

**The Chicago Council of Lawyers Evaluation Report:  
Judges Seeking Retention in the November 2022 General Election and  
Judicial Candidates Seeking to Fill Judicial Vacancies**

September 15, 2022

The Chicago Council of Lawyers, in this report, releases its evaluation of the judges seeking retention in the November 8th general election. We also include in this report our evaluation of the candidates who won their primary election held in June 2022 and who are on the November ballot.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY FOR RETENTION CANDIDATES

The criteria for the Council’s evaluations are whether the retention candidate has demonstrated the ability to serve on the relevant court in the following categories:

- fairness, including sensitivity to diversity and bias
- legal knowledge and skills (competence)
- integrity
- experience
- diligence
- impartiality
- judicial temperament
- respect for the rule of law
- independence from political and institutional influences
- professional conduct
- character
- community service

If a candidate has demonstrated the ability to perform the work required of a judge in all of these areas, the Council assigns a rating of “qualified.” If a candidate has demonstrated excellence in most of these areas, the Council assigns a rating of “well qualified.” If a candidate has demonstrated excellence in all of these areas, the Council assigns a rating of “highly qualified.” If a candidate has not demonstrated that he or she meets all of the criteria evaluated by the Council, the Council assigns a rating of “not qualified.” As part of the evaluation process, we require candidates to provide us with detailed information about their backgrounds, including any complaints filed against them with the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission

(“ARDC”) or the Judicial Inquiry Board (“JIB”).

In conducting these evaluations, the Council has participated in a joint investigation and interview process with the Alliance of Bar Associations for Judicial Screening (“Alliance”). The Alliance includes the following bar associations: Arab American Bar Association, Asian American Bar Association, Black Women Lawyers Association, Chicago Council of Lawyers, Cook County Bar Association, Decalogue Society of Lawyers, Hellenic Bar Association, Hispanic Lawyers’ Association of Illinois, Illinois State Bar Association, Lesbian and Gay Bar Association of Chicago, Puerto Rican Bar Association, and the Women’s Bar Association of Illinois.

The Council’s evaluation process includes:

- (1) a review of a written informational questionnaire provided to the Alliance by the candidate, including details of the candidate’s career and professional development and information on any complaints filed against the candidate with the JIB or the ARDC;
- (2) a review of the candidate’s written responses to the supplemental essay questionnaire;
- (3) interviews of judges, attorneys, and others with personal knowledge about the candidate, including those who have and those who have not been referred to the Alliance by the candidate, and not restricted to Council members;
- (4) a review of the candidate’s professional written work, where available;
- (5) an interview of the candidate done jointly with the Alliance;
- (6) review of any information concerning the candidate provided by the ARDC or the JIB;
- (7) a review of any other information available from public records, such as the Board of Election Commissioners and prosecutorial agencies; and
- (8) an evaluation of all the above materials by the Council’s Judicial Evaluation Committee;
- (9) submission of the proposed evaluation and write-up to the candidate prior to its public release, to provide an opportunity for comment, correction, or reconsideration.

- (10) the candidate is given a reasonable period of time to submit a written appeal of the Council's rating and written findings. The appeal is a written response to concerns discussed in the proposed write-up. The appeal is reviewed by both members of the original committee and by individuals who work with the Committee exclusively for appeals. Appellate decision-making is done by consensus.

The Council places special importance on interviews with attorneys who practice before the judge, particularly those who were not referred to the Council by the candidate. Most evaluations are based on information gathered and interviews held during the few months just prior to the general election.

In evaluating candidates, the Council expresses written reasons for its conclusions. Without knowing the reason for a recommendation concerning a candidate, the public cannot use the bar's evaluations intelligently to draw its own conclusions.

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RETENTION ELECTIONS

The retention elections provide the voter with an opportunity to remove those judges whose judicial performance has been, in some respect, unsatisfactory. Retention elections provide the only practical opportunity for the voters as a whole to focus on the performance of judges, with a realistic opportunity to defeat those candidates who deserve to be defeated.

#### EVALUATION METHODOLOGY FOR JUDICIAL CANDIDATES IN CONTESTED ELECTIONS

Judicial candidates seeking election must run for specific vacancies. Candidates seeking election to the Circuit Court – which is the County's trial-level court for both civil and criminal matters – may run in either a countywide or a subcircuit race. Legislation creating the subcircuits provides that approximately one-third of the judges are elected by voters of the entire County, and each of the remaining judges elected by voters runs in one of fifteen geographical districts into which the County has been arbitrarily divided. Once elected, there is no distinction between a "countywide" judge and a "subcircuit" judge. Either kind can be assigned to any judicial post in the County.

The Council rates candidates as "*highly qualified*," "*well qualified*," "*qualified*," or "*not qualified*." If a candidate refuses to submit his or her credentials to the Council, that candidate is rated "*not recommended*" unless the Council is aware of credible information that would justify a "not qualified" rating. Because we believe a willingness to participate in bar association and other public evaluations is a key indicator of fitness for public office, no candidate who refuses to be screened can be found "qualified."

We apply higher standards to candidates for the Supreme Court and the Appellate Court. Because these Courts establish legal precedents that bind the lower courts, their work has a broad impact on the justice system. Moreover, qualities of scholarship and writing ability are more important to the work of the Supreme and Appellate Court justices than they are to satisfactory

performance as a trial judge.

The Council does *not* evaluate candidates based on their substantive views of political or social issues. Nor do we take into account the particular race in which a candidate is running or the candidates against whom a candidate is running. We apply a uniform standard for all countywide and subcircuit elections because judges elected through either method can be assigned to any judicial position in the Circuit Court.

It should be noted that a lawyer might be performing well or even very well without being qualified to be a judge. A good lawyer may be unqualified to be a judge, for instance, because of a narrow range of prior experience, limited trial experience, or limited work doing legal research and writing. A lawyer may have the temperament and intelligence to be a judge without yet having worked in a position that would allow the candidate to demonstrate that capacity. Accordingly, it should be recognized and expected that we will rate some good lawyers “not qualified.”

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### Retention Elections (all ballots)

#### Qualified

The Hon. **James L. Allegretti** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1978. Since 2016, he has served as a Judge on the Circuit Court of Cook County, where since 2019, he has been assigned to Room 204 in Skokie, Second Municipal District. There, he hears a mixed civil call, both bench and jury, of torts, evictions, and administrative review. From 2005 to 2011, Mr. Allegretti served as the Fourth Ward Alderman for the city of Park Ridge. From 2001 to 2016, he was the Principal in the firm of Allegretti and Associates, focusing on Plaintiff’s personal injury cases and petitioners’ workers compensation representation. He has practiced as a solo practitioner or in a small firm handling traffic, DUI, personal injury and workers’ compensation cases since 1978.

Judge Allegretti is reported to be knowledgeable about the law and he is considered to have good legal ability. Most lawyers reported that Judge Allegretti is even keeled and respectful. A few respondents, however, noted that he can be demeaning with tenants in eviction proceedings. Overall, however, respondents say he is a good judge. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Robert Balanoff** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1982. In 2020, he was appointed Acting Presiding Judge of the Child Protection Division of Cook County. For over 15 years prior to that, he was a Judge in the division, where he adjudicated claims of abuse and neglect of minor children. Prior to his election to the bench, Judge Balanoff was in private practice.

Judge Balanoff is considered to be a highly capable judge who was praised for his technology skills during the pandemic, He is praised for his legal knowledge and legal ability. As the Acting Presiding Judge, he is praised for listening to advocates for reform ideas. He is generally reported to be respectful and fair to litigants. He is also reported to have good judicial temperament. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Steven James Bernstein** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1971. Since 2010, he has served as a Judge on the Circuit Court of Cook County, where since 2014, he has been assigned to the Juvenile Justice Division. There, he hears juvenile justice (criminal) cases from the Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Districts. Before joining the bench he was in private practice and served as the Acting General Counsel for the Illinois Criminal Justice Authority.

Judge Bernstein is reported to be knowledgeable about the law, and is praised for hearing all sides of a matter. Attorneys who have both lost and won in front of him say that he is fair and respectful to those who appear before him. He is praised for being empathetic to juveniles who appear before him, even when he is stern with parents or representatives of government agencies appearing in his courtroom. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Kathleen Marie Burke** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1989. She was elected to the bench in 2004. She is assigned to the Fifth Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, she was a litigator with Johnson & Bell with a focus on medical malpractice cases.

Judge Burke is considered to have very good legal ability who issues thoughtful decisions and is exceptionally knowledgeable about civil procedure. She is praised for her temperament. She is respectful of both lawyers and litigants. Judge Burke is reported to have good courtroom management skills. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Charles Patrick Burns** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1981. He was elected to the bench in 1998 and is assigned to the Criminal Division. He also presides over the R.A.P. and W.R.A.P. Drug Call. Prior to his election, he was an Assistant Cook County State's Attorney. Judge Burns has taught Graduate and Undergraduate classes at Lewis University on Justice, Law, and Public Safety studies, and has authored a number of published works, including as a Topic Writer with the Illinois Judicial Benchbook, as well as articles in the Illinois Bar Journal, the Duke University Journal of Law and Technology, and the Loyola University Chicago Law Journal.

Judge Burns is considered to have good legal ability. Attorneys generally find him to be fair to lawyers and litigants. However, many respondents reported that he can be quick to anger and combative on the bench. Many say they are willing to accept this behavior only because he is an otherwise good judge. The National Drug Court Institute awarded his problem solving court program a national mentor court designation in November 2021. The three-year mentor court designation has been awarded to this program three times since Judge Burns presided. He has

formed partnerships resulting in housing vouchers for participants in the drug call, and has established a partnership with Cabrini Green Legal Aid to provide no cost expungement and record sealing for (W)RAP graduates. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Bonita Coleman** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1992. She was elected to the bench in 2010 and is currently assigned to the Domestic Relations Division in Markham. Before becoming a judge she was in private practice.

Judge Coleman is considered to have good legal ability with a good knowledge of the law. She is especially praised for her courtroom management skills. She has a good temperament and is particularly patient with self-represented litigants. In 2016, the Council noted that there was a mixed response to whether she is fair to both men and women who appear before her. During this evaluation, some lawyers say she can be dismissive of domestic violence allegations – that she requires an excessive amount of evidence before she will order protections for alleged victims of abuse. On balance, the Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court

#### Not Recommended

The Hon. **Ann Finley Collins** did not participate in the evaluation process. The Council finds her Not Recommended for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Alison C. Conlon** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 2000. She was appointed to the bench in 2015 and elected in 2016. Currently, she is assigned to the Chancery Department, General Chancery Section. She began her legal career as a law clerk for Judge Charles Kocoras of the federal district court, and then went on to become an Associate and Partner with the law firm of Wildman Harrold. She then joined Barnes and Thornburg as a partner. She did tort and commercial litigation for both firms. She maintained an active pro bono practice, as well.

Judge Conlon is reported to be well prepared and thoughtful. She is considered knowledgeable with good legal ability. She is respectful and fair to all parties. She is praised for her temperament and is reported to be a calming influence in the courtroom. Overall, she is considered to have a good judicial temperament and is praised for her diligence and punctuality. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Maureen E. Connors** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1979. She currently serves as Justice on the Illinois Appellate Court, where she was appointed in 2010. She became an Associate Judge in 1988 and was elected to the bench in 1994. Previously, she had been an assistant general attorney at the Chicago Park District from 1983 to 1988 and an attorney with Klafter & Burke from 1979 to 1985.

Judge Connors is considered to have good legal ability, and is well prepared for oral arguments.

She is an active questioner during oral argument, and is praised for her fairness. She is praised overall for her judicial temperament and for the quality, thoroughness, and fairness of her written opinions. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Eulalia V. De La Rosa** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 2004. She was elected to the Circuit Court in 2016 and is currently assigned to the Fourth Municipal District. From 2005 to 2016, she served as an Assistant Cook County Public Defender, where beginning in 2009 she was assigned to the felony trial division..

Judge De La Rosa is praised for her legal knowledge and ability. She is reported to have good temperament, and is reported to be both punctual and diligent on the bench. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Well Qualified

The Hon. **Mathias William Delort** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1985. He currently serves as a Justice on the Illinois Appellate Court, where he was elected in 2012. He has served both as presiding justice of several divisions of that court and as chair of the court's Mediation Committee. In 2007, he was appointed an Associate Judge of the Circuit Court of Cook County and served almost exclusively in the Chancery Division of that court. From 1998 to 2007, Justice Delort was an Associate and Shareholder practicing Local Government, Education and Election Law at Robbins Schwartz et al. From 1988 to 1998 he was an Associate and Partner at Odelson & Sterk Ltd., and from 1985 to 1988 he worked as a sole practitioner with a general practice. He is a primary author of the benchbook for judges in the foreclosure call. He is also the author of several IICLE chapters for lawyers.

Justice Delort is a highly respected Jurist who is considered to have excellent legal ability. He is reported to be well prepared during oral arguments. His opinions are praised as being thorough and well-reasoned, The Council finds him Well Qualified for retention to the Appellate Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Daniel Patrick Duffy** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1995. He was appointed to the Circuit Court in 2014 and is currently assigned to the Law Division, Calendar 1, Tax & Miscellaneous Remedies. Before becoming a judge, he was an attorney with several private firms doing a variety of matters including criminal defense, commercial litigation, and insurance litigation.

Judge Duffy is reported to have good legal ability and knowledge for his current assignment. He is considered to be respectful to litigants and is fair to all parties. He is praised for his judicial temperament and is regarded as being both punctual and diligent. Since he was last evaluated, Judge Duffy appears to have improved his judicial temperament substantially. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Well Qualified

The Hon. **Jerry A. Esrig** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1978. He was first appointed to the Circuit Court by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2013. He lost a Primary election in 2014. He was appointed to the Circuit Court by the Illinois Supreme Court for another interim term in 2014 and was elected to the bench in 2016. He is currently assigned to the Law Division, Calendar S, Commercial Calendar Section. Prior to becoming a judge, he was a Partner with a small firm, focusing on sophisticated personal injury and commercial litigation matters.

Respondents spoke exceptionally highly of Judge Esrig's legal knowledge and ability. He is praised for his preparation and willingness to do the research necessary to acquire the necessary knowledge of the issues being litigated before him. He is also praised for his integrity and his judicial temperament was generally described as very good. He is considered punctual and diligent on the bench and respondents generally stated that Judge Esrig's orders were thorough, well-done, and issues in a timely manner. The Council finds him Well Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Highly Qualified

The Hon. **Timothy C. Evans** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1969. He currently serves as the Chief Judge of the Circuit Court of Cook County and has previously served as the Presiding Judge of the Domestic Relations Division. He was first elected to the bench in 1992 and was elected to the position of Chief Judge in 2001. Before taking the bench, he was a sole practitioner. Judge Evans was also an assistant corporation counsel for the City of Chicago and had served as a floor leader for Mayor Harold Washington and as an Alderman for the 4th Ward.

As Chief Judge, he does not hear cases, but sees to the administration of the courts. Chief Judge Evans created a domestic violence division of the Cook County Circuit Court, and recently convened a Task Force to identify needed reforms for that division. He re-instituted a pretrial services program and changed procedures so that bond hearings since 2008 are conducted in person, rather than via teleconferencing. This resulted in better due process protections. He has overseen the creation of several community courts which employ principals of restorative justice. In 2017 he issued an administrative order restricting the amount of money bond which could be imposed – resulting in a significant reduction in the Cook County jail population while 2017-2019 statistics showed no significant increase in Cook County crime.

Advocates say he is cooperating fully in preparing the Court for the end of money bond which is mandated by Illinois legislation to begin in January 2023, He has also issued an administrative order stopping Cook County judges from denying a public defender to a defendant without first conducting an indigence hearing.

Chief Judge Evans has also overseen the implementation of a court recording system in eviction courts and worked to ensure that judges recorded their eviction proceedings conducted by Zoom. Some say that he was too slow in moving the Circuit Court to a virtual operation during the pandemic, but others say that after delays at the outset, the Cook County Circuit Court

made the necessary changes. The Council finds him Highly Qualified for retention.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Rossana P. Fernandez** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1997. She is currently assigned to the Domestic Relations Division in the Third Municipal District. She was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2015 and elected as a Circuit Court Judge in 2016. Previously, she had been a Partner at Sanchez and Daniels, where she handled personal injury litigation. She had also worked at Eannace Lowery & Meade as an Associate Attorney.

Judge Fernandez has extensive legal knowledge and ability. She is praised for her opinion writing skills. However, there are mixed reviews on the issue of temperament and court management. Many lawyers praised her ability to control a courtroom while being respectful. Others criticize her for being inflexible and rigid in managing her courtroom and applying courtroom procedures in Domestic Relations and Domestic Violence cases, which, they say sometimes leads to questionable outcomes. Many lawyers praise her temperament and how she addresses person in her courtroom. But many other respondents say she is sometimes rude to litigants and lawyers. Because of the wide disparity of views, Judge Fernandez's evaluation presents a very close call. The reports of problems with Judge Fernandez's handling of her call are credible and concerning. Ultimately, however, the Council credits reports that Judge Fernandez is a hardworking and caring judge who is capable of improvement. On balance, the Council finds her Qualified for retention.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Carolyn Joan Gallagher** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1982. She was elected as a Circuit Court Judge in 2016 and is currently assigned to the Probate Division, Calendar 2, Decedent Estates. Previously, she was a solo practitioner focusing on litigation, appellate work, real estate, and transactional matters and handling commercial litigation in both state and federal courts. Between 1985 and 1992 she was an associate with Dardick & Denlow and between 2000 and 2004 was a Legal Writing Instructor at the DePaul University College of Law. As a writing consultant, she has assisted in the writing and editing of several law practice- related books.

Judge Gallagher is considered to have good legal knowledge and ability. She is reported to be a good courtroom manager and is punctual and diligent. She is reported generally to be respectful to the parties before her and she is praised for her temperament. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Daniel James Gallagher** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1994. He was elected to the bench in 2010 and is currently assigned to the Misdemeanor/Ordinance call in the First Municipal District. Previously, he was in private practice and served as an Assistant Cook County Public Defender.

Judge Gallagher is considered to have good legal ability and is praised for his temperament.

He established a reading program which operated as a deferred prosecution program. He is reported to have a thorough understanding of the law and the process and is praised for how he shows respect for all who appear before him. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Qualified

The Hon. **Aleksandra Gillespie** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1993. She was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2014 and elected as a Circuit Court Judge in 2016. She is currently assigned to the Second Municipal District where she is the Acting Presiding Judge when Presiding Judge Shelley Sutker-Dermer is unavailable. Before becoming a judge, she was a career First Assistant Cook County State's Attorney, and served as a First Chair prosecutor in felony matters.

Judge Gillespie is considered to have good legal ability with a good command of the law. She is praised for her courtroom management skills. She is reported to have a professional demeanor on the bench and is respectful of all those before her. Judge Gillespie is very invested in the Drug Court that she runs in the Second District. She is a respected jurist. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Qualified

The Hon. **Sophia H. Hall** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1967. She was elected to the bench in 1980 and currently serves as Interim Acting Presiding Judge in the Chancery Division, Calendar 12, General Chancery Section. Previously, she was the Administrative Presiding Judge of the Resource Section of the Juvenile Justice and Child Protection Department. Judge Hall has taught and lectured at a large number of schools and conferences, including Loyola University Chicago School of Law, DePaul School of Law, and the Illinois Administrative Law Conference.

Judge Hall is widely praised as an exceptionally knowledgeable and diligent jurist. She is considered to have an excellent judicial demeanor and demonstrates a devotion to diversity, inclusion, and equity through her community activities both individually and as a representative of the Cook County judiciary. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Qualified

The Hon. **Carrie Hamilton** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1996. She was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2015 and elected as a Circuit Court Judge in 2016. She is currently assigned to the Civil Section in the Sixth Municipal District. Previously, she was an Assistant United States Attorney who had prosecuted a number of high visibility cases in Chicago.

Judge Hamilton is considered to have good legal ability. She is a former federal prosecutor who now hears civil section cases, and respondents say she has made the transition well. She reportedly learned the law quickly and is now praised for her handling of even complex matters which appear before her. Judge Hamilton is praised for her courtroom management, and for her

temperament. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Maureen O'Donoghue Hannon** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1991. She was elected to the bench in 2016 and is currently assigned to the County Division. Previously, she was an Assistant Cook County State's Attorney working in the Conflict Counsel Unit, where she was responsible for the defense of Cook County Offices, Elected and Appointed Officials, and Cook County employees in various areas of state and federal civil litigation.

Judge Hannon is considered to have good legal ability with a good command of the law in a call which involves a variety of types of matters. She is reported to have good judicial temperament. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **William H. Hooks** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1981. He was appointed to the Circuit Court of Cook County in 2008 and is currently assigned to the Criminal Division. He is also the Judge Presiding for the Criminal Division Veteran's Treatment Court. Before becoming a Circuit Court Judge he was a Judge Advocate in the U.S. Marine Corps and Reserves, where he prosecuted and defended criminal cases. He left active duty in 1985 (though remained in the Reserves for an additional 10 years) and until 1991 practiced civil litigation (mainly insurance defense) with Pretzel & Stouffer, Hinshaw & Culbertson, and Garland W. Watt and Associates. Between 1995 and 2008, he practiced on his own and in partnership with others, concentrating on criminal defense and civil litigation.

Respondents praise Judge Hooks for his legal knowledge and legal ability. He is reported to be knowledgeable and well prepared. He has a reputation for being a mentor to lawyers and to other judges. Most lawyers praise his judicial temperament. Respondents generally praised his punctuality and diligence, and he is particularly praised for his work with his Veterans Court call. This problem solving court provides a probation program for veterans with the help of services provided by the Veterans Administration. Judge Hooks is cited for bringing compassion and assistance to veterans. Judge Hooks is also praised for his community activities and his sensitivity to bias. He is credited for calling out police officers who provide perjured testimony during trials. The Council believes that he is a very good judge and deserves to be retained to the Circuit Court. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Well Qualified

The Hon. **Nathaniel R. Howse, Jr.** was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1976. Since 2009, he has served as a Justice of the Appellate Court of Illinois, First District. He was elected to the Appellate Court in 2012. Prior to that, he served as a Cook County Circuit Court Judge, where he was assigned to the County Division (2001-2009), where he presided over Tax Deed, Real Estate Tax, Civil Forfeiture, and Adoption cases; and the First Municipal District, where he heard supplemental proceedings to enforce judgments as well as extraordinary remedies (2000-2001); served as floater judge on general assignment (1999-2000); and presided over traffic cases (1998-1999).

Judge Howse is considered to have excellent legal ability and is reported to demonstrate a good grasp of complex issues. His written opinions are praised as being well-written, well-reasoned, and thorough. Respondents say he is always well prepared for oral argument. His integrity is highly respected and his temperament is reported to be even-tempered. The Council finds him Well Qualified for retention to the Appellate Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Doretha R. Jackson** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 2006. She was elected to the Circuit Court in 2016 and is currently assigned to the Domestic Relations Division. Before becoming a judge, she worked as an attorney in private practice specializing in contract law, intellectual property, defective and dangerous products, and government law. From 2008 to 2010, she worked as an attorney for the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District.

Judge Jackson is considered to have good legal ability. She is praised for explaining the situation to self-represented litigants without becoming their advocate. She is reported to have a good judicial temperament, but also controls her courtroom. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Daryl J. Jones** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 2005. He was elected to the bench in 2016 and is currently assigned to the Juvenile Justice Division. Previously, he served as a member of the Illinois Prisoner Review Board and as an Assistant Cook County State's Attorney (2005-2013). He served as an Ethics Officer and an Equal Employment Opportunity Officer. Judge Jones is reported to be doing well in his current assignment with good court management skills and is praised for always being prepared. He is reportedly impartial on the bench and treats everyone with respect. Some respondents say he can be slow to rule, but most respondents say he takes the time necessary to come to the right conclusion. The Council finds him Qualified for retention.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Linzey Donald Jones, Jr.** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1982. He was elected to the bench in 2010 and is currently assigned to the Fifth Municipal Department. He previously worked at Sidley Austin, first as an Associate (1982- 1990) and then as a Partner (1990-2003). From 2003 to 2010, he served as a Partner at Pugh, Jones, and Johnson.

Judge Linzey Jones, Jr. is considered to have good legal ability. He is reported to handle his call with good court management skills and is respectful to those appearing before him. The Council finds him Qualified for retention.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Thomas Joseph Kelley** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1984. He was elected to the bench in 2004 and is currently assigned to the Domestic Relations Division in the Third Municipal District. Previously (1984-2004), he worked for Kelley & Greco, first as an Associate and then as a Partner.

Judge Kelley is considered to have good legal ability and he is a respected judge. He has a patient demeanor, allows the parties to have their say, but controls his call. He is praised for his courtroom management skills. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the bench.

#### Well Qualified

The Hon. **John P. Kirby** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1983. He was elected to the bench in 1998. He has served in the Criminal Division and is currently assigned to the Law Division. Prior to becoming a judge, he was an Assistant Cook County State's Attorney. Judge Kirby is a lecturer at DePaul University in Trial Advocacy I as well as a substitute lecturer in other courses.

Judge Kirby is considered to be knowledgeable and to have good legal ability. He has done well presiding over both criminal and civil cases. He is praised for his temperament and for his courtroom management skills. He is also praised for his punctuality and for his diligence. He is generally considered to be an excellent judge. In his past criminal division assignments, he received praise for his dedication to using alternative sentencing and for helping develop a cyber high school as an alternative sentence for youthful offenders. The Council finds him Well Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Steven A. Kozicki** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1985. He was elected to the bench in 2016 and is currently assigned to the Third Municipal District. Previously, he worked as a DuPage County Public Defender (1986-1988), a trial attorney for a small firm (1989-1998), and a Sole Practitioner with a general practice (1998-2016).

Judge Kozicki is considered to have good legal ability, and is praised for his fairness shown toward all parties. He is reported to have an excellent judicial temperament. He is a respected judge. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Well Qualified

The Hon. **Geary W. Kull** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1974. He was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2009 and was elected in 2010. Before becoming a judge he served as an Assistant Cook County Public Defender and was in private practice focusing on criminal defense work. He is currently assigned to the Fourth Municipal District, where he hears felony cases.

Judge Kull is considered to have very good legal ability. He is reported to be exceptionally knowledgeable and is respectful to all parties. He has a very good judicial temperament – patient but controls his courtroom. He is well-respected as a jurist. The Council finds him Well Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Terrence Lavin** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1983. Since 2010, he has served as

Illinois Appellate Court Justice. Prior to his appointment to the Appellate Court, he was an attorney with a practice centered on personal injury, wrongful death and medical negligence cases. He was an Associate at Corboy & Demetrio, an Associate at Wildman, Harrold Allen & Dixon, a Partner at Power Rogers Lavin and the Founding Partner of Lavin Law Offices, where he practiced from 1994 through 2009. He has taught trial advocacy as an Adjunct Professor at Chicago-Kent College of Law, and has written several published articles.

Justice Lavin is considered to have good legal ability and is praised for being well prepared during oral arguments. He is an active participant in oral arguments and he is reported to issue well-reasoned, thorough opinions. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Appellate Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Matthew Link** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 2004. He was elected to the bench in 2016 and is currently assigned to the Domestic Relations Division in the First Municipal District. Previously, he served as an Associate at Dowd & Dowd, Ltd. (2005-2007), where he handled civil litigation defense, and as Legal Counsel/Director of Policy for the Chicago City Council Committee on Finance (2007-2018), where he directed legislative initiatives on behalf of the City Council.

Judge Link is considered to have good legal ability and is praised for his temperament and for his knowledge of the law and for his sensitivity to cultural differences among the litigants who appear before him. He is also praised for his punctuality. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Anna Maria Loftus** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1998. She was appointed to the bench in 2014 and elected as a Circuit Court Judge in 2016. She is currently assigned to the Chancery Division. Previously, she had been a Partner at Hall, Prangel and Schoonveld, where she focused on medical malpractice and appellate work. She is a former Associate at Peterson & Ross.

Judge Loftus is considered to have good legal ability. She is reported to be punctual and diligent on the bench. She is well prepared and professional in her interactions with lawyers and litigants. She is praised for her integrity and for her overall demeanor. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **John F. Lyke, Jr.** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1994. He was appointed to the Circuit Court by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2015 and subsequently elected to the bench in 2016. He is currently assigned to the Criminal Division. Before becoming a judge, he was a Sole Practitioner focusing on criminal defense work. He was also an Administrative Hearing Officer for the Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Licensing. He served for six years as an Assistant Cook County State's Attorney where his work included the prosecution of complex

criminal law matters.

Judge Lyke is considered to have good legal ability and knowledge of the law. He is reported to have a good judicial temperament. Some advocates questioned his application of the law when he was assigned to Central Bond Court, but as a judge in the Criminal Division, he is reported to be well prepared, fair to all parties, and does well in managing his courtroom. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Well Qualified

The Hon. **Freddrenna M. Lyle** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1980. She was appointed to the Circuit Court by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2012. She unsuccessfully ran for election to the Illinois First District Appellate Court in 2014; later that year, her Circuit Court term expired. She was elected to the bench in 2016 and is currently assigned to the Mortgage Foreclosure Mechanics Lien Section in the Chancery Division. Before becoming a judge, she worked in small firms and as a solo practitioner, where she had substantial experience handling complex litigation matters. She also served for 13 years in the Chicago City Council.

Judge Lyle is praised for her knowledge of the law and for her courtroom management. She has a high volume call and is adept at getting through the cases while giving each of the parties the ability to make their case. She is praised for being “one of the judges who doesn’t automatically assume the bank is right.” Her rulings are well reasoned and are issued in a timely fashion. She is considered to have good legal ability. She is reported to have good legal ability. She is courteous and respectful to all litigants, including self-represented litigants. The Council finds her Well Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Thomas V. Lyons** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1987. Judge Lyons was appointed to the bench in 2008 and was elected in 2010. He had served as an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney. He is currently assigned to the Law Division where he presides over jury trials.

Judge Lyons is respected for his ability to grasp complex issues coming before him. He is praised for the quality of his decisions. He has a very good judicial temperament. He is patient and fair to all parties. He is described as “hard working”. He is well respected. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Terence F. MacCarthy** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1990. He was elected to the bench in 2010 and is currently assigned to the Domestic Violence Division. Previously, he had served as an Assistant Public Defender for Cook County. He has taught at both DePaul University’s College of Law and the University of Chicago’s Mandel Legal Aid Clinic, serving as an Adjunct Faculty Member for the former.

Judge MacCarthy is considered to be exceptionally knowledgeable and is praised for being well

prepared. He is reported to issue opinions in a timely and fair fashion and is up to date on the law as it relates to domestic violence. He is praised for calm demeanor and for being respectful to those appearing before him. He is reported to have good court management skills. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Daniel Brien Malone** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1986. He was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2009 and was elected in 2010. He is currently Presiding Judge of the Mediation/Pretrial Section of the Probate Division. Previously, he had been in private practice with a focus on personal injury and workers' compensation litigation.

Judge Malone is reported to be exceptionally knowledgeable with good legal ability. He is described as smart and fair. He is praised for being prepared and for being fair to all litigants. He is considered to be respectful and is also praised for his courtroom management. He is reported to be punctual. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Leroy K. Martin, Jr.** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1984. He currently serves as a Justice on the Illinois Appellate Court, where he was appointed in 2020. He was first appointed to the bench in 2002, serving in the Chancery Division and, from 2015 to 2020, as the Presiding Judge of the Criminal Division. He had served as a Cook County Public Defender from 1985 to 1987, then engaged in private practice for 15 years, specializing in criminal, domestic relations, and real estate matters.

Judge Martin is a well-respected jurist both as a trial judge and as an appellate justice. He is reported to have good legal ability. He is well prepared as an Appellate Justice. All respondents praised his temperament and punctuality. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Mary K. McHugh** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1993. She was elected to the bench in 2016 and is currently assigned to the Fifth Municipal District. Previously, she had been a Partner at the law firm of Parrillo, Weiss & O'Halloran where she concentrated in personal injury and subrogation litigation.

Judge McHugh is praised for her courtroom management. She presides over high volume calls and is reported to be organized and fair to all litigants. She reportedly reads all pleadings and is considered to have good legal ability. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Clare Elizabeth McWilliams** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1988. She was first elected to the bench in 2004 and she is currently assigned to the Law Division, where she

presides over jury trials. Previously, she worked as an attorney in private practice, specializing in matrimonial law.

Judge McWilliams is reported to be well prepared with good legal knowledge and ability. She is praised for her thorough and thoughtful opinions. Judge McWilliams is respectful of litigants before her and his also praised for her judicial temperament. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Well Qualified

The Hon. **Mary Lane Mikva** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1980. She currently serves as a Justice on the Illinois Appellate Court, where she was appointed in 2016. She was elected to the bench in 2004 and had been assigned to the Chancery Division and the Child Protection Division. Previously she had served as a clerk to Judge Prentice H. Marshall and later to U.S. Supreme Court Justice William J. Brennan, Jr. Judge Mikva also was an appellate attorney for the City of Chicago Law Department, as well as in private practice.

Justice Mikva is a highly respected jurist who is considered to have very good legal ability. She is praised for her ability to analyze and understand complex legal issues. She is respectful to those appearing before her and her written opinions are considered thoughtful and well-reasoned. The Council finds her Well Qualified for retention.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Patrick T. Murphy** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1965. He was elected to the bench in 2004 and is currently assigned to the Child Protection Division. From 1978 to 2004, Judge Murphy worked as Cook County Public Guardian, supervising a large staff and representing children as well as acting as guardian to disabled adults. He was elected to the bench in 2004.

Judge Murphy is reported to be exceptionally knowledgeable about abuse and neglect law. He is reported to be always prepared and to issue legal opinions which are thorough and well-reasoned. He is well respected for trying to find ways to return a child to the family with safeguards. He is reported to be courteous and respectful to all litigants. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Leonard Murray** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1974. He was elected to the Circuit Court in 2016 and currently serves as Acting Supervising Judge in the Housing Section of the First Municipal Department. Prior to his election, he had served as an Associate Judge since 2007. Previously, he was in private practice, first with a large accounting firm and then, from 1980 to 2007, as a solo practitioner with a varied practice, focused primarily in litigation.

Lawyers say Judge Murray is smart and knowledgeable. Some respondents complain that he is

slow to start his call, but he is generally praised for his impartiality and ability to manage his courtroom. He understands the issues and reportedly does a good job of applying the facts to the law and having decisions that are fair to all parties. The Council finds him Qualified for retention.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Brendan Alan O'Brien** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1996. He was elected to the Circuit Court in 2016 and is currently assigned to the Law Division, where he presides over jury trials. Before becoming a judge, he was a litigator handling insurance defense and medical malpractice cases. From 1999 to 2016 he was a Partner in the firm of Hinshaw & Culbertson, and between 1996 and 1999 was an Attorney with Connelly and Schroeder.

Judge O'Brien is considered to have good legal ability. He is a well-respected jurist who is exceptionally knowledgeable. He is praised for his temperament. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Kevin M. O'Donnell** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1988. He was elected to the Circuit Court in 2016 and is currently assigned to the Third Municipal Department. Prior to becoming a judge, he had been a sole practitioner for most of his career, although he practiced with small firms for several years early in his career. His practice concentrated on estate planning, probate, litigation, corporate work, and real estate matters.

Judge O'Donnell is considered to have good legal ability and is praised for his judicial temperament. He is always well prepared and is also praised for his thoughtful and well-reasoned opinions. He is known for his effective courtroom management. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Susana L. Ortiz** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 2001. She was elected to the Circuit Court in 2016 and is currently assigned to the Pretrial Division. Prior to becoming a judge, she was a staff attorney handling criminal defense litigation in the Law Offices of the Chicago-Kent College of Law and had also worked as an Associate in the Law Offices of Raul Villalobos.

Judge Susana Ortiz is reported to have very good legal knowledge and ability. She had substantial litigation experience in complex matters before becoming a judge and is praised for her courtroom management skills. She is active in community activities around diversity, equality, and inclusion. She is reported to have a good judicial temperament. She was especially praised for her impartiality and temperament in her previous assignment presiding over domestic violence cases. In general, Judge Ortiz is a well-respected jurist. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Qualified

The Hon. **Jesse Outlaw** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1980. He was elected to the Circuit Court in 2016 and is currently assigned to the Probate Division. Before becoming a judge he was for four years an Associate with the Stuttley Group, where he represented legislators, park district boards and school board. In addition, he had been a solo practitioner for 33 years, representing clients in real estate, divorce, probate and bankruptcy matters. He was also appointed by judges in the Probate Division to act as guardian ad litem for adult disabled people.

Judge Outlaw is considered to be highly knowledgeable of probate law and is praised particularly for his willingness to hold fiduciaries accountable. He is reported to demonstrate his ability to make decisions that are both timely and fair to all parties. He is also praised for being well prepared and for being respectful of all parties. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Not Recommended

The Hon. **Daniel James Pierce** did not participate in the evaluation process. The Council finds her Not Recommended for retention to the Circuit Court.

Qualified

The Hon. **Patrick Joseph Powers** was admitted to practice in 1987. He had been a sole practitioner throughout his career focusing on domestic relations, as well as real estate and contract litigation.

Judge Powers is considered to have good legal ability and is exceptionally knowledgeable about family law. He is a well-respected jurist who rules in a timely manner and is considered impartial in his rulings. He is reported to always to be prepared and is respectful of those who appear before him. He is praised for being decisive and for explaining his decisions to the litigants. The Council finds him Qualified for retention.

Qualified

The Hon. **Marguerite Anne Quinn** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1986. She was appointed as an Associate Judge in 2007 and elected to the Circuit Court in 2016. She is currently assigned to the Law Division, where she presides over jury trials. From 1999 to 2007, she was in private practice focusing on real estate taxation. From 1986 to 1998, she served as an Assistant Cook County State's Attorney.

Judge Quinn is considered to have good legal ability and is praised for the rapport she establishes with juries. She is reported to be impartial and respectful to those who appear before her. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Qualified

The Hon. **Sandra G. Ramos** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1986. She was elected to the bench in 2016 and currently is assigned to the Law Division, where she presides over jury trials.

She began her career as an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney and then worked as a sole practitioner focusing on criminal defense cases.

Judge Ramos is considered to have good legal ability and is praised for her courtroom management skills. She is reported to have a good temperament and is respectful to all parties. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Qualified

The Hon. **Eve Marie Reilly** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1997. She was appointed to the Circuit Court by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2014 and is currently assigned to the Chancery Division. She was a career Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney, having extensive litigation and appellate experience.

Judge Reilly is considered to have good legal ability and is praised for being prepared and for being willing to do her own research to understand all issues. She is reported to have a good temperament, and is praised generally, as being a solid jurist. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Qualified

The Hon. **Jesse G. Reyes** was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1984. Since 2012, he has served as a Justice of the Illinois Appellate Court, First District, Fourth Division. Previously he was a Cook County Circuit Judge, where his assignments included the Chancery Division’s Mortgage Foreclosure/Mechanics Lien Section (2005-2012); the Chancery Division, County Department and the First Municipal District, Municipal Department (2002-2005); the First Municipal District, First District (2001-2005, 1997-1999); and the Sixth Municipal District (Markham; 1999-2001). Judge Reyes has good legal ability and has had substantial experience both as a trial judge and as an Appellate Court Justice. He is reported to be well prepared at oral argument and his opinions are reported to be well written and well-reasoned. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Appellate Court.

Qualified

The Hon. **James J. Ryan** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1992 and was elected to the bench in 2004. He is currently hearing jury trials in the First Municipal District. Before taking the bench, Judge Ryan was an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney from 1993 to 1995 and was the Director of Operations and General Counsel for the Cook County Sheriff’s Office from 1995 to 2004.

Judge Ryan is considered to have good legal ability. He is reported to be a solid jurist, who is well prepared and who has a good judicial temperament. He is reported to be impartial in his rulings. A few lawyers say he pushes cases along too quickly but most respondents say he has good courtroom management skills.

Qualified

The Hon. **Catherine Schneider** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1994. She was elected to the Circuit Court in 2016 and is currently assigned to the Law Division, Motion Section. Before becoming a judge, she was the Supervising Attorney for CARPLS, a position she had held since 2008. As such, she provided legal assistance to lower income people in the areas of evictions, debt collections, and foreclosures. In addition, she worked as an attorney at the Law Offices of Deborah Ashen and as a civil litigation attorney for 21 years.

Judge Schneider is considered to have good legal ability and to be well prepared. She is reported to rule in a timely fashion and her opinions are thoughtful and well-reasoned. She is especially praised for her temperament and impartiality in the courtroom. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Qualified

The Hon. **James G. Fitzgerald Smith** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1975. He currently serves as a Justice on the Illinois Appellate Court, where he was elected in 2002. He is the presiding justice of the Second Division. Previously he was appointed to the Circuit Court of Cook County in 1989 and elected in 1994. Prior to becoming a judge, James Smith as an Assistant Corporation Counsel of Chicago and City Attorney and City Prosecutor of Des Plaines.

Justice Smith is widely praised for his legal ability and enjoys a reputation of having an excellent grasp of the issues coming before him. He is praised for his integrity and for treating all parties before him with respect. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Appellate Court.

Qualified

The Hon. **Patricia Susan Spratt** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1991. She was appointed by the Illinois Supreme Court to the Circuit Court in 2015 and was elected to the bench in 2016. She is currently assigned to the Mortgage Foreclosure/Mechanics Lien Section of the Chancery Division. She has also presided over the Restorative Justice Community Court. Before becoming a judge she was a Partner at Shefsky & Froelich, where she handled both trial and appellate work. From 1992 to 1995 she was an associate at a small firm where she focused on civil litigation involving securities issues.

Judge Spratt is considered to have good legal ability with excellent demeanor. She is reported to be thorough and well prepared.as a judge doing mortgage foreclosures As a judge tin a community court, she is praised for the rapport for those in the courtroom. She understands and implements the concepts of restorative justice. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

Qualified

The Hon. **Susan Kennedy Sullivan** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1994..She was elected to the bench in 2010 and has been assigned to the Probate Division since 2018, where she presides over cases involving disabled person estates. Before becoming a judge, she was a sole practitioner specializing in probate and estate planning matters. Judge Sullivan has taught Elder

Law at DePaul University College of Law since 1998.

Judge Susan Kennedy Sullivan is considered to have good legal ability and to have a low keel, patient temperament. She is knowledgeable about the law in her current assignment. She is praised for showing empathy toward litigants and her rulings have been described as “thoughtful”. The Council finds her Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Qualified

The Hon. **William B. Sullivan** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1992. He was appointed by the Illinois Supreme Court to the Circuit Court in 2015 and was subsequently elected to the bench in 2016. He is currently assigned to the Mortgage Foreclosure / Mechanics Lien Section of the Chancery Division. Prior to becoming a judge, he spent his career as a sole practitioner working on various civil legal issues including, but not limited to, commercial and real estate litigation and transactions.

Judge Sullivan is considered to have good legal ability. He is praised for his temperament and for his courtroom management. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

#### Highly Qualified

The Hon. **Mary Jane Theis** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1974. Since 2010, she has served as an Illinois Supreme Court Justice. Previously, she served as a Justice on the Illinois Appellate Court (appointed, 1993; elected, 1994), as a Circuit Court Judge (elected, 1988), and as an Associate Judge (appointed, 1983). Before joining the bench she served as an Assistant Cook County Public Defender. Justice Theis has taught at Loyola University of Chicago School of Law, Northwestern University School of Law, and John Marshall Law School. She was the author of “Recent amendment to Supreme Court Rule 304(b) and its impact on family law cases,” and Editor in Chief of “The Benchbook Project.”

Justice Theis is often described as an outstanding jurist. She reportedly always knows the cases she is hearing, and participates actively in oral arguments. Her questions are often described as thoughtful. She is knowledgeable about both criminal and civil law. She often participates in Access to Justice initiatives. She treats fairly all those who appear before her, and she is praised for issuing timely and thorough decisions. She is also praised for her integrity. The Council finds her Highly Qualified for retention

#### Qualified

The Hon. **Thaddeus L. Wilson** was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1994. He was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2007 and elected as a Circuit Court Judge in 2010. Currently, he is assigned to the Chancery Division. Prior to becoming a judge he had substantial trial experience in both civil and criminal law matters and practiced in both the state and federal courts. Judge Wilson is an adjunct professor at the John Marshall Law School

teaching Criminal Procedure- Adjudication and Voting Rights and Election Law.

Judge Wilson is praised for his legal ability and extensive legal knowledge. He is also praised for his application of technology to the hearing process during the Pandemic. He is reportedly impartial in his rulings. He is reportedly focused on moving cases ahead equitably. He is punctual with a patient and respectful demeanor. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

### **Illinois Appellate Court First District Vacancies**

#### **Illinois Appellate Court – Hall Vacancy**

##### **Hon. Debra B. Walker -- Well Qualified**

**The Hon. Debra B. Walker** was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1987. She was elected to the Circuit Court in 2008 and is currently assigned to the Domestic Relations Division. Prior to becoming a judge, Hon. Debra B. Walker was a partner at the firm Clausen Miller PC, litigating professional liability cases from 1996 until 2008. After working as an associate at Williams & Montgomery for 6 years, Judge Walker was a Senior Associate at Brydges, Riseborough, Peterson, Franke and Morris from 1993 to 1996.

Judge Walker is considered to have good legal ability as a trial judge. She is praised for her ability to handle the sometimes complex financial issues which come before her, and she is reported to have good court management skills. She is considered to have a good temperament and is always prepared. Her opinions are reported to be well reasoned, thorough, and issued in a timely manner. The Council finds her Well Qualified for the Appellate Court.

#### **Illinois Appellate Court – Harris Vacancy**

##### **Hon. Raymond W. Mitchell --Well Qualified**

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

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

### **Circuit Court of Cook County Countywide Vacancies**

#### **Circuit Court – Countywide – Brennan Vacancy**

### **Lisa Taylor – Qualified**

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

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

### **Circuit Court – Countywide – Callahan Jr. Vacancy**

#### **Hon. Tracie R. Porter – Qualified**

**The Hon. Tracie R. Porter** was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1994. She was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2021. As a lawyer, she was a Solo Practitioner with a focus on general business law, real estate, estate planning, probate, and entertainment law and a professor of law at the Abraham Lincoln School of Law and Western State College of Law. Previously, she taught law classes at the St. Louis University School of Law (2010), Southern Illinois University (2009-2012), IIT Chicago-Kent College of Law (2004-2009), and the UIC Law School (2004-2006). She handled real estate matters as a Senior Real Estate Associate at Brown Udell & Pomerantz, Ltd. (2003-2004) and as a Commercial Real Estate/Corporate Associate at Barnes & Thornburg (2000-2003). In addition, she was a Labor Litigation Attorney at the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of the Solicitor (1994-1998).

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

### **Circuit Court – Countywide – Cannon Vacancy**

#### **Hon. Diana E. Lopez – Qualified**

**The Hon. Diana E. Lopez** was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2001. She was elected by the Circuit Court to be an Associate Judge in 2021. Before becoming a judge, she was

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

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

### **Circuit Court – Countywide – Hyman Vacancy**

#### **Thomas Edward Nowinski -- Qualified**

Thomas Edward Nowinski was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2004. He is currently Chief of Staff for Cook County Circuit Court Clerk, Iris Martinez. He has worked for the Cook County State's Attorney Office, where he was the deputy supervisor of the Torts and Litigation Civil Rights Litigation Unit of the Civil Actions Bureau. He previously served as deputy director of labor relations in the Office of the President of the Cook County Board of Commissioners (2012-2014); and as an Assistant State's Attorney in the Civil Actions Bureau (2008-2012) and the Criminal Prosecutions Bureau (2004-2008) of the Cook County State's Attorney Office.

Mr. Nowinski is a well-regarded attorney who is reported to have good legal ability. He has substantial litigation experience in a variety of areas including civil rights, torts, wrongful death, and class action matters. He is reported to have good trial skills and a good temperament. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

### **Circuit Court – Countywide- Ingram Vacancy**

#### **Elizabeth “Beth” Ryan -- Qualified**

**Elizabeth Ryan** was admitted to practice in 2004 and concentrates her practice on civil

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

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

### **Circuit Court – Countywide – Leeming Vacancy**

#### **Hon. Rena Van Tine – Well Qualified**

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

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

### **Circuit Court – Countywide – Lynch Vacancy**

#### **Michael Weaver -- Qualified**

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

### **Circuit Court – Countywide- McGury Vacancy**

#### **Hon. Ruth Isabel Gudino -- Qualified**

**The Hon. Ruth Isabel Gudino** was admitted to practice in Illinois in 1995. She was

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

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

### **Circuit Court – Countywide- O'Brien Vacancy**

#### **Hon. Araceli R. De La Cruz – Qualified**

**The Hon. Araceli Reyes De La Cruz** was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2001. She was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in January 2022. Before becoming a judge, she had been the General Counsel/Chief Administrative Officer for Arcero Schools, a larger Chicago charter school network. There, she handled a variety of matters, including student law, labor and employment, and corporate transactions. Previously, she was Chief of General Prosecutions at the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulations (2014-2016); Deputy Chief of Staff (2009-2011) and Chief Safety and Security Officer (2011-2014) of the Chicago Transit Authority; and an Assistant State's Attorney at the Cook County State's Attorney Office (2001-2009). As a lawyer, Judge De La Cruz was considered to have very good legal ability with substantial litigation experience in both civil and criminal law matters. She is reported to be always prepared and is praised for her litigation skills. Her career has included a variety of legal areas, and she has demonstrated that she is adept at learning new law and applying that law to a variety of approaches. She is reported to have an excellent temperament – respectful while being a zealous advocate. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

### **Circuit Court – Countywide – Sullivan Vacancy**

#### **Hon. Thomas More Donnelly -- Well Qualified**

**The Hon. Thomas M. Donnelly** was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1986. He was elected as an Associate Judge in 2003 and was promoted to Circuit Judge by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2021. He is currently assigned to the Commercial Calendar Section of the Law Division. His previous judicial assignments include Traffic Court (2003), the Domestic Violence Trial Courtroom (2003), the Supplementary Proceedings and Miscellaneous Remedies Call for the First Municipal District (2003-2008), Misdemeanor

Jury Call in the First Municipal District (2008-2009), and Civil Jury Trials in the First Municipal District (2009-2017). Prior to becoming a judge, he was an Assistant Public Defender (1988-2000). Judge Donnelly has served on the Illinois Judicial Ethics Committee for nearly 30 years and has chaired the legal ethics committees of both the Chicago Bar Association and the Illinois State Bar Association. He currently serves on the faculty of the National Judicial College.

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

### **Circuit Court of Cook County Subcircuit Vacancies**

#### **Circuit Court – First Subcircuit – Johnson Vacancy**

##### **Maria M. Barlow – Not Recommended**

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

#### **Circuit Court – Fourth Subcircuit – Gavin Vacancy**

##### **Nicholas A. Kantas – Qualified**

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

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

#### **Circuit Court – Fourth Subcircuit – Rogers Vacancy**

##### **Shawn TeMiaundra Raines-Welch – Qualified**

**ShawnTe Miaundra Raines-Welch** was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2009. Since

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

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

### **Circuit Court – Fifth Subcircuit – Portman-Brown Vacancy**

#### **Hon. David Lewis Kelly – Qualified**

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

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

### **Circuit Court – Fifth Subcircuit – Shelley Vacancy**

#### **Timothy W. Wright -- Qualified**

**Timothy W. Wright** was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1984. Since 2011, he has been a Partner at Quintairos, Prieto, Wood & Boyer, where he practices in the areas of

transactional law, government affairs, public finance, and litigation. Previously, he was a Managing Partner at Gonzalez, Saggio and Harlan (2007-2011); Partner at Burris, Wright, Slaughter & Tom (2004-2007); General Counsel for WJYS, Tinley Park (1999-2003); Associate at Sachnoff and Weaver (1989-1993); Attorney for Business and Professional People for the Public Interest; and Judicial Clerk for Judge James Parsons, Northern District of Illinois (1983-1985).

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

### **Circuit Court – Sixth Subcircuit – Araujo Vacancy**

#### **Hon. Charles S. Beach -- Qualified**

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

### **Circuit Court- Sixth Subcircuit – Vega Vacancy**

#### **Hon. Kerrie Maloney Laytin -- Qualified**

**The Hon. Kerrie Maloney Laytin** was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2000. She was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2019 and now serves as an Associate Judge, elected by the Circuit Judges. Before becoming a judge, she served as an assistant corporation counsel for the City of Chicago's Department of Law, where she practiced appellate law on behalf of the City of Chicago, City employees, and City agencies. Previously, she worked as a staff attorney at the Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago (2000-2002), and volunteered for Columbia Law School, Social Justice Initiatives, as the regional adviser in Chicago for students involved in government and public interest careers.

Judge Laytin is considered to have very good legal ability. As a lawyer, she was praised for legal skills and for her professional demeanor, even in the midst of heated legal matters. She is reported to have good judgment and has the ability to resolve contested

disputes. Her appellate career has demonstrated the analytical thinking and management skills necessary to be a good Circuit Judge. She has been praised in her role as a judge. The Council finds her Qualified for the Circuit Court.

### **Circuit Court – Seventh Subcircuit – Martin Vacancy**

#### **Marcia O’Brien Conway – Well Qualified**

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

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

### **Circuit Court – Eighth Subcircuit – Gordon Vacancy**

#### **Bradley R. Trowbridge -- Qualified**

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

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

### **Circuit Court – Eighth Subcircuit – Lipscomb Vacancy**

#### **Stephen Andrew Swedlow – Well Qualified**

**Stephen Andrew Swedlow** was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1996. Since 2011, he has

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

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

### **Circuit Court – Ninth Subcircuit – Bernstein Vacancy**

#### **Hon. Sanjay T. Tailor – Well Qualified**

**The Hon. Sanjay T. Tailor** was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1991. He was appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2021, after serving as an Associate Judge between 2003 and 2021. He is currently Presiding Judge of the County Division, where he hears cases concerning mental health, election, adoption, civil asset forfeiture, property tax, name change, and other civil matters. Previously, he was assigned to the Chancery Division (2015-2020), the Law Division (2009-2015), the Domestic Relations Division (2006-2009), and the First Municipal Division (2003-2006). From 1996 to 2003, he was an Assistant State's Attorney in the Civil Actions Bureau of the Cook County State's Attorney Office. He was also in-house counsel in the Law Department of the First National Bank of Chicago (1994-1995) and an Associate in the Special Litigation, Bankruptcy, and Workout Group at Chapman and Cutler (1991-1994). He is a member of numerous bar associations, including the American Bar Association, the Illinois State Bar Association, and the South Asian Bar Association of Chicago (founding member, advisory council).

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

### **Circuit Court – Ninth Subcircuit – Jacobius Vacancy**

#### **Barry Goldberg -- Qualified**

**Barry Goldberg** was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1999. He is a member of several bar associations including the Decalogue Society of Lawyers, where he served as President (2009-2010). He has spent his career at the Charitable Trust Bureau of the Illinois Office

of the Attorney General, where he has served as Bureau Chief (2019-present), Deputy Bureau Chief (2018-2019), Assistant Bureau Chief (2006-2017), and Assistant Attorney General (1999-2006).

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

### **Circuit Court – Eleventh Subcircuit – McGuire Vacancy**

#### **Aileen Bhandari – Qualified**

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

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

### **Circuit Court – Thirteenth Subcircuit – Groebner Vacancy**

#### **(R) Gary W. Seyring -- Qualified**

**Gary W. Seyring** was admitted to practice in 1978. He is also a Certified Public Accountant. He is a solo practitioner focusing on domestic relations, real estate, estate planning, tax planning, and business law. A substantial percentage of Mr. Seyring's practice involves litigation. He is considered to have good legal ability and temperament. The Council finds him Qualified for the Circuit Court.

#### **(D) Joe Gump -- Qualified**

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

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

### **Circuit Court – Fourteenth Subcircuit – Brown Vacancy**

#### **Iris Y. Chavira – Not Recommended**

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

### **Circuit Court – Fourteenth Subcircuit – Jagielski Vacancy**

#### **Viviana Martinez – Qualified**

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

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

### **Circuit Court – Fifteenth Subcircuit – Lawler Vacancy**

#### **Bernadette Barrett -- Qualified**

**Bernadette Barrett** was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1991. As a Solo Practitioner at Bernadette Garrison Barrett, P.C (2019-present) and as an Attorney at Barrett & Sramek (1991-2018), where has concentrated primarily in domestic relations, civil litigation, corporate law, and personal injury cases. She has also worked as an Attorney at Carpls (1998-1999) and since 2018 has been a Board Member and Attorney for Rise from the Ashes, where she provides pro bono legal services to victims of domestic violence. She is a member in good standing of several bar associations, including the Southwest Bar Association, where she is a Past President.

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

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