

ALLEGHENY COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

JUDICIAL CANDIDATE PLEDGE

I, Jacquelyn A. Obara, a ^{future} 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.



Signature of Candidate

3/14/24

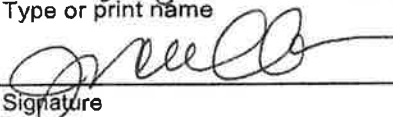
Date

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 If I withdraw from the race, the rating will not be announced, and the questionnaires will not be published.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.

3/14/24
Date

Jacquelyn A. Obara
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.

Jacquelyn Ann Obara, Jackie Obara
Jacquelyn Ann West, Jackie West

2. Date and place of birth.

July 4, 1978; Wheeling, WV

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

I am not a naturalized citizen. I am a citizen by birth.

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.**

I am currently married. My husband is David Andrew Obara and our wedding date is September 4, 2004.

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

I have never been divorced.

5. Have you served in the military?

I have not served in the military.

- a) **Give dates, branch of service, rank of rate and present status;**

N/A

- b) **Have you ever been rejected or released from the armed services for reasons other than honorable? If so, give details.**

N/A

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.**

Duquesne University; Bayer School of Natural and Environmental Sciences
August 1996—May 2000
Bachelor of Science, Major: Chemistry, Minor: Mathematics

Duquesne University; School of Law (now known as the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University)
August 2001—May 2004
Juris Doctorate, Cum Laude
Law Review
CALI Award: Trial Advocacy & Pennsylvania Civil Procedure

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.**

Pennsylvania: Admitted to the practice of law on October 4, 2004
West Virginia: Admitted to the practice of law on February 11, 2015
Southern District of West Virginia: Admitted to the practice of law on February 11, 2015

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.**

I receive professional mail at the following two (2) addresses:

Law Clerk to Hon. Thomas E. Flaherty
325 Courthouse
436 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
(412) 350-5445

Divorce Hearing Office
700 ½ City-County Building
414 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
(412) 350-2863

I do not have any personal or professional social media usernames and/or handles. I do not maintain any websites for personal or professional matters. I am an adjunct faculty member of the Duquesne University School of Law, and my profile is listed on their website. My profile is not shared on any other website.

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;**

- b) **Whether you practiced alone and, if so, the addresses and the dates;**
- 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,**
- d) **Any other relevant particulars.**

May 2004—January 2006: Lisa Marie Vari & Associates, Pittsburgh, PA; Associate Attorney

Represent family law clients in the Court of Common Pleas and Superior Court in matters related to divorce, custody, support, protection from abuse, paternity, grandparent's rights, dependency, and similar matters.

January 2006—present: Law Clerk to Hon. Thomas E. Flaherty, Court of Common Pleas, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania (Family Division January 2006—December 2010; Criminal Division: January 2011—Present)

Conduct legal research on issues pending before the Court; draft opinions for matters on appeal; draft findings of fact and conclusions of law; prepare jury instructions; and assist with daily management of Domestic Violence Court matters.

2011—May 2019: Discovery Master, Court of Common Pleas, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Family Division

Preside over oral argument and issue reports and recommendations in discovery matters referred by the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Family Division.

January 2015—May 2019: Audley Law Offices, Pittsburgh, PA; Of Counsel Assist Audley Law Offices in the representation of large hospital systems with complex revenue cycle matters.

January 2015—Present: Johnson Boiler Works, Inc., Benwood, WV; In-house Counsel

Review and negotiate terms of subcontractor agreements; coordinate with outside counsel for litigation; advise on personnel matters; and assist with debt collection.

May 2019—Present: Divorce Hearing Officer, Court of Common Pleas, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Family Division

Handle conciliations and hearings regarding economic claims incident to divorce, complex support, discovery, partition actions, enforcement, and other matters referred to the Divorce Hearing Officers by Judges of the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, Family Division.

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?**
- b) **Describe your typical clients and mention the areas in which you have concentrated your practice.**

My practice has concentrated on Family Law, although it also includes Criminal Law and a small amount of Civil Litigation.

With regard to client representation, from October 2004 through January 2006, I represented clients in a small firm setting in family law matters. Beginning in January 2006, my representation of clients terminated and my practice transitioned to a judicial clerkship. I have served as Judge Flaherty's law clerk for the past eighteen (18) years, which included service in Family Division for four (4) years and Criminal Division for fourteen (14) years.

In 2011, in addition to maintaining my clerkship duties, I began to receive periodic appointments as a discovery master in the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, Family Division. This continued until I was appointed as a Permanent Divorce Hearing Officer in the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Family Division in May 2019.

While serving as a law clerk and Discovery Master, beginning in 2015 and ending in May 2019, I worked part-time in an Of Counsel capacity for Audley Law Offices, P.C. While there, I represented large health systems with revenue cycle matters.

Currently, in addition to serving as a law clerk and Divorce Hearing Officer, I am in house counsel for a mid-sized family-owned company located in Benwood, WV.

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;**
- b) **What percentage of these appearances was in:**
 - i. **Federal courts:**
 - ii. **State courts of record:**
 - iii. **Other courts:**
- c) **What percentage of your litigation was:**
 - i. **Civil:**
 - ii. **Criminal:**
 - iii. **Family:**
 - iv. **Orphans' Division:**
- 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.**
- e) **What percentage of these trials were:**
 - i. **Jury:**
 - ii. **Non-jury:**

For the past ten (10) years, I have not appeared in court on a regular basis as counsel of record for a party. However, the vast majority of my time is spent in courtroom proceedings or conciliations as a Divorce Hearing Officer. In this capacity, I have presided over 111 hearings that concluded and required a report and recommendation to be issued, conducted 515

conciliations that resulted in settlement, and participated in 411 conciliations that did not settle and required additional proceedings.

12. **Summarize your experience in court the last ten years, indicating:**
- a) **Whether your appearances in court were more or less frequent;**
 - b) **Any significant changes in the percentages stated in your answers to question 11(b), (c) and (e); and,**
 - 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.**

As stated in response to Question 11, for the past ten (10) years, I have not appeared in court on a regular basis as counsel of record for a party. For the period 2014 through 2024, my appearances in court as a Hearing Officer have increased from periodic discovery matters while serving as a Discovery Master to almost daily court appearances as a Divorce Hearing Officer.

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.**

The bulk of my practice has been in the capacity of a Law Clerk and Divorce Hearing Officer. To that end, the cases listed below are not ones in which I represented a party, rather, they are matters that I presided over as a hearing officer. In addition to the matters listed below, I have provided legal research and analysis in many significant matters that were litigated before Judge Flaherty. A list of significant cases that have arisen during my clerkship is available upon request.

- I. *Biggs, G v. Biggs, M.*, FD 11-007304, Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Family Division

Referring Judge: Honorable Judge Kim Eaton

Counsel for Plaintiff: Eric Yandrich, Esquire, Law Offices of Eric Yandrich, 2101 Greentree Road, Suite A101B, Pittsburgh, PA 15220; ejy@yandrichlaw.com; (412) 429-0248

Counsel for Defendant: Max C. Feldman, Esquire, Law Offices of Max C. Feldman, 1322 5th Avenue, Coraopolis, PA 15108; mfeldman@attorneyfeldman.com; (412) 262-6181

Summary: The parties entered into a Consent Order of Court resolving their economic

claims incident to divorce that included a provision that awarded Defendant alimony. Plaintiff filed a Petition to Terminate Alimony and Defendant objected. The Order of Court was silent as to the duration and termination provisions for this alimony award and the parties disagreed as to its intended length. As the Order of Court providing for a period of alimony was silent as to its duration, the statutory language in 23 Pa.C.S.A. §3701(e) regarding termination and modification were found to apply.

- II. *Deyarmin, B. v. Deyarmin, J.*, FD 21-007927, Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Family Division

Referring Judge: Honorable Judge Sabrina Korbel

Counsel for Plaintiff: Christine Gale, Esquire, Frank, Gale, Bails, Murcko & Pocrass, P.C., Gulf Tower, Suite 3300, 707 Grant Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219; cgale@f-gbp.com; (412) 471-5918

Counsel for Defendant: Candice Komar, Esquire, Pollock Begg, 535 William Penn Place, Suite 3501, Pittsburgh, PA 15219; ckomar@pollockbegg.com; (412) 471-9000

Summary: Litigation of this matter concerned a pre-trial discovery dispute and trial issues of equitable distribution, alimony, and counsel fee claims. The pre-trial discovery dispute involved Defendant's ability to request and receive documents to quantify an increase in value of a non-marital medical practice when the shareholders had entered into a Buy-Sell Agreement. The Pennsylvania Superior Court holding in *Brody v. Brody*, 758 A.2d 1274 (Pa. Super. 2000) was found to apply and production of the requested documents was required.

The most interesting trial issue related to imposition of counsel fees pursuant to 42 Pa.C.S.A. §2503(7). After a hearing, Plaintiff was found to have exhibited egregious, obdurate, vexatious, and dilatory conduct that caused Defendant to incur substantial counsel fees.

- III. *Geller, A. v. Geller, S.*, FD 20-003559, Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Family Division

Referring Judge: Honorable Judge Jennifer Satler

Counsel for Plaintiff: Jennifer McEnroe, Esquire, McCarthy McEnroe, Rosinski & Joy, 630 Oliver Building, 535 Smithfield Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15222; mcenroe@mmrjfamilylaw.com; (412) 471-9900

Counsel for Defendant: Heather Trostle Smith, Esquire, Pollock Begg, 535 William Penn Place, Suite 3501, Pittsburgh, PA 15219; htsmith@pollockbegg.com; (412) 471-9000

Summary: This complex support matter raised novel issues related to international

compensation and earning capacity. Plaintiff resides and works in Pittsburgh and Defendant resides and works in Israel. Regarding international compensation, Defendant received a deduction from her Israeli income for the “Keren Hishtalmut”, also known as the “Study Fund.” At issue in this matter is whether the “Keren Hishtalmut” is a mandatory deduction from Defendant’s income, and therefore, not included in the calculation of Defendant’s income available for child support, or whether it was a voluntary deduction from Defendant’s income and included in the calculation of her income available for child support. After review of the documents and evidence presented, it was concluded that the “Keren Hishtalmut” is a mandatory deduction from Defendant’s income and was not included in the calculation of her income.

- IV. *Laffey, M. v. Laffey, L.*, FD 13-006890, Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Family Division

Referring Judges: Honorable Judge Jennifer Satler and Honorable Judge Chelsa Wagner

Counsel for Plaintiff: Margo Epstein, Esquire, Notaro Epstein Family Law Group, P.C., 310 Grant Street, Suite 1125, The Grant Building, Pittsburgh, PA 15219; margo@pghdivorcelaw.com; (412) 281-1988

Counsel for Defendant: Robb Bunde, Esquire, Bunde & Roberts, 223 Fourth Avenue, Suite 500, Pittsburgh, PA 15222; rbunde@bunderoberts.com, (412) 391-4330

Summary: The parties separated in 2013. However, due to the execution of two Post-Nuptial Agreements, nursing home entities purchased by Defendant in 2015 and 2017 were considered to be marital assets. At issue at trial was the treatment of distributions from the nursing homes to Defendant. Plaintiff asserted that ownership and management of the nursing home facilities should be considered to be passive investments such that the distributions received by Defendant should not be considered to be compensation. After a hearing, it was determined that management of nursing home facilities is an active investment that entitled Defendant to compensation for her services. Only the portion of the distributions she received in excess of reasonable compensation were considered to be a marital asset.

- V. *Wade, M. v. Wade, C.*, FD 21-009371, Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Family Division

Referring Judge: Honorable Judge Jessel Costa

Counsel for Plaintiff: Joseph Williams, Esquire and Ashley Majorsky, Esquire, Pollock Begg, 535 William Penn Place, Suite 3501, Pittsburgh, PA 15219; jwilliams@pollockbegg.com, amajorsky@pollockbegg.com; (412) 471-9000

Counsel for Defendant: Brooke McMorrow, Esquire, McMorrow Law, 10475 Perry

Highway, Suite 204, Wexford, PA 15090; brooke@mcmorrowlaw.com; (724) 940-0100

Summary: The parties entered into a comprehensive Marriage and Property Settlement Agreement that resolved their economic claims incident to divorce. Counsel for Plaintiff filed a Petition for Enforcement and Contempt and Counsel for Defendant filed an Answer to the Petition to Enforce and a Counter-Claim wherein Defendant requested to set-aside the Marriage and Property Settlement Agreement. The arguments advanced by Counsel for Defendant raised any and all bases to set-aside a contract. Ultimately, the Agreement was found to be a valid and enforceable agreement, as Defendant was unable to meet his burden to set aside a validly executed contract.

- 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.**

I have not practiced before any administrative boards, commissions or agencies during the past ten (10) years.

- 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.**

I have not practiced before any Appellate courts in the past ten (10) years. However, I have drafted dozens of opinions for Judge Flaherty that were filed in the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

- 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.**

I have not held judicial office, however, I am considered to be a quasi-judicial officer in my capacity as Divorce Hearing Officer. In that position, my jurisdiction is limited to the cases and matters referred to me by Judges in the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, Family Division. To the best of my knowledge, I have not been the subject of a Motion or Petition for Recusal. I have, on two occasions, recused myself from presiding over a matter.

- 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.**

I have never held public office.

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

I have never been an unsuccessful candidate for elective, judicial or other public office.

- 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.**

Approximately June 2000—August 2021: Bayer Corporation's Industrial Hygiene Laboratory: Bench Chemist; Long-term Temporary Placement through Adecco Staffing, Inc. Analyzed samples collected at various manufacturing plants to monitor worker exposure to known carcinogens or other hazardous chemicals.

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

- 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.**

I am not an officer or director in the management of any business enterprise.

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

I am not under any ongoing federal, state or local investigation or indictment for possible violation of a criminal statute.

- 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.**

I have never 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.

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

I have never had a tax lien or other collection procedure initiated against me by federal, state or local authorities.

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

I have never been sued by a client.

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.

I have never been a party or otherwise involved as a litigant in any other legal proceedings.

I was a witness in the matter of *Commonwealth v. Darren Sabo*, CP-02-06648-2012, Court of Common Pleas, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Criminal Division. Judge Flaherty had presided over a matter wherein Mr. Sabo had been convicted of a crime and had filed a Post-Conviction Relief Act Petition. During the PCRA proceedings, Mr. Sabo sent to Judge Flaherty a letter requesting direction on how to comply with an Order of Court, along with a copy of an Order of Court that was purportedly signed by Judge Flaherty. The Order of Court that was attached to the letter was not a valid Order of Court and had not been issued by Judge Flaherty. The correspondence sent to Judge Flaherty was turned over to the Allegheny County Sheriff's Office, who initiated these charges. As part of my law clerk duties include processing Orders of Court related to PCRA Petitions, I was called as a witness to testify to the lack of authenticity of the Order returned to Judge Flaherty's office by Mr. Sabo.

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.

I have never 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.

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.

I am not currently, nor have I within the past five (5) years, suffered from any medical or other condition which could affect or impair my judgment, reliability or ability to perform the essential functions of a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County.

- 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.**

There are no circumstances that exist that would affect my ability to perform the function of a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County.

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

Attached please find the Amended Report and Recommendation filed on November 1, 2022 in the matter of *Wade, M. v. Wade, C.*, FD 21-009371, Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Family Division.

- 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.**

Allegheny County Bar Association, Member
Family Law Section, Member
Women in the Law Division, Member

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

August 2008—December 2008: Westmoreland County Community College, Youngwood, PA; Adjunct Faculty in Legal Assistant Program
Course Taught: Torts

January 2013--Present: Duquesne University School of Law, Pittsburgh, PA;
Adjunct Faculty
Course Taught: Trial Advocacy; Fall and Spring Semesters each year
In January 2013, the Honorable Judge Jeffrey A. Manning invited me to become his Co-Instructor for this Trial Advocacy course. We utilized this "team teaching" approach for the course until December 2020. Beginning in January 2021 through August 2023, I was the sole instructor for this course. In August 2023, the Honorable Edward J. Borkowski asked to assist in teaching the course.

October 25, 2019: Fundamentals of Family Law CLE
Participated on a panel through the Allegheny County Bar Association to present a CLE regarding the fundamental concepts of Family Law.

April 16, 2021: Collaborative Law Program Featuring Masters of the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania Family Division
Participated on a panel discussion regarding cases that discontinue through the collaborative process and proceed through the litigation track.

February 20, 2024: Matrimonial Inns of Court

Participated as a guest speaker at the Matrimonial Inns of Court meeting discussing issues related to complex support, equitable distribution, and procedures.

- 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.**

Alpha Gamma Delta Sorority, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA
Member; Risk Management Officer

Saint Elizabeth Elementary Fashion Show Committee, Pleasant Hills, PA
Raffle Basket Coordinator: 2016, 2017
Chairperson: 2018, 2019

Elizabeth Forward Swim Club, Elizabeth, PA
Fundraising Chair: August 2017 through August 2019
President: August 2019 through August 2023
Elizabeth Forward Swim Club is a 501(c)(3) non-profit youth sports organization dedicated to developing swimmers ranging in ages from 5 through 18.

Central Catholic Crew Team Booster Organization, Pittsburgh, PA
Secretary: August 2023 to the present
The Central Catholic Crew Team is a parent-run booster organization designed to support the coaching staff and team members of the Central Catholic High School Crew Team.

- 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.**

I have not received any honors, prizes, awards or other forms of recognition other than those already discussed.

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

I was born and raised in Wheeling, West Virginia in a working-class family. While I was young, my father was a boilermaker and my mother was a homemaker. When I was 10 years old, my father purchased the business that he operates to this day. My parents worked hard to provide my sister and I with all the essentials of life and impressed upon us the importance of family and the necessity of a diligent work ethic.

My parents prioritized education, as neither of my parents earned a college degree. I attended a very small, all girls, private, Catholic high school that instilled in me the concept that women were not bound by any limitations. My upbringing and education gave me the confidence necessary to pursue degrees in chemistry and law at Duquesne University.

After graduation, I quickly realized that a successful traditional career in the law requires a significant amount of time to be spent in the office, oftentimes to the detriment of time spent at home. When my husband and I decided to start a family, I recognized that this traditional career path was not harmonious with my idea of motherhood. To that end, I changed career paths from litigation attorney to judicial law clerk to allow me to strike this important and delicate balance between work and family. Being a judicial law clerk provided the flexibility that I needed to care for and raise my three young children as I had desired.

As my children grew up, and became more self-sufficient, I began to forge a unique career path. First, I began to accept appointments in the newly created position of Discovery Master in the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Family Division. I obtained my license to practice law in West Virginia to assist my father's business with various legal matters. Ultimately, I was appointed as a Permanent Divorce Hearing Officer in the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Family Division.

In retrospect, while I was creating a career that was in tune with my personal goals, I also created a career that has been spent in service of others. As a judicial law clerk, I reviewed motions, pleadings, and other filings to assist Judge Flaherty in effectuating a prompt and judicious outcome in matters pending before him. As a Discovery Master and Divorce Hearing Officer, I effectuated fair and equitable resolutions to matters assigned to me.

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 recognize that a Judge can be assigned to any division in the Court of Common Pleas. I have eighteen (18) years of experience working with Judges and Court Administrators in all divisions of the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County. However, I would like to become a Judge in the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County and serve in the Family Division to use my background and experience to assist the families of Allegheny County.

I recognize that there are unique challenges to litigants and counsel in Family Division, and I believe my background well qualifies me for this position. I have been immersed in Family Law, as a practitioner, law clerk, and hearing officer, for almost twenty (20) years and am well-versed in the relevant statutory and case law. I am adept at legal research and writing. I understand the law and how it applies to the human condition. I am decisive, punctual, and prepared. As a Hearing Officer, I maintain an even temperament and professional demeanor. I strive to view each matter in an objective manner and to render decisions that are supported by the law and facts of each case.

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

The most significant achievement in my life outside of my profession is raising three children with my husband, and providing them with a solid foundation, excellent education, and comfortable lifestyle. Additionally, and perhaps more grueling, I ran and completed the Marine Corps Marathon in 2015.

For most of my life, I was active, but not athletic. I did not consider athletic accomplishment to be something I would or could achieve. In my mind, major athletic events, such as a marathon, were reserved for serious and committed athletes.

In 2011, when my children were young, I started running in the evenings to improve my overall health and reduce the anxiety that comes with being a working mother. At first, completing one lap on a quarter-mile track was a challenge. Despite the difficulty, I continued running because I enjoyed the overall health benefits that it provided. As I continued running, I increased my mileage and completed a few 5k and 10k road races. But, a marathon was something that I did not think I could complete. It was beyond my athletic capabilities.

That mindset changed in 2014 when I was diagnosed with thyroid cancer. In the weeks and months that followed the diagnosis, I made a promise to myself that I would run a marathon. I would achieve what I had thought was unachievable, and I would prove to myself that I was capable of accomplishing anything.

After I concluded my treatment, my brother-in-law, an officer in the United States Navy, and I registered for the Marine Corps Marathon. We committed to a twenty (20) week training program and began training. On October 25, 2015, we ran and completed the Marathon. It was an amazing adventure and an accomplishment of which I am truly proud.

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

Duties of my judicial clerkship include creating an internship program and hiring undergraduate or law student interns within Judge Flaherty's Chambers. Our internship program was designed to create networking opportunities for our students and to strengthen legal research and writing skills. Within that program, I hired numerous undergraduate and law student interns from various law schools with diverse backgrounds.

In addition, throughout my tenure as an adjunct professor at Duquesne University School of Law, I have been a mentor to many former students, including students with diverse backgrounds.

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.

Jacquelyn A. Obara
Type or print name


Signature

3/14/24
Date