously served in the Felony Trial Division in Chicago (2008-2013); in the Felony Review, Preliminary Hearings, and Grand Jury Units (2004-2008); in the Juvenile Division (Abuse and Neglect/Delinquency, 2001-2004); and in the Child Support Division (2001).

Ms. Groebner is considered to have good legal ability. Respondents to this evaluation say that she has good litigation skills and that she is an honest and fair prosecutor. She has substantial litigation experience in more complex matters. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

(R) Gary W. Seyring -- Qualified

Gary W. Seyring was admitted to practice in 1978. He is also a Certified Public Accountant. He is a solo practitioner focusing on domestic relations, real estate, estate planning, tax planning, and business law. A substantial percentage of Mr. Seyring’s practice involves litigation. He is considered to have good legal ability and temperament. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Fourteenth Subcircuit – Bertucci Vacancy

Hon. Gerardo Tristan Jr. -- Qualified

Hon. Gerardo Tristan Jr. was admitted to the Illinois bar in 2002 and was appointed to the Circuit Court by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2019. Before becoming a judge, he worked at Tristan & Cervantes as an associate, assisting the partners in their day-to-day legal obligations, focusing on labor, estate and business law. Then in 2003, Mr. Tristan began serving as an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney.

Judge Tristan is considered to have good legal ability and had substantial litigation experience in more complex matters before becoming a judge. He is reported to have a good temperament and respondents praised his fairness. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Fourteenth Subcircuit – Lacy Vacancy

Perla Tirado -- Qualified

Perla Tirado was admitted to the Illinois bar in 2005. Since 2016, she has served as the Supervising Attorney of Beyond Legal Aid, a nonprofit legal services provider, where she handles criminal defense, criminal records, traffic, immigration, removal defense, and family law matters. Previously she handled criminal defense, traffic, immigration, and domestic relations matters as a Solo Practitioner at the Law Office of Perla Tirado (2008-2016), as a Partner at TYT Law (2010), and as a Partner at Tirado Winters, LLP (2007-2008). She has also worked as a Contract Attorney for Genson & Gillespie, where she worked on a criminal case involving financial crimes and SEC violations (2007), as an Assistant Public Defender in the Cook County Public Defender Office (2005-2007), and as Staff Attorney at the Cabrini Legal Aid Clinic (2005).

Ms. Tirado is considered to have good legal ability and is praised for her knowledge of the law. She is reported to have good temperament and has substantial litigation experience in a variety of areas. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Fifteenth Subcircuit – Griffin Vacancy

Nicole Catina Patton – Qualified

Nicole Catina Patton was admitted to practice in 1997. Since 2010 she has served as an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney, focusing on court proceedings involving mental health commitments. From 1997 to 2001 she served as an Assistant Cook County State’s attorney doing both civil and criminal matters. From 2001 to 2002, she was an attorney with Liberty Mutual Insurance Company, and from 2003 to 2010, she was with small firms or worked as a sole practitioner. She is considered to be knowledgeable about the law and is described as a “go to” person in the State’s Attorney’s Office. She is considered to have good legal ability and is praised as a good lawyer – a zealous advocate who is trustworthy and respectful both to clients and opposing counsel. She is active in community matters, and is the author of a recent article on expert witnesses. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.