2017 Democratic Statewide Judicial Candidates

Justice of the Supreme Court

Judge Dwayne Woodruff: Judge on the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas. He was first elected to the court in 2005 and was retained in 2015. He graduated from the University of Louisville in 1979 and played defensive end for the Pittsburgh Steelers. He later earned his J.D. from Duquesne University School of Law in 1988. In 1997, Woodruff became a founding partner of the Woodruff, Flaherty & Fardo law firm. He also serves as the Pittsburgh co-chair for the National Campaign to Stop Violence's "Do the Write Thing" Challenge

Judge of the Superior Court – 4 open seats

Judge Maria McLaughlin: Maria is a judge on the Philadelphia County Court of Common Pleas in Pennsylvania. She was elected in 2011, and her term expires in January 2022. McLaughlin received her bachelor's degree from Pennsylvania State University in 1988 and her J.D. from Widener University School of Law in 1992.

Judge Carolyn H. Nichols: Carolyn is a judge on the Philadelphia County Court of Common Pleas in Pennsylvania. Prior to her election to the common pleas court in 2011, Nichols held a number of positions, including legislative assistant to former Philadelphia Councilwoman Augusta Clarke, assistant city solicitor, and deputy secretary of external affairs for the office of the mayor of Philadelphia.

Judge Debbie A. Kunselman: Deborah is a judge on the Beaver County Court of Common Pleas in Pennsylvania. She was elected in 2005 and was retained in 2015. She was the first female judge elected to the 36th district Court of Common Pleas. She earned her undergraduate degree from Pennsylvania State University in 1989 and her J.D. from Notre Dame Law School in 1992.

Judge Geoff Moulton (incumbent): H. Geoffrey Moulton Jr. is a judge on the Pennsylvania Superior Court. He was appointed by Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf in June 2016 and confirmed by the Pennsylvania State Senate on June 27, 2016. Moulton received his bachelor's degree from Amherst College in 1980 and his J.D. from Columbia University School of Law in 1984.

Judge of the Commonwealth Court – 2 open seats

Judge Ellen Ceisler: A 1986 graduate of Temple University Law School, Ellen served as a Philadelphia Assistant District Attorney, specializing in prosecuting domestic violence crimes. She also worked as an investigative producer for CBS News in Philadelphia. From 1997-2005, she served as Deputy Director and then Director of the Philadelphia Police Department's Integrity and Accountability Office. In 2007, she was elected to the Court of Common Pleas in Philadelphia and spent her first six years presiding over major felony trials.

Judge Irene McLaughlin Clark: Irene served as a Municipal Court Judge in Pittsburgh for ten years before returning to private practice focused on helping municipalities and organizations revitalize communities. Her extensive background in housing and neighborhood revitalization led to her to being designated Housing Court Judge responsible for code enforcement cases. Since leaving the bench in 2003, she has focused on helping municipalities and organizations clean up and revitalize blighted and abandoned properties.

Justice of the Supreme Court for Retention

Justice Debra Todd (For retention to Supreme Court) In 2007,**Debra Todd** became the first Democratic Woman to be elected to the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. She is now in line to become Pennsylvania's first female Chief Justice. Justice Todd was born in Ellwood City, PA. Her father was a steelworker at J&L Steel. She received her B.A. with Honors from Chatham College; J.D. Degree from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law, where she was a member of the Law Review; and LL.M. Degree in the Judicial Process from the University of Virginia School of Law.

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