

**Chicago Council of Lawyers
Report on Judicial Candidates in the June 28, 2022 Primary
For Vacancies on the, 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. Those designated with an (R) are found on the
Republican ballot. All other candidates are found on the Democratic ballot.)***

May 2022

Primary elections for state-court judges will be held on June 28, 2022. To assist the public in evaluating the candidates for judicial office, the Chicago Council of Lawyers has evaluated candidates for vacancies in Cook County.

Attached is the Council's report of its evaluations of candidates for vacancies on the Illinois Appellate Court, First District; for countywide vacancies; and for vacancies in the judicial subcircuits of the Circuit Court of Cook County.

INTRODUCTION

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."

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The criteria for the Council's evaluations are whether the 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.”

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.

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, where applicable, the Judicial Inquiry Board (“JIB”). If a candidate does not participate in our evaluation process, we are unable to obtain that information. Therefore, we assign those candidates a rating of “not recommended.”

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 Alliance's 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;
- (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; and
- (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) appellate process: Each candidate will have the opportunity to appeal both their evaluation rating and their evaluation write-up. The appeal should be based on the content of the evaluation write-up, but candidates are encouraged to add any other information bearing upon their evaluation by the Chicago Council of Lawyers.

When the candidate is a sitting judge, 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 past few months. In cases where the Alliance evaluated candidates within the past five years, the Alliance requested updated information, but did not investigate or interview candidates again for the March 2020 primary, instead relying on the earlier results.

In evaluating candidates, the Council expresses written reasons for its conclusions, while abiding by promises to protect the confidentiality of its non-public sources. Without knowing the reason for a recommendation concerning a candidate, the public cannot use the bar's evaluations intelligently to draw its own conclusions.

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. Similarly, a candidate may have an outstanding resume but lack the temperament or patience to perform well as an even-handed or respectful judge. Accordingly, it should be recognized and expected that we will rate some good lawyers "not qualified."

Candidates Listed are on the Democratic Ballot, unless noted as running on the Republican ("R") ballot.

Illinois Appellate Court First District Vacancies

Illinois Appellate Court – Hall Vacancy

Hon. Russell W. Hartigan – Qualified

Hon. Russell W. Hartigan was admitted to practice in 1976. He served as a Circuit Court judge between 2010 and 2017. He was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2010. As a lawyer he practiced for 34 years before becoming a judge and has practiced since retiring from the bench in 2017. He has been exceptionally active in bar association activities.

As a lawyer, Judge Hartigan had substantial litigation experience in both civil and criminal law matters, including appellate court experience. He was praised for his litigation skills, for his temperament, and for his integrity. As a judge, he spent much of his career in the Bridgeview Courthouse hearing a variety of cases. He was a well-respected jurist who was praised for his courtroom demeanor and management skills. The Council finds him Qualified for the Appellate Court.

Hon. Dominique C. Ross -- Not Qualified

The Hon. Dominique C. Ross was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1995. She was elected to the Circuit Court in 2008. She is currently a trial judge in the Domestic Relations Division. Prior to serving on the bench she was a solo practitioner

Judge Dominique Ross is considered to have good legal ability and is active in community activities. Respondents praised her knowledge of the law. She is reported to be respectful to all parties. However, some lawyers complain that it can take months to get an order issued and she is often not on the bench at the scheduled time. In addition, Judge Ross does not provide published works or other writing to establish her qualifications to be an appellate justice. The Council finds her Not Qualified for the Appellate Court.

Hon. Debra B. Walker -- Well Qualified

The Hon. Debra B. Walker was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1987. She was elected to the Circuit Court in 2008 and is currently assigned to the Domestic Relations Division. 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 is considered to have good legal ability as a trial judge. She is praised for her ability to handle the sometimes complex financial issues which come before her, and she is

reported to have good court management skills. She is considered to have a good temperament and is always prepared. Her opinions are reported to be well reasoned, thorough, and issued in a timely manner. The Council finds her Well Qualified for the Appellate Court.

Illinois Appellate Court – Harris Vacancy

Hon. Raymond W. Mitchell –Well Qualified

The Hon. Raymond W. Mitchell was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1993. He was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2008 and was elected in 2010. He is currently assigned to the Chancery Division, Calendar 2. Judge Mitchell has co-authored a Traffic Court Bench Book.

Judge Mitchell is a well-respected jurist with good legal ability presiding over complex matters. Since 2015, he has issued over 500 written opinions. He is reported to be exceptionally knowledgeable about legal doctrines, principles, and procedure. He is reported to be respectful to all parties before him, and is praised for his temperament. He is reported to be exceptionally hard working, with a strong commitment to professionalism. He is also praised for his courtroom management skills. The Council finds him Well Qualified for the Appellate Court.

Devlin Joseph Schoop -- Qualified

Devlin Schoop was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1997. Since 2019, he has been a Partner at Henderson Parks LLC d/b/a The Cochran Firm Chicago, where he is Chair of the civil rights practice group and represents clients in civil rights, post-conviction matters, and catastrophic personal injury matters. Previously he served as Senior Counsel at the City of Chicago Law Department (2017-2019). He was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2015 and served until 2016, when he failed to win election to the bench. He was an Associate (2003-2007) and later a Partner (2008-2015) at Laner Muchin, Ltd., where he represented employers in a wide array of labor and employment litigation, and an Associate (1999-2003) at Wildman Harrold Allen & Dixon, LLP, where he represented plaintiffs and defendants in state and federal courts in a variety of commercial litigation. He began his legal career at the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois as a Law Clerk to the Hon. Blanche M. Manning.

Devlin Schoop is considered to have very good legal ability and trial skills. He has substantial experience in complex litigation matters. There have been a few negative reports about his temperament during the year when he was a judge, but the majority of reports on Devlin Schoop indicate that he is a well respected attorney who has published articles on legal issues and has been active in community activities. On balance, the Council finds him Qualified for the Appellate Court.

Hon. John H. Ehrlich -- Qualified

The Hon. John H. Ehrlich was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1998. Prior to becoming a judge, he worked in the City of Chicago Law Department and has been Chief Assistant Corporation Counsel in the Torts Division. Prior to that, he was in private practice handling commercial

litigation matters. He was elected to the bench in 2012. Since 2014, he has been assigned to the County Department, Motion Section of the Circuit Court of Cook County in Chicago, Illinois, where his docket consists of non-commercial tort cases. His previous judicial assignments were in the County Department, Chancery Division, Foreclosure Section (2013) and the Municipal Department, First Municipal Division, Traffic Section (2012-2013).

Judge Ehrlich is praised for his legal ability and for being well prepared. He is punctual and his opinions are reported to be well reasoned and thorough. The Council finds him Qualified for the Appellate Court.

Circuit Court of Cook County Countywide Vacancies

Circuit Court – Countywide – Brennan Vacancy

Howard B. Brookins, Jr -- Qualified

Howard B. Brookins, Jr. was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1988. He is Alderman of the 21st Ward of the City of Chicago (2003-present) and the Owner and Sole Practitioner of the Law Offices of Howard B. Brookins, Jr. (1987-present). Previously, he was a Partner at Brookins & Wilson (1993-1997); the Principal at Howard B. Brookins, Jr., P.C. (1990-1993); an Assistant State's Attorney at the Cook County State's Attorney Office, Juvenile Court Division; and an Assistant Public Defender in the Cook County Public Defender's Office, Traffic Court Division (1988-89).

Ald. Brookins is considered to have good legal ability with litigation experience in more complex matters. He is reported to be well prepared and thorough. He has a reputation for being honest and fair, with a strong sense of justice. He is reported to have a calm, professional temperament. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Ubi O. O'Neal – Not Recommended

Ubi O. O'Neal did not participate in the evaluation process. The Council finds Ubi O. O'Neal to be Not Recommended for the Circuit Court

Lisa Taylor – Qualified

Lisa Taylor was admitted to practice in Illinois in 2001. She is in private practice with experience in plaintiff's personal injury and medical negligence practice area. She has also handled criminal defense matters. She was a member of the City of Chicago Board of Ethics between 2009 and 2012. From 2001 to 2002 she was an associate with Sitko a& Hoffman handling automobile claims and insurance coverage litigation. From 2002 to 2005, she did litigation at Pretzel & Stouffer. From 2005 to 2013, she was an Associate and then Partner with Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard & Smith handling litigation and appellate work for insurance clients.

Ms. Taylor was widely praised for her legal ability. She reports handling relatively few actual trials but has extensive pretrial litigation experience. She is described as "thorough" and knowledgeable about her area of law. She is reported to have good temperament. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Countywide – Cannon Vacancy

Hon. Diana E. Lopez – Qualified

The Hon. Diana E. Lopez was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2001. She was elected by the Circuit Court to be an Associate Judge in 2021. Before becoming a judge, she was the Sole Shareholder and President of the Lopez Law Group, P.C., where she focused on civil litigation in both family law and adoption law. She also handled family law and adoption matters for Monteagudo, Lopez and Diaz, LLC, where between 2006 and 2010 she was an Attorney and Managing Partner. From 2001 to 2004, she served as an Assistant State's Attorney for the Cook County State's Attorney Office, where she was assigned to the Child Support Enforcement Division and the Juvenile Protection Division, Abuse and Neglect. She has worked with the National Immigrant Justice Center as a volunteer pro bono attorney for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status Predicate Orders and has also provided pro bono legal services through the Chicago Bar Association's Call a Lawyer Program and its Lawyer Referral Service for Family Law. She is a member of a number of bar associations, including the Chicago Bar Association, where she sits on the Adoption Law Committee and the Domestic Relations Committee; the Hispanic Lawyer Association of Illinois, where she sits on the Latina Commission; the Illinois State Bar Association; and the Women's Bar Association of Illinois.

Judge Lopez is considered to have good legal ability. She is praised for her temperament and for litigation skills. She had substantial litigation experience before becoming a judge. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Monica Gail Somerville -- Qualified

Monica Gail Somerville was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1990. From 2018 through January 2021, she served as Deputy Director of Accounts Receivable and Cost Recovery of the Department of Finance of the City of Chicago. She has also worked for City of Chicago's Committee on Finance, where she served as Director of Workers' Compensation, Police and Fire Claims (2013-2017); the Illinois Department of Employment Security, she served as an Administration Law Judge (2003-2007) and a Supervising Administrative Law Judge (2009-2013); the U.S. Postal Service Law Department, where she served as an Attorney (2007-2009); the City of Chicago's Corporation Counsel's Office, where she served as Chief Assistant Corporation Counsel (2000-2001) and Assistant Corporation Counsel (1989-1997); and the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission, where she served as Litigation Counsel (1997-2000). She is a member of the Black Women Lawyers' Association, the Chicago Bar Association, the Cook County Bar Association, and the Women's Bar of Illinois. She reports being lead counsel in 11 jury trials and 50 bench trials, mostly early in her career

Ms. Somerville is considered to have good legal ability. She is praised for her supervisor skills and for her ability to manage complex government programs. She has litigation experience. She is reported to have good temperament. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Mable Taylor -- Not Qualified

Mable Taylor was admitted to practice in 1994. She is a sole practitioner doing both criminal and civil law matters. Some lawyers report that she is a good lawyer with good temperament. She has demonstrated her commitment to public service. However, while Ms. Taylor has litigation experience, the Council is concerned that she lacks sufficient experience in more complex matters, and there are reports that she has on occasion not followed proper court procedures. In addition, she showed questionable judgment during the evaluation process through her unwillingness to cooperate fully with the Alliance of Bar Associations for Judicial Screening (which includes the Chicago Council of Lawyers) in its efforts to gather meaningful information about her record and candidacy. The Council finds her Not Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Countywide – Hyman Vacancy

Elizabeth Anne Karkula -- Qualified (removed from the ballot)

Elizabeth Anne Karkula was admitted to practice in 1987. She was appointed to be a Circuit Judge by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2016 but left the judiciary in 2018. As a lawyer, she handles commercial and civil litigation. She has been of counsel to the Office of the General Counsel of a corporation, General Counsel of IBEW Local 134, and was with a variety of small law firms.

Ms. Karkula is considered to have good legal ability. She has both trial experience and extensive pretrial experience in more complex matters. She is reported to be even tempered, professional, and polished in her demeanor. She is praised for her litigation skills and she is praised for her extensive pro bono litigation work. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Thomas Edward Nowinski -- Qualified

Thomas Edward Nowinski was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2004. He is currently Chief of Staff for Cook County Circuit Court Clerk, Iris Martinez. He has worked for the Cook County State's Attorney Office, where he was the deputy supervisor of the Torts and Litigation Civil Rights Litigation Unit of the Civil Actions Bureau. He previously served as deputy director of labor relations in the Office of the President of the Cook County Board of Commissioners (2012-2014); and as an Assistant State's Attorney in the Civil Actions Bureau (2008-2012) and the Criminal Prosecutions Bureau (2004-2008) of the Cook County State's Attorney Office. Mr. Nowinski is a well-regarded attorney who is reported to have good legal ability. He has substantial litigation experience in a variety of areas including civil rights, torts, wrongful death, and class action matters. He is reported to have good trial skills and a good temperament. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Carmen Quinones – Not Qualified

Carmen Quinones was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1989. She is a sole practitioner. Much of her current practice is as a child representative appointed by Circuit Judges.

Ms. Quinones is considered to have good legal ability. She is praised for the way she treats the children she represents as a child representative. The Council is concerned, however, with numerous reports about her diligence. Lawyers too often report that she does not do her job in a timely way within the litigation process. The Council finds her Not Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Countywide- Ingram Vacancy

Elizabeth “Beth” Ryan -- Qualified

Elizabeth Ryan was admitted to practice in 2004 and concentrates her practice on civil litigation. After law school, she was a judicial clerk for Judge Martin Agran in the Chancery Division of Cook County Circuit Court. Ms Ryan focuses her practice on representing plaintiffs in auto accidents, animal attacks, slip-and-falls, sexual battery, and Social Security disability claims.

Ms. Ryan is considered to have good legal ability and temperament. She is praised for her litigation skills and she has substantial litigation experience in more complex matters. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Yolanda Harris Sayre -- Qualified

Yolanda H. Sayre was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1995. Since 1997, her primary employment has been with the Chicago Police Department (CPD), where she is an Attorney. Her duties at the CPD include training CPD personnel in civil rights laws, criminal laws and criminal procedures. In addition, she is a Solo Practitioner with a general law practice focusing on consulting, real estate transactions, contract negotiations, and other matters (1996-present) and also an Attorney/Hearing Officer at the Illinois Secretary of State’s Office (July 2019-present). Previously, she served as an Attorney/Hearing Officer at the Cook County and Chicago Boards of Election (2003-January 2019). She provides pro bono services to the First Municipal District Pro Bono Program, where she represents self-represented litigants.

Ms. Sayre is considered to have good legal ability and her temperament is unquestioned. She is praised for her knowledge of her particular practice areas. The Council is concerned that she has little litigation experience and that her practice area is narrow. On balance, the Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Countywide – Leeming Vacancy

Hon. Rena Van Tine – Well Qualified

The Hon. Rena Van Tine was elected to be an Associate Judge in 2001, and was appointed to be a Circuit Judge by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2021. She is assigned to the Law Division, Jury Trial Section. She served as an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney for 12 years before becoming a judge, prosecuting criminal cases and defending medical malpractice cases against Cook County Hospital. She also served as Special Counsel to then Illinois State Comptroller Daniel W. Hynes.

Judge Van Tine was a well respected Assistant State's Attorney before becoming a judge with a reputation of having good legal ability, temperament, and integrity. As a judge, she is praised for her legal knowledge, her temperament, and for her court management skills. The Council finds her Well Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Wende Williams – Not Recommended

Wende Williams did not participate in the evaluation process. The Council finds Wende Williams Not Recommended for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Countywide – Lynch Vacancy

Deidre Baumann – Qualified

Deidre Baumann was admitted to practice in 1992. She is an owner of a small firm focusing on litigation in personal injury, employment discrimination, civil rights, legal malpractice, First Amendment, and general commercial litigation. From 1993 to 1996 she worked for a small firm doing trial and appellate litigation around First Amendment issues. From 1996 to 2001, she was a sole practitioner.

Respondents in our evaluation say Ms. Baumann has good legal ability, and that she has a good temperament. Ms. Baumann is reported to be a respected attorney with substantial litigation experience and a demonstrated commitment to court reform. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Paul Joyce -- Qualified

Paul J. Joyce was admitted to practice in 1991. He has spent most of his career with the Cook County State's Attorney's Office. He is currently a First Chair prosecutor in the Skokie Courthouse. He has substantial bench and jury trial experience.

Paul J. Joyce is considered to have good legal ability and to be very knowledgeable about the criminal law. He is a go to person for advice and information. Both colleagues and opposing criminal defense counsel praise him for his honesty and integrity. He is reported to have a good temperament, and he is praised for being well prepared. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Michael Weaver -- Qualified

Michael Weaver was admitted to practice in 2006. He has been a partner with the law firm of McDermott Will & Emery since 2013. He was an Associate with this firm between 2007 and 2012. He has had substantial motion practice in complex matters and some experience with actual trials, as well. He is considered to have good legal ability and is praised for his litigation skills. He is reported to have good temperament and is involved in a substantial amount of pro bono work. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Countywide- McGury Vacancy

Hon. Ruth Isabel Gudino -- Qualified

The Hon. Ruth Isabel Gudino was admitted to practice in Illinois in 1995. She was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2021. For a majority of her career, Judge Gudino had been an Assistant State's Attorney for the Cook County State's Attorney's Office. She handled litigation in child support, juvenile delinquency matters, and traffic and misdemeanor offenses, though more recently she has focused on felony prosecution. In 2013, she became the Director of Legal Hiring for the Office. Ms. Gudino also has experience handling real estate and litigation for General Motors' Union employees.

Judge Gudino is reported to have good legal ability. She is praised for having an even keel temperament and for being hard-working. As a prosecutor, she has extensive litigation experience in a variety of criminal law matters. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Chelsey Renece Robinson -- Qualified

Chelsey R. Robinson was admitted to practice in 1996. She is a Partner in a small firm where she handles civil and criminal litigation matters. Her practice also includes bankruptcy and employment discrimination matters in federal court. She is widely praised for her legal ability and for her knowledge of the law. She has litigation experience in a variety of matters in both state and federal courts. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Countywide- O'Brien Vacancy

Hon. Araceli R. De La Cruz – Qualified

The Hon. Araceli Reyes De La Cruz was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2001. She was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in January 2022. Before becoming a judge, she had been the General Counsel/Chief Administrative Officer for Arcero Schools, a larger Chicago charter school network. There, she handled a variety of matters, including student law, labor and employment, and corporate transactions. Previously, she was Chief of General Prosecutions at the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulations (2014-2016); Deputy Chief of Staff (2009-2011) and Chief Safety and Security Officer (2011-2014) of the Chicago Transit Authority; and an Assistant State's Attorney at the Cook County State's Attorney Office (2001-2009).

As a lawyer, Judge De La Cruz was considered to have very good legal ability with substantial litigation experience in both civil and criminal law matters. She is reported to be always prepared and is praised for her litigation skills. Her career has included a variety of legal areas, and she has demonstrated that she is adept at learning new law and applying that law to a variety of approaches. She is reported to have an excellent temperament – respectful while being a zealous advocate. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Jacqueline M. Griffin – Qualified

Jacqueline M. Griffin was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2005. Since that time, she has been an Assistant State's Attorney in the Cook County State's Attorney Office, She is currently assigned to the Sex Assault and Domestic Violence Unit of the Felony Trial Division. Since 2007, she has also been a Solo Practitioner with a focus on wills and real estate transactions.

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

Dan Balanoff – Not Qualified

Daniel C. Balanoff was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2007. Since then, he has practiced at this own firm -- a general practice with a focus on trusts and estates and probate, residential and real estate law, and consumer bankruptcy.

Mr. Balanoff is praised for his legal ability and for always being prepared. He is reported to have a good demeanor. He has had few trials, but has had an active motion practice. The Council is concerned that he has not had substantial litigation experience in complex matters. On balance, the Council finds him Not Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Countywide – Sullivan Vacancy

Hon.Thomas More Donnelly -- Well Qualified

The Hon. Thomas M. Donnelly was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1986. He was elected as an Associate Judge in 2003 and was promoted to Circuit Judge by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2021. He is currently assigned to the Commercial Calendar Section of the Law Division. His previous judicial assignments include Traffic Court (2003), the Domestic Violence Trial Courtroom (2003), the Supplementary Proceedings and Miscellaneous Remedies Call for the First Municipal District (2003-2008), Misdemeanor Jury Call in the First Municipal District (2008-2009), and Civil Jury Trials in the First Municipal District (2009-2017). Prior to becoming a judge, he was an Assistant Public Defender (1988-2000). Judge Donnelly has served on the Illinois Judicial Ethics Committee for nearly 30 years and has chaired the legal ethics committees of both the Chicago Bar Association and the Illinois State Bar Association. He currently serves on the faculty of the National Judicial College.

Judge Donnelly is considered to have very good legal ability and is exceptionally knowledgeable. His opinions are reported to be excellent and he is praised for his integrity. He is reported to have good courtroom management skills, and a good judicial temperament. The Council finds him Well Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Claudia Silva-Hernandez – Not Recommended

Claudia Silva-Hernandez did not participate in the evaluation process. The Council finds her Not Recommended for the Circuit Court.

Meridth Vanae Hammer – Not Recommended

Meridth Vanae Hammer did not participate in the evaluation process. The Council finds her Not Recommended for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Countywide – Callahan Jr. Vacancy

Mary Bernadette McMahon -- Qualified

Mary McMahon was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2005. Since that time, she has served as an Assistant State's Attorney in the Cook County State's Attorney Office, where she currently serves as Supervisor for the Second Municipal District (2021-present). Her previous assignments there include Deputy Supervisor for the Third Municipal District (2019-2021). She has also served in the Felony Trial Division (2011-2019), Felony Review and Preliminary Hearings Unit (2009-2011), Narcotics Prosecutions Bureau (2006-2009), and the First Municipal District (2005-2006).

Mary McMahon is considered to have good legal ability, and as a career prosecutor has substantial litigation experience. Respondents praise her temperament and integrity. She is considered to have good litigation skills. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Suzanne Therese McEneely -- Qualified

Suzanne McEneely was admitted to practice in 2001. She is a career Assistant Cook County Public Defender with the exception of her first year of practice when she was an associate with a civil litigation firm.

Ms. McEneely is considered to have good legal ability and is praised for her litigation skills and her diligence. She is also praised for her knowledge of the law. She has substantial litigation experience in more complex criminal law matters. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Hon. Tracie R. Porter – Qualified

The Hon. Tracie R. Porter was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1994. She was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2021. As a lawyer, she was a Solo Practitioner with a focus on general business law, real estate, estate planning, probate, and entertainment law and a professor of law at the Abraham Lincoln School of Law and Western State College of Law. Previously, she taught law classes at the St. Louis University School of Law (2010), Southern Illinois University (2009-2012), IIT Chicago-Kent College of Law (2004-2009), and the UIC Law School (2004-2006). She handled real estate matters as a Senior Real Estate Associate at Brown Udell & Pomerantz, Ltd. (2003-2004) and as a Commercial Real Estate/Corporate

Associate at Barnes & Thornburg (2000-2003). In addition, she was a Labor Litigation Attorney at the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of the Solicitor (1994-1998).

The Hon. Tracie R. Porter is considered to be exceptionally knowledgeable and is or has been on the faculty of several law schools. She has multiple articles on legal topics published in law reviews. She is very active in bar association activities and she is admired for her community involvement. She has litigation experience. She was well respected as a practitioner, as a person working for community interests, and as a teacher. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court of Cook County Subcircuit Vacancies

Circuit Court – First Subcircuit – Johnson Vacancy

Maria M. Barlow – Not Recommended

Maria M. Barlow did not participate in the evaluation process. The Council finds her Not Recommended for the Circuit Court.

Hon. John Wellington Wilson – Well Qualified

The Hon. John Wellington Wilson was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1996. He was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2021. Before becoming a judge, he spent his career at the Law Office of the Cook County Public Defender, where he had served as an Attorney Supervisor. From 1997 to 2019, he was an Assistant Public Defender in the Homicide Task Force Unit/Felony Trial Division.

As a lawyer, Judge Wilson was considered to have very good legal ability. He is praised by opposing counsel and by judges for his litigation skills. He has substantial litigation experience in complex criminal law matters. He is reported to have excellent temperament and is praised for his integrity. The Council finds him Well Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Fourth Subcircuit – Gavin Vacancy

Nicholas A. Kantas – Qualified

Nicholas A. Kantas was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1994. He is an Assistant State's Attorney in the Cook County State's Attorney Office, where he currently serves as a second chair prosecutor in the Felony Trial Division. He has also served in the Office's Felony Review Unit (2012-2014; Supervisor, 2015), Preliminary Hearings (2014), Juvenile Justice Division (2008-2012), and Child Support Enforcement (2004-2008). In 2009-2010, he worked for a real estate developer, JAB Realty, where he handled landlord-tenant disputes, lease agreements, evictions, and property tax assessments.

Mr. Kantas is considered to be a smart, hard-working prosecutor. He is reported to be well-prepared and hard-working with substantial experience in felony trial prosecution. Respondents praised his trial skills. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Amanda Moira Pillsbury – Not Qualified

Amanda Moira Pillsbury was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2004. Since 2005, she has worked as an Assistant State's Attorney in the Cook County State's Attorney Office, where she currently serves in the Felony Trial Division at the Leighton Criminal Court building. Her previous assignments there included the Felony Trial Division Skokie Courthouse; the Branch 66 Homicide and Sex Crimes Unit; the Grand Jury Unit; the Preliminary Hearings Unit; and the Felony Review Unit.

Ms. Pillsbury is considered to have good legal ability. Most respondents praised her temperament but a few noted that she can, on occasion, be abrasive with opposing counsel. She has substantial litigation experience although some respondents noted that a substantial amount of her experience has been in less complex matters. Most respondents praised her trial skills, although there were a few respondents who questioned her diligence. Most respondents praised her as a prosecutor. On balance, the Council finds her Not Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Fourth Subcircuit – Rogers Vacancy

Jerome C. Barrido -- Qualified

Jerome C. Barrido was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1999. He is a career Assistant Cook County Public Defender. He is currently assigned to a juvenile justice call in a suburban district, where he handles matters ranging from Class X felonies to misdemeanors. He has extensive adult felony and juvenile litigation experience. He is praised as having very good legal ability and temperament. He is considered to be very knowledgeable, and is praised for his trial skills. He is reported to be a zealous advocate while being respectful to judges and opposing counsel. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.,

Chloe Gerogianna Pedersen -- Qualified

Chloe G. Pedersen was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2007. She has served as an Associate and (2014-2019) and an Equity Partner (2019-present) for Fletcher & Sippel, LLC, where she represents employers in a full range of labor and employment matters before regulatory agencies and in state and federal court litigation. Previously she served as Chief Legal and Labor Counsel for the Cook County Recorder of Deeds (2012-2014), as Assistant Attorney General in the Office of the Illinois Attorney General (2010-2012), as Assistant General Counsel to Speaker of the House of Representatives 96th General Assembly of the Illinois House of Representatives (2009), and as an Associate Attorney (2007-2009) at Querry & Harrow, Ltd., where she defended local municipal corporations and litigated a variety of other cases, including premise liability, personal injury, and insurance defense and coverage. She is a member of several bar associations, including the Illinois State Bar Association, where she sits on the Board of Governors (2021-present) and the Women's Bar Association of Illinois, where she formerly sat on the Board of Directors (2012-2016).

Chloe Pederson is considered to have good legal ability and has had litigation experience in more complex matters. She is reported to be very knowledgeable in her areas of practice and reports a variety of published articles. She is reported to have a good demeanor and enjoys a reputation of always being prepared. She is active in the professional community in areas related to race and gender, and participates often as a presenter in seminars and lectures. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Shawn TeMiaundra Raines-Welch – Qualified

ShawnTe Miaundra Raines-Welch was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2009. Since 2019, she has been a Partner at Ancel Glink, P.C., where she is a civil litigation defense attorney and acts as corporation counsel representing units of local government. Previously, she was an Associate Attorney at Sanchez Daniels & Hoffman LLP (2011-2018), where she focused on employment and labor law, and an Attorney at Brustin & Lundblad, Ltd., where she litigated personal injury claims. She is a member of the Cook County Bar Association and the Black Women Lawyers' Bar Association. She provides pro bono legal services as the Board Attorney for the District 89 Education Foundation and as a constituent volunteer for State Representative Emanuel Christopher Welch, where she serves seniors and veterans.

Ms. Raines-Welch is considered to have good legal ability. She has substantial litigation experience in more complex matters and is praised for her litigation skills. She is reported to have good temperament and provides substantial pro bono assistance. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Patrick Campanelli -- Not Qualified

Patrick Campanelli was admitted to practice in 1986. From 1986 to 1997 he served as an Assistant State's Attorney and then left to start his own practice which consists of criminal defense, torts, chancery matters, and real estate. He has substantial litigation experience.

Mr. Campanelli is considered to have good legal ability, but the reports involving his temperament are mixed. Some say that he has insulted opposing counsel and engaged in name calling on the record. Others have described other unprofessional behavior. On balance, the Council finds him Not Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Fifth Subcircuit – Portman-Brown Vacancy

Hon. David Lewis Kelly – Qualified

The Hon. David Lewis Kelly was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2001. He was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2021. Before becoming a judge, he was a Solo Practitioner primarily focused on criminal defense, civil litigation, and real estate. Previously he was Of Counsel at the Property Law Group, LLC (2013-2015), where represented landlords and condominium associations, and investors and individuals in real estate transactions; and served as an Assistant State's Attorney at the Cook County State's Attorney Office (2001-2006). He is a member of the Cook County Bar Association, where he has served as Executive Board

Member/Secretary (2013-2015) and provided pro bono services in Expungement Workshops and the Legal Assistance Program for low-income individuals.

Judge Kelly is considered to have good legal ability. He is reported to be very knowledgeable with a good temperament. He has substantial litigation experience in more complex matters. He is praised for his litigation skills and for his integrity. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Jenetia Marshall – Qualified

Jenetia Marshall was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2004. Since 2019, she has worked for the Department of Child and Family Services, where she currently is Statewide Compliance Administrator and previously was Supervisor Regional Counsel. From 2003 to 2019, worked for the Cook County Office of the Public Guardian, where she served as Senior Attorney--Guardian Ad Litem II. She is a member of numerous bar associations, including the Black Women's Lawyer Association, the Chicago Bar Association, the Cook County Bar Association, and the American Bar Association.

Ms. Marshall is considered to have good legal ability and is praised for her knowledge of the law in her area of practice. She has substantial litigation experience and is praised for her skills. She is reported to have a good temperament and is praised for her ability to work out settlements with opposing counsel. She is praised as being exceptionally hard working. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Fifth Subcircuit – Shelley Vacancy

Timothy W. Wright -- Qualified

Timothy W. Wright was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1984. Since 2011, he has been a Partner at Quintairos, Prieto, Wood & Boyer, where he practices in the areas of transactional law, government affairs, public finance, and litigation. Previously, he was a Managing Partner at Gonzalez, Saggio and Harlan (2007-2011); Partner at Burriss, Wright, Slaughter & Tom (2004-2007); General Counsel for WJYS, Tinley Park (1999-2003); Associate at Sachnoff and Weaver (1989-1993); Attorney for Business and Professional People for the Public Interest; and Judicial Clerk for Judge James Parsons, Northern District of Illinois (1983-1985).

Mr. Wright is considered to have good legal ability and has litigation experience. He is reported to have a good temperament. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Judie Lyn Smith – Qualified

Judie Lyn Smith was admitted to practice in 1992. She serves as an Assistant Cook County Public Defender. She spent several years in private practice before joining the Cook County Public Defender's Office. She is a court interpreter orientation trainer for the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts.

Judie Lyn Smith is considered to have good legal ability and is praised for her temperament. She has a long career of criminal defense work. Many respondents to this evaluation praise her skills and her knowledge of the law. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Tiffany N. Brooks – Not Qualified

Tiffany Brooks was admitted to practice in 2010. In 2011 she was employed as a staff attorney at Urban Partnership Bank. She was a sole practitioner between 2013 and 2020. From 2018 to 2020 she served as an Assistant Commissioner for the Business Affairs and Consumer Protection for the City of Chicago. From December 2020 to the present she is the General Counsel for the Clerk of the Circuit Court.

Tiffany Brooks is considered to have good legal ability and has excelled in the variety of professional positions she has had. She is praised for her temperament. The Council is concerned, however, that she has limited trial and litigation experience. Her practice lacks sufficient breadth and depth to be a judge. She has been a lawyer for 12 years, only half of which she was providing individual representation. On balance, the Council finds her Not Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Jackie Marie Portman-Brown - Qualified

Jackie Marie Portman-Brown was elected to the bench in 2008 and left the bench in 2020. Prior to becoming a judge, she 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. Former Judge Portman-Brown has served as the 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 the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Sixth Subcircuit – Araujo Vacancy

Hon. Charles S. Beach -- Qualified

The Hon. Charles S. Beach was admitted to practice in 1996. He was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2017 and was elected as an Associate Judge in 2018, Before becoming a judge, he was a sole practitioner doing primarily criminal defense work in felony and misdemeanor cases. The bulk of his practice is DUI defense. In addition to being a sole practitioner he was an associate in a small private practice firm doing criminal defense, was a Law Clerk to Illinois Appellate Justice Judith Koehler, and served for one year as an Assistant Cook County Public Defender. As a practitioner, Judge Beach was considered to very knowledgeable in the areas of law he practiced. He was considered to be an expert in DUI law and had experience in more complex litigation. As a judge, he is well respected for his court management and for his temperament. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Lori Ann Roper – Qualified (withdrew)

Lori Ann Roper was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1994. She is a career Assistant Cook County Public Defender. She is assigned to 26th and California where she is an Attorney Supervisor. She has held various positions as an Assistant Public Defender. Ms. Roper has substantial litigation experience in a variety of complex criminal law matters. She advises other Assistant Public Defenders on litigation strategies, and is considered to be an excellent lawyer. She is reported to have a professional and low key temperament. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court- Sixth Subcircuit – Vega Vacancy

David S. Rodriguez – Qualified

David Rodriguez was admitted to practice in 1984. He served as a Commissioner of the Illinois Court or Claims between 2011 and 2017. He also served as First Deputy Commissioner of the Illinois Office of Banks and Real Estate from 1999 to 2005. From 1989 to 2005, he was Deputy Director of the Illinois Office of Banks and Real Estate. From 1989 to 1999, he also served as an Assistant Attorney General handling litigation matters, including personal injury, real estate, and commercial matters. He is very active in community activities.

Mr. Rodriguez is considered to have good legal ability and knowledgeable. He is widely praised for his temperament. His litigation experience in more complex matters occurred while he was with the Illinois Attorney General's Office, but he was praised for his abilities as a Commissioner with the Court of Claims which has been described as being akin to a role as an administrative law judge. His experience with non-litigation matters has been with complex financial matters and he is reported to have done a solid job. In looking at the totality of his career, it appears that Mr. Rodriguez has had a variety of relevant experiences including litigation. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Hon. Kerrie Maloney Laytin -- Qualified

The Hon. Kerrie Maloney Laytin was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2000. She was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2019 and now serves as an Associate Judge, elected by the Circuit Judges. Before becoming a judge, she served as an assistant corporation counsel for the City of Chicago's Department of Law, where she practiced appellate law on behalf of the City of Chicago, City employees, and City agencies.

Previously, she worked as a staff attorney at the Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago (2000-2002), and volunteered for Columbia Law School, Social Justice Initiatives, as the regional adviser in Chicago for students involved in government and public interest careers.

Judge Laytin is considered to have very good legal ability. As a lawyer, she was praised for legal skills and for her professional demeanor, even in the midst of heated legal matters. She is reported to have good judgment and has the ability to resolve contested disputes. Her appellate career has demonstrated the analytical thinking and management skills necessary to be a good Circuit Judge. She has been praised in her role as a judge. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Seventh Subcircuit – Martin Vacancy

Marcia O'Brien Conway – Well Qualified

Marcia O'Brien Conway was admitted to practice in 1984. She was a sole practitioner between 1986 and 1991, and has been in private practice since 2019. She retired from the Cook County State's Attorney's Office in 2018 after having served there since 1993. She represented Cook County and County officials in real estate tax litigation between 2008 and 2018. She drafted and negotiated purchase and sale agreements between 1994 and 2008. She was in private practice between 1994 and 1988, including the law firm of Winston & Strawn.

Ms. Conway is praised for her legal ability and knowledge. She was often cited as an expert in real estate and taxation law. She is reported to always be well prepared and she is praised for her litigation skills. She is considered to have a very good temperament with a patient but effective demeanor. She is said to be exceptionally hard working. The Council finds her Well Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Owens J. Shelby -- Qualified

Owens J. Shelby was admitted to practice in 2007. He has been a career Cook County Assistant State's Attorney working as a second chair prosecutor in a felony trial courtroom. He served for less than a year as the Assistant Counsel to the Speaker of the Illinois House, and as a contract attorney with Loevy & Loevy in 2007 to 2008. Mr. Shelby is considered to have good legal ability with a very good temperament. He is praised for his diligence. Most lawyers praise his abilities although a few say he lacks adequate experience. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Eighth Subcircuit – Gordon Vacancy

Patrick Casey – Not Qualified

Patrick Casey was admitted to the Illinois bar in 2001. He has been in private practice since January 2020. For the previous 10 years Mr. Casey served as an administrative law judge involving a long-term care. Prior to that he did some criminal work and of some personal injury cases. Respondents indicated that Mr. Casey is knowledgeable about his current position and fulfilled his duties. However, the Council is concerned that Mr. Casey lacks sufficient litigation experience, and his current position as an administrative law judge is not sufficiently complex to demonstrate his ability to be a judge. The Council finds him Not Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Bradley R. Trowbridge -- Qualified

Bradley R. Trowbridge was admitted to practice in Illinois in 2000. Prior to law school he served as a social worker. Since 2004 he has served as a solo practitioner focusing on domestic relations issues. He has worked as a staff attorney at the Chicago Department of Law; a staff attorney at the Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago; and as an associate with Audrey Gaynor & Associates. He has done domestic violence order of protection pro bono work.

Mr. Trowbridge is considered to have good legal ability. He has had substantial litigation experience in a variety of areas. Judges and practitioners praise his litigation skills. A few respondents questioned his temperament, but on balance, the Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

John Fritchey -- Qualified

John Fritchey was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1989. For about two years he practiced before administrative tribunals as an attorney with the Illinois Attorney General's Office. He then practiced with a small firm for another 4 to 5 years. He then became a politician, first as a State Representative and then as a Cook County Board Commissioner. He was defeated in 2018. He has been president of his own consulting firm for the last 15 years. In 1998, he created the John Fritchey Youth Foundation, designed to create educational and recreational opportunities for local children through the sponsorship of academic and sports programs

Mr. Fritchey has little litigation experience and that was within the first 7 years of his career. But he is well respected as a politician, and is considered to have good ability. The Council recognizes his lack of actual trial experience, but Mr. Fritchey has had a career of public service, and as a politician, he has made impressive contributions to the public interest in a wide variety of legislative areas. The Council believes that his work as a respected public servant compensates for his paucity of litigation experience. On balance, the Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Eighth Subcircuit – Lipscomb Vacancy

Jennifer E. Bae -- Qualified

Jennifer E. Bae was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1997. She is currently Director of Employee Discipline at the Cook County Sheriff's Office. Before taking this position, she worked as a solo practitioner focusing in criminal defense cases. She also worked part-time as a board member on the Cook County Sheriff's Merit Board, a position she has held since 2013. Previously she worked as a partner at Bae Law Offices (2000-2012); and as an Assistant State's Attorney in the Cook County State's Attorney Office (1996-2000), where she was assigned to the Appeals Division, the Traffic Division, and the Domestic Violence Division. In January 2017, she became Chair of the Illinois Supreme Court's Committee on Character and Fitness for the First Judicial District, where she has served since 2010.

Ms. Bae is considered to have good legal ability and temperament. She has sufficient complex litigation experience in criminal law matters, both as a prosecutor and in private practice. She has had experience in civil proceedings, as well. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Stephen Andrew Swedlow – Well Qualified

Stephen Andrew Swedlow was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1996. Since 2011, he has served as Managing Partner of Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan, where he handles complex civil litigation matters. Previously, he was a Founding Partner at Swedlow & Associates/Korein Tillery (2001-2011), where he handled plaintiffs' contingency cases and trials. From 1996 to 2001 he handled complex corporate litigation as an Associate at Latham & Watkins and from 1995 to 1996 he clerked for the Hon. Jerome Farris of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. He provides pro bono legal services through his own firm and as a volunteer for CARPLS legal aid.

Mr. Swedlow is considered to have excellent legal ability and has substantial litigation experience in highly complex matters in both state and federal courts. He has both trial and appellate experience, including cases argued before the Illinois Supreme Court. He is praised for his litigation skills. He is reported to have a very good and professional temperament, while being a zealous advocate. The Council finds him Well Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Ninth Subcircuit – Bernstein Vacancy

Hon. Sanjay T. Tailor – Well Qualified

The Hon. Sanjay T. Tailor was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1991. He was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2021, after serving as an Associate Judge between 2003 and 2021. He is currently Presiding Judge of the County Division, where he hears cases concerning mental health, election, adoption, civil asset forfeiture, property tax, name change, and other civil matters. Previously, he was assigned to the Chancery Division (2015-2020), the Law Division (2009-2015), the Domestic Relations Division (2006-2009), and the First Municipal Division (2003-2006). From 1996 to 2003, he was an Assistant State's Attorney in the Civil Actions Bureau of the Cook County State's Attorney Office. He was also in-house counsel in the

Law Department of the First National Bank of Chicago (1994-1995) and an Associate in the Special Litigation, Bankruptcy, and Workout Group at Chapman and Cutler (1991-1994). He is a member of numerous bar associations, including the American Bar Association, the Illinois State Bar Association, and the South Asian Bar Association of Chicago (founding member, advisory council).

Judge Tailor is a highly respected jurist who is praised for his knowledge, his preparedness, and his temperament. He has excelled in every judicial position to which he has been assigned. The Council finds him Well Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Ann Buran-Vongher -- Qualified

Ann Buran-Vongher was admitted to practice in Illinois in 1989 and has been a solo practitioner since December 2020. She does criminal defense work exclusively. She had been a Cook County Assistant Public Defender for 31 years practicing in a variety of cases and locations including felony trial work at the Criminal Courts Building, the Juvenile Court, the 2nd Municipal District in Skokie, and Preliminary Hearings.

Ann Buran-Vongher is considered to have good legal ability and is praised for her professionalism, her knowledge of the law, and for her diligence. She is reported to be a zealous advocate for her clients while being praised for her integrity. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Ninth Subcircuit – Jacobius Vacancy

Basileios “Bill” John Foutris -- Qualified

Basileios “Bill” John Foutris was admitted to practice in 2000. His practice has been devoted to representing victims of police misconduct. As a civil rights lawyer, he has been involved in litigating wrongful death, police shootings, police brutality, illegal searches, false arrest, coerced confessions, malicious prosecution and other police misconduct. He has substantial litigation experience in both state and federal courts. He is praised for his knowledge of the law. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Torrik Alan Ward -- Qualified

Torrik Alan Ward was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1998. Mr. Ward began his career at the Chicago Department of Law as an assistant corporation counsel. In 2004 he was promoted to senior counsel where he supervised attorneys, handled employment discrimination suits and helped develop city policies. In 2008, he became the deputy director of the Chicago office of Compliance. In 2012 he began a solo practice.

Mr. Ward is praised for his legal ability and temperament. He has had substantial litigation experience during the course of his career, and is reported to have good temperament – civil and professional. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Barry Goldberg -- Qualified

Barry Goldberg was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1999. He is a member of several bar associations including the Decalogue Society of Lawyers, where he served as President (2009-2010). He has spent his career at the Charitable Trust Bureau of the Illinois Office of the Attorney General, where he has served as Bureau Chief (2019-present), Deputy Bureau Chief (2018-2019), Assistant Bureau Chief (2006-2017), and Assistant Attorney General (1999-2006).

Barry Goldberg is considered to have very good legal ability and is exceptionally knowledgeable involving charitable trusts. He is praised for his temperament. He has handled enforcement actions and conducted a multistate litigation action in a fraud action in federal court. While he has little trial experience, he has substantial experience in litigation matters. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Don R. Sampen – Well Qualified

Don R. Sampen was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1975. Since 2008, he has been a partner at Clausen Miller P.C., where he focuses on appellate litigation. He has also been a partner at Meckler, Bulger & Tilson, where he focused on insurance-related commercial litigation (2003-2008); chief of the Public Interest Division and chief of the Special Litigation Bureau of the Illinois Attorney General's Office (1995-2003); a partner at Martin, Craig, Chester & Sonnenschein (1988-1995); a partner and associate at Jenner & Block (1976-1988); and a law clerk to Judge Phil Tone of the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit (1975-1976). He serves as pro bono counsel for the Abolition Institute, an organization that fights modern day slavery.

Mr. Sampen is considered to have excellent legal ability. He is a widely respected appellate attorney who is also praised for his trial litigation experience in complex matters. He is reported to have a professional demeanor and is considered to a solid practitioner who knows the court system from a variety of points of view. The Council finds him Well Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Eleventh Subcircuit – McGuire Vacancy

Chris Taliaferro -- Not Qualified

Christopher Taliaferro was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2007. Currently he serves as Alderman for the 29th Ward of the City of Chicago (2015-present) and as a Solo Practitioner (2007-present) with the Taliaferro Law Group, where he practices family law.

Christopher Taliaferro is reported to have a good temperament. The Council is concerned, however, that he does not appear to have sufficient litigation experience in more complex matters and that his practice lacks sufficient depth and breadth. The Council finds him Not Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Aileen Bhandari – Qualified

Aileen Bhandari was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2002. She is an Assistant State's Attorney in the Cook County State's Attorney Office, where she prosecutes criminal cases, including Armed Robbery, Criminal Sexual Assault, Attempted Murder, and Murder cases, for the Felony Trial Division. Her pro bono activities include participation in Lawyers in the Classroom (2015).

Aileen Bhandari is considered to have good legal ability and has substantial trial experience in more complex criminal law matters. Her temperament is described as calm and affable. She is a well respected prosecutor who is described as having a commitment to understanding the needs of different communities and of crime victims from different backgrounds. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Thirteenth Subcircuit – Groebner Vacancy

(R) Alice Christine Svenson – Qualified

Alice Christine Svenson was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1995. She is the Principal at Svenson Law Offices, where she focuses on family law, federal and state election law, and employment law. Previously, she handled workers compensation cases at Stone and Johnson (Associate and Partner, 1998-2008) and at Ridge and Downes (Associate, 1995-1998). She has participated in several bar associations including the Republican National Lawyers Association, where she served on the Board of Governors and as the Finance Chair and the Illinois State Chapter Chair. She has provided pro bono legal services to divorced fathers through the organization Fathers Helping Fathers.

Ms. Svenson has a variety of legal experiences, including litigation experience in workers compensation cases and domestic relations matters. She has relatively little recent trial experience, although she maintains a motion practice. Respondents say she has demonstrative good litigation skills and she is reported to have a good temperament. There have been a few client complaints concerning her diligence, but on balance, she appears to be a good practitioner. 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.

(R) Dominic J. Buttitta, Jr. -- Qualified

Dominic Buttitta, Jr was admitted to the Illinois bar in 2010. He began his legal career with the McHenry County State's Attorney's Office where during a span of 3 years he achieved the position of lead trial attorney. He then went into private practice as a partner in a small firm, doing criminal defense, family law, civil litigation, and personal injury matters. In 2015 he

opened his own practice where he is the managing partner. He has substantial bench and jury trial experience in a variety of areas. He is active in community activities.

Dominic Buttitta is widely praised as an attorney with good legal ability and a go to person for advice by other attorneys. He is reported to have a good temperament and to be well prepared and organized in his practice. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

James Costello --Qualified

James Costello was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2007. He has spent his career as an Assistant State's Attorney in the Cook County State's Attorney Office, where since 2019 he has served in the Special Prosecutions Bureau, Public Corruption and Financial Crimes Unit (he is currently First Chair). He has also served in the Felony Trial Division (2016-2019), the Felony Review and Preliminary Hearings Unit (2013-2016), the Misdemeanors/Traffic/Preliminary Hearings Units at the Markham courthouse (2009-2013), and Criminal Appeals in the Daley Center (2007-2009).

Mr. Costello is considered to have good legal ability and is especially praised for his temperament. He is reported to be knowledgeable and fair with lawyers and litigants. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Joe Gump -- Qualified

Joseph Michael Gump was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1987. He has spent his legal career at the Office of the Cook County Public Defender, where he is currently a Felony Trial Assistant.

Joseph Michael Gump is considered to have good legal ability and is praised for being a zealous advocate. He has substantial litigation experience in complex matters, and is praised for his knowledge of the law as well as for his research skills. He is praised for his judicial temperament. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Fourteenth Subcircuit – Brown Vacancy

Iris Y. Chavira – Not Recommended

Iris Y. Chavira did not participate in the evaluation process. The Council finds her Not Recommended for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Fourteenth Subcircuit – Jagielski Vacancy

Steve Demitro – Qualified

Steve Demitro was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2000. Since that time, he has been a Solo Practitioner. His practice is concentrated on torts (personal injury), but he also handles some criminal law, domestic relations, real estate, probate, and chancery matters.

Mr. Demitro is considered to have good legal ability and is praised for his temperament. He is very active in community affairs. He has had substantial litigation experience, particularly in recent years. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Viviana Martinez – Qualified

Viviana Martinez was admitted to practice in 2007. She currently serves as the Deputy General Counsel for the Chicago Public Schools. Between 2018 and 2022, she served as a Cook County Government Special Assistant Legal Counsel. In that role, she acted as legal advisor and counsel to the bureau chief or director in all matters related to the statutory authority and execution of powers of Cook County government departments and bureaus. She provided assistance in interpreting the legal ramifications of proposals, policy directives and other actions. From 2013 to 2018 she served as a deputy general counsel within the Cook County President's Office and she was Chief of Staff and General Counsel from 2010 to 2013. She served with the Illinois Attorney General's Office in 2008. She has served as a hearing officer for pre disciplinary hearings for Cook County offices under the Cook County President

Viviana Martinez is considered to have good legal ability and has excelled in the variety of professional positions she has had. She is reported to be well respected for her knowledge and for her managerial skills. She is praised for her temperament and is active in community activities. She has limited trial and litigation experience, but in looking at her successful career in its entirety, the Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Jorge Cazares – Qualified

Jorge Cazares was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1990. He is also licensed in various federal courts. He first joined Altheimer & Gray as an associate, and then went to Pugh, Jones & Johnson from 1992-2006 where he became partner. He served as general counsel to the Chicago Housing Authority from 2007-2008 and then returned to Pugh, Jones from 2009 to 2020. He joined Hinshaw Culbertson as a partner in February 2020 handling complex civil cases, employment discrimination cases, and contract work. He was the Chief Ethics and Chief EEO Officer for the CHA from 2017-2019. He is active in pro bono activities.

Mr. Cazares is considered to have very good legal ability. He has substantial trial work in complex cases and extensive motion practice. He is praised for his temperament and integrity. He is praised as an excellent trial attorney. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Circuit Court – Fifteenth Subcircuit – Lawler Vacancy

Bernadette Barrett -- Qualified

Bernadette Barrett was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1991. As a Solo Practitioner at Bernadette Garrison Barrett, P.C (2019-present) and as an Attorney at Barrett & Sramek (1991-2018), where she has concentrated primarily in domestic relations, civil litigation, corporate law, and personal injury cases. She has also worked as an Attorney at Carpls (1998-1999) and since 2018 has been a Board Member and Attorney for Rise from the Ashes, where she provides pro

bono legal services to victims of domestic violence. She is a member in good standing of several bar associations, including the Southwest Bar Association, where she is a Past President.

Bernadette Barrett is considered to be a seasoned attorney with good legal ability. She has substantial experience in more complex matters. She is reported to have good temperament and is praised for her willingness to be a mentor to other attorneys. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

Jim Gleffe -- Not Qualified

James Gleffe was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2007. Since December 2020, he has served as Deputy Chief of Staff and Labor Counsel for the Cook County Clerk's Office. Previously, he worked for the Cook County Recorder of Deeds Office as Chief Deputy Recorder/Chief of Staff (2018-2020) and Chief Legal Counsel (2014-2018); for Illinois Secretary of State Securities Department as Chief Deputy Director (2012-2013) and Enforcement Attorney (2009-2012); and as a Prosecutor in the Municipal Prosecutions Division of the City of Chicago Department of Law (2007-2009).

Mr. Gleffe is considered to have good legal ability. He has good legal ability and is praised for his temperament. The Council is concerned about his lack of sufficient direct litigation experience. He has substantial experience overseeing litigation being conducted by others, and is often actively involved in providing advice and counsel to agency staff engaged in litigation. Earlier in his career, Mr. Gleffe represented an agency in administrative hearings. On balance, the Council finds him Not Qualified for the Circuit Court.

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