



Justice Initiatives, Inc.
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Mecklenburg County Bar
www.meckbar.org

1123 South Church Street, Suite 103,
Charlotte, NC 28203

Present
2014
Judicial Candidates' Forum



Wednesday October 15, 2014

5:30 PM—8:30 PM

The Charlotte School of Law

Moderator: Taylor Batten-Charlotte Observer



Justice Initiatives envisions a court system that delivers the highest quality justice and fosters community trust and confidence.

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*Candidate descriptions have been provided by each campaign.
They have not been validated by Justice Initiatives, Inc.*



**Elisa Chinn-Gary,
Family Court Administrator**

I bring an unrivaled commitment to public service and the advancement of court excellence. Having served the Mecklenburg County community as the Administrator of the Juvenile & Family Courts for 13 years, I have worked collaboratively with the judiciary, bar members, leaders across a broad range of systems and the citizens of our community to transform our courts into a more equitable, accessible and innovative system of justice. A recipient of the Raising the Bar Award for excellence in court administration, I was also honored to receive the Julius L. Chambers Diversity Champion Award by the Mecklenburg County Bar.



Martha Efir, Attorney at Law

A Myers Park High School graduate, Martha studied at Agnes Scott College and graduated from UNCC. While in corporate management for Piedmont Airlines, she developed an interest in law. After earning a J.D. from Campbell University, Martha maintained a private practice until the current Clerk of Superior Court appointed her Assistant Clerk with responsibilities as Hearing Officer and manager of two departments. Martha, a Huntersville resident, is currently an attorney on Moore & Van Allen's Litigation Team. She enjoys photography, outdoor activities, and participating in church leadership.

PROGRAM

Welcome

Tom Myrick, Chair—Justice Initiatives

Introductions

**Moderator, Taylor Batten
Superior Court Candidates**

Presentation of Rules

Superior Court Candidates

**Moderator Questions (45 minutes)
Audience Questions (25 minutes)**

Brief Intermission (20 minutes)

Introduction of District Court Candidates

Moderator, Taylor Batten

District Court Candidates

**Moderator Questions (45 minutes)
Audience Questions (25 minutes)**

Closing

Moderator, Taylor Batten

The use of cameras and/or other electronic recording devices by the audience is prohibited

CANDIDATES

Superior Court Judge (I)

Bob Bell
Justin Moore

Superior Court Judge (II)

Carla Archie
John Bowers
David Kelly
Eric Montgomery

District Court Judge (I)

Theo Nixon
Yolanda Trotman

District Court Judge (II)

Alicia Brooks
Casey Viser

Special Guests

Clerk of Superior Court Candidates

Elisa Chinn-Gary
Martha Efird

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David Kelly, Assistant District Attorney

David grew up in Mecklenburg County, specifically in District 26B. David attended Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, graduated magna cum laude from UNC Charlotte, then attended Wake Forest for law school where he was a 3-year recipient of a full-tuition academic merit scholarship. While at Wake Forest, David interned with the Mecklenburg Public Defender's Office and was the first judicial intern for The Honorable Albert Diaz. In 2004 David was hired as an Assistant District Attorney, where he currently serves as a member of the Homicide Unit. David is also an adjunct law professor.



Eric Montgomery, Attorney at Law

Eric Montgomery has practiced law for nearly 25 years, more than any other candidate in the race for Superior Court Judge District 26B. He is a native of Charlotte and a graduate of West Charlotte High (Class of 83). He knows the challenges facing this community as it pertains to the justice system. Montgomery has diverse law experience. He has represented corporations, small business owners and his favorite, individuals. He has litigated cases in Federal and State courts and administrative agencies across this state. Montgomery brought favorable resolutions for the companies he represented without sacrificing his values or support for strong communities.

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Carla Archie, Attorney at Law

Carla graduated *summa cum laude* from Hampton University with a bachelor's of science degree in accounting. She received her Juris Doctorate from the College of William and Mary. Carla is currently senior litigation counsel for Wells Fargo. She began her legal career in 1995 as an assistant district attorney in Charlotte, N.C. In 2002, she joined Wachovia as assistant general counsel. In 2006, she became the deputy executive director of legal and security for the N.C. Education Lottery. Carla is the current president of the Mecklenburg County Bar.



John Bowers, Attorney at Law

I am a native Charlottean and graduate of Myers Park High School. I graduated Phi Beta Kappa from UNC in 1993 and from UNC School of Law in 1997 with Honors. I clerked for Justice John Webb at the North Carolina Supreme Court before returning to Charlotte for private practice. I practiced complex commercial litigation at Horack Talley for the last ten years. I handled all forms of civil litigation as both a Plaintiff and Defendant for individuals, small businesses, large companies and international corporations and appeared several times a month in Superior Courts throughout the state. On September 8, 2013, I was appointed by Governor McCrory to fill Judge Constangy's seat.

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Bob Bell, Superior Court Judge

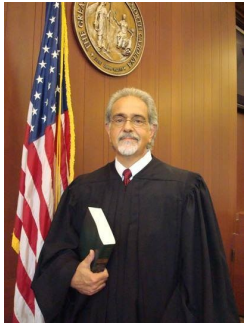
Judge Bell has served on the Superior Court bench for 17 years. During that time he has presided over 1000's of cases, including capital murder, medical malpractice and complex business cases. Prior to his service on the bench Judge Bell was an Assistant District Attorney in Mecklenburg County for 10 years. He successfully tried 100's of cases including homicide, sexual assault, armed robbery, habitual felon, arson and drug trafficking cases. Judge Bell graduated from Wake Forest University and the University of North Carolina School of Law.



Justin Moore, Attorney at Law

No Information was provided by the candidate.

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Theo Nixon, District Court Judge

Judge Theo Nixon is presently serving Mecklenburg County as a District Court Judge. Since becoming a judge in 2008, he has utilized his knowledge and experience from 3 years as an Assistant Public Defender and 28 years as a trial attorney in state and federal courts to promote the efficiency and fairness of our criminal court system. Judge Nixon has blended his experience from both the private and public sectors into progressive approaches to improve the complex criminal justice system for this county. As Lead Criminal Courts Judge, he created specialized courts to address specific needs within the system.



Yolanda Trotman, Attorney at Law

I am an alumnus of UNC-Charlotte and was a North Carolina Teaching Fellow. I received my B.A. in History in 1996. I was a history teacher, Debate & Speech coach and mock trial coach for three years at North Mecklenburg High School. I received my *J.D.* from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law in 2002. I began my legal career in 2002 as an Assistant Public Defender, where I handled cases in District and Superior Court. I have been in private practice focusing on criminal defense and family law matters since 2004, and I have extensive jury trial experience.

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Alicia Brooks, Attorney at Law

I am a native of Fayetteville, North Carolina. I graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill for both undergraduate and Law School. In 1992, my husband and I moved to Charlotte where we raised three daughters. I began my legal career as an assistant public defender and later became an assistant district attorney and I have been in private practice for 14 years. My legal experience makes me uniquely qualified to be a District Court Judge. I understand the importance of listening to both sides on any legal matter and following the law.



Casey Viser, District Court Judge

Judge Casey Viser was born and raised in Charlotte. He practiced civil litigation and criminal law in State and Federal Courts for thirteen years as a partner at James, McElroy & Diehl, PA, before becoming a Judge. He is a graduate of Hampden-Sydney College and Campbell University School of Law, where he served as President of the Student Bar Association. In 2013 he was elected by the Mecklenburg County Bar, and appointed by the Governor as a District Court Judge. Judge Viser understands the challenges faced by litigants and witnesses, and treats all who come before him with fairness, respect, and professionalism.