

**FLORIDA BAR
JUDICIAL CANDIDATE
VOLUNTARY SELF-DISCLOSURE STATEMENT**

**PLEASE BEAR IN MIND YOUR OBLIGATIONS UNDER JUDICIAL CANON NO. 7
IN PROVIDING ANSWERS TO THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.**

**THE FLORIDA BAR DOES NOT ASSUME ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR ANSWERS NOR WILL THE
BAR EDIT YOUR ANSWERS TO COMPORT WITH THE CANONS.**

Name: Ryan Will

Date disclosure statement completed: June 18, 2018

Judicial position sought: Circuit Judge

Jurisdiction: 7th Circuit

Jurisdiction(s) in which admitted to practice law:

Jurisdiction	Date Admitted
Florida	07/11/06
Alabama	04/27/07

Florida Bar No. 0024122

Years admitted to practice law: 2006-2018 (12 years)

Years in the legal profession: 2002-2018 (16 years)

Personal Statement:

In 100 words or less, without discussing any particular issue that may come before you as a judge, explain why you believe you would be a good judge:

Every day of my practice has been dedicated to making this community safe for children and families. To that end, I have guided thousands of individuals through our courts. Over my career, I have routinely and successfully handled difficult cases and prosecuted the most dangerous criminals in our society. I have experience in criminal and civil matters, juvenile, family law, probate, and real estate. But my real strength lies in the courtroom. In electing me, the people of the 7th Circuit will be choosing a trial judge with the experience and ability to help individuals resolve their problems.

FLORIDA BAR JUDICIAL CANDIDATE
VOLUNTARY SELF-DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Prior Candidacy in Judicial Election(s):

If you have run in an election for judicial office before, please list the court, relevant date(s) and position:

Court	Relevant Dates	Position
n/a		

Prior and/or Current Judicial Experience:

If you have held judicial office, please state the Courts involved, the dates of service, and the office:

Court	Relevant Dates	Office
n/a		

Number of evidentiary hearings, trials and/or oral arguments over which you have presided:

0-5 6-15 16-30 31-50 51-100 101-200 201+

Additional comments:

Please provide the number of jury trials _____ and the number of bench trials _____ over which you have presided.

Additional comments:

Current judges may respond to the following questions regarding legal practice only with reference to pre-judicial legal experience.

Area(s) of practice:

Civil Criminal Government Other _____

FLORIDA BAR JUDICIAL CANDIDATE
VOLUNTARY SELF-DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Please list the primary areas in which you have specialized or have legal expertise and allocate a percentage of your practice to each area.

During my career, I have handled a broad array of legal issues. Since 2010, I have limited my practice to the prosecution of homicides occurring in the 7th Circuit. To that end, I have spent the last 8 years helping individuals overcome the violent and brutal loss of a loved one while dealing with a myriad of legal issues. My primary task has been the prosecution of the murder, but there have been other related issues in the civil and family courts, to include issues of the estate, child custody, mental health, and substance abuse.

Number of evidentiary hearings, trials and/or oral arguments in which you have participated as legal counsel:

0-5 6-15 16-30 31-50 51-100 101-200 201+

Additional comments:

Please provide the number of jury trials approx 70 and the number of bench trials unknown in which you have participated.

Additional comments:

Of the 70 (approx) trials listed above, more than 30 cases have been 1st Degree Murder.

Number of arbitration hearings in which you have participated as legal counsel or hearing officer:

0-5 6-15 16-30 31-50 51-100 101-200 201+

Additional comments:

Arbitration is not part of the criminal law and therefore not within my area of practice.

Number of administrative hearings in which you have participated as legal counsel or hearing officer:

0-5 6-15 16-30 31-50 51-100 101-200 201+

Additional comments:

To the extent applicable, please quantify any additional alternative dispute resolution/negotiation experience:

During my time at the State Attorney's office, I have handled more than 10,000 cases. Each of those cases has been negotiated, and many times to the satisfaction of both parties. In representing the interests of victims, it has been my pleasure to negotiate restitution. On behalf of the State, I have negotiated punishment, probation, and incarceration. Approximately 98% of criminal cases are resolved without the need for trial. Though few homicide cases can be resolved short of life incarceration, it is something that I discuss with each family. Negotiation can be a useful skill, even at the highest levels of the criminal practice, and under certain circumstances.

FLORIDA BAR JUDICIAL CANDIDATE
VOLUNTARY SELF-DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Have you ever been Board Certified in any area(s) of practice? If yes, please identify:

The area(s) of practice:

n/a

When you were certified in each area of practice:

n/a

Whether you are currently certified in those areas:

n/a

Please provide the percentage of your practice that has involved representing plaintiffs 100 % and the percentage that has involved representing defendants 0 %.

Undergraduate Education:

Name of institution:

University of Florida

Degree received/major:

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Minor in Economics

Academic awards, recognitions, honors, leadership roles and participation in academic organizations:

Florida Academic Scholars (full scholarship); Florida State University Honors Program 1998-1999; Undergraduate Studies Dean's List 1999 & 2002; Who's Who Among American Universities and Colleges

Law School Education:

Name of institution: Cumberland School of Law

Degree received: Juris Doctor

Internships/in-school clerkships, academic awards, recognitions, honors, leadership roles and participation in academic organizations (*e.g.*, law review, moot court, legal clinics):

Dean's List at Cumberland 2003, 2004, 2005; Nominated for Who's Who by Cumberland Faculty & Staff; Cumberland Moot Court Program; Cumberland Trial Advocacy Program; Cumberland Client Counseling & Negotiation Program; Cumberland Trial Advocacy Board; Cumberland School of Law Trial Advocacy Board (partial scholarship); Certified in Trial Advocacy by Cumberland School of Law; National Member of the Order of Barristers

Number of hours devoted to public work while in undergraduate 160 (approx) or law school 250 (approx).

Additional Educational History (if applicable):

Name of Institution	Degree Received	Special awards, recognitions, honors, or leadership roles (if any)
Florida State University	n/a (enrolled 1998-1999)	see above

Employment:

Present employer: Office of the State Attorney

Number of years with present employer: 2006 - present (12 years)

Present position: Assistant State Attorney, Homicide Investigation Unit

Explain relevant experience or skills gained that you will bring to the bench:

Please see attached.

List All Prior Employers and Occupations, Legal or Non-legal, for the Last Ten Years:

Employer: n/a _____

Number of years employed with this employer: _____

Position/specialty: _____

Explain relevant experience or skills gained that you will bring to the bench:

Employer: _____

Number of years employed with this employer: _____

Position/specialty: _____

Explain relevant experience or skills gained that you will bring to the bench:

Employer: _____

Number of years employed with this employer: _____

Position/specialty: _____

Explain relevant experience or skills gained that you will bring to the bench:

FLORIDA BAR JUDICIAL CANDIDATE
VOLUNTARY SELF-DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Law Organizations:

Please list legal organizations in which you have been an active member for more than two years and all legal organizations in which you hold a leadership position or which required nomination to join:

Organization Name	Dates of Participation	Office Held (If applicable)
Volusia County Bar Association	2006 - present	Executive Committee Member / Officer
Dunn-Blount Inns of Court	2009 - present	Member
Volusia County Teen Court	2013 - present	Volunteer

Honors and Publications:

Please list relevant published articles or books that you have authored, speeches or lectures you have given, and honors, prizes or awards you have received:

Title	Date	Additional Information
Please see attached		

Public Service – Pro Bono, Volunteer Work or Military Service:

Please provide the dates, activities and any special accomplishments, honors or leadership roles you have played in volunteer, public or military service organizations or in providing pro bono, volunteer, public or military service:

Please see attached

Discipline:

If you have ever been found, either involuntarily or by consent, to have committed a violation of The Florida Bar Disciplinary Rules, the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration or the Florida Code of Judicial Conduct for which the discipline imposed was one of the following: (a) public reprimand; (b) suspension; or (c) disbarment, please provide the following information:

Date of charge: September 2015

Date of disposition: December 31, 2015

Rule(s) found to have violated: Rule 3-7.9

Discipline imposed for rule violation(s): Written Reprimand

Date reinstated to the Bar or bench: n/a

Any conditions imposed for reinstatement (e.g., financial penalty, probation or public service):

n/a

CERTIFICATION

I certify that the information given on The Florida Bar Judicial Candidate Voluntary Self-Disclosure Statement is complete, true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Executed this 24 day of June, 2018.

Name Ryan Will

Certification Confirmation (must be checked prior to submission):

Explain relevant skills or experience gained that you will bring to the bench:

Since I was a young boy, it has been my desire to earn a judicial seat in this community. It is my home and I have a vested interest in the future. To that end, every day of my career has focused on serving the needs of our citizens and working to improve our quality of life. As a prosecutor, I have helped thousands of victims while offering a fair and just result for criminal defendants.

Over the past twelve years I have amassed a nearly flawless trial record. Virtually all of my cases have been appealed; only one conviction has been overturned. In electing a Circuit Judge, the voters are essentially selecting a traveling trial judge. As a homicide prosecutor, it has been my essential function to serve as a traveling trial attorney. I have litigated high-profile cases in Volusia, Flagler, Putnam, and St Johns County.

I have conducted sixty-nine criminal jury trials. Twenty-nine of those trials have related to murder charges. Of sixty-nine total trials, six were lost. The last not guilty verdict was rendered in 2010. There have also been hundreds of sentencing hearings, stand your ground / self defense hearings, and hearings for violation of probation that can be every bit as difficult and time consuming as a trial. For instance, Jeffrey Farina was recently before the Court for re-sentencing in the 1992 murder of Michelle Van Ness at the Taco Bell in Daytona Beach. The proceeding lasted 2 weeks.

As a prosecutor, I have spent the majority of my career in the courtroom. One of my most significant contributions to this position is my litigation experience. In my career, I have presented and cross-examined experts of every discipline. I have wrestled with the evidence code and argued all points of procedure. I have litigated at the highest level of the criminal practice. Those same skills can be applied to the civil and family courts. The rules are the same, no matter the forum. Over the last ten years, I chose to limit my practice to the litigation of high-profile criminal cases. The skills that I have developed can be adapted to any discipline.

As a Judge, I would strive to deliver the same quality workmanship that I have provided in practice. Success and achievement are driven by careful attention to detail and meticulous preparation. No doubt, a judicial position will require the same hard work that has generated success in my current role.

Though the majority of my career has been limited to criminal prosecution, I spent a year drafting and negotiating contracts for the extraction of oil and gas prior to joining the State. In that time, I gained substantial experience in real property, contract, and probate law. While in school, I worked in civil law firms and as a judicial staff attorney, handling civil and administrative matters. And over the years, I have helped friends with a myriad of issues, from divorce and child custody to worker's compensation and employment litigation. I have frequently appeared in civil arenas related to pending criminal matters being litigated at the State Attorney's Office. Nearly all criminal cases have a component of mental health and drug addiction. Juvenile delinquency often involves dependency. Sex crimes expand to the involuntary civil commitment of predators. Homicide routinely brings questions about the estate. By choice, my recent work has been primarily focused in criminal prosecution. But, my

experiences can be universally applied. The role of a prosecutor is never limited to the criminal practice.

As a senior litigator in the State Attorney's Office, it has been a pleasure to travel the Circuit and appear before many courts. There have also been opportunities to attend hearings in other jurisdictions. In each location, there has been an occasion to observe the many ways that a Judge will conduct business and handle his or her affairs. If given the opportunity, I would continue to study the work of my colleagues and accept guidance from more practiced jurists.

I have lived my life according to a code that recognizes hard work will be rewarded. That perseverance and dedication will always make a difference. That a strong moral compass will steer you to your destination. These are the characteristics of a life well-lived. But they are also the hallmarks of a qualified candidate.

If elected, I will always give attorneys and litigants an opportunity to be fully and fairly heard. I will treat each individual with respect and dignity. I will never place a premium on form over substance. Our citizens are entitled to consistent, reliable, and predictable outcomes that are generated through an adherence to precedent. And, I will be mindful of the resources expended by others. Whether time or money, someone has sacrificed in order to appear before the Court.

It has always been my belief that a trial attorney is great because he or she is well prepared. If elected, I would give the same effort from the Bench. The people of this community deserve hard-working public servants. It would be my honor to serve our citizens.

Honors and Publications:

Recognized as the State Attorney's "Top Gun" in 2013 & 2014, an honor reserved for the top trial attorney in the Office

Public Appearances and Lectures:

- It's more than a Playground: Elevate Daytona, July 19, 2018
- Homicide Investigation & Prosecution, an Overview Daytona Beach Rotary West: May 2018.
- Homicide Investigation and Prosecution, an Overview Atlantic High School, Academy for Law and Government: April 2018
- The 4th Amendment for Crime Scene Investigators Advanced Education Seminar for Criminal Investigations and Crime Scenes, Daytona State College: December 2017.

- Fingerprint Evidence and Persuasive Courtroom Presentation Advanced Education for Forensic Examiners & Print Technicians, Daytona State College: July 2017
- Crime Scene and the Courtroom Law Enforcement Training, Daytona State College: March 2017
- Digital Evidence: The Legalities of Social Media & Modern Communication Presented to Dunn-Blount Inns of Court for Volusia & Flagler Counties: March 2017
- Digital Evidence and Computer Forensics: A Prosecutor's Perspective Volusia County Sheriff's Office Seminar for Advanced Crime Scene Investigation: September 2016
- Crime Scene Investigation and the Courtroom Law Enforcement Training, Daytona State College: July, 2016
- Crime Scene Investigation and the Courtroom Law Enforcement Training, Basic Crime Scene Investigations, Daytona State College: March 2016
- The 4th Amendment – A Primer for Elementary Students Four Part Educational Series & Moot Court Presentation at Grace Academy, Ormond Beach: February 2016
- Death & Injury Investigations Detective's College, Daytona State College: August 2015
- Tips for Testifying and the Psychology of Persuasion: A Prosecutor's Perspective Detective's College, Daytona State College: July 2015
- Maintaining the Investigation & Ensuring a Successful Prosecution Volusia County Sheriff's Office Seminar for Advanced Crime Scene Investigation: February 2015
- Major Cases, Tips for Testifying & the Psychology of Persuasion Criminal Justice Seminar, Daytona State College: October 2014
- Tips for Testifying and the Psychology of Persuasion: A Prosecutor's Perspective New Deputy Training and Courtroom Presentation, Presented by the Office of the State Attorney: September 2014
- Tips for Testifying and the Psychology of Persuasion: A Prosecutor's Perspective 2014
- Death and Crime Scene Investigation Conference, Presented by the Volusia County Sheriff's Office and the Office of the Medical Examiner: September 2014

- The Criminal Justice System & Effective Presentation of Evidence Atlantic High School, Academy of Law and Government: February 2014
- Introduction to the Criminal Justice System – Investigation & Prosecution of Crime University of Central Florida, Undergraduate Trial Advocacy Program in Legal Studies: September 2013
- Death and Injury Investigations: A Prosecutor’s Perspective Criminal Justice Seminar, Daytona State College: February 2013
- Fundamentals of Evidence – the Origins of Hearsay & Implementation of the Rule University of Central Florida, Undergraduate Evidence Course in Legal Studies: September 2012
- Introduction to the Criminal Justice System – Investigation & Prosecution of Crime University of Central Florida, Undergraduate Trial Advocacy Program in Legal Studies: March 2011
- The Legislative Response – Florida’s Sexually Violent Predators & the JLA Volusia County Sexual Assault Response Team: September 2010
- Fundamentals of Evidence Collection and the Importance of Accurate Reporting Volusia County Sexual Assault Response Team: April 2010
- Sex Crimes Prosecution Volusia County Sexual Assault Response Team: October 2009
- Sex Crimes – Statistics, Investigation, Reporting and Trial Preparation Volusia County Sexual Assault Response Team: May 2009
- Trial Preparation 101 – The Importance of Witness Preparation Orange County Association of Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners: August 2008
- Trial Preparation 101 – The Importance of Witness Preparation Volusia County Sexual Assault Response Team: July, 2008

Public Service - pro bono, volunteer work or military service:

As a condition of my government employment, I am prohibited from representing individual clients. Instead, I have actively participated with local organizations and occasionally assisted my homeowner's association with legal matters.

In 2013, I created and established Florida's first Playground to Prevent Neighborhood Sex Predators. Under Florida law, no sexual predator may live within 1000' of a playground. Local ordinances give greater protection, extending the zone of protection to 2500' and expanding the list of dangerous criminals that may not live within that zone. By using these laws to create a zone of exclusion, I protected a neighborhood of nearly 400 homes and forever gave children a safe place to play. Since that time, I have consulted with other communities to ensure the protection of our children. To my knowledge 8 additional playgrounds have been constructed throughout the State. Several more will be added to local developments later this year and I am excited to announce that the entire area West of I-95 in Daytona Beach will soon be closed to the relocation efforts of sexual predators. This project has been personally meaningful and given me a wealth of experience in areas of the law outside my daily function as a homicide prosecutor. I have had the opportunity to work with civil, criminal, and administrative rules that govern the prohibition of individuals and the construction of these structures.

Since 2013, I have volunteered with the Volusia County Teen Court. During that time, I have served as a Teen Court Judge and Teen Court trial team consultant, providing approximately 10-20 hours of service per year.

Additionally, I volunteer in the local schools. In a typical year, I will spend several hours speaking with students. Whether an impromptu session in my wife's elementary class, students enrolled in the law academy at Atlantic High School, or University scholars seeking to expand their education, I maintain a close contact with academia and enjoy helping the next generation.

Last year, Assistant Public Defender George Burden and I conducted a four-part legal seminar for Robin Gentry's fourth grade class at Grace Academy in Ormond Beach. The seminar featured 3 instructional lessons on the 4th amendment. We worked with the students to educate them and helped them prepare a moot court argument. The final lesson allowed the students to present simplified oral arguments. The seminar was loosely based upon Tangerine, a book that we read with the class. I gave approximately 20-25 hours to the project.

Explanation of Disciplinary History:

In December of 2012, Jerry Crew was tried for the offenses of Second Degree Felony Murder and Robbery with a Firearm. Substantial, competent evidence demonstrated that Crew assisted three young drug dealers in robbing a competing dealer. At the time of the crime, Crew was in his mid-fifties. The young dealers ranged in age from teenage years to early twenties. For his role in luring their competitor to the scene, Crew was paid crack cocaine and was promised to receive all stolen narcotics. The robbery attempt failed, and several weapons were fired. Crew was responsible for a gang-land-style war between the young men. Of the seven individuals present, four were shot. A teenage boy was killed. During my closing argument, I referred to Crew as a "crackhead". The Florida Bar issued a written reprimand for demeaning the defendant.