



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CHESTER COUNTY**

LWVCC, P.O. Box 62, Exton, PA 19341

Telephone (610) 644-5960

[www.lwvccpa.org](http://www.lwvccpa.org)

# Non-Partisan Voters Guide

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**PA State and County Political Candidates and  
4 Judicial Retention Questions  
General Election 2021**

**Tuesday, November 2, 2021**

**Polls shall remain open continuously between the hours of:  
7:00 A.M. and 8:00 P.M.**

**\*If you plan to vote in person, due to the Coronavirus pandemic please check with Chester County Voter Services to confirm your polling place will be open on November 2nd**

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**Election Day Problems?** Call one of these hotlines:

1-866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683)

1-888-VE-Y-VOTA (en Español)  
(1-888-839-8682)

1-888-API-VOTE (Asian multilingual assistance)  
(1-888-274-8683)

1-844-YALLA-US (Arabic)  
(1-844-925-5287)

**Chester County Voter Services**

<https://www.chesco.org/156/Voter-Services>

**610-344-6410**



*The League of Women Voters of Chester County is a nonpartisan organization whose purpose is to serve the local community by promoting informed active citizen participation in government and by acting on selected governmental issues. The League does not support or oppose any candidate or political party.*

# State Judicial Races

## Pennsylvania Justice of the Supreme Court

**Description of office:** The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania is the highest court in the Commonwealth and the oldest appellate court in the nation. The Supreme Court's administrative powers and jurisdictional responsibilities are vested with the seven-member court by the Pennsylvania State Constitution and a collection of statutes known as the Judicial Code. The justice with the longest continuous service on the Supreme Court automatically becomes chief justice. Administratively, the courts within the Unified Judicial System are largely responsible for organizing their own staff and dockets; however, the Supreme Court has several committees and boards responsible for writing and enforcing rules for judges, attorneys, and litigants to ensure an efficient and fair judicial review. Annually, the seven justices receive over 3,000 requests for appellate review.

**Term:** 10 years

**Salary:** \$215,037

### Candidates (choose 1):

#### Maria McLaughlin



**Party:** Dem

**Biographical Info:**

**County:** Philadelphia

**Occupation:** Superior Court Judge

**Education:** Penn State 1988. Delaware Law School at Widener University 1992

**Qualifications:** Current Judge on our PA Superior Court; Served 6 years as Judge, Court of Common Pleas; Chief and ADA, Phila District Attorneys Office; Rated Highly Recommended for the Supreme Court by the PBA

**campaign website:** <http://judgemclaughlin.com>

**Facebook:** <http://@Maria4PASC>

**Twitter:** <http://@McLaughlin4PASC>

**Questions:**

**Q:** *What can you do, both on and off the bench, to ensure that all individuals have equal access to justice?*

**A:** Along with being our highest appellate court, The Supreme Court oversees our statewide court system and legal community. As such we have the opportunity to set rules, educate the legal community and create special court programs dealing with human services issues like substance abuse & mental health challenges, veteran's issues & initiatives focused on autism. All geared toward providing fair treatment and equal access for people with unique circumstances.

**Q:** *What can you do, both on and off the bench, to ensure an equitable and fair court?*

**A:** As a lawyer & a judge I have always worked to ensure everyone who comes into a courtroom has an opportunity to be heard and the law applied without bias. This is the cornerstone of our legal system. As a

Justice I will not waiver from that driving principle. My work on the bench and in my life will always reflect my dedication to fairness and equality.

## Kevin Brobson



**Party:** Rep

**Biographical Info:**

**County:** Dauphin

**Occupation:** President Judge, Pennsylvania Commonwealth Court

**Education:** Widener Commonwealth Law School, summa cum laude (2nd in class), Managing Editor Law Review; Lycoming College (B.A., Accounting/Economics), magna cum laude

**Qualifications:** President Judge of the Pa. Commonwealth Court; over 11 years as statewide appellate court judge (elected 2009, retained 2019); Pa. Judicial Conduct Board, 2015-19 (Chair); 14 years' private practice; former federal judicial clerk; "Highly Recommended" by Pa. Bar Association

**campaign website:** <http://www.brobsonforpa.com>

**Facebook:** <http://www.facebook.com/Kevin-Brobson-for-PA-112608997531221>

**Questions:**

**Q:** *What can you do, both on and off the bench, to ensure that all individuals have equal access to justice?*

**A:** I would work cooperatively with the governor and the legislature to increase funding for legal aid programs. While in private practice, I created a program in Dauphin County to expand pro bono opportunities for lawyers to provide services to nonprofit organizations. I would encourage county bar associations to think creatively about expanding pro bono service to small and minority-owned businesses and nonprofits. I want to ensure our courts have access to interpreters for parties with limited English proficiency. I would build upon the excellent work of Philadelphia Legal Assistance with respect to the representation of low-wage workers and the unemployed by engaging law schools and other legal aid associations throughout the state.

**Q:** *What can you do, both on and off the bench, to ensure an equitable and fair court?*

**A:** I believe I have earned a reputation as a fair and impartial arbiter of the law. I treat everyone who enters my courtroom, or has a matter before me, with equal respect and dignity. I strive to appreciate the perspectives and points of view of all parties. It is important to me that every litigant, represented and unrepresented, be given every opportunity, within the rules and the law, to present their case. Moreover, as a former Chair of the Pa. Judicial Conduct Board, I am keenly aware of how important it is to Pennsylvanians that our judges observe the highest ethical standards on and off the bench. I hold myself to this high standard. All Pennsylvanians deserve to have faith in a fair and impartial judiciary.

# Pennsylvania Judge of the Superior Court

**Description of office:** The Superior Court is one of Pennsylvania's two statewide intermediate appellate courts. This court, established in 1895, reviews most of the civil and criminal cases that are appealed from the Courts of Common Pleas in the Commonwealth's 67 counties. The Superior Court consists of 15 judges. The president judge is elected to a five-year term by his/her colleagues. A large number of appeals flow to the Superior Court from the trial courts. Generally, appeals are heard by panels of three judges sitting in Philadelphia, Harrisburg, or Pittsburgh. The court often is the final arbiter of legal disputes. Although the Supreme Court may grant a petition for review of a Superior Court decision, most petitions are denied, and the ruling of the Superior Court stands.

**Term:** 10 years

**Salary:** \$202,898

## Candidates (choose 1):

### Timika Lane



**Party:** Dem

**Biographical Info:**

**County:** Philadelphia

**Occupation:** Judge - Court of Common Pleas

**Education:** West Catholic High School and went on to graduate Howard University in Washington DC & received my Law Degree in 2002 from Rutgers University School of Law in NJ.

**Qualifications:** Major Trials Judge presiding over 1000's of trials, authoring 100's of opinions. I handle all human trafficking cases & many of the most serious criminal cases & Grand Jury matters. Certified Child Advocate & as former Exec Dir of the Senate Govt Cmte advised on the constitutionality of legislation

**campaign website:** <http://www.judgelane.com>

**Facebook:** <http://@LaneforSuperiorCourt>

**Twitter:** <http://@JudgeTimikaLane>

**Questions:**

**Q:** *What can you do, both on and off the bench, to ensure that all individuals have equal access to justice?*

**A:** As a sitting Judge, I ensure everyone in my courtroom is treated with dignity and respect regardless of race, gender, creed, religion, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status. As a member of the Access to Justice Committee, we address this issue by looking at possible barriers and how to remove those barriers to ensure everyone has equal access. As co-chair of the Local Criminal Rules Committee we recommend the qualifications for court appointed attorneys to make sure that indigent people have capable legal representation. We ensure that the local criminal rules are fair and applied equally to all who all who come before our courts.

**Q:** *What can you do, both on and off the bench, to ensure an equitable and fair court?*

**A:** The Superior Court is an error correcting court & often the last line of defense for the parties involved in a case. When reviewing an appeal It is vital the appellate judge have strong courtroom experience on both sides

of the bench to best determine the if the proceedings in the lower court were fair, all parties were heard and the law has been applied fairly regardless of race, creed, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation or economic status. I will ensure equity and fairness in all cases before me, just as I do for all who appear in my current courtroom. Off the bench, I believe judges should be visible in the community. We are public servants and it is our duty to make sure the public understands how the court system functions.

## Megan Sullivan



**Party:** Rep

**Biographical Info:**

**County:** Chester

**Occupation:** Attorney

**Education:** Temple University Beasley School of Law, Juris Doctorate (cum laude); Saint Joseph's University (B.A.)

**Qualifications:** 20 years criminal & civil law experience. Deputy Attorney General in PA Attorney General's Office & Supervisory District Attorney, protected victims including the most vulnerable members of our society as a child abuse prosecutor. Asst. General Counsel at West Chester University and civil litigator.

**campaign website:** <http://www.megsullivanforjudge.com>

**Facebook:** <http://@megforjudge>

**Questions:**

**Q:** *What can you do, both on and off the bench, to ensure that all individuals have equal access to justice?*

**A:** I believe equal access to justice is essential to maintaining trust in our courts and our justice system's legitimacy. I am committed to providing all individuals in my courtroom with equal access to justice by ensuring their voice is heard, their rights are protected, & that they are never subject to discrimination. I support efforts to enhance equal access to justice through legal aid programs that provide individuals with access to qualified attorneys. Providing interpreters for those individuals for whom English is a second language is also important. It is also important to give Individuals with disabilities full access to the courtroom. Everyone that comes before a judge should fully understand their constitutional rights.

**Q:** *What can you do, both on and off the bench, to ensure an equitable and fair court?*

**A:** I have a deep respect for our Constitution and our system of justice. I have spent a large part of my 20-year career as an attorney helping others to navigate both the criminal and civil judicial system. I respect the system but understand why some fear it. Individuals who serve in the role of a judge must recognize that they are the arbiter of the rules and the process. This is a great power that requires objectivity, an innate sense of fairness, and humility. I possess these traits and am committed to delivering to all citizens a justice system that shows respect and fairness, as well as knowledgeable decision-making that takes into account the parties' perspectives and applies the law objectively.

# Pennsylvania Judge of the Commonwealth Court

**Description of office:** The Commonwealth Court is one of Pennsylvania's two statewide intermediate appellate courts. This court, established in 1968, is unlike any other state court in the nation. Its jurisdiction generally is limited to legal matters involving state and local government and regulatory agencies. Litigation typically focuses on subjects such as banking, insurance, utility regulation, and laws affecting taxation, land use, elections, labor practices, and workers compensation. The Commonwealth Court also acts as a court of original jurisdiction, or a trial court, when lawsuits are filed by or against the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth Court is made up of nine judges. The president judge is elected to a five-year term by his/her colleagues. Generally, appeals are heard by panels of three judges sitting in Philadelphia, Harrisburg, or Pittsburgh.

**Term:** 10 years

**Salary:** \$202,898

## Candidates (choose 2):

### Lori A. Dumas



**Party:** Dem

**Biographical Info:**

**County:** Philadelphia

**Occupation:** Judge

**Education:** North Carolina Central School of Law; Duke University; Executive Certificates from Cornell University, (D&I); University of Pennsylvania, Fels Institute of Government

**Qualifications:** Trial Court Judge since 2002; Jury and Non-jury experience; Presided in Family, Criminal and Civil Divisions; Former Corporate Executive, Non-Profit Leader; Adjunct Professor; National Leader in trauma informed courts; Led the creation of victim centered juvenile human trafficking court in Phila.

**campaign website:** <http://www.judgedumas2021.com/>

**Facebook:** <http://www.facebook.com/Judgedumas2021/>

**Twitter:** <http://Twitter.com/JudgeDumas>

**Questions:**

**Q:** *What can you do, both on and off the bench, to ensure that all individuals have equal access to justice?*

**A:** As a judge, I must ensure that every person that comes before the Court has the opportunity to be heard. I must rule according to the law without losing sight of the ultimate goal of dispensing justice. I must remove any obstacle which prevents equal access to justice by any means necessary. As a citizen, I can involve myself with organizations and in activities which seek to educate people about the Court, its processes and procedures and to equip them with the knowledge and power to be able to use the legal system as an advocate for themselves and their interests.

**Q:** *What can you do, both on and off the bench, to ensure an equitable and fair court?*

**A:** Judges set the tone in their courtrooms. They must model fairness, civility, patience and impartiality and demand it from those in their presence. In my courtroom, every voice will be heard and my decisions will be rooted in the law and cloaked in compassion and the urgency to do what is right. I must conduct a daily heart



check to ensure that I am not bringing any biases with me that may interfere with my ability to render impartial decisions. I must call out injustice when it occurs...every time. In the community, I can educate others about their rights and the status of the law. I should regularly attend implicit bias trainings and require my staff to do the same, to ensure that fairness is not just a mantra but embedded in my core.

## David Lee Spurgeon



**Party:** Dem

**Biographical Info:**

**County:** Allegheny

**Occupation:** Judge - Court of Common Pleas

**Education:** McKeesport Area Senior High Duquesne University - B.A. Duquesne University School of Law - Juris Doctor

**Qualifications:** "Highly Recommended" by the Pennsylvania Bar Association; Endorsed by the PA Dem; Serving as a Judge since 2016; Appointed by the Governor and unanimously confirmed by the PA Senate; Adjunct Law Professor; National Judicial Fellow; Domestic Violence National Expert; former prosecutor family violence

**campaign website:** <http://www.judgespurgeon4commonwealth.com>

**Facebook:** <http://@judgespurgeon4commonwealthcourt>

**Twitter:** <http://@davidspurgeon4J>

**Questions:**

**Q:** *What can you do, both on and off the bench, to ensure that all individuals have equal access to justice?*

**A:** As a judge, I use my position to promote systems change that ensure that all people have more accessibility to the courts. As a Judicial Fellow, I am using those resources to study the statistics over the year of the pandemic to understand whether the use of advanced technology communications increased participation in the court process. Often times, people with limited resources face additional obstacles inherent with our established court processes. Further, we can ensure that everyone in our community has equal access to the court regardless of how you look, who you love, the language you speak and your socio-economic status. Off the bench, judges should participate in the community as a stakeholder to promote the above matters.

**Q:** *What can you do, both on and off the bench, to ensure an equitable and fair court?*

**A:** Judges must continue to be active members of the community. In order to understand how the court is perceived, one must be accessible and engage in intentional dialogue to understand all the people that we serve. Judges must continue to be trained in explicit and implicit bias as it relates to all aspect of the existing court system, and be open to discussing and participating in the changes identified to make the courts more equitable and fair. I recently participated in a national panel to address the racial disparities that exist in the child welfare system. On the bench, we must continue to serve as a servant leader and hold ourselves as well as our colleagues accountable for inequities.

## Stacy Marie Wallace



**Party:** Rep

**Biographical Info:**

**County:** McKean

**Occupation:** Attorney

**Education:** B.A. Communications, University of Pittsburgh ('01) J.D., Duquesne University School of Law ('04)

**Qualifications:** Nearly 17 years' experience Owner: Stacy Wallace Law LLC Specially Appointed Family Law Master & SORNA Counsel Adjunct Professor, University of Pittsburgh-Bradford Clerkships: McKean Co. Court of Common Pleas, PA Superior Court Certified Mediator-Conflict Resolution McKean Co. Bar Assn., President

**campaign website:** <http://stacyforpa.com>

**Facebook:** <http://www.facebook.com/StacyforPA/>

**Questions:**

**Q:** *What can you do, both on and off the bench, to ensure that all individuals have equal access to justice?*

**A:** Throughout my career, my purpose has been to always seek justice. I was first inspired to enter the legal field by a pamphlet for Northwestern Legal Services, a legal aid organization of which I now serve on the board of directors. I've worked tirelessly to ensure that our state's most vulnerable individuals, including at-risk children and those with disabilities, have equal access to justice, and have done much of this work pro bono. If elected, I will continue to advocate for and engage with underserved communities. On the bench, I will be a steadfast defender of equal justice under the law in all matters and safeguard the rights of all citizens regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, or financial status.

**Q:** *What can you do, both on and off the bench, to ensure an equitable and fair court?*

**A:** The makeup of the Commonwealth Court should be a true reflection of Pennsylvania and the broad perspectives and values of our residents. I will use my grassroots upbringing from McKean County, diverse experience, and values to guide informed and thoughtful opinions that produce equitable outcomes. Off the bench, I will continue to engage our citizens, lead by example in promoting inclusiveness of all people, and raise awareness of our judiciary's role. Equitable courts start with having equitable judges who value equality, fairness and a desire to serve others. As just one example of how I've done that in my personal life, I co-founded "Blessing Boxes of Bradford" which serves as small sidewalk food pantries throughout my community.



## Drew Crompton



**Party:** Rep

**Biographical Info:**

**County:** Cumberland

**Occupation:** Judge

**Education:** Phil-mont Christian Academy; Dickinson College; Widener School of Law

**Qualifications:** Currently a sitting Judge on the Commonwealth Court. I have authored over 100 opinions. They are balanced, well-reasoned and thoughtful. I am recommended by the PA Bar. I also serve on the Supreme Court Appellate Rules Committee. I have extensive Constitutional, statutory and regulatory experience.

**campaign website:** <http://JudgeCrompton.com>

**Facebook:** <http://www.facebook.com/judgecrompton>

**Questions:**

**Q:** *What can you do, both on and off the bench, to ensure that all individuals have equal access to justice?*

**A:** As a sitting Judge I have done all in my power to treat every person that comes before me with respect and fairness. Judges must ensure those with modest means have equal access to justice. We are all created equal but as judges we must insist that all are treated equally or justice is being unfairly denied. Filing fees and other court costs must be waived for those who cannot afford them. Also, quality lawyers must be available to low income individuals free of cost for civil and criminal matters. Further as judges we must ensure that no one perceives that race or wealth or political connections are weighed when a decision is rendered. High ethical standards are vital to instill confidence in the Judiciary.

**Q:** *What can you do, both on and off the bench, to ensure an equitable and fair court?*

**A:** Litigants must be convinced that the Judge's personal philosophy does not impede justice. I have also defended the powers of each branch of government since citizens want to be assured that the legislative, executive and judicial branches are not overstepping their constitutional boundaries. Further I try to be a judge that has common sense and treats every person with common decency. Judges must also remain connected to their communities and not be overly isolated. People have more confidence in the Judiciary when they know Judges care about our the same things in our Commonwealth as they do. Judges must have a heightened sense of their words and actions in the courtroom. Both must be beyond reproach.

# Judicial Retention

## JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT RETENTION ELECTION 1

### Description:

*Shall **John T. Bender** be retained for an additional term as Judge of the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania?*

### Official Judicial Retention

According to [www.pacourts.us](http://www.pacourts.us), retention is a nonpolitical method of reelecting Pennsylvania judges. It is intended to be politically neutral and does not require judges to engage in campaigning against other candidates. Retention is specifically designed to keep judges out of the political fray while at the same time holding them accountable to the voters based on their overall records and performance in office. The intent is to provide a fair and nonpartisan way for the public to judge its judges. **The names of the candidates are listed at the end of the ballot, apart from other offices.** No political affiliation is listed for retention candidates.

PA Bar Association ratings and information for incumbent judges are available at [www.pavotesmart.com/current-judicial-ratings/](http://www.pavotesmart.com/current-judicial-ratings/).

**Yes - For the Measure**

**No - Against the Measure**

## JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT RETENTION ELECTION 2

### Description:

*Shall **Mary Jane Bowes** be retained for an additional term as Judge of the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania?*

### Official Judicial Retention

According to [www.pacourts.us](http://www.pacourts.us), retention is a nonpolitical method of reelecting Pennsylvania judges. It is intended to be politically neutral and does not require judges to engage in campaigning against other candidates. Retention is specifically designed to keep judges out of the political fray while at the same time holding them accountable to the voters based on their overall records and performance in office. The intent is to provide a fair and nonpartisan way for the public to judge its judges. **The names of the candidates are listed at the end of the ballot, apart from other offices.** No political affiliation is listed for retention candidates.

PA Bar Association ratings and information for incumbent judges are available at [www.pavotesmart.com/current-judicial-ratings/](http://www.pavotesmart.com/current-judicial-ratings/).

**Yes - For the Measure**

**No - Against the Measure**

# JUDGE OF THE COMMONWEALTH COURT RETENTION ELECTION 1

## Description:

*Shall Anne Covey be retained for an additional term as Judge of Commonwealth Court of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania?*

## Official Judicial Retention

According to [www.pacourts.us](http://www.pacourts.us), retention is a nonpolitical method of reelecting Pennsylvania judges. It is intended to be politically neutral and does not require judges to engage in campaigning against other candidates. Retention is specifically designed to keep judges out of the political fray while at the same time holding them accountable to the voters based on their overall records and performance in office. The intent is to provide a fair and nonpartisan way for the public to judge its judges. **The names of the candidates are listed at the end of the ballot, apart from other offices.** No political affiliation is listed for retention candidates.

PA Bar Association ratings and information for incumbent judges are available at [www.pavotesmart.com/current-judicial-ratings/](http://www.pavotesmart.com/current-judicial-ratings/).

**Yes - For the Measure**

**No - Against the Measure**

# JUDGE OF THE COMMONWEALTH COURT RETENTION ELECTION 2

## Description:

*Shall Renee Cohn Jubelirer be retained for an additional term as Judge of Commonwealth Court of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania?*

## Official Judicial Retention

According to [www.pacourts.us](http://www.pacourts.us), retention is a nonpolitical method of reelecting Pennsylvania judges. It is intended to be politically neutral and does not require judges to engage in campaigning against other candidates. Retention is specifically designed to keep judges out of the political fray while at the same time holding them accountable to the voters based on their overall records and performance in office. The intent is to provide a fair and nonpartisan way for the public to judge its judges. **The names of the candidates are listed at the end of the ballot, apart from other offices.** No political affiliation is listed for retention candidates.

PA Bar Association ratings and information for incumbent judges are available at [www.pavotesmart.com/current-judicial-ratings/](http://www.pavotesmart.com/current-judicial-ratings/).

**Yes - For the Measure**

**No - Against the Measure**

# Chester County Court of Common Pleas Judge

**Description of office:** The Chester County Court of Common Pleas is a mid-level general jurisdiction trial court located in West Chester, Pa. This court, which was established in 1722, reviews all major criminal and civil cases, appeals from the minor courts including traffic matters and matters involving children and families. The Court of Common Pleas consists of 11 full time judges, who serve 10-year terms, and 2 senior judges. The President Judge of the Court of Common Pleas is elected to a 5-year term by his or her colleagues. The Court supervises Adult Probation, Juvenile Probation, Domestic Relations, Bail Agency, Court Reporters and the Law Library. The Court oversees and provides administrative services to the 17 magisterial district court offices that comprise the Magisterial District Court system in Chester County. Salary: \$186,665

## Candidates (choose 2):

### Louis A. Mincarelli



**Party:** Rep

#### **Biographical Info:**

**Address:** 521 East Lancaster Ave. Downingtown PA 19335

**Web Site:** <http://www.LouMincarelli.com>

**Email:** [info@LouMincarelli.com](mailto:info@LouMincarelli.com)

**Education:** BA: English Literature Ursinus College 1999; JD: Temple University School of Law 2003

**Qualifications:** Former Victim Advocate; Former Prosecutor; Private Practice for over 10 years; husband; father of two (2) children

**Facebook:** @Lou Mincarelli for Judge

#### **Questions:**

**Q:** *What are the top three programs that you support for alternate sentencing aimed at keeping people out of the prison systems?*

**A:** There is definitely a need for programs to deal with substance addiction and mental health issues. As a prosecutor, my first assignment was to run the Philadelphia Community Court Program which was designed to help combat the growing substance addiction and mental health issues plaguing our society. We experienced much success in getting desperately needed treatment for those who are most vulnerable while still protecting our community. The program enjoyed a great success rate as the recidivism rate was lower among those who entered the program for these non-violent crimes than those who did not. The program was also designed to center around treatment rather than incarceration. If elected Judge of the Chester County Court of Common Pleas, I would use my vast experience as both a prosecutor and a defense attorney to find ways to keep those who find themselves in the court system out of prison if the situation and facts of their case warrant it. Programs such as ARD, Drug Treatment Court, and Veteran's Court are options to allow all parties to collaborate to find an approach to benefit the accused, the victims and the community.

**Q:** *What can you do both on and off the bench to support a more fair and equitable court system regarding cash bail, plea bargaining, and sentencing.*

**A:** Plea bargaining is one tool that is at the disposal of the prosecutors to alleviate the need for victims to have to come to court to testify about their traumatic experiences—often continuing the cycle of victimization. As a prosecutor, I often took this into consideration when negotiating with defense attorneys in determining the fair and just outcome to a case. Now, as a defense attorney with over a decade of experience representing people from all walks of life, the option of a plea bargain is something that can potentially benefit my clients as it alleviates the uncertainty of taking a case to trial. All situations are different and the path chosen must be made by the accused in a knowing, informed and voluntary manner. If I am fortunate to have the people of Chester County elect me judge, I would use this experience while presiding over my cases. Bail is never supposed to be punitive. It is designed to assure the accused appears for court and to protect the community. All cases should be individually reviewed taking into account the seriousness of the accusations; the record or lack of criminal record of the accused; and their ties to the community. I have years of experience, on both sides of the courtroom, that I would utilize to make fair and just decisions on matters such as bail and sentencing.

## **PJ Redmond**



**Party:** Rep

### **Biographical Info:**

**Address:** Box 2212 West Chester PA 19380

**Campaign Phone:** (610) 209-6192

**Web Site:** <http://www.VotePJRedmond.com>

**Email:** PJRedmondforJudge@gmail.com

**Education:** Juris Doctor at Villanova Law School; BA English, Villanova Univ; Salesianum

**Qualifications:** I am only one of the four judicial candidates who has spent an entire working life in the very West Chester Courtrooms where I hope to serve. I have represented people in Court and other dispute arenas in litigation for 20-plus years in private practice doing exactly the whole spectrum of cases the Court does (Criminal cases, civil suits, Family law disputes, business cases, and estates.) Nobody else has. West Chester is my hometown. I am tuned in to Chester County uniquely among the candidates. That's a benefit to the citizens of the County, who get not only a seasoned lawyer, but a locally focused hometown one as Judge. I left private practice for the Public Defender's Office, and have represented indigent Chester County criminal defendants for 12 years now. It has been a blessing to bring grey-haired life experience to help everybody get a fair shot in Court. The experience helps me see people who are simply detoured by addiction, or trauma in their lives, and see too those driven by a more serious trouble for whom harsher measures might be required. Everybody in any case, (on any side) deserves a fair chance to be heard in Court. I listen. The most important behavior for this job is judicial temperament. I am known as patient and empathetic, firmly competent and respectful of differing and opposing points of view. I have so acted all my life. Ask any police officer or prosecutor or lawyer in town, including anybody in the race. They'll tell you I have the temperament for this job- one where there is no place for anger or bullying. People who come to Court deserve a neutral, patient, fair, experienced and savvy person

as the Judge. I am that person. Please ask around about me, and vote for me November 2 as Judge of the Court of Common Pleas.

**Facebook:** PJRedmondforJudge

**Instagram:** PJRedmondforJudge

**Questions:**

**Q:** *What are the top three programs that you support for alternate sentencing aimed at keeping people out of the prison systems?*

**A:** Judicial Candidates may not publicly assert positions on topics which could come before the Court, and to answer the specific question of my “support” or preference of programs aimed toward the goal of “keeping people out of the prison system” would violate the rule. You wouldn’t want a Judge who has announced deciding a court case a certain predictable way in advance. That’s not fair- to somebody in that case. But over more than thirty years of actual daily experience in the criminal courtrooms in West Chester has taught me that there are ways to encourage a person to change their own unwanted or unhealthy behavior. When destructive behaviors are changed, everybody in the community benefits. This approach isn’t a judicial plan. Just common sense. Most crimes today are driven by addiction, (alcohol abuse or drug use), mental health issues (including PTSD) or both. Addiction causes people to be unproductive, to avoid responsibility, and to commit crime. All those behaviors drag down the community. With support, some people realize that they could be living a better life if they didn’t take drugs, and can be encouraged to change that behavior. Chester County has a number of “problem solving Courts” which focus on unhealthy behaviors that result in non-violent crimes. They are aimed at reminding a person with a first offense or minor criminal case that life can be better for everybody. They encourage change by offering a result in return for openness to change and avoidance of destructive behavior. We have had ‘Drug Court’ for 20 years in Chester County. I have worked in it from the beginning. It’s a 2 year time of close oversight (including testing) where the Court’s Probation Office does long-term encouragement of stability, honesty and productivity. Completion requires a job, stable housing, no drinking or drug use, and meaningful therapeutic participation. There are other such special court arrangements. Everybody knows about ARD, where a first time non-violent person can earn a dismissal over a period of supervision and treatment and community service. There’s Mental Health court too; this recognizes that if we treat the defendant as a patient with an illness and encourage treatment compliance in connection with a criminal case, it improves the patients’ lives, their families’ lives and the wider community too. Sometimes it’s an educational component, sometimes it’s a treatment component, sometimes it’s a reduction in the punishment—but the accused only gets a benefit if they show they are working toward avoiding the behavior which get them in trouble. An example is first time retail theft. Sometimes simply learning of the huge money loss theft causes, or that it causes higher prices change the thinking of a person accused of stealing. That’s helpful to us all, because if we can raise the chance that the current arrest will be the LAST arrest, everybody benefits. Perhaps our least utilized alternative is Veterans’ Court, where those who suffered in service to our country are encouraged to turn their lives from the despair and shame which accompanies an arrest to become again the people of Honor they were when they wore the uniform. These specialty Courts don’t work for all cases. Or everybody, but they do create opportunities that benefit the individual and the community. Some people have shown by violence or a lengthy criminal history that sterner procedures are necessary. A resolution aimed more at punishment and removing the person from the community they victimized needs to be considered once a person proves themselves violent or unwilling to change. The community must have some relief from the chaos the bad behavior by those unwilling people causes us all, if a more compassionate approach does not work.

**Q:** *What can you do both on and off the bench to support a more fair and equitable court system regarding cash bail, plea bargaining, and sentencing.*

**A:** Judges can use experience and judgment to conduct themselves in every sector of their lives to encourage respect for the people in Court, the institution of the Court ‘system’, and model behaviors displaying a concern for equity and fairness across the community. Specifics follow. Bail: A Judge should use the rules and procedures already in place and apply them to each case individually. Successfully applied, the result will be similarity across comparable cases independent of the area of the county where the accused might live, or age, or other characteristic. Pennsylvania has specific Criminal Rules telling a Judge how to set bail. An internet search for ‘Pa Criminal Rule 523’ and the rules around them will list the rules. Judges, and not any other agency or Office, should determine what bail is appropriate for a person accused of a crime. Sometimes, this will



require posting of money. Most times, it will not. The purpose of bail is only to arrange a set of conditions which will ensure the defendant will appear at subsequent Court proceedings, and 'shall not be greater than is necessary to reasonably ensure the defendant's appearance.' Bail is not to be a punishment. The Rules are specifically set out to suggest that everybody is entitled to bail unless after a conviction for murder punishable by life imprisonment or death. The highest goal of justice is served by a Judge who knows and follows the rules. Everyone in America has a presumption of innocence, and that must be acknowledged when setting bail. Plea Bargaining: Pennsylvania has specific Criminal Rules applicable to plea agreements. Pa Criminal Rule 590. Fairness and impartiality dictate that the Judge not participate in ( or have knowledge of ) discussions between lawyers for the Commonwealth and the defendant relating to terms of a plea agreement. Fairness and impartiality are maximized by a Judge obeying those rules. The obligations to the community, to all persons in Court, and to the job of a Judge requires obedience. Judges can't act outside that lane. Sentencing: Sentencing in Pennsylvania is informed by specific Guidelines issued by the Pa Commission on Sentencing, and the responsibility of sound discretion of the Judge. It is also informed by presentations by the parties at the time of sentencing, and sometimes the defendant. A Judge does the best job by following the Sentencing Code, knowing and applying the applicable law, and considering all admissible information from the parties and victims. The Pennsylvania Sentencing Code is presently around 300 pages, and it is rounded out by legal opinions authored by Appeals Courts in the Commonwealth which are the controlling law. The best Judge will learn, consider and follow all of it to maximize stability and consistency over time and impartiality over the wide spectrum of behaviors and people being sentenced. Here, I have an edge which benefits the whole community. I am particularly (and probably most) conversant with the Sentencing Code and applicable law from 35 years of experience in criminal cases. The community ought to have the most experienced lawyer with the widest breadth of hands-on participation in this subject, and I invite voters to ask anybody around to learn all they wish to know about my experience. After that active investigation and asking around, I think they'll decide that I'm the most temperamentally suited, knowledgeable, and experienced lawyer in this race. Please vote for me as one of the two Judges you elect November 2.

### **Alita A. Rovito**



**Party:** Dem

#### **Biographical Info:**

**Address:** PO Box 3493, West Chester PA 19381

**Campaign Phone:** (484) 402-7650

**Web Site:** <http://www.RovitoforJudge.com>

**Email:** [Alita@RovitoforJudge.com](mailto:Alita@RovitoforJudge.com)

**Education:** 1987 - DICKINSON SCHOOL OF LAW, J.D., Carlisle, PA; 1984 - PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY, B.A. Philosophy, Schreyer Honors College, with distinction, State College, PA

**Qualifications:** Rovito Law, LLC Sole Shareholder 18 South New Street, West Chester, PA 19380 1/2009-present Private Practice of Family Law, Arbitration and Mediation >> County of Chester 201 West Market Street Masters' Unit, Fifth Floor West Chester, PA 19380 Family Court Master/Hearing Officer 4/1994-1/2009 >> Chester County District Attorney's Office 17 N. Church Street, Courthouse Annex West Chester, PA 19380

Assistant District Attorney and Managing Attorney of the Child Abuse Unit 2/1988-4/1994 >> Cottman Transmissions, Inc Commerce Drive Fort Washington, PA 19034 In-house corporate counsel 9/1987-2/1988

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/rovitoforjudge](http://www.facebook.com/rovitoforjudge)

**Twitter:** [twitter.com/rovitoforjudge](https://twitter.com/rovitoforjudge)

**Instagram:** [www.instagram.com/rovitoforjudge/](http://www.instagram.com/rovitoforjudge/)

**You Tube:** <https://rovitoforjudge.com/video/>

**Questions:**

**Q:** *What are the top three programs that you support for alternate sentencing aimed at keeping people out of the prison systems?*

**A:** Chester County offers a variety of alternative treatment programs such as Drug Court, Mental Health Court and Veterans Court. The programs offer intermediate punishment/home confinement alternatives that allow the individual to be at home and working while restricting their ability to otherwise leave the home; the programs also have strict treatment/counseling and reporting requirements. These programs are designed to look at the root cause of the criminal behavior and offer the defendants an opportunity to learn about themselves and make positive changes in their lives. I believe a judge has an obligation to look at the whole person and see what each individual may need in order for he/she to remain in the community. It is my personal opinion that alternative sentencing allows all the facts of a person's life to be considered when crafting a sentence that is appropriate for the crime, the victim, the defendant and community.

**Q:** *What can you do both on and off the bench to support a more fair and equitable court system regarding cash bail, plea bargaining, and sentencing.*

**A:** Treating each person, regardless of race, gender, or socioeconomic situation, as an individual and equally is the duty of every judge. It is that equity in the courtroom that promotes "justice for all". The purpose of bail is to guarantee a defendant's appearance in court and to keep the community safe but not as a punishment. Except for the most serious offenses and offenders, I believe that bail should be cashless or nominal. Plea bargains are agreements between the prosecutor (with the agreement and consent of the victim) and the defendant. The role of plea bargaining is to aid in the administration of justice by reducing the number of trials that need to be conducted while still addressing the wrong that may have occurred. A plea bargain also provides the defendant an opportunity to plead guilty to a lesser offense, which may increase their opportunities for employment, education, and advancement. The judge has a duty to review the terms of the agreement and has the ability to accept or reject the agreement ensuring that not only the needs of the defendant but of the victim and the community at large, are met with an eye towards restoring justice to all. Sentencing is where a judge can make the most difference and where the balance between the various forms of "justice" (for the victim, for the community and for the defendant) is addressed. Uniformity in sentencing is mandated by the legislature through the use of the Sentencing Guidelines. However, if the crime does not carry a mandatory minimum sentence (which ties a judge's hands completely), there is room within the guidelines to acknowledge and recognize the specific circumstances of the crime, the defendant and the victim and make appropriate and considered deviations. Judges need to be mindful of when and how they may deviate, by either increased or decreased punishments, so that equity is provided to all who appear in court.

**Anthony T. Verwey**



**Party:** Dem

**Biographical Info:**

**Address:** P.O. Box 109, Downingtown, PA 19335

**Campaign Phone:** (484) 252-9297

**Web Site:** <http://www.VoteVerwey.com>

**Email:** [info@voteverwey.com](mailto:info@voteverwey.com)

**Education:** Juris Doctor, 1989 Widener University School of Law Wilmington, DE; Bachelor of Science, Administration of Justice, 1986 The Pennsylvania State University University Park, PA

**Qualifications:** I have been practicing law for over 31 years in diverse areas of law ranging from civil litigation, to attorney discipline, eminent domain, real estate taxation and government. I have also successfully argued cases before all three of Pennsylvania's appellate courts, including a number of cases before the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. I am honored to be a Chester County lawyer and one of the three candidates to be independently rated as "qualified" for Judge of the Court of Common Pleas by the Chester County Bar Association. I have also been named a Thomson Reuters "Super Lawyer," Main Line Today "Top Lawyer," Philadelphia Business Journal "Best of the Bar" and chosen as a Daily Local News Reader's Choice "Best Lawyer." I will bring a wealth of life experience to the bench as well. I was raised in poverty by my mother, a waitress, and my grandmother, a housekeeper. I understand struggle, hard work, and commitment. After high school, I enlisted in the military and after serving my country, I worked my way through college and law school. These experiences provide me with the temperament necessary to serve as a judge and an understanding of the importance of treating others with dignity and respect. I also have a record of community and public service. I started by serving my country and then continued serving my community in student government in college and law school. During law school I also worked in the Delaware Civil Clinic providing legal representation to those who could not otherwise afford it. As a practicing attorney, I served with the Office of Disciplinary Counsel for 10 years investigating and prosecuting attorneys for misconduct. I spent 12 years raising money for Legal Aid and have served on board's working to improve our community. I now seek to put my experience and commitment to service to work for the citizens of Chester County as a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas.

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/Vote-Verwey-For-Judge-106036231402246](http://www.facebook.com/Vote-Verwey-For-Judge-106036231402246)

**Instagram:** @VoteVerwey4Judge

**Questions:**

**Q:** *What are the top three programs that you support for alternate sentencing aimed at keeping people out of the prison systems?*

**A:** Veteran's Court, Drug Court and Mental Health Court all provide valuable alternatives to incarceration. Each recognizes that addiction and mental health issues are not personal failings or choices, but illness that may be treated. These courts provide a path for treatment, while allowing an individual to remain a part of their community.

**Q:** *What can you do both on and off the bench to support a more fair and equitable court system regarding cash bail, plea bargaining, and sentencing.*

**A:** On the bench, I will ensure that all decisions on these issues are fair, well thought out and in accordance with the law. Off the bench, I would support rule changes that would address these issues.

# Chester County Treasurer

**Description of office:** Responsible for collecting taxes and maintaining financial records for the county. Organizes the regular collection of property taxes from county residents and special taxes from businesses. Responsible for issuing business permits, licenses and publishing unclaimed property lists. Term of office: 4 years

## Candidates (choose 1):

### Patricia A. Maisano



**Party:** Dem

#### Biographical Info:

**Address:** PO Box 707 Mendenhall PA 19357

**Web Site:** <http://reelectmaisanofortreasurer@maisano.us>

**Email:** [patricia@maisano.us](mailto:patricia@maisano.us)

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/patricia.maisano.50/>

#### Questions:

**Q:** *What education, training or experience have you had that makes you fit for the position as the Treasurer?*

**A:** - no response -

**Q:** *What are your top three goals to improve the operations of the office you are seeking as the Treasurer?*

**A:** - no response -

### Jennifer Nicolas



**Party:** Rep

#### Biographical Info:

**Campaign Phone:** (610) 200-0214

**Web Site:** <http://Votejennifernicolas.com>

**Email:** [2chescorow@gmail.com](mailto:2chescorow@gmail.com)

**Education:** BS in Business and Administration from Drexel University

**Qualifications:** 20 years of experience in Accounting industry

**Facebook:** Jenna Nicolas for Chester County Treasurer

**Instagram:** Vote\_jennifernicolas

**Questions:**

**Q:** *What education, training or experience have you had that makes you fit for the position as the Treasurer?*

**A:** Over 10 years as managing director of tax practice, over 20 years experience in accounting positions, from public accounting to audits of insurance policies, and continued study of tax law.

**Q:** *What are your top three goals to improve the operations of the office you are seeking as the Treasurer?*

**A:** Keep the office personnel cross trained, evaluate and save on tax increases, update internal office software with other departments in a cost effective manner.

## Chester County Controller

**Description of office:** The chief financial officer and chief auditor. Exercises general supervision and control over the County's financial affairs. Authorized to examine the accounts and official acts of all officers or other persons who collect, receive, or disperse the County's money. Term of office: 4 years

**Candidates (choose 1):**

**Regina Mauro**



**Party:** Rep

**Biographical Info:**

**Address:** PO Box 56, Devon, PA 19333

**Campaign Phone:** (484) 378-0478

**Web Site:** <http://www.ChescoDeservesBetter.com/regina-1>

**Education:** MBA – J Mack School of Business, Georgia State University (Top 20 Executive MBA program in the US); BA – Villanova University

**Qualifications:** \*Award-winning record of success increasing the profitability of multi-million-dollar budgets.

\*Highly successful development and oversight of complex Fortune 500 projects, domestically and abroad.

\*Extensive HR management experience with a record of low employee turnover.

**Facebook:** @ReginaMMAuro

**Instagram:** @reginamauro4chescocontroller

**Questions:**

**Q:** *What education, training or experience have you had that makes you fit for the position as the Controller?*

**A:** As the county's fiscal watchdog, the Controller's primary responsibility is the proficient oversight and skilled management of Chester County's expense budget (over half billion dollars), and its Accounting, A/P,

Audit and Payroll departments' operations and staff. At times this responsibility also extends to the successful evaluation, launch and/or management of complex and costly projects (ie- Seamless transition to a new payroll system for 2,600+ employees). As the county's fiscal watchdog, the Controller must also remain nonpartisan, vigilant and an outspoken voice for projects that stand to benefit Chester County residents and businesses, and against those that present a risk (ie- Selection of proper partner for \$20M worth of Covid test kits). These responsibilities require not only relevant management experience in size and scope, but a proven communicator, an outside the box thinker, and a record of accomplishments in diverse and highly challenging environments.

Professional Experience: \*Co-developed and managed Regional Credit Reporting Center (Multi-million dollar operation. Fortune 500 - Philadelphia) \*Sales Manager (Multi-million dollar budget. Largest US office of Fortune 500 - Atlanta) \*Regional talent acquisition, training and development (Fortune 500 - Philadelphia, Mexico, Atlanta) \*International expansion via strategic partnerships, mergers & acquisitions (Fortune 500 - Mexico, Chile, Argentina) \*Merchandise selection and importation (As SBO - Australia, France, Italy, Spain) \*Affiliates Operations training and transition lead (Largest owned and affiliate offices. Fortune 500 - Cincinnati, Tulsa) \*New Product Development Manager (Fortune 500 HQ - Atlanta) \*Search engine and credit risk algorithm development (Fortune 500 - Latin America) \*Featured speaker on various platforms (podcasts, live TV, webinar, in-person town halls) \*Featured in national television 30-sec commercial representing Fortune 500 Co (Telemundo – 9 mo. run)

**Q:** *What are your top three goals to improve the operations of the office you are seeking as the Controller?*

**A:** \*Spending and its impact on taxation: Chester County is reportedly ranked #1 in highest property taxes in Pennsylvania. These taxes fund the county's debt service, parks and recreation, libraries and "general purposes". Property taxes are the 2nd largest source of funds for the county's governmental activities. In the past 4 years, yearly increases in property tax allocation to fund "general purposes" (currently 70% of the total) have significantly outpaced the growth of the county population it serves. For the 3 years pre-Covid, yearly increases in allocation to general purposes were also most disproportionately higher. Given that a review of the prior 11 years (2007-2017) did not reflect such a disproportionate relation between the two, it is imperative that a prompt review is conducted of areas and processes with direct or indirect impact on property tax rates (ie- a review of service providers for purchased services, contractual terms and obligations, and the process through which proper vetting and selection of providers is ensured. The goal is to ensure fiscally sound transactions with quality providers). \*Human resources management and its impact on employee productivity, morale and costly turnover: An immediate survey must be conducted to determine areas of concern among current staff (work environment, job satisfaction, skills development, career advancement, etc), and optimal allocation of skills and resources by function and departmental needs, present and future. Trust and respect are also paramount and must define work relationships. Utilization of regular feedback mechanisms and dialogue must be encouraged, civility expected in conflict resolution. \*Establish a close working relationship with other county managers: The Controller's office cannot operate in a vacuum as there are multiple other areas that impact its success and performance. Collaborative working across departments ensures maximum success as it minimizes risks inherent in organizational silos.



## Margaret Reif



**Party:** Dem

**Biographical Info:**

**Address:** 81 Devon Dr Exton PA 19341

**Campaign Phone:** (610) 721-3418

**Web Site:** <http://MargaretReif.com>

**Email:** ReifForController@gmail.com

**Education:** BS Economics and Finance

**Qualifications:** Certified Public Pension Professional

**Facebook:** Margaret Reif for Chester County Controller

**Questions:**

**Q:** *What education, training or experience have you had that makes you fit for the position as the Controller?*

**A:** As a small business owner with an education & track record in finance and economics, I utilized my experience as a Community Leader and passion for Chester County to serve as Controller of Chester County for the last four years. Since being in office and serving on the Retirement Board, I have also now received certification as a Public Pension Professional.

**Q:** *What are your top three goals to improve the operations of the office you are seeking as the Controller?*

**A:** While in office, I have spearheaded several County-wide, efficiency-driven, projects that I look forward to completing in my next term (including automating our Accounts Payable and Audit processes and outsourcing Payroll). Second, I am committed to expanding our reach with regard to auditing programs that have never before been reviewed to ensure our tax dollars are being spent wisely. My third goal includes working with the various departments involved in revamping our Procurement process to ensure a more modernized, transparent and efficient bidding process.

## Chester County Clerk of Courts

**Description of office:** Performs administrative duties in the criminal and civil justice systems and assists other officers of the court as well as judges and lawyers. Maintains court records, administers oaths to witnesses and jurors, and authenticates copies of the court's orders and judgments with the court's seal. Term of office: 4 years

**Candidates (choose 1):**

## **Carmela Z. Ciliberti**



**Party:** Rep

### **Biographical Info:**

**Address:** 208 Ferguson Street, New London, PA 19352

**Campaign Phone:** (610) 298-1079

**Web Site:** <http://www.chescodeservesbetter.com>

**Email:** [contact@carmelaciliberti.com](mailto:contact@carmelaciliberti.com)

**Education:** Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law Juris Doctor – JD; Lancaster Bible College Capital Seminary & Graduate School Bachelor's Degree – BS: Biblical Studies

**Qualifications:** -Attorney, Villanova law graduate admitted to the Pennsylvania Bar -Extensive Regulatory Compliance auditing and project management experience

**Facebook:** @carmelacilibertiesq

### **Questions:**

**Q:** *What education, training or experience have you had that makes you fit for the position as the Clerk of Courts?*

**A:** Carmela has decades long private sector experience and accomplishments in regulatory compliance. She developed and implemented complex regulatory compliant Electronic Record Keeping systems which tracked more than 80,000 regulatory events annually. Carmela performed regulatory and quality audits domestically and abroad. These experiences along with her Juris Doctor degree and Pennsylvania Bar Admission position Carmela as the best candidate to serve Chester County.

**Q:** *What are your top three goals to improve the operations of the office you are seeking as the Clerk of Courts?*

**A:** Carmela will ensure timely and accurate entry of the county's 6,000 annual criminal court filings drawing from her decades long private sector experience. Further she will increase transparency & accountability through her knowledge of Quality Management Systems, Audit Procedures & Accounting Principles.

## Yolanda Van de Krol



**Party:** Dem

**Biographical Info:**

**Address:** 1 Maude Circle Paoli, PA 19301

**Web Site:** <http://www.VandekrolforClerkofCourts.com>

**Education:** B.A Hamilton College; M.A. University of Delaware

**Qualifications:** Incumbent successfully doing the job for the past 4 years

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/VandeKrolforClerkofCourts>

**Instagram:** VandekrolforClerkofCourts

**Questions:**

**Q:** *What education, training or experience have you had that makes you fit for the position as the Clerk of Courts?*

**A:** Answer: My main experience is being the incumbent and having done the job very effectively for the past 4 years. I also bring my business banking background and my skills as a leader who is organized, detail-oriented and process-driven to make government work for residents. The office cannot and does not provide legal advice. We process criminal legal paperwork and money. While that may sound dull to some – I love it! Being able to identify waste and inefficiency, and then implement improvements, excites me, and motivates me to come to work every day. I am successful as the Clerk of Courts because I treat this position as a full-time job. I show up, I listen to the team members who often have decades of experience, and I build relationships internally to collaborate in making positive change. While I have made great strides, there is still more to do.

**Q:** *What are your top three goals to improve the operations of the office you are seeking as the Clerk of Courts?*

**A:** The Clerk of Courts processes criminal legal paperwork and money based on complex state and local rules that are subject to continual change, so the primary challenge is staying on top of all these various services to ensure accuracy and efficiency. For example, not long after I was elected, I was struggling to find where new fees associated with changes in legislation were actually going. After many weeks of hunting through the books, I ultimately found the money—in the wrong place—which meant these funds were not benefitting the taxpayers of Chester County. Over \$8 million comes through the Clerk of Courts office every year, and tracking that flow of money is a critical aspect of the job, especially when those fees change based on new legislation. Under my leadership, every one of the 28 team members reviews every process on a regular basis and documents exactly how each process is done so that I can manage the duties of the office efficiently. Doing so, we were able to uncover things being done inefficiently, incorrectly, or not at all. I also modernized the office to make these functions easier for everyone, internal and external. For example, I successfully implemented an electronic filing system. Lawyers can now file any time, from anywhere, and can also access all documents online, saving them a trip to the office. This technology not only saves time and money for lawyers and their clients, it also saves the taxpayers money. E-filing also increases access to justice. I am glad to have initiated these basic but critical procedures to solve the primary challenge of the office and to streamline management going forward. One of my proudest achievements was to successfully implement an electronic filing system. Lawyers can now file any time, from anywhere, and can also access all documents online, saving them a trip to my office. This

technology not only saves time and money for lawyers and their clients, it also saves YOU, the taxpayer, money.

## Chester County Coroner

**Description of office:** Investigates all sudden, violent, traumatic or unexpected deaths. Determines cause of death by conducting inquests; performing autopsies; conducting pathological and toxicological analyses. Assures the individual's proper identify and provides notification to the legal next of kin. Term of office: 4 years

### Candidates (choose 1):

#### Sophia Garcia-Jackson



**Party:** Dem

#### **Biographical Info:**

**Address:** P.O. Box 904 Exton PA 19341

**Campaign Phone:** (484) 985-0356

**Web Site:** <http://sophiaforcoroner.com/>

**Email:** [info@sophiaforcoroner.com](mailto:info@sophiaforcoroner.com)

**Education:** Sophia obtained her Bachelor's of Art degree from California State University, Chico with a major in Anthropology, a minor in Nutrition, and a certificate in Forensic Identification. She attended the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine and received a Master's of Science degree in Forensic Medicine.

**Qualifications:** Sophia has been Chief Deputy Coroner of the Coroner's Office since March 2020, she was promoted from First Deputy Coroner at the start of the Pandemic. She has been with the Coroner's Office for 2 ½ years. Prior to that she worked for 6 years as a Medicolegal Death Investigator at a Medical Examiners Office in Southern New Jersey. She is certified by the American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators and is working on the next level of certification. She also has a certificate by the Pennsylvania's Coroners Education Board.

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/sophiaforcoroner>

**You Tube:** <https://youtu.be/US2qKG7rSso>

#### **Questions:**

**Q:** *What education, training or experience have you had that makes you fit for the position as the Coroner?*

**A:** Sophia obtained her Bachelor's of Art degree from California State University, Chico with a major in Anthropology, a minor in Nutrition, and a certificate in Forensic Identification. She attended the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine and received a Master's of Science degree in Forensic Medicine. During undergrad she had an internship with the Human Identification Lab where she assisted the University Professors on identification of human remains in criminal cases. She processed animal skeletal remains for their comparative collection in the Zooarchaology Lab. She also assisted in the training of criminal investigators for

continuing education courses. Sophia's duties at the Chester Coroner's Office include signing death certificates with cause and manner of death. Serving on various task forces: Child Fatality Review Board, Drug Overdose Task Force, Elder Abuse Task Force, Mass Fatalities Planning in conjunction with Chester County Department of Emergency Services. Managing the Coroner Office Budget. Managing all aspects of the Office: Administration, Death Investigation, Transportation. Being an on-call supervisor 24/7 providing back up for the on-call Coroner Investigator. Training new Investigators and Transporters. Back filling in the schedule to cover Investigator shifts by responding to scenes and investigating deaths, working all shifts including nights, weekends and Holidays.

**Q:** *What are your top three goals to improve the operations of the office you are seeking as the Coroner?*

**A:** Sophia's top goals are working towards Chester County building a modern Forensic Facility to provide a better service to Chester County residents to both the deceased and their next of kin. Having only one location, instead of three, will save taxpayers money by cutting down transportation costs, avoid relying on nearby county facilities to handle examinations of unique cases and bring in revenue by having autopsy suite spaces available to rent. Sophia plans to grow the office by adding positions such as a salaried Forensic Pathologist to help save the county money instead of paying per exam. This Pathologist would be able to give their full attention to the office by providing a better turnaround time for final reports and be more readily available to the next of kin. She also plans to add an additional full time autopsy technician to prevent burnout and injuries, and saving the county money instead of relying on other counties to perform autopsies when the only autopsy technician is away from the office. Sophia plans to increase community awareness and transparency by providing more community outreach to include: Public Information Sessions, Education based presentations to High School and College Students, and information sessions to long-term care facilities, hospitals and hospice.

## **Frank Speidel**



**Party:** Rep

**Biographical Info:**

**Address:** 215 William Penn Blvd. West Chester, PA, 19382

**Campaign Phone:** (610) 235-7268

**Web Site:** <http://dti0xq8055bjv.cloudfront.net/home.html>

**Email:** [fspeidelmd@aol.com](mailto:fspeidelmd@aol.com)

**Education:** BA, Kalamazoo College, Physics, Oakley Prize winner in Physics; MBA, Wharton School Finance, Information Systems; MD Temple University School of Medicine; Residency in Emergency Medicine Medical College of Pennsylvania

**Qualifications:** Decades of clinical practice in emergency medicine. Four decades of Board Certification by ABEM

**Facebook:** Dr Frank Speidel For Chester County Coroner <https://www.facebook.com/Dr-Frank-Speidel-For-Chester-County-Coroner-106802248217134>

**Twitter:** [Francis Speidel@FrankXSpeidel](https://twitter.com/FrancisSpeidel@FrankXSpeidel)

**You Tube:** The Doctor Is In

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL69cH1JuZxSeJE6GrVNmU6ZoYI2thnTY5>

**Questions:**

**Q:** *What education, training or experience have you had that makes you fit for the position as the Coroner?*

**A:** Years of clinical practice of emergency medicine has provided me awareness of the pathophysiology of disease, the complexity and nuance of disease and trauma. The specialty and practice of emergency medicine encompasses toxicology, environmental injuries, trauma, medicine and behavioral illnesses in both adults and children. In addition, during my service on active duty with the United States Navy as a Flight Surgeon, I have received education and training in nuclear, biologic and chemical warfare as well as formal training in aviation mishap investigations and human factors analysis. Throughout my career I have provide leadership to my organizations at ever increasing levels of responsibility, from Department Head, Chief of Emergency Services, Chief Medical Officer, Chief Quality Officer, Privacy Officer, Compliance Officer and hospital CEO. My service to community and country has included EMS Medical Director for both Chester County and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. I am a Gulf War Veteran and served proudly as Senior Medical Officer for the carrier USS Dwight D Eisenhower and Battle Force Red Sea. I have demonstrated I can perform, manage and succeed in critical, high stress, complex environments such as a pandemic.

**Q:** *What are your top three goals to improve the operations of the office you are seeking as the Coroner?*

**A:** COMPETENCY My opponent is not a physician. The Office is more than forensic files. In the time of a pandemic, you need more physician voices, not fewer. In the time of a pandemic, we need someone who has diagnosed and treated infectious diseases. No lecture can match being the Emergency Department Director for a level II Trauma Center for understanding trauma mechanisms. Emergency Medicine is the specialty that focuses on acute illness and injury across all ages. Nothing can match decades of treating the ill and injured to provide sure knowledge of the mechanisms and pathology that cause death. The above is simple technical competence. More important are decades of being there for family and loved ones on the worst day of their lives. Part of the Coroner's function is being there when someone's world falls apart, when all that truly counts is gone.

## **Chester County Magisterial District Judge**

### **Chester County Magisterial District Judge 15-1-01**

**Description of office:** Magisterial district judges (MDJs) do not have to be lawyers but are required to pass a qualifying exam. They handle civil cases up to \$12,000; responsible for whether serious criminal cases go the Court of Common Pleas; handle preliminary arraignments and hearings; minor criminal offenses, traffic citations and non-traffic ordinance violations. They are responsible for setting and accepting bail, except in murder or voluntary manslaughter cases. Term of office: 6 years. Salary: \$93,338

**Candidates (choose 1):**

**Mark A. Bruno**

**Party:** Rep

**Biographical Info:**

**Questions:**

**Q:** *What are the top three programs that you support for alternate sentencing aimed at keeping people out of the prison systems?*

**A:** - no response -

**Q:** *What can you do both on and off the bench to support a more fair and equitable court system regarding cash bail, plea bargaining, and sentencing.*

**A:** - no response -



**Marc J. Lieberman**



**Party:** Dem

**Biographical Info:**

**Address:** 1356 Skelp Level Rd. Downingtown PA 19335

**Campaign Phone:** (610) 430-3701

**Web Site:** <http://www.marclieberman.com>

**Email:** [jf.marcliebermanforjudge@gmail.com](mailto:jf.marcliebermanforjudge@gmail.com)

**Education:** Henderson High School 1985 West Chester University BA in Psychology and Minor in Peace and Conflict Studies 1994 Widener University of Law J.D. 1997

**Qualifications:** 23 years of legal practice in defending individuals accused of a crime, Real Estate law, Landlord tenant law, Family law.

**Facebook:** Marc J Lieberman for MDJ

**Instagram:** Marc J Lieberman for MDJ

**Questions:**

**Q:** *What are the top three programs that you support for alternate sentencing aimed at keeping people out of the prison systems?*

**A:** - no response -

**Q:** *What can you do both on and off the bench to support a more fair and equitable court system regarding cash bail, plea bargaining, and sentencing.*

**A:** - no response –

## **Chester County Magisterial District Judge 15-1-02**

**Description of office:** Magisterial district judges (MDJs) do not have to be lawyers but are required to pass a qualifying exam. They handle civil cases up to \$12,000; responsible for whether serious criminal cases go the Court of Common Pleas; handle preliminary arraignments and hearings; minor criminal offenses, traffic citations and non-traffic ordinance violations. They are responsible for setting and accepting bail, except in murder or voluntary manslaughter cases. Term of office: 6 years. Salary: \$93,338

**Candidates (choose 1):**

## Mackenzie W. Smith



**Party:** Dem

**Biographical Info:**

**Web Site:** <http://www.MWSforMDJ.com>

**Email:** [contact@mwsformdj.com](mailto:contact@mwsformdj.com)

**Education:** Tulane University, BA 2005 in Italian and Linguistics (magna cum laude); Middlebury College, MA 2006 in Italian Studies; Temple University Beasley School of Law, JD 2009 (cum laude)

**Qualifications:** I am the only candidate for District Judge 15-1-02 who possesses a law degree. I believe that judges at all levels of the judiciary should be legal experts, because knowledge of the law, the Constitution, and the rules of evidence and procedure are critical to the preservation of individual rights, due process, and democracy. In short, judges should be lawyers. Additionally, I am the only candidate who has practiced in both the criminal justice system (as a prosecutor at the Chester County District Attorney's Office and as a defense and civil rights attorney, representing those accused of crimes) and the civil justice system (I have represented clients ranging from Fortune 500 companies to a newborn baby born into the foster care system, in courts ranging from district court all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court). Finally, I am the only candidate who has represented parties on both sides of the law: the prosecution/plaintiffs and the defense. This experience makes me the candidate with the broadest, most impartial perspective.

**Facebook:** [Facebook.com/mwsformdj](https://www.facebook.com/mwsformdj)

**Questions:**

**Q:** *What are the top three programs that you support for alternate sentencing aimed at keeping people out of the prison systems?*

**A:** Diversionary programs such as Mental Health Court, Drug Court, and Veterans' Court play a critical role in the criminal justice system and in the lives of those admitted into the programs. It is absolutely crucial that the people working in the system – police officers, prosecutors, defense attorneys, probation officers, and of course judges – acknowledge and hold sacred the humanity and dignity of those accused of crimes. Oftentimes, individuals who are coming into the criminal justice system lack the support networks that we all need in order to thrive, and diversionary programs are one mechanism (among others) that we can put in place to avoid or at least minimize incarceration and provide some sort of support network. The Magisterial District Courts do not oversee these essential programs, but there is an opportunity for District Judges to fulfill their own role as part of a social support network. First, District Judges must commit to administering preliminary and bail hearings impartially, providing a full and fair opportunity for the accused to be heard and/or advocated for (within the confines of Fifth Amendment considerations), and furthering their own education on trauma-informed systems. Second, District Judges can employ their own form of alternate sentencing in summary cases, such as disorderly conduct citations. Many of these cases provide an ideal opportunity for community service as an alternative to a monetary fine. Community service not only helps an (often young) individual with little or no criminal history avoid financial penalties, but also creates a connection between the individual and their community. A District Judge who is trauma-informed and committed to listening to all the facts and circumstances of a given case, no matter how “small,” can employ other alternatives to a traditional sentence on a case-by-case basis. Third, District Judges can and should seek to improve the law, the legal system, and the administration of justice, as set forth in Pennsylvania Code of Judicial Conduct 3.4, to ensure that diversionary programs are run effectively and efficiently.

**Q:** *What can you do both on and off the bench to support a more fair and equitable court system regarding cash bail, plea bargaining, and sentencing.*

**A:** If I am elected as District Judge, I will take an oath to follow the law of Pennsylvania and the Constitution of the United States, including the factors set forth in the Pennsylvania Rules of Criminal Procedure regarding bail and plea bargains. Magisterial District Judges are required by Pennsylvania law to interpret and apply the law without regard to whether the magisterial district judge approves or disapproves of the law in question, and to keep an open mind and carry out their adjudicative duties faithfully and impartially. If elected, I will follow the law and honor my commitment to rule impartially, permit every party a full and fair opportunity to be heard, and seek to continually improve my own education in all areas relevant to my judicial duties. I will always seek to keep an open mind, listen to all the facts, and apply the law fairly and impartially to all parties who come before me. Magisterial district judges are permitted to participate in activities that promote public understanding of and confidence in the administration of justice, including appearing before governmental bodies and officials in connection with matters concerning the law, the legal system, or the administration of justice, and engaging in civic outreach and education. If elected, I will seek to improve the law and the justice system by engaging in such activities. I have sought to do this both before my campaign – through, among other things, service as a volunteer child advocate, membership on the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania pro bono honor roll, and service on the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania prisoner civil rights panel – and throughout my campaign, as a judge for the 2021 Pennsylvania High School Mock Trial Championship and through my Supreme Court education webinar, accessible at <https://www.mwsformdj.com/in-the-news>. If elected, I will continue and deepen my commitment to civic education in our community and seek to improve the justice system so that it efficiently and effectively serves all members of our community.

### **Thomas W. Tartaglio**



**Party:** Rep

**Biographical Info:**

**Address:** 868 Lancaster Ave. Devon, PA. 19333

**Web Site:** <http://Https://judgetartaglio.com>

**Email:** [Info@judgetartaglio.com](mailto:Info@judgetartaglio.com)

**Education:** B.S. Criminal Justice, West Chester University; Magisterial Judge Certification, PA Supreme Court; M.S. Criminal Justice Admin-Organizational Leadership, Colorado State University

**Qualifications:** 24 years in the Chester County Justice System; 12 years Judicial experience; Lived up to my oath to be fair & impartial

**Facebook:** @judge\_tartaglio

**Instagram:** Judge\_tartaglio

**Questions:**

**Q:** *What are the top three programs that you support for alternate sentencing aimed at keeping people out of the prison systems?*

**A:** Chester County has a wide range of diversionary programs at the Court of Common Pleas level. Accelerated Rehabilitative Disposition (ARD). This first-time, nonviolent program provides the most flexibility for

defendants to take a level of responsibility and avoid trial. Drug Court, this intensive supervision program, touting a high record of success at reducing recidivism in addicts. Women's Reentry Assessment & Programming Initiative (WRAP) integrates gender-responsive, risk/need assessment/supervision programs in collaboration with community case management to reduce recidivism, decrease technical violations and increase the health and well-being of justice-involved women and their family members.

**Q:** *What can you do both on and off the bench to support a more fair and equitable court system regarding cash bail, plea bargaining, and sentencing.*

**A:** Bail: I delve deep during the arraignment process calculating financial means. Non-monetary bail conditions are just as constructive by keeping the defendant employed or with family creating stability. Plea Bargaining: I use restorative justice measures when all parties wish to participate. Many of my bail orders incorporate treatment/counseling rather than incarceration. Sentencing: District Judges are very limited in sentencing range by statute and do not have the authority to deviate unless the laws specified a higher penalty for consecutive offenses.

## **Chester County Magisterial District Judge 15-1-03**

**Description of office:** Magisterial district judges (MDJs) do not have to be lawyers but are required to pass a qualifying exam. They handle civil cases up to \$12,000; responsible for whether serious criminal cases go the Court of Common Pleas; handle preliminary arraignments and hearings; minor criminal offenses, traffic citations and non-traffic ordinance violations. They are responsible for setting and accepting bail, except in murder or voluntary manslaughter cases. Term of office: 6 years. Salary: \$93,338

### **Candidates (choose 1):**

#### **Gregory Hines**

**Party:** D/R

#### **Biographical Info:**

#### **Questions:**

**Q:** *What are the top three programs that you support for alternate sentencing aimed at keeping people out of the prison systems?*

**A:** - no response -

**Q:** *What can you do both on and off the bench to support a more fair and equitable court system regarding cash bail, plea bargaining, and sentencing.*

**A:** - no response -

## **Chester County Magisterial District Judge 15-1-04**

**Description of office:** Magisterial district judges (MDJs) do not have to be lawyers but are required to pass a qualifying exam. They handle civil cases up to \$12,000; responsible for whether serious criminal cases go the Court of Common Pleas; handle preliminary arraignments and hearings; minor criminal offenses, traffic citations and non-traffic ordinance violations. They are responsible for setting and accepting bail, except in murder or voluntary manslaughter cases. Term of office: 6 years. Salary: \$93,338

### **Candidates (choose 1):**

#### **Marian Vito**

**Party:** D/R

#### **Biographical Info:**

#### **Questions:**

**Q:** *What are the top three programs that you support for alternate sentencing aimed at keeping people out of the prison systems?*

**A:** - no response -

**Q:** *What can you do both on and off the bench to support a more fair and equitable court system regarding cash bail, plea bargaining, and sentencing.*

**A:** - no response -

## **Chester County Magisterial District Judge 15-2-07**

**Description of office:** Magisterial district judges (MDJs) do not have to be lawyers but are required to pass a qualifying exam. They handle civil cases up to \$12,000; responsible for whether serious criminal cases go the Court of Common Pleas; handle preliminary arraignments and hearings; minor criminal offenses, traffic citations and non-traffic ordinance violations. They are responsible for setting and accepting bail, except in murder or voluntary manslaughter cases. Term of office: 6 years. Salary: \$93,338

### **Candidates (choose 1):**

#### **Paige Simmons**



**Party:** Dem

#### **Biographical Info:**

**Address:** 1214 KIMBERTON RD, # 107, CHESTER SPRINGS, PA 19425

**Campaign Phone:** (484) 301-2192

**Web Site:** <http://www.simmonsforjudge.com/>

**Email:** [info@simmonsforjudge.com](mailto:info@simmonsforjudge.com)

**Education:** Johns Hopkins University, MPA (expected graduation date May 2022); Case Western Reserve School of Law, JD; Adelphi University, BS in Business Management

**Qualifications:** Licensed to practice law in PA, NY, and CA. Have been practicing law for over a decade.

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/Simmonsforjudge>

**Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/Simmons4MDJ>

#### **Questions:**

**Q:** *What are the top three programs that you support for alternate sentencing aimed at keeping people out of the prison systems?*

**A:** District Court 15-2-07 is not located in a higher crime area and most offenses are drug, alcohol, and mental health-related with some domestic violence. To that end, many offenders in this Court may be better served by having the opportunity to rehabilitate and treat the root of their issue as opposed to a punishment that is simply punitive in nature. The hope is that upon completing one of the below programs, the offender will have the tools to keep from reoffending. The top three programs I feel further this goal are: 1) Recovery Court which is a drug and alcohol treatment-based court program for offenders in need of long term, highly structured drug and alcohol treatment and supervision; 2) Mental Health Court provides treatment, support and stability to justice for offenders who struggle with Serious and Persistent Mental Illness; and 3) the Accelerated Rehabilitative

Disposition Program which is a pre-trial diversion program for individuals with limited or no prior record who are deemed eligible by the District Attorney.

**Q:** *What can you do both on and off the bench to support a more fair and equitable court system regarding cash bail, plea bargaining, and sentencing.*

**A:** All individuals carry some level of bias and even when we work to eliminate our biases, unconscious biases can still remain. These remaining biases can unconsciously influence a judge's sentencing decisions. The key to creating a more fair and equitable court is to be aware of the potential for bias and to take steps to lessen their effects. To begin with, on the bench judges must be transparent in their decision making, consistent in their sentencing, and critical of plea bargains that on their face suggest bias. Being transparent means issuing decisions that are detailed and well-reasoned so that all that wish to, can review the decisions to ensure the judge is sentencing consistently across all similar defendants. In addition, judges should ensure that defendants that agree to plea bargains are being offered similar terms by sending plea bargains that are inconsistent back to the District Attorney's office for further review. With regard to cash bail, it is incumbent on judges to thoroughly review pre-sentence investigation reports which include a review of factors such as a Defendant's prior record, prior probation/parole, and institutional history, family and marital history, health (physical, mental, emotional), education, employment, financial conditions, and victim information. Based on the investigation's findings, and in accordance with Pennsylvania law, cash bail should only be imposed when a defendant poses a risk to the community and/or no other bail option can ensure that the defendant returns to court. Alternate cash bail options include release on recognizance, suspended bail (meaning bail is set but does not have to be paid so long as the defendant complies with the court's orders and attends all hearings), and electronic monitoring.

### **Maria Varano McDowell**

**Party:** Rep

**Biographical Info:**

**Questions:**

**Q:** *What are the top three programs that you support for alternate sentencing aimed at keeping people out of the prison systems?*

**A:** - no response -

**Q:** *What can you do both on and off the bench to support a more fair and equitable court system regarding cash bail, plea bargaining, and sentencing.*

**A:** - no response -

## **Chester County Magisterial District Judge 15-4-01**

**Description of office:** Magisterial district judges (MDJs) do not have to be lawyers but are required to pass a qualifying exam. They handle civil cases up to \$12,000; responsible for whether serious criminal cases go the Court of Common Pleas; handle preliminary arraignments and hearings; minor criminal offenses, traffic citations and non-traffic ordinance violations. They are responsible for setting and accepting bail, except in murder or voluntary manslaughter cases. Term of office: 6 years. Salary: \$93,338

**Candidates (choose 1):**



## Lauren Holt



**Party:** Dem

### **Biographical Info:**

**Address:** 64 Jolin Rd., Paoli, PA 19301

**Campaign Phone:** (717) 468-4962

**Web Site:** <http://www.laurenholt4mdj.com>

**Email:** laurenholt4mdj@gmail.com

**Education:** Graduate of the the University of Pittsburgh, BA Political Science/History; and The Penn State Dickinson School of Law

**Qualifications:** I am a licensed attorney with over a 10 years of trial experience and an extensive background in criminal law. I previously served as an assistant public defender with the Chester County Public Defender's Office and was a judicial law clerk to the Honorable Penny L. Blackwell of the York County Court of Common Pleas.

**Facebook:** Lauren Holt for Magisterial District Judge

### **Questions:**

**Q:** *What are the top three programs that you support for alternate sentencing aimed at keeping people out of the prison systems?*

**A:** There are several sentencing alternative programs available to criminal defendants in the Chester County court system such as Drug Court, Mental Health Court and Veterans Court. They are aimed at treating, rehabilitating and keeping people out of our prison systems while under the supervision of the court. While I am very familiar with these programs, having had several clients participate in these programs during my tenure as a Chester County Assistant Public Defender, I will not have the jurisdiction to sentence anyone to these programs as a Magisterial District Judge as they are typically only available to defendants facing misdemeanor and felony charges. At the MDJ level, the Judge can only issue a final disposition of a summary offense, which carries a maximum possible sentence of 90 days in jail and \$300 fine, but rarely is jail time sought by the Commonwealth in those instances. While there are no specific sentencing alternative programs available to defendants at the MDJ level, the rules do allow for the court to offer alternative dispositions where appropriate. This most often happens for first time offenders caught underage drinking, for example. These alternative programs would allow for a defendant to avoid a conviction and maintain a clean criminal record after completing specific conditions such as community services, drug/alcohol treatment, job training or other educational training. While I will not have an opportunity to be involved with the sentencing alternative programs like Drug Court and Mental Health court while serving as an MDJ, I will likely be the first to address bail for those cases. Therefore, I will have an opportunity to impose bail conditions such as directing that a defendant undergo a mental health and/or drug and alcohol evaluations and follow all recommendations for treatment. Therefore, by the time the defendant is before the Court of Common Pleas, and if it is determined that they qualify and are appropriate for one of these programs, it is possible that they will have already have taken the first steps necessary to complete the sentencing alternative programs.

**Q:** *What can you do both on and off the bench to support a more fair and equitable court system regarding cash bail, plea bargaining, and sentencing.*

**A:** Appearing before a Magisterial District Judge is the first step in the criminal justice system for many, if not all, facing criminal charges. Therefore it is the first time that bail is addressed. With regards to cash bail, it

should be the exception and not the norm in cases involving non-violent offenses. However, in determining bail for any offense, an MDJ should consider the information provided to the court by the defendant, the prosecutor and the county bail agency/pre-trial services department before making a determination. Not only should an MDJ use that information to determine whether or not to incarcerate a defendant pending trial, they should also use that opportunity to consider the imposition of specific bail conditions. For example, an MDJ can order that a defendant undergo a mental health and/or a drug and alcohol evaluation should they feel that that particular condition is appropriate and beneficial for all parties. With regards to plea bargaining, MDJs should not involve themselves in negotiations between the parties. The MDJ should only consider whether a plea agreement presented to the court should be accepted or rejected, if the terms themselves would be a miscarriage of justice. An MDJ is not running a fair and equitable court if all plea agreements are blindly accepted without consideration. Regarding sentencing, the MDJ should consider all of the information provided by the parties, the appropriate factors for consideration in sentencing and whether an alternative disposition would be more appropriate in the case before imposing any sentence. As an MDJ, I would give every case before me due consideration and allow all parties to have a chance to be heard in court. Off the bench, I will educate myself on all legal changes and rule updates, just as I do as a licensed attorney in complying with yearly continuing legal education requirements.

### **Eugene Twardowski**



**Party:** Rep

#### **Biographical Info:**

**Address:** 2 Stuart Drive Malvern, PA 19355

**Campaign Phone:** (610) 908-4819

**Web Site:** <http://TwardowskiLaw.com>

**Email:** [emt@twardowskilaw.com](mailto:emt@twardowskilaw.com)

**Education:** Kings College, Wilkes-Barre, Cum Laude, 1973; Temple University School of law, 1976

**Qualifications:** Trial Experience before district magistrates and county courts; Admitted to practice before the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania; My experience goes far beyond the Courtroom; 45 years of legal experience in both private and public sectors; Served as General Counsel to corporations; Represented numerous municipalities; Active in Community service; 13 years of service on Great Valley School Board with 3 years as Board President; Served as Minister of Eucharist and Lector at St. Patrick Parish, Malvern, PA; Vice Chairman and Secretary of Race 4 The House, a Section 501(c) (3) organization dedicated to raising funds for Ronald's House in Philadelphia, PA.

#### **Questions:**

**Q:** *What are the top three programs that you support for alternate sentencing aimed at keeping people out of the prison systems?*

**A:** (a) A Program of Restorative Justice: These are programs which involve all parties (victims, offenders, the community affected and the legislature to acknowledge the need to repair the harm done by the specific offence committed. This would involve restitution to the victim, counseling for both victim and offender, rehabilitation of offender by community service which would allow the offender to re-enter society. Incarceration should be the last resort. (b) A program which includes substance abuse prevention, work training, parent counseling and

work release. (c) A program which is specifically designed for teenagers in offences such as theft, truancy, disorderly conduct and vandalism. The offender would be given an opportunity to explain why the offense was committed but the charges should be admitted. Counseling and probation would be included.

**Q:** *What can you do both on and off the bench to support a more fair and equitable court system regarding cash bail, plea bargaining, and sentencing.*

**A:** In addition to implementing the programs described in the first response as much as possible from the bench, I would address these matters with various School Boards to promote an awareness of the need for such programs. I would also lobby before the State Legislature. Education is the most valuable tool.

## **Chester County Magisterial District Judge 15-4-02**

**Description of office:** Magisterial district judges (MDJs) do not have to be lawyers but are required to pass a qualifying exam. They handle civil cases up to \$12,000; responsible for whether serious criminal cases go the Court of Common Pleas; handle preliminary arraignments and hearings; minor criminal offenses, traffic citations and non-traffic ordinance violations. They are responsible for setting and accepting bail, except in murder or voluntary manslaughter cases. Term of office: 6 years. Salary: \$93,338

### **Candidates (choose 1):**

#### **Ann M. Feldman**



**Party:** Dem

#### **Biographical Info:**

**Address:** P.O. Box 143, Downingtown, PA 19335

**Campaign Phone:** (725) 568-7799

**Web Site:** <http://AnnFeldman4Judge.com>

**Email:** AnnFeldman4Judge@gmail.com

**Education:** Paralegal, Boston Univ 2010

**Qualifications:** Certified by Pennsylvania Supreme Court; 2009 – Present, Elected to Downingtown Borough Council for three consecutive terms serving in quasi-judicial and legislative roles

**Facebook:** AnnFeldman4Judge

#### **Questions:**

**Q:** *What are the top three programs that you support for alternate sentencing aimed at keeping people out of the prison systems?*

**A:** The top three alternative sentencing programs that I support are Mental Health Court, intermediate punishment (i.e., community service), and the re-entry program. The MDJ has an opportunity to intervene at a pivotal juncture in the life of a non-violent, low-level offender by providing alternate sentencing that will not only keep the individual out of prison but will also provide the needed support to change behavior for the long-term. Successful intervention will benefit the individual and the community.

**Q:** *What can you do both on and off the bench to support a more fair and equitable court system regarding cash bail, plea bargaining, and sentencing.*

**A:** As MDJ can ensure fair hearings that are open to all and provide alternatives to cash bail when appropriate. Community service is a viable option for low-level, non-violent summary offenses. Additionally, in order to maintain a fair and equitable court, a judge must not participate in ex parte communications.

### **Jeffrey J. Valocchi**



**Party:** Rep

#### **Biographical Info:**

**Address:** 32 Downing Ave, Downingtown, PA 19335

**Campaign Phone:** (484) 614-2461

**Web Site:** <http://www.reelectjudgevalocchi.com>

**Email:** [reelectjudgevalocchi@gmail.com](mailto:reelectjudgevalocchi@gmail.com)

**Education:** University of Notre Dame – BA; Saint Louis University and University of Pennsylvania – JD; As a sitting judge I participate every year in a one week Continuing Judicial Education Course which has kept me updated on relevant developments affecting the Court.

**Qualifications:** As an attorney I have over 35 years of legal experience in general areas including civil, criminal, family and municipal related matters. For ten years I participated in Mental Health hearings on the Mental Health Masters Circuit which has provided valuable insight into the many cases that come through the Court. As a Judge I have conducted thousands of hearings in my twelve years on the bench. My Court was chosen as the Pilot Court to oversee the process of implementing a Landlord Tenant assistance program. This program was created by the Friends Association and utilizes various fundraising sources to assist tenants in paying (and landlords receiving) past rent due and current rent.

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/ReelectJudgeValocchi](http://www.facebook.com/ReelectJudgeValocchi)

#### **Questions:**

**Q:** *What are the top three programs that you support for alternate sentencing aimed at keeping people out of the prison systems?*

**A:** There are no specific programs on which I lean in providing sentencing alternatives in lieu of prison. My first approach is to fashion some type of educational process which addresses the particulars of the case offense, the conduct of the defendant and, most importantly some measure of satisfaction and justice for the victim. I tend to fashion some community service, research assignments and writing exercises which hopefully force the Defendant into a position of empathy in understanding how their conduct has impacted the victim. Where appropriate, I will impose anger management counseling and classes as well as drug and alcohol education. The bottom line is that the alternatives offered in lieu of prison must first have a good probability of enlightening, educating and changing the Defendant, while at the same time providing a real sense of satisfaction and justice for the victim.

**Q:** *What can you do both on and off the bench to support a more fair and equitable court system regarding cash bail, plea bargaining, and sentencing.*

**A:** The primary issues regarding cash bail, plea bargaining, and sentencing are consistency and transparency. Consistency does not mean “sameness”. Every case, defendant and victim offer specific factors which relate to that case and only that case. However, the process, protocols and rules should apply similarly to everyone. Transparency does not mean that details related to discussions and negotiations should be publicly aired but that the process is clear and known to all involved, including the public. As for the issue of bail, most newspaper articles and public discussions on the matter indicate that there is confusion between “bail” and “collateral”. In non-criminal summary cases and traffic citations, defendants often end up sitting in prison on an outstanding warrant and are often required to post “collateral” to be released prior to a hearing. That very rarely happens in this Court as we rarely require the posting of collateral except when a defendant has consistently been less than candid with the Court and clearly has the means to pay. As for bail, which applies to criminal cases only, the bottom line of cash bail is 1) the likelihood of a Defendant to appear for scheduled hearings; 2) the health, safety, and welfare of the alleged victims as well as the public; and 3) the health, safety, and welfare of the defendant. We do not use bail to punish a defendant before the case has been adjudicated. Regarding plea bargaining, the process serves a purpose in a more efficient use of everyone’s time and energy including Court personnel, law enforcement, the parties and, importantly, witnesses and others who would have to appear for hearings and trial. If the plea bargaining process is consistent and transparent it provides many advantages to all involved as well as the public. Regarding what a Judge does “on and off the bench” related to these issues, quite simply, I practice what I believe on the bench and preach what I practice off the bench.

## **Chester County Magisterial District Judge 15-4-04**

**Description of office:** Magisterial district judges (MDJs) do not have to be lawyers but are required to pass a qualifying exam. They handle civil cases up to \$12,000; responsible for whether serious criminal cases go the Court of Common Pleas; handle preliminary arraignments and hearings; minor criminal offenses, traffic citations and non-traffic ordinance violations. They are responsible for setting and accepting bail, except in murder or voluntary manslaughter cases. Term of office: 6 years. Salary: \$93,338

### **Candidates (choose 1):**

#### **Bobby Brown**



**Party:** Dem

#### **Biographical Info:**

**Address:** PO Box 8066, West Grove, PA 19390

**Web Site:** <http://VoteBobbyBrown.com>

**Email:** BobbyBrown4MDJ@gmail.com

**Facebook:** Facebook.com/VoteBobbyBrown

**Instagram:** Instagram.com/VoteBobbyBrown

#### **Questions:**

**Q:** *What are the top three programs that you support for alternate sentencing aimed at keeping people out of the prison systems?*

**A:** - no response -

**Q:** *What can you do both on and off the bench to support a more fair and equitable court system regarding cash bail, plea bargaining, and sentencing.*

**A:** - no response -

**Matthew Seavey**

**Party:** Rep

**Biographical Info:**

**Address:** 914 W. Cypress St. Kennett Square, PA 19348

**Web Site:** <http://www.ElectMatthewSeavey.com>

**Email:** MSeavey34@gmail.com

**Facebook:** ElectMatthewSeavey

**Twitter:** @Seavey4Judge

**Questions:**

**Q:** *What are the top three programs that you support for alternate sentencing aimed at keeping people out of the prison systems?*

**A:** - no response -

**Q:** *What can you do both on and off the bench to support a more fair and equitable court system regarding cash bail, plea bargaining, and sentencing.*

**A:** - no response -