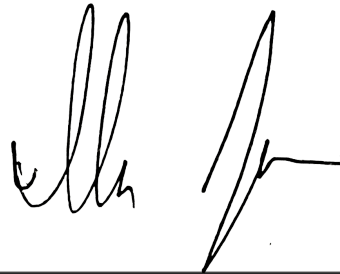


**ALLEGHENY COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION**

**JUDICIAL CANDIDATE PLEDGE**

I, Ilan Zur, a candidate for judicial office, have familiarized myself with the Code of Judicial Conduct and the Code of Civility, as promulgated by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. I have directed special attention to Canon 4 of the Code of Judicial Conduct, including Rules 4.1, 4.2 and 4.4. I agree to conduct my judicial campaign consistent therewith and further consistent with *Republican Party v. White*, 536 U.S. 765 (2002). I further pledge that all campaign advertising will be done fairly, accurately, truthfully, and will maintain the dignity appropriate to the judicial office which I am seeking.



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Signature of Candidate

12/02/2024

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Date

ALLEGHENY COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND AUTHORIZATION

As a candidate or potential candidate for Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas the Pennsylvania Appellate or Federal Courts, I hereby acknowledge and authorize the procedures of the Allegheny County Bar Association Judiciary Committee, including the following:

1. If I become a candidate, the Allegheny County Bar Association Judiciary Committee will make available to the public the Questionnaire, and my responses, except for the questions and responses which are acknowledged to be confidential, which information shall remain available only to the Committee.
2. My responses are provided without breaching client confidentiality as embodied in Rule 1.6 of the Rules of Professional Conduct.
3. If I become a candidate, the rating assigned to me by the Committee will be publicly announced. Ratings remain valid for 2 years but are subject to reevaluation upon request.
4. Should I receive a *Not Recommended* rating the Committee will endeavor to notify me prior to a public announcement. If I withdraw from the race, the rating will not be announced, and the questionnaires will not be published.
5. I hereby authorize the Pennsylvania Judicial Conduct Board, the Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, and the Pennsylvania Board of Law Examiners to transmit my entire file and record, including confidential information contained therein, to the Allegheny County Bar Association Judiciary Committee. I hereby specifically waive any confidentiality rights I may have in those records.
6. I hereby authorize the Judicial Conduct Board, the Disciplinary Board, and the Board of Law Examiners, or the equivalent, in any jurisdiction where I have practiced, been admitted to practice or have applied to either take a bar examination or for admission to the bar to transmit my entire file and record, including confidential information contained therein, to the Allegheny County Bar Association Judiciary Committee. I hereby specifically waive any confidentiality rights I may have in those records.
7. The Allegheny County Bar Association Judiciary Committee may change, during the course of my campaign for office, the original rating assigned to me for cause.

12/02/2024  
Date

Ilan Zur  
Type or print name  
  
Signature

**ACBA JUDICIARY COMMITTEE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LAWYER APPLICANTS**

I am seeking a rating for the following court:

- Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas
- Pennsylvania Commonwealth Court
- Pennsylvania Superior Court
- Pennsylvania Supreme Court

1. State your full name and list any other name by which you have ever been known.

**Ilan Zur**

2. Date and place of birth.

**September 17, 1972. New York, NY**

3. Are you a naturalized citizen? If so, give date and place of naturalization.

**No.**

4. Family status:

- a) Are you married? If so, state the date of marriage and your spouse's full name, including maiden name, if applicable.

**Yes.**

Date of marriage: **May 19, 2012**

Spouse's full name: **Lisa Marie Guizzetti**

- b) Have you been divorced? **Yes.** If so, state the date, the number of the case and the court.

**Date: July 10, 2008. Case #: FD08-07351. Court: Court of Common Pleas, Family Division.**

5. Have you served in the military? If so,

**No.**

- a) Give dates, branch of service, rank of rate and present status;
  
- b) Have you ever been rejected or released from the armed services for reasons other than honorable? **No**. If so, give details.

6. List each college and law school you attended, including dates of attendance, any scholastic honors, and the degrees awarded. If you left any institution without receiving a degree, state the reason for leaving.

**Carnegie Mellon University August 1990 – May 1994**

Bachelor of Science in Industrial Management, Minor in architecture

**University of Pittsburgh School of Law August 1995 – May 1998**

Juris Doctorate

7. List all jurisdictions in which you have applied to take a bar examination, have applied for admission or have been admitted to practice. Include dates of admissions and if not admitted, give application dates and explain the outcome.

**Commonwealth of Pennsylvania** – admitted October 1998

**U.S. District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania** – admitted October 1998.

8. List your professional mailing address and telephone number including the name of any associated law firm. Please also list any personal and professional social media usernames and/or handles and any websites you maintain or to which you know that your profile is shared.

**Office of the District Attorney**

**Room 401 Courthouse**

**436 Grant Street Pittsburgh, PA 15219**

**412-350-5109**

<https://www.facebook.com/ilan.zur.39>

<https://www.facebook.com/Zur4Judge/>

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/ilan-zur-0b096163/>

9. Describe chronologically your law practice and experience after your graduation from law school, including:
  - a) Whether you served as clerk to a judge and, if so, the name of the judge, the court, and the dates of the period you were a clerk; **N/A**
  - b) Whether you practiced alone and, if so, the addresses and the dates. **N/A**
  - c) The dates, names and addresses of law firms or offices, companies or governmental agencies with which you have been connected and the nature of your connection with each; and,

**1) Allegheny County Public Defender**

542 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15219 Legal intern, Appellate Division, May 1996 - August 1996

I was responsible for conducting legal research and writing appellate briefs.

**2) Seewald, Swartz & Associates**

429 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pa 15219

Legal intern, May 1998 -October 1998

This was a personal injury law firm for which I was primarily responsible for drafting demand letters and conducting legal research.

**3) Allegheny County District Attorney's Office**

436 Grant Street, Pittsburgh, Pa 15219

Assistant District Attorney, October 1998 – May 2013

Deputy District Attorney, May 2013 - present

d) Any other relevant particulars.

10. Regarding your practice:

- a) What has been the general character of your practice, dividing it into periods with dates if its character has changed over the years?

**The general character of my practice has been criminal prosecution. Over the course of my 26 year career in the Allegheny County District Attorney's Office I have prosecuted a wide range of criminal offenses. Below is a breakdown by year outlining the types of cases I handled and my general responsibilities within the office.**

- a. **1998 - 1999 – Pretrial screening unit.** Drafted criminal information.
  - b. **1999 - 2003 – General trial unit.** This is the office's entry level trial unit where I handled a variety of misdemeanor and felony cases to include burglary, DUI, and theft related offenses.
  - c. **2003 - 2004 –Narcotics unit.** Prosecuted felony drug offenses.
  - d. **2004 - 2009 - Violent crimes and firearms (VCF) unit.** Prosecuted individuals for crimes committed with the use of a firearm such as criminal attempted homicide, aggravated assault, and robbery.
  - e. **2009 - 2013 – Homicide unit.** Prosecuted individuals charged with the crime of homicide.
  - f. **2013- Present – Deputy District Attorney.** In 2013 I was promoted to Deputy District Attorney of the VCF and Narcotics units. As the deputy of this unit my primary responsibility is to provide advice and guidance to the 11 assistant district attorneys that I supervise. In addition to my supervisory duties, I also maintain a trial calendar.
- b) Describe your typical clients and mention the areas in which you have concentrated your practice.

**I represent the Commonwealth and citizens of Allegheny County. The area in which I have concentrated my practice is criminal prosecution, most prominently the prosecution of individuals who have committed the crime of homicide.**

11. Regarding the last ten years:

- a) Did you appear in court regularly, occasionally, or not at all? If the frequency of your appearances in court has varied during this period, describe each such variance, giving the dates thereof;

**Regularly**

b) What percentage of these appearances was in:

1. Federal courts: **0**
2. State courts of record: **100%**
3. Other courts: **0**

c) What percentage of your litigation was:

1. Civil: **0**
2. Criminal: **100**
3. Family: **0**
4. Orphans' Division: **0**



- d) State the number of cases in courts of record you tried to verdict or judgment (rather than settled), indicating whether you were sole counsel, chief counsel or associate counsel.

**With respect to the last ten years, I have tried 10 cases to verdict. I was sole counsel on 5 cases and chief counsel on 5.**

- e) What percentage of these trials were:

1. Jury: **90%**

2. Non-jury: **10%**

12. Summarize your experience in court the last ten years, indicating:

- a) Whether your appearances in court were more or less frequent;

**My appearances in court the last ten years were less frequent. From 1999 to 2009, as an assistant district attorney in the General Trial Unit, Narcotics unit, and VCF unit I appeared in court on nearly a daily basis. As a member of the homicide unit, my court appearances were less frequent as my trial calendar was reduced to approximately 20 cases due to the complexity of the cases. When I was promoted to deputy of the VCF and Narcotics units in 2013 my responsibilities became primarily managerial in nature. Currently, I carry an average of 10 cases on my trial calendar.**

- b) Any significant changes in the percentages stated in your answers to question 11(b), (c) and (e); and,

**There have not been any significant changes.**

- c) Any significant changes in the number of cases per year in courts of record you tried to verdict or judgment (rather than settled), as sole counsel, chief counsel or associate counsel.

**There was a significant change in the number of cases I tried to verdict after being promoted to deputy in 2013. From 1999 and 2013 I tried approximately 400 cases to verdict of which I was sole counsel on each. From 2014 to 2024 I**

**tried 10 cases to verdict of which I was sole counsel on 5 and chief counsel on 5. (As a supervisor, I began taking on second seats as a method of teaching the attorneys I supervise.)**

13. Describe five of the most significant litigated matters which you personally handled (give the citations if the cases were reported and docket numbers if unreported) by providing a capsule summary of each case and a succinct statement of what you believe to be the particular significance of the case; the party or parties whom you represented; the name of the Court, Judge and contact information if known of counsel for any other party; your role in the litigation; and the final disposition.

**1: Commonwealth v. Charles Cabiness**

**CP-02-CR-0016743-2009**

A) **Trial dates:** October 14, 2011 – October 21, 2011.

B) **Court and Judge:** This case was tried before the Honorable Edward J. Borkowski in the Court of Common Pleas.

C) **Defense Counsel:** James A. Wymard 220 Grant Street Pittsburgh, PA 15219 412-281-6963

On May 14, 2009, Luzay Watson shot and killed Davon Young. Two months later, in August 2009, Monnica Gay (Young's sister) testified for the Commonwealth at Watson's preliminary hearing, following which Watson was held for trial on the charge of criminal homicide for the murder of Davon Young.

After the preliminary hearing, Watson remained in the Allegheny County Jail where he made numerous phone calls to his girlfriend and brother Charles Cabiness. In these calls, Watson demanded that the witnesses against him be eliminated.

On August 22, 2009, at approximately 11:00 AM, Charles Cabiness shot Monnica Gay in the back of the head while she was outside of her sister Donneika's house, in the company of neighbors and her sister's young children.

The significance of this case to me, in addition to the general senseless loss of life, was twofold: First, it was an affront to the legal system in that Monnica Gay was a Commonwealth witness who was murdered solely for that reason. Second, a father's two children were murdered within a two-month period - Davon Young because he got into an argument with Luzay Watson and Monnica Gay because she testified in court.

I represented the Commonwealth in this matter as the sole trial attorney. I argued all preliminary motions, selected the jury, opened to the jury, conducted direct examination on all Commonwealth witnesses, of which there were approximately 35, cross examined the defense witnesses, and closed

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to the jury. In addition to calling lay witnesses to the stand, I also conducted the direct examination of experts in the fields of serology, ballistics, gunshot residue, and forensic pathology. The jury found Charles Cabiness guilty of 1st degree murder. (I also prosecuted Luzay Watson for the murder of Davon Young and he too was found guilty by a jury of 1st degree murder).

## **2: Commonwealth v. Marvin Hill**

### **CP-02-CR-0009072-2020**

A) **Trial dates:** October 17, 2023– October 31, 2023.

B) **Court and Judge:** This case was tried before the Honorable Susan Evashevic Dilucente in the Court of Common Pleas.

C) **Defense Counsel:** Elbert Gray 500 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15219 412-897-1163 and Carmen Robinson 500 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15219 412-897-1163

On August 24, 2020, at approximately 6:00 PM, Marvin Hill and Andre Crawford were involved in a shootout in the Three Rivers Manor Apartment Complex located in the Spring Hill neighborhood in the City of Pittsburgh. Hill fired multiple rounds at Crawford prompting Crawford to seek cover by running into one of the buildings in the complex. After Hill stopped shooting, Crawford began shooting from behind the door he was using as a shield. As Crawford was firing blindly from behind the door, one of Crawford's errant bullets penetrated a 2<sup>nd</sup> story window and hit a 1 year old child in the head, killing the child. Neither Hill nor Crawford could lawfully be in possession of a firearm. Crawford plead guilty to both voluntary manslaughter and carrying a firearm without a license and testified in the trial against Marvin Hill. While Hill did not fire the fatal shot that killed the child, the jury convicted Hill of voluntary manslaughter, under the legal theory of causation, as well as person not to possess a firearm.

I was the chief prosecuting attorney on this case. I selected one of the attorneys I supervise to assist me in the preparation and prosecution of this case. The second chair conducted the examination of the pathologist, the first responding officer, and the witness who collected the surveillance videos associated with the case. I argued all preliminary motions, picked the jury, opened to the jury, conducted direct on the majority of the Commonwealth witnesses (of which there were sixteen), cross examined the defendant, and closed to the jury.

Of significance to me in this case, aside from the tragic loss of life, is the ripple effect caused by gun violence. Because of this act, several families' lives are changed forever and there will be a lasting impact on the community at large. The victim's family has to endure the loss of such a young life.

Both Hill and Crawford will forever be defined by this moment and their families will also carry the burden of responsibility for these reckless actions. Friends and neighbors will continue to cope with the trauma of this act violence in their community. Many lives, aside from the ones lost and those incarcerated, are impacted by the permeation of gun violence in our communities and this case stands out as a strong example of that reality.

### **3: Commonwealth v. Daniel Russell**

#### **CP-02-CR-0006310-2017**

**A) Trial dates:** November 12, 2019 – November 21, 2019

**B) Court and Judge:** This case was tried before the Honorable David R. Cashman in the Court of Common Pleas.

**C) Defense Counsel:** T. Brent McCune 225 Ross Street, 4th Floor Pittsburgh, PA 15219, 412-261-4444

On February 21, 2017, at approximately 2:00 AM, Daniel Russell called for a Z-Trip cab for the purpose of robbing the driver. When the cab arrived, Russell, along with three of his friends, pulled the driver, Ramadhan Mohamed, out of the cab. Mohamed had no cash and posed no threat to the four assailants, yet they proceeded to beat him unconscious by kicking and punching him repeatedly. Russell was the main aggressor and repeatedly kicked Mohamed in the head even after he lost consciousness. In the 24 hours following the assault, Daniel Russell took to social media. He bragged about robbing a Z-Trip driver on Facebook and he also posted a video of himself and a friend hanging out, listening to music and occasionally dancing.

At trial, the neurologist testified that the injuries to Mohamed's head and brain were so severe that they could be compared to the trauma caused by hitting your head against a telephone pole at 30 miles per hour. Ultimately, Mr. Mohamed succumbed to the brain injuries and was pronounced deceased a few days later.

I was the chief prosecuting attorney on this case. Due to the voluminous nature of the case, in that approximately 40 Commonwealth witnesses testified, I had a second chair assist me by conducting the examination of the pathologist, neurologist, and DNA expert. I argued all preliminary motions, picked the jury, opened to the jury, conducted direct on the majority of the Commonwealth witnesses, and closed to the jury. The jury found Daniel Russell guilty of 2nd degree murder, robbery, and conspiracy to commit robbery.

Of significance to me in this case, as in all homicide cases, is the loss of life. Mr. Mohamed was a Somalian refugee who was providing for his wife and children with the money he earned from his job as a Z-Trip driver. The suffering he endured for no reason is horrifying and his death is a tragedy.

The loss of life in this case, however, extends to Daniel Russell as well in the sense that at age 20 he was sentenced to life in prison; and that is not lost on me. As I looked at him receiving his sentence I just felt sadness. Despite what Daniel Russell did, at that particular moment, I saw a vulnerable kid. I was left thinking about what happened to him in his childhood that got him to the point where he could be so angry and disconnected. It is crucial as a prosecutor to at least attempt to see the humanity in everyone. This perspective is not new to me but was reinforced through the course of this trial making it one of the more significant matters I have litigated.

#### **4: Commonwealth v. Erskine Smith**

##### **CP-02-CR-0017065-2005**

**A) Trial dates:** May 7, 2007 – May 11, 2007.

**B) Court and Judge:** This case was tried before the Honorable Donald E. Machen in the Court of Common Pleas.

**C) Defense Counsel:** Veronica Brestensky 429 Forbes Avenue, Suite 1204 Pittsburgh, PA 15219 412-719-3577

On November 9, 2005, Tracy Pollard returned home from work to find her son, Johnny Hutson, age 19, and his friend, Daniel Underwood, age 17, murdered. The evidence introduced at trial showed that prior to Ms. Pollard returning home, Erskine Smith was at the Pollard residence playing video games with the two victims and Marlin Sanders. At some point Hutson and Smith got into an argument over who had a nicer firearm. With the argument seemingly over they returned to playing video games. When it was Hutson's turn to play the game with Underwood, Smith shot Hutson in the head. Underwood got up to run and Smith shot him in the back of the head. Erskine Smith later gave a statement claiming self-defense.

I represented the Commonwealth in this matter as the sole trial attorney. I argued all preliminary motions, selected the jury, opened to the jury, conducted direct examination on all Commonwealth witnesses, of which there were approximately 20, cross examined the defense witnesses, and closed to the jury. In addition to calling lay witnesses to the stand, I also conducted the direct examination of experts in the fields of forensic pathology, serology, DNA comparison, and ballistics. The jury found Erskine Smith guilty of two counts of 1st degree murder.

I wanted to be an assistant district attorney because I wanted to help victims of crime. When I think back on this case what I remember most is the gratitude I received from the mother of Johnny Hutson. She seemed to be in disbelief that someone who had never met her son before could care so much about getting her a sense of justice. The significance of this case to me was being appreciated by the people who I strive to help.

#### **5: Commonwealth v. Rojanai Alston**

**CP-02-CR-0008021-2019**

D) **Preliminary Hearing date:** July 18, 2019.

E) **Court and Judge:** The preliminary hearing was heard before the Honorable Roxanne S. Eichler in Magisterial District 05-2-11.

F) **Defense Counsel:** Kenneth J. Haber 304 Ross Street, Suite 400 Pittsburgh, PA 15219 412-338-9990

Rojanai Alston was charged with criminal attempt homicide and aggravated assault for shooting Ericka Dennis in the North Versailles Walmart on July 5, 2019. The charges were held for court on July 18, 2019. I represented the Commonwealth at the preliminary hearing and Ken Haber represented Alston.

I did not select to discuss this case as a measure of my courtroom experience. The litigation was limited to the preliminary hearing in which I called only one witness before resting my case. I chose this case because it shows another side of what I do as a prosecutor.

After the preliminary hearing I spoke with defense counsel, Ken Haber. He provided me with additional background on the case. He explained that his client was being repeatedly harassed by Ms. Dennis and that on this particular day Ms. Dennis and another individual intentionally targeted his client at the Walmart and that his client acted in self-defense. He further offered to bring his client in to give a statement as to what happened.

Ms. Alston was 22 years old when this incident occurred. She had never been arrested before, had a valid license to carry a concealed firearm, and was employed. I do not take my responsibility as a prosecutor lightly and I realize the decisions I make can have lifetime consequences on people's lives. When Mr. Haber approached me, I listened. I asked the detectives to interview Ms. Alston and to further investigate the harassment claims.

After the follow up investigation I made the decision to withdraw the charges against Ms. Alston. I believe many prosecutors with less experience would have proceeded on the charges. It was a situation in which by the letter of the law an argument could have been made that Ms. Alston was not acting in self-defense. Based on my trial experience, however, I knew with certainty that Ms. Alston would be acquitted at trial. Furthermore, I believed that under this particular set of facts, the right thing to do was to withdraw the charges.

14. If a substantial period of your practice has been before administrative boards, commissions or agencies during the past ten years, identify the boards, commissions or agencies before which you have practiced and estimate percentages of practice time devoted thereto.

**N/A**

15. If a substantial portion of your practice has been before Appellate courts during the past ten years, identify the Appellate Courts before which you have practiced and estimate percentages of practice time devoted thereto.

**N/A**

16. Have you ever held judicial office? If so, give dates and details, including the court involved, whether elected or appointed, periods of services and a description of the jurisdiction of each of such courts with any limitations upon the jurisdiction of each court indicating the time(s) that you were the subject of a Motion or Petition for Recusal.

**No.**

17. Have you ever held public office other than judicial office? If so, give details, including the office, whether elected or appointed and the length of your service, giving details.

**No.**

18. Have you ever been an unsuccessful candidate for elective, judicial or other public office? If so, give details, including dates.

**Yes, I previously ran for Court of Common Pleas Judge in 2021.**

19. Have you ever been engaged in any occupation, business or profession other than the practice of law or the holding of judicial or other public office? If so, give details, including dates.

**No.**

20. Are you now an officer or director or otherwise engaged in the management of any business enterprise?

**No.**

- a) If so, give details, including the name of your enterprise, the nature of the business, the title or other description of your position, the nature of your duties and the term of your service.

b) Is it your intention to resign such positions and withdraw from any participation in the management of any such enterprises if you are elected and confirmed? If not, give reasons.

21. Are you under any ongoing federal, state or local investigation or indictment for possible violation of a criminal statute? If so, give details.

**No.**

22. Have you ever been charged or convicted of any violation of a local, state or federal law, any misdemeanor or felony, court martialled, been granted immunity from prosecution, been held in contempt of court or been the subject of a final protection from abuse order? If so, give details. Do not include summary traffic offenses.

**No.**

23. Has a tax lien or other collection procedure been instituted against you by federal, state or local authorities? If so, give details.

**No.**

24. Have you ever been sued by a client? If so, give details.

**No.**

25. Have you ever been a party to or otherwise involved in any other legal proceedings? If so, give the particulars. Do not list proceedings in which you were merely a guardian *ad litem* or stakeholder. Include all legal proceedings in which you were a party in interest, a material witness, were named as co-conspirator or a co-respondent and any grand jury investigation in which you figured as a subject or in which you appeared as a witness.

**No.**

26. Have you ever been disciplined or cited for a breach of ethics or unprofessional conduct by, or been the subject of a complaint to, any court, administrative agency, bar association, disciplinary committee or other professional group? If so, give the details.

**No.**

27. Currently or within the past five (5) years have you suffered from any medical or other



condition which could affect or impair your judgment, reliability or ability to perform the essential functions of the judicial position you are seeking? If so, describe.

**No.**

28. Do any circumstances exist that would affect your ability to perform the function of the position you seek or fulfill the term of office? If so, please explain.

**No.**

29. Furnish one (1) writing sample that reflects your analysis of a legal problem or issue.

I am submitting a writing sample from 2010. While I do have more recent samples, the sample I am submitting deals with a more complex and nuanced issue than the others. I feel that it is the best representation of my research, writing, and analytical skills.

30. List all bar associations and professional societies of which you are a member and give the titles and dates of any offices which you have held in such groups. Please also identify any leadership role you have held in such groups.

**I am a member of the Allegheny County Bar Association, as well as the Criminal Litigation Section.**

31. List your experiences in teaching and lecturing, including law school, continuing legal education and to non-legal audiences.

**1. Concealed Carry Seminar, Pittsburgh Technical College, 1111 McKee Road, Oakdale, PA 15071, August 20, 2016** This seminar was open to the public. I presented on the laws that pertain to carrying a concealed firearm in Allegheny County, reciprocity of firearm laws with other states, and the Castle Doctrine.

**2. Dorie Miller Gun Club, Haymaker Point Clubhouse, 100 Horizon Drive, Monroeville, PA 15146, October 20, 2018** I taught the members of this club the laws pertaining to carrying a concealed firearm as well as the laws that pertain to self-defense and the Castle Doctrine.

**3. Zone 6 Public Safety meeting, Sheraden Healthy Active Living Center, 720 Sherwood Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15204, March 26, 2019.** I lectured to community members regarding Self-defense/Castle Doctrine Laws.

**4. Clean Slate & Pardons Workshop, Rhonda D. Wright Family Center, 8350 Frankstown Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15221, January 16, 2020.** I presented to community members an

overview of the expungement laws as far as what crimes qualify for expungement and how to apply for an expungement.

**5. Mock Trial Competition, University of Pittsburgh School of Law**, 3900 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15260, November 15, 2020 I scored the participants of the competition regarding their opening statements, closing arguments, and direct and cross examinations, as well as provided each student with individualized critique and advice.

**6. Jury Selection Training, Allegheny County District Attorney's Office**, 436 Grant Street, Pittsburgh, Pa 15219. This is an ongoing training I conduct periodically to teach a new class of assistant district attorneys best practices for jury selection.

**7. Magisterial District Training, Allegheny County District Attorney's Office**, 436 Grant Street, Pittsburgh, Pa 15219. This is an ongoing training I conduct periodically to teach a new class of assistant district attorneys how to best handle preliminary hearings that involve charges related to gun violence and narcotics.

32. List all organizations other than bar associations, professional associations or societies of which you are or have been a member, including civic, charitable, religious, educational, social and fraternal organizations.

**I am a member of Rodef Shalom Synagogue.**

**I am a member of the Jewish Community Center.**

**I was a member of Delta Tau Delta Fraternity when I attended Carnegie Mellon University.**

33. List any honors, prizes, awards or other forms of recognition which you have received (including any indication of academic distinction in college or law school) other than those mentioned in answers to the foregoing questions.

**N/A**

34. State any other information which may reflect positively or adversely on you or which you believe should be disclosed.

**N/A**

35. Why do you wish to become a Justice or Judge? What strengths do you possess that would particularly well qualify you for such a position?

**I have been practicing in the Criminal Division of the Court of Common Pleas for 26**

years. I have spent thousands of hours in the courtroom and have litigated before approximately 50 different judges throughout my career. I have appeared before judges who have a profound understanding of the law and bring dignity, humanity, and honor to the bench- judges I respect and will strive to emulate from the bench. I have also practiced before judges that do not exemplify what we should demand from our judiciary - judges that are unnecessarily intolerant and disrespectful who lack objectivity and empathy.

What motivates me to seek this position is really what has motivated my entire career - a passion for justice, a commitment to protecting communities, and the desire to help people redirect the course of their lives when and where I can. This is not a job of convenience for me; I am not just throwing my name in the hat because there are numerous openings. I take the role of being a judge seriously. I am aware that the decisions a judge makes impact not only the individual and their families, but also communities as a whole. I have given the thought of running for judge great consideration and I do not enter this endeavor lightheartedly.

I believe I am well qualified to be a judge on the Court of Common Pleas. My trial experience in particular has helped me develop a thorough knowledge of the law, trial advocacy, and courtroom procedure. I have tried approximately 50 homicide cases to verdict and in doing so have gained significant perspective as I prepared intensely for each case.

Preparations which required me to visit crime scenes all across Allegheny County and interview in depth the witnesses, their family members, and others who live there. For better or worse, I have seen a lot and learned to keep an open mind and deeply consider the full context of people's lives when assessing a case. Saying you are open minded is easy. Being open minded takes perspective as well as the desire to understand other people's points of view.

As a prosecutor, I do not view every defendant as a bad person. I recognize that some people make terrible mistakes as opposed to being a career criminal. As a judge, I will have compassion. I will not only consider the crime when sentencing, but rather the individual and the context of their lived experiences. I will make an effort to understand why someone did what they did. I see prison as a last resort and will strive to sentence people with an eye towards rehabilitation and reintegration.

My cases as a prosecutor are never about me and my courtroom would never be about me either. It would be about the accused and the victims that come before me; the prosecutor and the defense attorney, as well as the personnel that make the courtroom function from sheriff, to law clerk, to intern. I will treat everyone who comes before me with respect and I will be mindful of people's time. I recognize that there will always be people who are smarter than me and more knowledgeable in certain subject matters. I will actively seek out their guidance, listen and learn. I admit when I am wrong and do

**not let my ego interfere with my judgment or treatment of people.**

**I am keenly aware of the impact the criminal justice system has on individuals, their families, and their futures. As a husband and father of three children, I know firsthand the commitment and importance of family and understand the responsibility that comes when sentencing individuals who will appear before me. I know that these are moments where families may be separated and lives are changed forever. That is why having a balanced approach, looking beyond the crime charges and into the background of the person is fundamental to making such critical decisions.**

**My two decades of experience working in the criminal justice system has taught me that there are usually two sides to every story. Everyone is capable of misrepresenting the truth, intentionally or unintentionally, from witnesses, to victims, and even police officers. I have learned to never prejudge a situation. I will always listen to both sides with an open mind before rendering a verdict or imposing a sentence. I take the presumption of innocence seriously. Every case is different and will stand on its own. I will not view the Commonwealth and defense as good or bad, simply as two sides.**

**As a judge I will be impartial, patient, and respectful to all. I have the legal acumen and experience to make difficult and, at times, unpopular decisions. I want to be a judge because I believe I can make a positive difference in people's lives. I want the chance to get to that kid before they get to the point of no return. Most of the homicide defendants I prosecuted had a criminal history that escalated to the point where they were then on trial for murder. Some people could be steered in other directions, and as a judge I would have the ability to do so. Incarceration is often not the answer. It should be reserved for the violent people we need to be protected from. I believe strongly in giving people another chance, where appropriate, and will take sentencing and bail reform seriously to ensure our criminal justice system is inclusive and just for all.**

36. What do you consider a significant achievement in your life outside your profession?

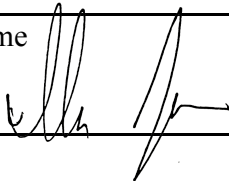
**The most significant achievement in my life above all else is becoming a father and raising my children. Alongside my wife Lisa, we work tirelessly to provide the love, guidance, and support necessary to give them enriching lives and foster their growth into society. I strive to create a nurturing environment where they feel safe to express themselves and explore their interests. By instilling values of kindness, resilience, and curiosity, I aim to empower them to become confident individuals with limitless potential. My children inspire me every day to make our community a better place. Watching them grow and thrive fills me with immense pride and joy, making fatherhood my greatest accomplishment.**

37. Please identify specific efforts you have made, or been involved with, to support equality and inclusion in the legal profession.

**As a member of the District Attorney's Office for the last 26 years I recognize the need for more diversity within the legal profession. As supervisor of the Violent Crimes and Narcotics Unit since 2013, I have taken diversity and inclusion seriously when considering internal promotions. Over the years the attorneys in my unit have been diverse in race, gender and age. However, the internal pool of applicants is often limited in diversity which ties into the wider need for more diversity in the legal profession.**

**I am encouraged by the ACBA's Diversity and Inclusion initiative to prioritize diversity and inclusion in the legal profession. In addition to supporting these initiatives, if elected to the bench, I will establish a robust year-long internship program and prioritize selecting women, people of color, and other members of minority communities including the LGBTQ+ community. I will take the role of mentoring legal interns seriously, just as I have done as a supervisor in the DA's Office.**

The undersigned certifies that the statements made in this questionnaire are true, complete and correct to the best of his/her knowledge and belief and are made in good faith.

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Signature

12/02/2024  
Date

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