

JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION  
PERSONAL DATA QUESTIONNAIRE



Court, Position, and Seat # for which you are applying: Thirteenth Judicial Circuit, Family Court, Seat 3

1. Name: Mrs. Kimaka Nichols-Graham

Name that you are known by if different from above  
(Example: A Nickname):

Are you currently serving in some capacity as a judge? No.  
(Includes Municipal, Magistrate, Etc.)

Home Address: [Redacted]

Business Address: 701 South Main Street  
Greenville, South Carolina 29601

E-Mail Address: [Redacted]

Telephone Number: (home): [Redacted]  
(office): (864) 679-3259

2. Date of Birth: [Redacted] 1972  
Place of Birth: Marion, South Carolina  
Social Security Number: [Redacted]

3. Are you a citizen of South Carolina? Yes.  
Have you been a resident of this state for at least the immediate past five years? Yes.

4. SCDL# or SCHD#: [Redacted]  
Voter Registration Number: [Redacted]

5. Family Status:  
Married. July 6, 2002. Hakim Rahman Graham.  
One Child.  
[Redacted]

6. Have you served in the military? If so, give the dates, branch of service, highest rank attained, serial number, present status, and the character of your discharge or release.

No. Not Applicable.

7. List each college and law school you attended, including the dates of your attendance, the degrees you received, and if you left an institution without receiving a degree, the reason for your departure.

Winthrop University. August 1990 to May 1994.  
Bachelor of Arts in Political Science

Rutgers University. August 1994 to May 1995.  
Master of Science in Public Policy

The University of South Carolina, School of Law. August 1995 to May 1998.  
Juris Doctor.

8. List the states in which you have been admitted to practice law and the year of each admission. Also list any states in which you took the bar exam but were never admitted to the practice of law. If you took the bar exam more than once in any of the states listed, please indicate the number of times you took the exam in each state.

South Carolina. Licensed to practice law in November of 1998.

9. List the significant activities in which you took part during your attendance at college, graduate, and law school. Give the dates you were involved in these activities and list any leadership positions you held.

Winthrop University:

Pi Sigma Alpha, National Political Science Honor Society (Chapter President 1993-1994);

Phi Kappa Phi, National Collegiate Honor Society

Alpha Kappa Delta, International Sociology Honor Society

Delta Sigma Theta, International Public Service Sorority (Secretary and Founder's Week Chairperson, April 1992 to May 1994)

National American Political Science Association's Ralph Bunche Summer Institute in Atlanta, Georgia, Summer 1993

Tri-County Sister Help, Local Battered Women's Shelter, Legal Advocate, 1992-1993.

Rutgers University:

The Eagleton Institute of Politics. Full Fellowship (August 1994 to May 1995).

Ronald E. McNair Post Baccalaureate Program, Graduate Counselor (September 1994 to May 1995).

\*Timothy H. Pogue, Attorney at Law. Volunteer. (June 1995 to August 1995). I volunteered in this law firm between graduate and law school. It was significant because it provided this experience introduced me to practicing law and family court.

University of South Carolina, School of Law:

Student-Faculty Task Force. (Career Services and Registration Committees) 1996-1997

Civil Procedure Tutor for Academic Peer Assistant Program, Spring 1997 and 1998

Black Law Student Association (Banquet and Elections Committees, Social/Mentoring Committee Chairperson, 1997-1998)

Phi Delta Phi, Student Bar Association, Women in Law (1995-1998)

Law Clerk for the Law Office of Hemphill P. Pride, II (Summer 1996 and Fall 1996)

Law Clerk for the South Carolina Department of Education, Office of General Counsel (Spring 1997)

Law Clerk for the Richland County Volunteer Guardian ad Litem Project (Summer of 1997 and Fall of 1997)

Law Intern/Clerk for the South Carolina Association of School Administrators (Spring 1998)

10. Describe your continuing legal or judicial education during the past five years.

South Carolina Bar Convention (family and children's law)	1/22/2016;
South Carolina Legal Services Statewide Conference	11/18/2015;
ABA Lead Law 2015	10/23/2015;
2015 South Carolina Public Defender Conference	9/21/2015;
South Carolina Black Lawyers Association 13 <sup>th</sup> Annual Retreat	9/17/2015;
Stress Management – Avoiding Unhealthy Consequences of Stress	8/31/2015;
South Carolina Legal Services Statewide Conference	12/10/2014;
South Carolina Black Lawyers Association Annual Retreat	9/19/2014;
South Carolina Bar Education Law	8/8/2014;
Using LinkedIn as a Professional & Organizational Tool	
Without Violating the Rules of Professional Conduct	4/24/2014;
Social Security Disability 2014: From Administrative Proceedings to	
Federal Practice	3/28/2014;
Greenville Bar Association Annual "Year End" CLE	2/14/2014;
South Carolina Bar Foundation Greenville Grantee Gathering	12/10/2013;
South Carolina Legal Services Statewide Conference	11/21/2013;
South Carolina Black Lawyers Association Annual Retreat	9/26/2013;
Ethical Lessons from the Bench	9/25/2013;
Greenville County Bar Year End CLE	2/15/2013;
SC Bar Foundation Grantee Gathering	12/1/2012;
SCLS Seminar for DSS/Child Support Enforcement Attorneys	11/2/2012;
South Carolina Black Lawyers Association Annual Retreat	9/27/2012;
SCALJ Connecting Students with Tools for School	3/9/2012;
Managing Ethical Issues for Day to Day Practice	12/6/2011;
South Carolina Legal Services Statewide Meeting	11/8/2011;

South Carolina Black Lawyers Association Annual Retreat	10/4/2011;
Children Coping with Divorce Trans-parenting for Professionals	9/30/2011;
Judicial Ethics for Lawyers	8/17/2011;
2011 Due Process Hearing Officer Training	6/20/2011;
Spring Special Education Administrators Training and Hearing Officer Update	3/23/2011.

11. Have you taught law-related courses or lectured at bar association conferences, educational institutions, or continuing legal or judicial education programs? If so, briefly describe each course or lecture.
- (a) I presented a session on representing low income students and parents in school law to legal services agencies for South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center on October 11, 2001.
  - (b) I presented a session on representing low income families in school law at the South Eastern Project Directors Association for directors of legal service agencies on July 15, 2002.
  - (c) I presented a session on monitoring re-segregation and protecting the poor for legal service lawyers at the National Legal Aid and Public Defender Substantive Law Conference on July 25, 2002.
  - (d) I presented a session on the overview of a school law practice to legal services and pro bono attorneys for South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center on August 12, 2004.
  - (e) I presented a session on DSS Court Appointments and Defense Pointers to lawyers at the South Carolina Black Lawyers Association Retreat on October 22, 2004.
  - (f) I presented a session on parent rights in school discipline procedures to legal services and pro bono attorneys for South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center on February 24, 2006.
  - (g) I presented a session on school discipline and special education discipline to lawyers in the Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough Education Pro Bono Project Training on August 10, 2006.
  - (h) I presented a session on students still having due process rights to school administrators, professors, and attorneys at the Education Law Association's Annual Conference on October 22, 2009.
  - (i) I have presented several sessions to attorneys and staff on education law at SC Legal Services' Statewide Meetings and in house education task force meetings.
  - (j) I presented a session on working with students experiencing bullying to attorneys at the South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center's Education Law Training on March 9, 2012.
  - (k) I presented a session called balancing the scales of justice on representing students in education law cases for the South Carolina Bar on August 8, 2014
  - (l) I presented a session called expulsion case pointers to provide practice tips for South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center in October of 2014.
  - (m) I presented a session on school discipline law at the South Carolina Bar Convention on January 24, 2015.

- (n) I presented a legal education session on adding school law to your private law practice at the South Carolina Black Lawyers Association Conference on September 18, 2015.
- (o) I presented a session on education law updates and developments at the South Carolina Legal Services Conference on November 19, 2015.
- (p) I presented a session on the school to prison pipeline at the South Carolina Public Defender Association on November 23, 2015.
- (q) I presented a session on forming partnerships to achieve equal educational opportunities for the South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center on January 15, 2016.
- (r) I presented at session at the South Carolina Bar Convention on the rights of single fathers in adoption cases on January 23, 2016.

12. List all published books and articles you have written and give citations and the dates of publication for each.

Not Applicable.

13. List all courts in which you have been admitted to practice and list the dates of your admission. Give the same information for administrative bodies that require a special admission to practice.

- (a) Admitted to practice before the State Courts of South Carolina on November 16, 1998;
- (b) Admitted to practice in The United States District Court of South Carolina on January 2, 2003;
- (c) Also admitted to practice before the Unites States Bankruptcy Court, District of South Carolina.

14. Describe chronologically your legal experience since graduation from law school and include a list of all law firms with which you have been associated. Describe the general character of your practice and divide it into periods with dates if its character has changed over the years.

Legal Services Agency of Western Carolina, Inc. Greenville, South Carolina.  
Staff Attorney. Provided general law practice and community education in housing, probate, and family law cases. November 1998 to September 1999.

Children's Law Attorney. Practiced law for low income children by focusing primarily on adoptions, children's social security cases, special education advocacy, and school discipline cases. September 1999 until December 31, 2001.

South Carolina Legal Services. Greenville, South Carolina.  
Staff Attorney II. Practices law in cases in Greenville County that includes divorce, custody, school discipline, special education, special needs relative adoptions, bankruptcy, credit card defense, and children social security appeals. Appears in Magistrate's Court, Family Court, the Court of Common Pleas, Court of Appeals, and the U. S. Bankruptcy Court in various cases. January 1, 2002 to present.

Education Unit Head. Leads the education unit, seeks local funding when possible, trains legal service attorneys across the state in representing students in the public education system, teaches parents how to advocate for children, responds to requests for training from community groups, and operated the Greenville County United Way's Securing Public School Opportunities Program. Education cases include special education, school discipline, 504 accommodation plans, school enrollment, and homeless student education cases throughout South Carolina providing representation before local hearing officers, School Boards, the South Carolina Department of Education, the United States Department of Education, the Court of Common Pleas, and the South Carolina Court of Appeals. March 2003 to present.

Acting Managing Attorney. Supervised six attorneys, two paralegals, and three support staff. Assigned cases, supervised legal work, handled personnel issues, and participated on management team while the Managing Attorney was on extended leave. September 24, 2007 through December 31, 2007.

Acting Managing Attorney. Supervised five full time attorneys, three contract attorneys, one volunteer attorney, three support staff employees, and a satellite office. Reviewed emergency intakes, assigned cases, supervised legal work, handled personnel issues, and provided other managerial duties while the Managing Attorney was on extended leave. August 26, 2009 through November 24, 2009.

Interim Managing Attorney. Ensures the efficient operation of the Greenville Office and maintains a caseload primarily in family court. The Greenville Office serves Greenville, Anderson, Pickens, and Oconee counties. Reviews, accepts and assigns or denies applicants. Reviews all cases for quality and compliance. Supervises the legal work of attorneys, several support staff, and the financial accounts. Addresses human resource issues. Prepares grant reports. Participates in the statewide management team. April 1, 2013 to present.

Managing Attorney (Greenville). Responsible for the provision of civil legal services in Anderson, Greenville, Pickens, and Oconee counties, the quality of legal services provided, and maintaining connections with the community and private bar. Reviews applications for legal services. Assigns cases and provides case load management. Provides employee evaluations for support staff and attorneys. Provides human resource management and addresses grievances. Provides guidance and training. Manages client trust and petty cash accounts. Assures compliance with grants, policies, and procedures. Maintains a case load in the service area. Participates in grant writing. Permanent Position from June 1, 2013 to present.

Interim Managing Attorney (Low Income Taxpayer Clinic). Supervises and manages the Clinic Director, paralegal, and attorneys that assist with tax cases for South Carolina Legal Services in all counties. Provides case load management, monitors the quality of legal services provided, facilitates assigning cases, denies applicants, provides human

resource management, and reviews grant applications and reports. January 2015 to present.

15. Please answer the following (if you are a judge and are not seeking a different type of judgeship, this question is inapplicable):

- (a) If you are a candidate for Family Court, please provide a brief written description of your experience within each of the following Family Court practice areas: divorce and equitable division of property, child custody, adoption, abuse and neglect, and juvenile justice. Include information about cases you have handled in each of these practice areas, or if you have not practiced in an area, describe how your background has prepared you to preside over such matters as a Family Court Judge.

I have experience in handling divorces (physical cruelty, one year separation, and adultery defense), although my experience is primarily with physical cruelty divorces because of the legal services case acceptance policy. I have significant experience in handling custody and adoption cases. My custody cases involve disputes involving biological parents and non-biological parents but usually when there is an allegation of abuse and DSS is not involved or custody is needed to secure some benefit on behalf of the child. My experience with adoption cases is primarily with relative special needs adoptions. I have experience representing defendants in abuse and neglect cases but lately due to limited resources we refer many of those cases to court appointed attorneys unless we are already representing a party in a divorce or custody case. I do not have significant experience handling juvenile justice cases but I believe the vast amount of work that I do for students in school discipline cases has more than prepared me to learn what I do not know in that area.

As a Managing Attorney I have experience in quickly reviewing the facts and applicable laws in divorce and equitable division of property, child custody, adoption, and abuse and neglect applications for legal services to determine whether there is merit to the application, if we will accept or deny the application, if accepted I assess the level of services that we will provide, and assign the file to a staff attorney or private attorney for legal representation.

As the Education Unit Head I have experience in reviewing juvenile justice cases to determine if there are special education or school discipline issues that require attention.

- (b) If you are a candidate for Circuit Court, please provide a brief written description of your experience in criminal matters, including any cases handled over the past five years and include a brief description of the issues involved. Further, please provide a brief written description of your experience in civil matters, including any cases handled over the past five years and include a brief description of the types of matters handled, issues involved, and procedural history. Please include information

such as the primary areas in civil court in which you practice, whether you represent plaintiffs or defendants, or both. You may go back further than five years if you feel it would assist the Commission with its assessment of your experience. If you lack experience in an area, describe how your background has prepared you to preside over such matters as a Circuit Court Judge, or how you would compensate for your lack of experience in this area.

Not Applicable.

- (c) If you are a candidate for Master-In-Equity, please provide a brief written description of your experience in the Master's court, including any cases handled over the past five years and include a brief description of the issues involved. Please include the frequency of your appearances before a Master-In-Equity.

Not Applicable.

- (d) If you are a candidate for Administrative Law Judge, please provide a brief written description of your experience before an Administrative Law Judge, including any issues discussed and the frequency of your appearances before the Administrative Law Judge Court.

Not Applicable.

16. What is your rating, if any, by any legal rating organization, such as, Best Lawyers, Chambers, Legal 500, Martindale-Hubbell, Who's Who Legal, Super Lawyers, etc.? If you are currently a member of the judiciary, list your last available rating, if any.

None. Not Applicable.

**\* Retired justices/judges and justices/judges applying for reelection to their current position may omit Questions 17–22. If a candidate is seeking a judgeship different than his or her current position, Questions 17-22 should be answered based on experience prior to serving on the bench.**

17. What was the frequency of your court appearances during the past five years?

- (a) federal: 3%;  
(b) state: 97%.

18. What percentage of your practice involved civil, criminal, domestic, and other matters during the past five years?

- (a) civil: 47%;  
(b) criminal: 0%;  
(c) domestic: 53%;  
(d) other: 0%.



19. What percentage of your practice in trial court during the past five years involved matters that went to a jury, including those that settled prior to trial?

(a) jury: 0%;

(b) non-jury: 100%.

Did you most often serve as sole counsel, chief counsel, or associate counsel in these matters? Sole Counsel.

20. List five of the most significant litigated matters you have personally handled in either trial or appellate court or before a state or federal agency. Give citations if the cases were reported and describe why these matters were significant.

(a) (Sealed File). John Row, et al. vs. John Doe, et al., This case was significant because a single father registered on the responsible father registry before his child was placed with an out of state couple for adoption. We reviewed adoption practices and were able to prevail by using the due process provisions already codified but often overlooked in practice. The litigation strategy was shared at a few legal education trainings. ABC Nightline News also aired a follow up story with the single father regarding the responsible father registry while protecting the identity of the Plaintiffs.

(b) Jane Doe, A High School Student in Richland County School District Two and her Parent, Mary Doe, vs. Richland County School District Two. Case Number: 2006-CP-40-6545. This case was significant to me because I represented a student that was expelled from school and accused of committing sexual offenses without any evidence. The parent unsuccessfully appealed to the board after simply stating persuasive legal grounds but she needed legal services to appeal to the court system. We prevailed in circuit court but the school district appealed the decision to the court of appeals. This case is evidence that things do not always work themselves out and there are times that the indigent need civil legal services to secure basic opportunities. Decided March 25, 2009. 382 S.C. 656; 677 S.E.2d 610.

(c) Martha Sue Payne vs. Mary and Ray Patterson, William Scott McFadden. Case Number 2005-DR-23-3223. This case was significant because I successfully defended a change of custody action among relatives for children that were previously abused and neglected. I also represented the third party in the previous contested abuse and neglect case. The court granted my motion an involuntary dismissal at the conclusion of the Plaintiff's case.

(d) Martha Sue Payne vs. Mary Patterson. Case Number: 2006-DR-23-4112. This case was significant to me because I was unsuccessful in appealing a visitation contempt case. It is important for people to have access to the legal system but the legal system should not be involved in every family dispute.

(e) Darla Yates vs. Eddie Crooks. Case Number: 2005-DR-39-418. This case was significant to me because I represented a client in a visitation Rule to Show Cause. There was an allegation of a history of abuse in a prior case that prevented my client from being able to represent herself.

21. List up to five civil appeals you have personally handled. Give the case name, the court, the date of decision, and the citation if the case was reported.
- (a) Jane Doe, A High School Student in Richland County School District Two and her Parent, Mary Doe, vs. Richland County School District Two. South Carolina Court of Appeals. Decided March 25, 2009. 382 S.C. 656; 677 S.E.2d 610.
- (b) Unpublished Opinion. Martha Sue Payne vs. Mary Patterson. South Carolina Court of Appeals. Decided April 26, 2010.
22. List up to five criminal appeals that you have personally handled. Give the case name, the court, the date of decision and the citation if the case was reported.  
None. Not Applicable.
23. Have you ever held judicial office? If so, list the periods of your service, the courts involved, and whether you were elected or appointed. Describe the jurisdiction of each of the courts and note any limitations on the jurisdiction of each court.
- No.
24. If the answer to question 23 is yes, describe or list five of your most significant orders or opinions and give the citations if they were reported. Also list citations to any appellate review of these orders or opinions.  
Not Applicable.
25. Have you ever held public office other than judicial office? If so, list the periods of your service, the office or offices involved, and whether you were elected or appointed. Also, state whether or not you have timely filed your report with the State Ethics Commission during the period you held public office. If not, were you ever subject to a penalty? If so, give details, including dates.
- No. Not Applicable.
26. List all employment you had while serving as a judge (whether full-time or part-time, contractual or at will, consulting or otherwise) other than elected judicial office. Specify your dates of employment, employer, major job responsibilities, and supervisor.
- None. Not Applicable.
27. Have you ever been an unsuccessful candidate for elective, judicial, or other public office? If so, give details, including dates.

I applied for Family Court Judge, At Large, Seat 4, in the Fall of 2012. I was found qualified but I did not receive a nomination.

I applied for Family Court Judge, Thirteenth Judicial Circuit, Seat 5, in Fall of 2013. I was found qualified but I did not receive a nomination.

28. Have you ever been engaged in any occupation, business, or profession other than the practice of law, teaching of law, or holding judicial or other public office? If so, give details, including a description of your occupation, business, or profession, the dates of your employment, and the name of your business or employer.

I worked as a front desk clerk at the Embassy Suites in Greenville, South Carolina. The time period was approximately February 1999 until November or December of 1999.

I also taught a LSAT preparation courses at Clemson University for Kaplan Test Preparation from 2000 to 2001.

29. Are you now an officer or director or involved in the management of any business enterprise? Explain the nature of the business, your duties, and the term of your service.

No.

30. Provide, as a separate attachment, a complete, current financial net worth statement that itemizes in detail:
- (a) the identity and value of all financial assets held, directly or indirectly, including, but not limited to, bank accounts, real estate, securities, trusts, investments, and other financial holdings; and
  - (b) the identity and amount of each liability owed, directly or indirectly, which is in excess of \$1,000, including, but not limited to, debts, mortgages, loans, and other financial obligations.

(Your response to this question may state “see attached”).

(A net worth statement is provided with this questionnaire and you must use this format for submission of your financial statement.)

See attached.

**NOTE: The Commission may require written confirmation that financial obligations have been satisfied or that the parties have agreed upon a payment schedule.**

31. Describe any financial arrangements or business relationships you have, or have had in the past, that could constitute or result in a possible conflict of interest in the position you seek. Explain how you would resolve any potential conflict of interest.

I am not aware of any financial arrangements or business relationships that could result in a possible conflict of interest.

32. Have you ever been arrested, charged, or held by federal, state, or other law enforcement authorities for violation or for suspicion of violation of any federal law or regulation, state

law or regulation, or county or municipal law, regulation, or ordinance, or any other law, including another country's law? If so, give details but do not include traffic violations for which a fine of \$125 or less was imposed.

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33. Have you, to your knowledge, ever been under federal, state, or local investigation for possible violation of a criminal statute? If yes, explain.

No.

34. Has a tax lien or other collection procedure ever been instituted against you by federal, state, or local authorities? Have you ever defaulted on a student loan? Have you ever filed for bankruptcy? If so, give details.

I have not had a tax lien or other collection procedure by federal, state or local authorities. Over ten years ago, at the beginning of my career at legal services, I defaulted on a small student loan before my loans were consolidated. I secured additional employment. The loan was reinstated and years later it was consolidated with other student loans. I have never filed for bankruptcy.

35. Have you ever been sued, either personally or professionally, that is, have you ever been named as defendant or respondent in any court of law? If so, give details, including, but not limited to, dates and resolution. No.

36. Have you ever, in South Carolina or any other jurisdiction, as a lawyer, judge, or other professional, been sanctioned or disciplined for lawyer, judicial, or other professional misconduct, or has any jurisdiction found that you committed any misconduct? If so, give the details and describe any final disposition.

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37. Have you ever been investigated by the Department of Social Services? If so, give the details and the resolution. Has your name ever been enrolled on the Central Registry of Child Abuse and Neglect? If so, give the details.

No.

38. If you are in private practice, are you covered by malpractice insurance and, if so, how long have you carried malpractice insurance? If applicable, have you ever been covered by a tail policy? If so, please explain when you were covered by a tail policy. Also, if applicable, indicate your coverage and deductible for your current malpractice policy.

I have always been covered by malpractice insurance with all of the attorneys at SC Legal Services.

39. Are you active on or a member of a social media or Internet site or have you, to your knowledge, been featured or depicted on a social media or Internet site, such as, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.? If so, how would your use of social media or other similar types of Internet sites be affected if you were serving in a judicial capacity?

Yes. I have Facebook and Twitter accounts. I do not participate in any communication that reflects negatively upon me or the legal profession. Also my privacy settings are monitored and I do not accept friend requests from clients. My Twitter account is used to share public information and some public outreach events for my law firm. I am aware of the additional restraints that need to be placed on the use of social media when serving in a judicial capacity to avoid the appearance of impropriety, the creation of conflicts of interest, to avoid political activity, and to maintain impartiality. I do not have a LinkedIn account and I am aware that if I were serving in a judicial capacity I would not be able to have a LinkedIn account. Also I would have to monitor friend requests to avoid conflicts of interests regarding members of the Bar and potential litigants.

40. Are you now or have you ever been employed as a “lobbyist,” as defined by S.C. Code § 2-17-10(13), or have you acted in the capacity of a “lobbyist’s principal,” as defined by S.C. Code § 2-17-10(14)? If so, give the dates of your employment or activity in such capacity and specify by whom you were directed or employed.

No.

41. Since filing with the Commission your letter of intent to run for judicial office, have you accepted lodging, transportation, entertainment, food, meals, beverages, money, or any other thing of value as defined by S.C. Code § 2-17-10(1) from a lobbyist or lobbyist’s principal? If so, please specify the item or items you received, the date of receipt, and the lobbyist or lobbyist’s principal involved.

No.

42. S.C. Code § 8-13-700 provides, in part, that “[n]o public official, public member, or public employee may knowingly use his official office, membership, or employment to obtain an economic interest for himself, a member of his immediate family, an individual with whom he is associated, or a business with which he is associated.” Please detail any knowledge you have of any formal charges or informal allegations against you or any other candidate for violations of these provisions. Include the disposition, if any, of such charges or allegations.

I do not have any such knowledge.

43. S.C. Code § 8-13-765 provides, in part, that “[n]o person may use government personnel, equipment, materials, or an office building in an election campaign.” Please detail any knowledge you have of any formal charges or informal allegations against you or any other candidate for violations of these provisions. Include the disposition, if any, of such charges or allegations.

I do not have any such knowledge.

44. Itemize (by amount, type, and date) all expenditures, other than those for travel and room and board, made by you, or on your behalf in furtherance of your candidacy for the position you seek.

I have not made expenditures in furtherance of my candidacy.

45. List the amount and recipient of all contributions made by you or on your behalf to members of the General Assembly since the announcement of your intent to seek election to a judgeship.

I have not made any campaign contributions nor am I aware of any made on my behalf to members of the General Assembly since the announcement of my intent to seek election to a judgeship.

46. Have you directly or indirectly requested the pledge of any member of the General Assembly as to your election for the position for which you are being screened? Have you received the assurance of any public official or public employee that they will seek the pledge of any member of the General Assembly as to your election for the position for which you are being screened? If so, give details.

**Note: Attached are (1) Section 2-19-70(c); (2) JMSC Rule 24, and (3) informal opinions and letters concerning pledging prohibitions, with which third parties acting on your behalf, as well as you, must comply.**

No. No.

47. Have you requested a friend or colleague to contact members of the General Assembly on your behalf? If so, give details. Are you aware of any friends or colleagues contacting members of the General Assembly on your behalf? If so, give details.

No.

48. Have you or has anyone acting on your behalf solicited or collected funds to aid in the promotion of your candidacy? If so, please specify the amount, solicitor, donor, and date of the solicitation.

No.

49. Have you or has anyone acting on your behalf contacted members of the Judicial Merit Selection Commission about your candidacy or intention to become a candidate?

No.

50. List all bar associations and professional organizations of which you are a member and give the titles and dates of any offices you have held in such groups.
- (a) South Carolina Bar, Young Lawyers Division, Executive Council 2002-2003.
  - (b) South Carolina Bar Children's Law Committee
  - (c) South Carolina Supreme Court CLE & Specialization Commissioner, June 2003-July 2009.
  - (d) Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates
  - (e) South Carolina Black Lawyers Association. Assistant Secretary. 2013 to present.
  - (f) Greenville County Bar Association
  - (g) South Carolina Bar, Education Law Committee. General Public Information Subcommittee Chair 2014-2015.
51. List all civic, charitable, educational, social, and fraternal organizations of which you are or have been a member during the past five years and include any offices held in such a group, any professional honors, awards, or other forms of recognition received and not listed elsewhere.
- (a) Young Lawyer of the Year Award. South Carolina Bar. 2001-2002.
  - (b) Center for Educational Equity, Advisory Board of Directors (2001 to present) and Parent Reconnect Program Coordinator (2001 to 2008).
  - (c) Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities, Board of Directors, Grievance Committee (first term), Chair of the Personnel Committee (current term).
  - (d) United Way of Greenville County. Graduate Greenville Student Enrichment Committee. (2006-2007).
  - (e) Bethlehem Baptist Church. Summer Bible Institute Instructor. June 2011
  - (f) Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated. Greenville (SC) Alumnae Chapter.
  - (g) Springfield Baptist Church. Unsung Heroine Award. March 24, 2013.
  - (h) Pro Parents of South Carolina. Board of Directors.
  - (i) The Ellen Hines Smith Legal Services Attorney of the Year 2015.
  - (j) The Riley Institute Diversity Leadership. Fall 2015. Upstate.
52. Provide any other information that may reflect positively or negatively on your candidacy, or which you believe should be disclosed in connection with consideration of you for nomination for the position you seek. This information may include how your life experiences have affected or influenced the kind or type of judge you have been or plan to be.

Family and school law have always been natural interests of mine. Family relationships and educational experiences play an important role in everyone's development. My formal education was driven by a curiosity and desire to learn more about those relationships and to help others with those relationships and experiences. I blindly pursued a legal career to help and to serve the public. This does not mean that I am more susceptible to bribery than others. It is evidence to the contrary. Values like sound character, integrity, honesty, fairness, respect, and a dedication to public service are my family's business and they shaped my life experiences well before I began expressing personal opinions.

As a child, my family attended Nazarene Baptist Church in Mullins, South Carolina and everyone in my family was actively involved in our church. I quickly learned the difference between good and evil and right and wrong. Of course, growing up in a safe rural community with relatively stable families also helped.

A family courtroom was the first courtroom I observed when I was interested in going to law school. Judge Timothy Pogue allowed me to volunteer in his law firm because I wanted to go to law school but I did not know a lawyer. Judge Pogue had the juvenile defender contract and he was the Marion County DSS attorney so I learned a lot about family court before I went to law school.

I assisted with the administration of justice in family court when I volunteered to help complete Order of Protection paperwork while I was a college student at Winthrop. This experience gave me insight into part of the pro se process in family court.

When I was in law school I spent a lot of time in family court working for the Richland County Guardian ad Litem program. I became familiar with abuse and neglect and termination of parent rights cases as well as the role of the Guardian ad litem in and outside of court. I observed judges, lawyers, and Guardian ad Litem in many abuse and neglect and termination of parental rights trials. There were several family court judges in Richland County so I got to observe different judges addressing issues in and weighing concerns in many cases.

The first day I walked into a courtroom to represent a client as a member of the Bar, I was in a family court courtroom in a DSS vulnerable adult case before Judge Robert Jenkins. As a legal services attorney most of my courtroom experience has been overwhelmingly in family court.

Many of my significant cases are confidential and closed matters to protect the identity of minor children but I achieved a lot in publicly reported cases. I have also had the privilege of consulting with many legal service attorneys in numerous cases, court appearances, and appellate work.

I believe my personal and professional experiences will continue to serve the public well if I am a successful candidate for Family Court.

53. List the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of five (5) persons, including your banker, from whom you are providing references. Also, provide the Commission with **original letters** of recommendation from each person listed herein, including their signature (preferably in blue ink). **The Commission will not accept a photocopy or electronic submission of a letter of recommendation and failure to include all five (5) original letters of recommendation in your packet when you submit it will render your packet incomplete.** Please **do not** have references mail your reference letters to the Commission directly.

(a) Thomas L. Bruce



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925 Cleveland Street, Unit 242  
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(864) 235-3923

(b) Jada B. Charley

Safe Passage  
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Rock Hill, South Carolina 29731  
(803) 329-3336

(c) Reverend Judy M. Richardson, Presiding Elder

African Methodist Episcopal Church, Seventh District  
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(d) Erik T. Norton, Esquire

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(e) Tonya C. Johnson

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Greenville, South Carolina 2961  
(864) 255-3732

54. Describe any interest you or a member of your immediate family has in real property:

- (a) in which there is a potential conflict of interest with your involvement in a South Carolina state or local public agency;
- (b) in which there have been public improvements of \$200 or that adjoins property in which there have been public improvements of \$200; or
- (c) which was sold, leased, or rented to a state or local public agency in South Carolina.

None.

List the interest you hold and the value and location of the property. Identify as applicable the:

- (a) nature of any potential conflict of interest;
- (b) nature and value of any public improvements; and

(c) which was sold, leased, or rented to a state or local public agency in South Carolina.

None.

List the interest you hold and the value and location of the property. Identify as applicable the:

- (a) nature of any potential conflict of interest;
- (b) nature and value of any public improvements; and
- (c) South Carolina state or local public agency which purchased or is leasing or renting such property.

Attach a copy of any contract or agreement.


Not Applicable.

55. Identify any personal property interest you or a member of your immediate family sold, leased, or rented to a South Carolina state or local public agency. Identify the property, its amount or value, and the name of the agency. Attach a copy of any contract or agreement.

None.

YOUR SIGNATURE WILL BE HELD TO CONSTITUTE A WAIVER OF THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF ANY PROCEEDING BEFORE A GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE OR ANY INFORMATION CONCERNING YOUR CREDIT.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT MY ANSWERS ARE TRUE AND COMPLETE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.

Signature:   
Date: 3/3/2016