

Inquirer Judicial Candidate Questionnaire

Name: **Sallie Mundy**

Running for: Superior Court of Pennsylvania

Political Party: Republican

Campaign e-mail and Website: sumundy@aol.com



Questions:

1. Why are you qualified and well-suited to serve as a judge on the court for which you are running?

I have been a practicing attorney for more than 20 years. I have approximately 10 years experience on the defense side mostly representing doctors and nurses accused of medical malpractice, and another 10 years representing catastrophically injured victims on the plaintiff's side. I have also practiced in the field of criminal law, of late serving as a volunteer assistant public defender in Tioga County.

I was raised in rural Tioga County, Pennsylvania, and come from a blue collar family. My father was a lineman for a local electric company, and the Chief of our volunteer fire Department for 25 years. My mother worked as a laborer in a box factory. From my parents, I have developed a strong work ethic, (I can not recall a time throughout my school years when I did not have at least one part-time job). In our household, my parents taught the difference between right and wrong, it was a clear line, either black or white with no gray area. My parents also instilled a strong sense of compassion for others. These are traits that I have carried with me throughout my life and will bring to the bench as a Superior Court Judge.

My background as a women from Tioga County seeking a statewide judgeship, is somewhat unique. To my knowledge, there has been only one other appellate court judge from the Northern Tier, and that was back in the 1880's. I have been fortunate to spend seven years in the southwestern part of the state while I was an undergraduate at Washington & Jefferson College in Washington, Pa. and a law student at the University of Pittsburgh. After returning to Tioga County to serve a clerkship for the Honorable Robert M. Kemp, President Judge of Tioga County, I practiced for 8 years in Central Pennsylvania for a firm that was General Counsel for Pennsylvania State University and represented the Milton S. Hershey Medical Center. I then moved to the Philadelphia area, working for defense firms for several years before accepting a position with my current firm of McEldrew & Fullam, I believe my diversity both in terms of litigation experience and geographical practice are assets in my efforts to secure a seat on the Superior Court.

2. Did you receive a rating of "recommended" or higher from the state or local bar association? If not, why not?

I have received a favorable recommendations from the Pennsylvania Bar Association. My local bar association in Tioga County does not rate statewide judicial candidates.

3. If you are an incumbent judge, what's a recent instance in which you acted to preserve your judicial independence? If you are an aspiring judge, how do you plan to remain independent if elected to the bench?

I believe strongly in what I call the three "I"s. Integrity: a judge in all things must be above reproach. Independence: a judge should always base his or her decision on the law. Intellect: a judge should explain his or her decision clearly and concisely so that even the losing party as well as the interested public will understand the decision and the reasons behind it. I believe if an elected judicial officer adheres to these principles, people will discern that he or she is doing the job the right way and respect for the legal system will increase accordingly.

4. A number of Pennsylvania judges have been sanctioned for campaign activities, ex parte dealings, and other alleged misconduct. How can the state's judiciary prevent discipline scandals of the type seen recently?

The Superior Court of Pennsylvania has been constitutionally vested with all the power necessary to police the Courts and those who serve these institutions. They must exercise this power, or cede it to another branch of government. Transparency is the key. For example, current disclosure forms require specific financial information on the judge's finances, but not on the finances of the spouse of the judge. They require disclosure as to the source of the outside income, but not the amounts. More comprehensive disclosure forms may have enabled the Supreme Court to discern the abuses which occurred in Luzerne County earlier. I would support the Courts efforts to increase scrutiny by demanding greater transparency.

5. If you believe that gender, racial, ethnic, class or other forms of bias can infect the justice system, how will you work to keep your courtroom as bias-free as possible?

These biases are very much in existence today. A public official who ignores this reality, encourages its existence, even without intending to do so. As a Judge, I will be proactive in seeing to it that my staff is composed of men and women, non-white as well as white. My goal is to insure that with even cursory visit to my chambers, anyone would know immediately that there is no room for bias of any kind with this judge. I will encourage my colleagues to do so as well.