

**JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION  
PERSONAL DATA QUESTIONNAIRE**

Court, Position, and Seat # for which you are applying:  
Family Court, Thirteenth Circuit, Seat 5

1. NAME: Ms. Wanda L. Adams  
BUSINESS ADDRESS: 13<sup>th</sup> Circuit Solicitor's Office  
301 East North Street, Suite 325  
Greenville, SC 29601  
TELEPHONE NUMBER: 864-467-8647
2. Date of Birth: 1960  
Place of Birth: Greenville, SC
3. Are you a citizen of SC? Yes  
Have you been a resident of this state for at least the immediate past five years? Yes
5. Family Status: Single; Never divorced; No children.
6. Have you served in the military? N/A
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.
- (a) Bennett College, Greensboro, NC, 1978-79; Transferred to USC Columbia, SC;
  - (b) USC Columbia, SC, 1979-82; Awarded Bachelor of Arts Degree, May 1982;
  - (c) Univ. of Tennessee School of Law, Knoxville, TN, 1989-92, JD Degree;
  - (d) Oxford Univ. Oxford, England, Summer 1991, Comparative Law Studies Certificate.
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.
- I sat for the SC Bar in July 1992 and was successful on the first attempt.
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.
- During my three years as a full-time law student, I was also employed as a Residential Hall Director and Graduate Assistant. In these positions, I had the varied opportunities to mentor undergraduate students. I was also an active member of Black Law Students Association.
10. Describe your continuing legal or judicial education during the past five years.
- | <u>Conference/CLE Name</u>                      | <u>Date(s)</u> |
|---|----------------|
| (a) 13 <sup>th</sup> Circuit Solicitor's Office | 05/06/06;      |
| (b) Annual Solicitor's Conference               | 09/24/06;      |
| (c) Annual Solicitor's Conference               | 09/23/07;      |
| (d) Technology in Prosecution                   | 05/11/08;      |
| (e) Prosecuting Cases in Family Court           | 08/20/08;      |
| (f) Annual Solicitor's Conference               | 09/28/08;      |
| (g) Polishing Your Trial From the Beginning     | 05/03/09;      |



- |     |   |           |
|-----|---|-----------|
| (h) | Prosecuting Cases in Family Court       | 08/21/09; |
| (i) | 13 <sup>th</sup> Circuit Annual Retreat | 05/02/10; |
| (j) | Investigation and Prosecution           | 06/13/10; |
| (k) | Trial Advocacy                          | 06/16/11; |
| (l) | Judicial Ethics For Lawyers             | 08/17/11; |
| (m) | Annual Solicitor's Conference           | 09/25/11; |
| (n) | "Away For Lunch CLE                     | 04/05/12; |
| (o) | Prosecuting Sex Crimes                  | 07/26/13. |
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 taught Family Law 101 in the Greenville Technical College Paralegal Program as an Adjunct Professor August – December 2004.;
- (b) I made a presentation on the topic of juvenile prosecution to lawyers attending the 2010 Annual Black Lawyers Association Meeting.
12. List all published books and articles you have written and give citations and the dates of publication for each. None Published
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 SC in 1993;
- (b) Admitted to practice before the Federal District Court in 1994.
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.

I was admitted to the SC Bar in January 1993. Shortly thereafter, I became the Staff Attorney for Greenville County Dept. of Social Services (DSS). I was the sole attorney for approximately 1 year. My duties included the litigation and settlement of more than 300 abuse and neglect cases in Greenville County Family Court.

In 1994, I established a solo private practice in Greenville County. The majority of my practice involved domestic matters, primarily divorces and adoptions. During the first year of private practice, I contracted with DSS and Legal Services of Western Carolina. I handled housing discrimination cases under the Legal Services contract. The DSS contract required me to represent the interests of children in abuse/neglect and termination of parental rights actions under the DSS contract.

While in private practice, I was appointed as Guardian Ad Litem in numerous custody actions. Hundreds of families were also referred to me for finalization of adoptions. These referrals came from DSS and private adoption agencies such as Bethany Christian Services. I was also often requested to speak with prospective adoptive parents about the adoption process.

In April 1995, I was appointed by Greenville SC City Council as an Asst. Municipal Court Judge. I presided over jury and bench trials and preliminary hearings, arising under city ordinances and criminal cases made under state law. I was called upon to preside when the full-time Municipal Judge was unavailable or disqualified, or in the event of docket

overload. I served in the Cities of Greenville and Greer from 1995 until August 2005, while also maintaining my law office.

From August until December 2004, I taught Family Law at Greenville Technical College, as adjunct faculty in the Paralegal program.

I became an Assistant Solicitor with the 13<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Solicitor's Office in August 2005, where I remain employed. During the first year with the Solicitor's Office, I prosecuted criminal domestic violence cases. From 2006 until 2009, I was responsible for the prosecution of juveniles in the Greenville and Pickens County Family Courts. I am currently responsible for the prosecution of primarily drug and sex crime cases.

If you are a judge and are not seeking a different type of judgeship, the following questions are 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 extensive experience in all of the above-outlined areas:

#### DIVORCE AND DIVISION OF PROPERTY

While in private practice from 1994 until 2005, I represented both plaintiffs and defendants in the area of divorce and equitable division of property. An example of that experience was my representation of the defendant in Pamela Holmes vs. Nathan Holmes (2000-DR-04-871). This case involved dissolution of a marriage of more than 25 years. A multi-day hearing was required to equitably divide substantial marital assets, and determine alimony, child support, custody and visitation.

#### CHILD CUSTODY

In the area of custody, I served as Guardian Ad Litem in many custody actions. I also represented numerous parties seeking custody. One example is Yolanda Hart vs. Will and Cora Wren (1995-DR-23-6065). I represented the Wrens, who were the paternal aunt and uncle of minor children placed in their care by the custodial father. Upon the death of the father, the mother petitioned the Court for custody.

#### ADOPTION

In the area of adoption, I have many years of experience preparing pleadings, notifying birth parents, relinquishment of parental rights, and finalization of adoption actions. One unique example is an adult adoption, Alee Gearhart vs. Judy Mahaffey Thompson (1994-DR-23-3072). This case involved the reunification of an elderly birth mother and adult adoptee. I represented the birth mother in the adoption of her birth daughter, whom she had relinquished for adoption as an infant.

#### ABUSE AND NEGLECT

In the area of abuse and neglect, I have many years of experience, having served as counsel for DSS, Guardian Ad Litem appointments, and prosecuted crimes of abuse and neglect. An example of that diverse experience is DSS vs. Alberta Grimes (2000-DR-23-978). I was appointed Guardian ad Litem in this adult abuse case. I convinced the Family Court to remove the vulnerable adult from the care of her relative, due to abuse and neglect. I facilitated an alternative placement, while providing guidance to the court as to what was in her best interests.

## JUVENILE JUSTICE

As to the area of juvenile justice, I served as a juvenile prosecutor from 2006 until 2009. I continue to assist the 13<sup>th</sup> Circuit with the prosecution of these cases, when the current juvenile prosecutor is unavailable. I also represented juvenile defendants while in private practice. An example of such prosecution is The State vs. Charles A. (2008-JU-23-627, 2009-JU-23-119). This juvenile was declared a juvenile delinquent in 2009, after a hearing for an Assault and Battery of a High and Aggravated Nature charge. He was charged with Criminal Sexual Conduct later that year, and remains in state custody. I have many years of extensive family court experience, as outlined above. I am knowledgeable of the law and handled diverse cases, providing me with the background necessary to competently handle the duties of a Family Court Judge.

15. 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.?  
Not Rated
16. What was the frequency of your court appearances during the last five years?  
(a) federal: N/A;  
(b) state: Frequently.
17. What percentage of your practice involved civil, criminal, domestic, and other matters during the last five years? As a prosecutor,  
(a) civil: None;  
(b) criminal: 100%;  
(c) domestic: None;  
(d) other: None.
18. What percentage of your practice in trial court during the last five years involved matters that went to a jury, including those that settled prior to trial?  
(a) jury: 25%;  
(b) non-jury: 75%.  
Did you most often serve as sole counsel, chief counsel, or associate counsel in these matters? Sole Counsel
19. 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) State vs. Ralph Hayes (Indictment No. 2011GS2307681): The Defendant was charged with Murder and Possession Of A Weapon During The Commission Of A Violent Crime. The defendant was arrested and tried almost 2 years after the female victim's body was discovered. This was a circumstantial case, that developed with the assistance of investigative skills and cooperative witnesses. One such critical witness was a homeless man, later located in Illinois. I was able to convince this reluctant witness to return to Greenville for trial. His testimony proved to be instrumental in the defendant's conviction.  
(b) Estate of Michael Hildebrand (02ES2301170): This was a Greenville County Probate action. I was appointed the Personal Representative (PR) of this estate after the decedent had murdered his estranged wife and two children. After a national manhunt, the decedent died of a self-inflicted gunshot. Although he had surviving relatives, no one was willing to serve as PR. During my appointment, a wrongful death lawsuit was filed against the estate, on behalf of the deceased wife and

children. This appointment required me to defend the lawsuit, which resulted in a settlement. I was required to conduct an extensive multi-state identification of assets, facilitate the sale of out of state property, and settle this estate to the satisfaction of the court.

- (c) Jane and John Doe vs. SCDSS and Billy, a minor under the age of 5 (2004-DR-04-1509): I petitioned the Anderson Co. Family Court to intervene in an adoption action opposed by SCDSS. The subject child was the sibling of a child earlier adopted by the family I represented. The subject child had special needs and had been placed in foster care. Once the subject child became legally free to be adopted, it was DSS' desire for the child to be placed with his sibling, while the foster parents sought adoption. The significance of this case was that the Court was faced with determining whether the child's best interests would be served by living with a blood relative/sibling or risk emotional trauma by being removed from the only family he knew. The court found that it was in the best interests of the child that he remain with the foster family, with special consideration given to his special needs.
- (d) Pamela Holmes vs. Nathan Holmes (2000-DR-04-871): The plaintiff wife sought a divorce on the ground of adultery. The significance of this case is that the parties had been married more than 25 years and parents to 3 children. Several days of litigation was necessary to determine multiple issues of distribution of substantial marital assets, alimony, child support and visitation.
- (e) Beatrice Scurry vs. Chadwick Properties (93-05079) This was the first litigated case of its kind in Greenville County. The issue was landlord retaliation against a tenant, who had reported substandard living conditions to the authorities. I represented the tenant in a Magistrate Court jury trial. I successfully convinced the jury that the prohibited conduct had occurred, resulting in punitive damages and attorney fees. The significance of this case warranted media coverage.
20. 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. None
21. 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.  
State vs. Darnell Alston (Indictment Nos. 2001GS2305385 – 5387):  
In 2005, I was appointed to appeal the conviction of Darnell Alston, who had earlier plead guilty to several charges, including armed robbery, criminal sexual conduct and kidnapping. I was appointed due a conflict in Appellate Indigent Defense. The significance of this case was that the defendant was 14 years old when these home invasion crimes were committed, the defendant received a sentence of 90+ years and appealed, claiming he did not understand the possible outcomes of a guilty plea. It had been noted in the record that the defendant suffered from mental retardation. I unsuccessfully filed a brief, arguing that the defendant lacked the maturity and cognitive ability to recognize the gravity of his actions and the consequences.
22. Have you ever held judicial office?  
I served as Asst. Municipal Court Judge for the Cities of Greenville and Greer, SC, from April 1995 until August 2005. I was appointed by the Greenville City Council. Municipal Court's jurisdiction is limited to cases arising under city ordinances and misdemeanors under state law.

23. If the answer to question 22 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.
- (a) City of Greer vs. Sandy Williams (Warrant No. F727981): Presided over the criminal domestic violence 8/22/03 jury trial of defendant Sandy Williams. She and her husband, City of Greer police officers, were both charged with domestic violence because her fellow officers were not able to determine the primary aggressor at the time of arrest. The trial involved testimony of several Greer officers and resulted in her conviction.;
  - (b) City of Greer vs. Brent Thompson (Warrant No. 60734CL) 3/23/05;
  - (c) City of Greer vs. Kyler McAbee (Warrant No. 412000C) 6/8/05;
  - (d) City of Greer vs. Robert Seals (Warrant No. 42270DC) 3/9/05;
  - (e) City of Greer vs. Tiffany Norris (Warrant No. 41880DC) 7/3/05.
24. Have you ever held public office other than judicial office? No
25. 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.
- (a) Law Office of Wanda L. Adams, 1994-2005, Solo Practitioner;
  - (b) Greenville Technical College, August –December 2004, Adjunct Faculty Supervisor: Elizabeth Mann, Taught Family Law course in Paralegal Program.
26. Have you ever been an unsuccessful candidate for elective, judicial, or other public office? No
27. 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?
- (a) Summer of 1990, Legal Services of Western Carolina Greenville, SC Law Clerk Responsible for assisting staff attorneys with case preparation and research; Performed intake interviews of new clients.
  - (b) 1983–89, Greenville County DSS Child Protective Services Specialist Worker and Supervisor Investigated reports of child abuse and neglect; Supervised child protective services workers; Assisted in developing prosecution Guidelines for child sexual abuse cases; Prepared and placed children in adoptive homes; Recruited adoptive families for children with special needs.
  - (c) Summers of 1976, 1977, 1978, Greenville, SC Law Enforcement Center Records Clerk; Forensics Assistant
  - (d) Summers of 1980 and 1981, Union Carbide, Greenville, SC, Human Resources Assistant
28. Are you now an officer or director or involved in the management of any business enterprise? No
29. A complete, current financial net worth statement was provided to the Commission.
30. 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. None Explain how you would resolve any potential conflict of interest. N/A
31. 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? No

32. Have you, to your knowledge, ever been under federal, state, or local investigation for possible violation of a criminal statute? No

33. 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?

A Judgment was issued against me in 1991, for a unsecured loan. I was the co-signer and unaware the primary borrower had defaulted. Upon learning of this judgment, I contacted the lender and satisfied it.

34. 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? Yes, In the above-referenced action.

36. Have you ever been investigated by the Department of Social Services? Has your name ever been enrolled on the Central Registry of Child Abuse and Neglect? No

37. If you are in private practice, are you covered by malpractice insurance and, if so, how long have you carried malpractice insurance? N/A

38. 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.?

I had a profile on Facebook, with minimal information. I deleted it due to my lack of interest. My extremely limited use would not be affected if serving in a judicial position.

39. 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)? No

40. 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? No

41. 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." None

42. 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." None

43. 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. None

44. 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. None

45. 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? No

46. Have you requested a friend or colleague to contact members of the General Assembly on your behalf? Are you aware of any friends or colleagues contacting members of the General Assembly on your behalf? No
47. Have you or has anyone acting on your behalf solicited or collected funds to aid in the promotion of your candidacy? No
48. 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
49. 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) SC Bar Association;
  - (b) Greenville Co. Bar Association;
  - (c) Solicitor's Association of SC, Inc.
50. 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) Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Greenville, SC, Alumnae Chapter Office: Sergeant At Arms;
  - (b) Pendleton Place Children's Shelter, Board Member, Greenville, SC;
  - (c) Genesis Homes, Board Member, Greenville, SC;
  - (d) Community Foundation, Board Member, Greenville, SC;
  - (e) Carolina Family Services, Board Member, Greenville, SC.
51. 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.
- While reared in a single parent home, my mother consistently stressed the importance of accountability, as well as the importance of having empathy for the plight of others. This compassion led me to the profession of social work. After serving as a child and family advocate for several years, I believed the practice of law would afford me the opportunity to contribute even more. I attempted to utilize my private practice as a platform of empowerment. As a Municipal Court Judge, I served with the philosophy that while one must be accountable for his/her actions, rehabilitation must also be encouraged when appropriate. I believe that these traits, coupled with my legal knowledge, integrity, deliberate decision-making and temperament, makes me an ideal candidate for a Family Court Judge.
52. References:
- (a) Randy L. Bell  
Bank of Travelers Rest  
P.O. Box 1067  
Travelers Rest, SC, 29690  
(864) 282-2322;
  - (b) Jane S. Redmond, Ph.D.  
6312 Babelay Road  
Knoxville, TN 37924  
(865) 687-8777;
  - (c) Pastor Sean Dogan



Long Branch Baptist Church  
28 Bolt Street  
Greenville, SC 29605  
(864) 235-6205;

- (d) Cassandra W. Adams, Esquire  
Cumberland School of Law Samford University  
800 Lakeshore Drive  
Birmingham, AL 35229  
(205) 726-4342;
- (e) Juliette B. Mims, Esquire  
100 East Poinsett Street  
Greer, SC 29651  
(864) 877-0463.

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

Signature: Wanda L. Adams

Date: August 5, 2013

WANDA L. ADAMS, ESQUIRE  
413 ADAMS MILL ROAD  
MAULDIN, SOUTH CAROLINA 29662  
(864) 275-8176

October 3, 2013

Jane O. Shuler, Chief Counsel  
S.C. Judicial Merit Selection Commission  
P.O. Box 142  
Columbia, S.C. 29202

RE: Wanda L. Adams  
Judicial Candidate Seat 5


Dear Ms. Shuler:

Please allow the following to serve as amendments to my Personal Data Questionnaire:

**Item No. 27:** August-October 1992, SHARE Inc. Greenville, SC  
Employed as an assistant for the Utilities Assistance  
Program.

<b>Item No. 50:</b> Delta Sigma Theta, Inc.	Current Member
Pendleton Place Children's Shelter	Current Board Member
Genesis Homes	Former Board Member
Community Foundation	Former Board Member
Carolina Family Services	Former Board Member

Respectfully,

  
Wanda L. Adams

cc: E. Katherine Wells