

**Application for Nomination to the  
Fifth District Court of Appeal**



**Hon. Therese Ann Savona**

**June 5, 2026**

## APPLICATION FOR NOMINATION TO THE FIFTH DISTRICT COURT OF APPEAL

**Instructions:** Respond fully to the questions asked below. Please make all efforts to include your full answer to each question in this document. You may attach additional pages, as necessary, however it is discouraged. In addition to the application, you must provide a recent color photograph to help identify yourself.

**Full Name:** Therese Ann Savona

**Social Security No.:** [REDACTED]

**Florida Bar No.:** 0077618

**Date Admitted to Practice in Florida:** 4/21/2010

1. Please state your current employer and title, including any professional position and any public or judicial office you hold, your business address and telephone number.

Ninth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida – *Circuit Court Judge*  
Jon B. Morgan Osceola County Courthouse  
2 Courthouse Square  
Kissimmee, FL 34741-5487  
(407) 742-2499

2. Please state your current residential address, including city, county, and zip code. Indicate how long you have resided at this location and how long you have lived in Florida. Additionally, please provide a telephone number where you can be reached (preferably a cell phone number), and your preferred email address.

My address is [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] I have lived in Florida my entire life. My cell phone  
number is [REDACTED] My preferred email address is [REDACTED]

3. State your birthdate and place of birth.

I was born on September 10, 1983, in Winter Park, Florida.

4. Are you a registered voter in Florida (Y/N)?

Yes.

5. Please list all courts (including state bar admissions) and administrative bodies having special admissions requirements to which you have ever been admitted to practice, giving the dates of admission, and if applicable, state whether you have ever been suspended or resigned. Please explain the reason for any lapse in membership.

<b>Court</b>	<b>Date of Admission</b>
State of Florida	April 21, 2010
Supreme Court of the United States	November 2, 2015
Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals	May 15, 2018
United States District Court for the Northern District of Florida	June 23, 2011
United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida	August 4, 2016
United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida*	June 18, 2010

\*I had a lapse in membership due to no longer practicing in the Southern District. This membership is current.

6. Have you ever been known by any aliases? If so, please indicate and when you were known by such alias.

No.

**EDUCATION:**

7. List in reverse chronological order each secondary school, college, university, law school or any other institution of higher education attended and indicate for each the dates of attendance, whether a degree was received, the date the degree was received, class standing, and graduating GPA (if your class standing or graduating GPA is unknown, please request the same from such school).

<b>School</b>	<b>Class Standing</b>	<b>Dates of Attendance</b>	<b>Degree</b>
St. Thomas University, School of Law –	Top 70%	Aug. 2006-May 2009	J.D. (May 16, 2009)
Rollins College	4.0 GPA	Summer 2003, Summer 2004	N/A (only took summer classes)
University of Miami	3.5 GPA	Aug. 2002-May 2006	B.S. in Communication (May 12, 2006)
Bishop Moore Catholic High School	Ranked 17 of 261	Aug. 1998-May 2002	High School Diploma

8. List and describe any organizations, clubs, fraternities or sororities, and extracurricular activities you engaged in during your higher education. For each, list any positions or titles you held and the dates of participation.

St. Thomas University Law Review

- Notes and Comments Editor (2008-2009)
- Member (2007-2009)

St. Thomas University School of Law Moot Court Team

- Moot Court Executive Board – *Secretary* (2008-2009)
- Member (2007-2009)

Robert Orseck Memorial Moot Court Competition

- Coach – *First Place* (Summer 2008)

John J. Gibbons Criminal Procedure Moot Court Competition

- Competitor (Spring 2008)

Burton D. Wechsler National First Amendment Moot Court Competition

- Research Assistant (Fall 2007)

**EMPLOYMENT:**

9. List in reverse chronological order all full-time jobs or employment (including internships and clerkships) you have held since the age of 21. Include the name and address of the employer, job title(s) and dates of employment. For non-legal employment, please briefly describe the position and provide a business address and telephone number.

Ninth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida  
Jon B. Morgan Osceola County Courthouse  
2 Courthouse Square  
Kissimmee, FL 34741-5487  
Job Title: Circuit Court Judge  
Dates of Employment: May 2026 – Present

Cole, Scott & Kissane, P.A  
1900 Summit Tower Blvd., Suite 400  
Orlando, FL 32810  
Job Title: Partner (Jan. 2019 – May 2026); Associate (Sept. 2015 – Dec. 2018)  
Dates of Employment: July 2025 – May 2026; Sept. 2015 – May 2025

Rissman, Barrett, Hurt, Donahue, McLain & Mangan, P.A  
201 E. Pine Street  
15th Floor  
Orlando, FL 32801  
Job Title: Senior Counsel  
Dates of Employment: May 2025 – July 2025

Florida Department of Health, Prosecution Services Unit  
4052 Bald Cypress Way  
Tallahassee, FL 32399  
Job Title: Chief Appellate Counsel  
Dates of Employment: Nov. 2012 – Sept. 2015

Office of the Attorney General, Criminal Appellate Division  
PL-01, The Capitol  
Tallahassee, FL 32399  
Job Title: Assistant Attorney General  
Dates of Employment: Aug. 2010 – Nov. 2012

Ice Legal, P.A.  
6586 Hypoluxo Road, Suite 350  
Lake Worth, FL 33467  
Job Title: Associate  
Dates of Employment: May 2010 – June 2010

Ninth Judicial Circuit Court, Hon. John M. Kest  
Osceola County Courthouse  
2 Courthouse Square  
Kissimmee, FL 34741  
Job Title: Intern  
Dates of Employment: Sept. 2009 – Dec. 2009

Miami-Dade Public Defender's Office  
St. Thomas University School of Law, Appellate Litigation Clinic  
1320 NW 14th Street  
Miami, FL 33125  
Job Title: Certified Legal Intern  
Dates of Employment: Aug. 2008 – May 2009

Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office  
1350 NW 12th Avenue  
Miami, FL 33136  
Job Title: Intern  
Dates of Employment: Summer 2008

San Pedro Scripture Camp  
2400 Dike Road  
Winter Park, FL 32792  
Job Title: Assistant Director  
Dates of Employment: Summer 2006

I assisted the camp director in developing schedules, events, and programs for an overnight scripture camp for middle school students through high school students. This role also required me to collaborate with other counselors and staff at the San Pedro Center to ensure

the camp was compliant with rules and regulations, that campers were accounted for at all times, and that camp guidelines were in place. Working at San Pedro Scripture Camp was more than an administrative role as each day included activities (sports, outdoor, lake access, worship, reflection, prayer) that we would take part alongside the counselors and campers.

- 10.** Describe the general nature of your current practice including any certifications which you possess; additionally, if your practice is substantially different from your prior practice or if you are not now practicing law, give details of prior practice. Describe your typical clients or former clients and the problems for which they sought your services.

I am Board Certified in Appellate Practice by the Florida Bar. I received this certification in 2018 and re-certified in 2023.

I currently serve as a Circuit Judge for the Ninth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida in a Unified Family division, which includes both domestic relations and domestic violence matters. Along with presiding over all aspects of domestic relations litigation, the domestic violence portion of my division includes ruling on temporary and final injunctions for stalking, domestic violence, dating violence, and sexual violence, as well as ruling on emergency motions. The issues, matters, and cases that comprise my current division assignment are substantially different than my prior practice.

From 2018 through May 2026, my practice was devoted to civil appellate practice in Florida's appellate courts and the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals. During that time, I was responsible for all appellate filings, briefs, mediations, and oral arguments. I also assisted trial attorneys with litigation support, including drafting: evidentiary and dispositive motions; responses to evidentiary and dispositive motions; jury instructions and verdict forms; objections to trial exhibits; *Daubert* motions and responses to *Daubert* motions; motions for rehearing/reconsideration on dispositive motions; and post-trial motions. From 2015 through approximately 2018, I handled civil trial litigation in cases involving medical malpractice, wrongful death, professional liability, and condominium/homeowners' association. In both the trial and appellate cases, I was retained by insurance carriers to represent the interests of their insureds as defense counsel.

Prior to handling civil appeals, my professional career began as an Assistant Attorney General with Florida's Office of the Attorney General in Tallahassee where I handled criminal appeals from 2010 through 2012. I was responsible for all appellate briefs and oral arguments in my cases.

Then, from 2012 through 2015, I served as the Chief Appellate Counsel for the Florida Department of Health. My practice focused on administrative law appeals from final orders issued by professional boards against health care professionals, responses to petitions for review of emergency suspension/restriction orders, and assisted in reviewing emergency suspension and restriction orders prior to being signed by Florida's Surgeon General.

11. What percentage of your appearance in court in the last five years or in the last five years of practice\* (include the dates) was:

	Court		Area of Practice
Federal Appellate (2021- May 2026)	_____ 3 %	Civil	_____ 100 %
Federal Trial	_____ %	Criminal	_____ %
Federal Other	_____ %	Family	_____ %
State Appellate (2021- May 2026)	_____ 94 %	Probate	_____ %
State Trial (2021- May 2026)	_____ 3 %	Other	_____ %
State Administrative	_____ %		
State Other	_____ %		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>_____ 100 %</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>_____ 100 %</b>

*\*The percentages are premised on my practice before taking the bench on May 26, 2026. If percentages are requested on my current division assignment, they would reflect 100% for state trial and 100% for family.*

If your appearance in court the last five years is substantially different from your prior practice, please provide a brief explanation:

My current judicial assignment is in state court in a Unified Family division. This is substantially different than my civil practice prior to being appointed. In the last five years of private practice, I handled all aspects of appellate cases and practiced before state and federal appellate courts. As an appellate practitioner, I also provided litigation support to trial attorneys, including attending trial as appellate counsel.

12. In your lifetime, how many (number) of the cases that you tried to verdict, judgment, or final decision were:

Jury?	_____	Non-jury?	_____
Arbitration?	_____	Administrative Bodies?	_____
Appellate?	<u>647</u>		

13. Please list every case that you have argued (or substantially participated) in front of the United States Supreme Court, a United States Circuit Court, the Florida Supreme Court, or a Florida District Court of Appeal, providing the case name, jurisdiction, case number, date of argument, and the name(s), e-mail address(es), and telephone number(s) for opposing appellate counsel. If there is a published opinion, please also include that citation.

*Sinno v. Walmart Stores East, LP*

Fourth District Court of Appeal

Case No. 4D24-1752

February 24, 2026

Unpublished Disposition – Per Curiam Affirmed

Opposing counsel:

Brian Lee, [blee@forthepeople.com](mailto:blee@forthepeople.com), (904) 456-6816

*Roe v. NPC International, Inc.*

Fifth District Court of Appeal

Case No. 5D24-2323

January 8, 2026

429 So. 3d 124

Opposing counsel:

Dimitrios A. Peteves, [dpeteves@appellate-firm.com](mailto:dpeteves@appellate-firm.com), (904) 350-0075

Bryan S. Gowdy, [bgowdy@appellate-firm.com](mailto:bgowdy@appellate-firm.com), (904) 350-0075

*Devine v. Anga and Bayfront HMA Convenient Care*

Second District Court of Appeal

Case No. 2D24-0814

August 13, 2025

Unpublished Disposition – Per Curiam Affirmed

Opposing counsel:

Ralph L. Gonzalez, [rgonzalez@yerridlaw.com](mailto:rgonzalez@yerridlaw.com), (813) 222-8222

C. Steven Yerrid, [syerrid@yerridlaw.com](mailto:syerrid@yerridlaw.com), (813) 222-8222

*Preferred Orthopedics of the Palm Beaches, P.A. and Michael Zeide, M.D. v. Awadallah*

Fourth District Court of Appeal

Case No. 4D24-0625

July 8, 2025

Unpublished Disposition – Per Curiam Affirmed

Co- counsel:

Conor B. Dugan, [cdugan@southbank.legal](mailto:cdugan@southbank.legal), (616) 706-1103

Joseph T. Nawrocki, [jnawrocki@southblank.legal](mailto:jnawrocki@southblank.legal), (574) 807-8243

Amicus counsel (for client):

Andrew S. Bolin, [asb@bolin-law.com](mailto:asb@bolin-law.com), (813) 848-0600

Opposing counsel:

Timothy Kenison, [tkenison@goldlaw.com](mailto:tkenison@goldlaw.com), (561) 222-2222  
Spencer Kuvin, [skuvin@goldlaw.com](mailto:skuvin@goldlaw.com), (561) 222-2222

*Loren v. Once Upon a Time Group*

Fourth District Court of Appeal

Case No. 4D23-3154

June 17, 2025

415 So. 3d 222

Opposing counsel:

Annabel C. Majewski, [annabel@wassonandassociates.com](mailto:annabel@wassonandassociates.com), (305) 372-5220

Sam Mandelbaum, [hoya595@yahoo.com](mailto:hoya595@yahoo.com), (813) 505-1322

*Schramm v. Adams Homes of Northwest Florida, Inc.*

Fifth District Court of Appeal

Case No. 5D24-0445

May 13, 2025

414 So. 3d 352

Opposing counsel:

Brian Lee, [blee@forthepeople.com](mailto:blee@forthepeople.com), (904) 456-6816

*Bilal v. Hodges, et al.*

Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals

Case No. 23-11703

March 26, 2025

2025 WL 3240264 (unpublished)

Co-Appellee counsel:

Alyssa Yarbrough, [alyssayarbrough@warnerlaw.us](mailto:alyssayarbrough@warnerlaw.us), (850) 784-7772

Opposing counsel:

Thomas V. Burch, [tvburch@uga.edu](mailto:tvburch@uga.edu), (706) 542-5236

*Eloquence on the Bay Condominium Association, Inc. v. CDC Builders, Inc.*

Third District Court of Appeal

Case No. 3D23-592

May 15, 2024

415 So. 3d 259

Opposing counsel:

Robert M. Klein, [robert.klein@fmglaw.com](mailto:robert.klein@fmglaw.com), (305) 670-3700

*John Dinallo, as personal representative of the Estate of Jacqueline Dinallo, Deceased v. Charles Kayat, P.A.; Alka Nair, M.D.; and Gulf Coast HMA Physician Management, LLC D/B/A Gulf Coast Medical Group Sarasota Primary Care*

Second District Court of Appeal

Case No. 2D22-4194

April 23, 2024

Unpublished Disposition – Per Curiam Affirmed

Opposing counsel:

Brian Lee, [blee@forthepeople.com](mailto:blee@forthepeople.com), (904) 456-6816

*Lynn Steele, individually, and as Personal Representative of to the Estate of David Steele v. Select Quote Insurance Services, Inc.*

Second District Court of Appeal

Case No. 2D22-3756

February 21, 2024

Unpublished Disposition – Per Curiam Affirmed

Opposing counsel:

Gabriella E. Lopez, [service-glopez@bankerlopez.com](mailto:service-glopez@bankerlopez.com), (813) 221-1500

Raymond A. Haas, [haas@hdlawpartners.com](mailto:haas@hdlawpartners.com), (813) 280-1364

*Watts v. Joggers Run Property Owners Association, Inc.*

Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeal

Case No. 22-13763

January 25, 2024

133 F.4th 1032

Opposing counsel:

Jennifer S. Carroll, [jcarroll@jscappeal.com](mailto:jcarroll@jscappeal.com), (561) 478-2102

Amicus counsel:

Reed Colfax, [rcolfax@relmanlaw.com](mailto:rcolfax@relmanlaw.com), (505) 983-1601

Nicholas Abbott, [nabbott@relmanlaw.com](mailto:nabbott@relmanlaw.com), (202) 728-1888

*Hines v. Westgate Resorts, Inc. and Westgate Vacation Villas, LLC*

Sixth District Court of Appeal

Case No. 6D23-1401

November 16, 2023

376 So. 3d 92

Opposing counsel:

Geoffery B. Marks, [gmarks@gbmlegal.com](mailto:gmarks@gbmlegal.com), (305) 505-7615

*Jan Seligman and Marc Seligman v. The Oasis Master Association*

Second District Court of Appeal

Case No. 2D22-1687

October 25, 2023

Unpublished Disposition – Per Curiam Affirmed

Opposing counsel:

Dineen Pashoukos Wasylik, [dineen@ip-appeals.com](mailto:dineen@ip-appeals.com), (813) 778-5161

*Zinman v. L.A. Fitness International, Inc.*

Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals

Case No. 21-12385

September 13, 2022

2022 WL 8019384 (unpublished)

Opposing counsel:

Corey Jason Zinman, [coreyjzinmanesq@gmail.com](mailto:coreyjzinmanesq@gmail.com), (561) 234-1792

*Rodman v. Dead Bug Edwards/Praetorian Insurance Company*

First District Court of Appeal

Case No. 1D21-2456

July 20, 2022

Dismissed due to settlement after oral argument

Opposing counsel:

William J. McCabe, [billjmccabe@earthlink.net](mailto:billjmccabe@earthlink.net), (407) 403-6111

*Good Old Days, Investments, LLC v. Boca West Country Club, Inc. and Boca West Mater Association, Inc.*

Fourth District Court of Appeal

Case No. 4D21-1391

June 28, 2022

Unpublished Disposition – Per Curiam Affirmed

Opposing counsel:

Morgan L. Weinstein, [morgan@twiglaw.com](mailto:morgan@twiglaw.com), (954) 540-2755

*Good Old Days Investments, LLC, et al. v. Boca West Country Club, Inc and Boca West Master Association, Inc.*

Fourth District Court of Appeal

Case No. 4D20-1246

May 10, 2022

Dismissed after oral argument for lack of jurisdiction

Opposing counsel:

Donna Greenspan Solomon, [donna@solomonappeals.com](mailto:donna@solomonappeals.com), (561) 762-9932

*Thayer v. Randy Marion Chevrolet Buick Cadillac, LLC*

Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals

Case No. 21-10744

April 6, 2022

30 F.4th 1290

Opposing counsel:

Brian Lee, [blee@forthepeople.com](mailto:blee@forthepeople.com), (904) 456-6845

*TMH Medical Services v. Platinum-HR, LLC, et al.*

Second District Court of Appeal

Case No. 2D20-1951

August 18, 2021

Unpublished Disposition – Per Curiam Affirmed

Opposing counsel:

Rosemary Hayes, [rhayes@const-law.com](mailto:rhayes@const-law.com), (407) 649-9974

Carly Newman, [cnewman@const-law.com](mailto:cnewman@const-law.com), (407) 649-9974

*Palace Resorts, Inc., et al v. Chacko*

Third District Court of Appeal

Case No. 3D19-1015

February 21, 2020

Unpublished Disposition – Per Curiam Affirmed

Opposing counsel:

Brant C. Hadaway, [bhadaway@diazreus.com](mailto:bhadaway@diazreus.com), (305) 375-9220

Gary E. Davidson, [gdaavidson@diazreus.com](mailto:gdaavidson@diazreus.com), (305) 375-9220

Xingjian Zhao, [jeff.zhao@alibaba-inc.com](mailto:jeff.zhao@alibaba-inc.com), 85222155100

*Security First Insurance Company v. True Builders, Inc. a/a/o Lorenzo Rivera-Cruz*

Second District Court of Appeal

Case No. 2D17-5165

March 5, 2019

Unpublished Disposition – Per Curiam Affirmed

Opposing counsel:

Nicholas A. Shannin, [nshannin@shanninlaw.com](mailto:nshannin@shanninlaw.com), (407) 985-2222

*Poornima & Avanash Charitable Foundation, Inc. v. The River Club Association, Inc.*

Fifth District Court of Appeal

Case No. 5D17-2410

December 13, 2018

Unpublished Disposition – Per Curiam Affirmed

Opposing counsel:

Diego Handel, [dhandel@bellsouth.net](mailto:dhandel@bellsouth.net), (386) 252-4493

*Florida Department of Health v. Choy*

First District Court of Appeal

Case No. 1D14-3233

March 10, 2015

Unpublished Disposition – Per Curiam Affirmed

Opposing counsel:

Timothy M. Cerio, [tim.cerio@citizensfla.com](mailto:tim.cerio@citizensfla.com), (850) 521-8644

Andy V. Bardos, [andy.bardos@gray-robinson.com](mailto:andy.bardos@gray-robinson.com), (850) 577-9090

Kristie Hatcher-Bolin, [kristie.hatcher-bolin@gray-robinson.com](mailto:kristie.hatcher-bolin@gray-robinson.com),  
(863) 284-2256

Amy W. Schrader, [aschrader@bakerdonelson.com](mailto:aschrader@bakerdonelson.com), (850) 251-2671

Jay A. Ziskind, [jaz@ziskindlaw.com](mailto:jaz@ziskindlaw.com), (305) 753-5990

*Borges v. Department of Health*

Third District Court of Appeal

Case No. 3D13-1529

June 16, 2014

143 So. 3d 1185

Opposing counsel:

Randall M. Shochet, [rshochet@shochetlaw.com](mailto:rshochet@shochetlaw.com), (352) 354-4518

Nancy Stein, [nmccarthy@milbermakris.com](mailto:nmccarthy@milbermakris.com), (561) 994-7310

*Christian v. Department of Health, Board of Chiropractic Medicine*

Second District Court of Appeal

Case No. 2D12-3768

January 8, 2014

161 So. 3d 416

Opposing counsel:

Matthew J. Conigliaro, [mconigliaro@carltonfields.com](mailto:mconigliaro@carltonfields.com), (813) 229-4254

*Castellon v. Florida Department of Health*

Third District Court of Appeal

Case No. 3D13-0642

September 24, 2013

130 So. 3d 748

Opposing counsel:

Jerome Billy Ullman, Jr., [bill@billullman.com](mailto:bill@billullman.com), (305) 358-0284

*Fernandez v. Department of Health, Board of Nursing*

Fourth District Court of Appeal

Case No. 4D12-3431

July 2, 2013

120 So. 3d 117

Opposing counsel:

Lawrence E. Besser, [lbesseresq@yahoo.com](mailto:lbesseresq@yahoo.com), (305) 577-3873

*Gaukhman v. Department of Health, Board of Dentistry*

Second District Court of Appeal

Case No. 2D12-0917

May 3, 2013

Unpublished Disposition – Per Curiam Affirmed

Opposing counsel:

Dennis Grossman, (516) 466-6690

\*no e-mail address listed on The Florida Bar website

*Walling v. State of Florida*

First District Court of Appeal

Case No. 1D11-4434

November 15, 2012

105 So. 3d 660

Opposing counsel:

Tatiana A. Bersch, [tbertsch@eji.org](mailto:tbertsch@eji.org), (334) 269-1803

Benjamin W. Maxymuk, [benjamin.maxymuk@gmail.com](mailto:benjamin.maxymuk@gmail.com), (334) 652-2531

*Romero v. State of Florida*

First District Court of Appeal

Case No. 1D11-2122

October 16, 2012

105 So. 3d 550

Opposing counsel:

Bryan Gowdy, [bgowdy@appellate-firm.com](mailto:bgowdy@appellate-firm.com), (904) 350-0075

*Smith v. State of Florida*

First District Court of Appeal

Case No. 1D11-4040

March 13, 2012

93 So. 3d 371

Opposing counsel:

Glenna Joyce Reeves, [joycer10@centurylink.net](mailto:joycer10@centurylink.net), (850) 668-7622

*Berry v. State of Florida*

First District Court of Appeal

Case No. 1D10-2627

January 19, 2012

86 So. 3d 595

Opposing counsel:

A. Victoria Wiggins, [vwiggins@pd10.org](mailto:vwiggins@pd10.org), (863) 534-4200

*Thomas v. State of Florida*

First District Court of Appeal

Case No. 1D10-1613

November 15, 2011

78 So. 3d 644

Opposing counsel:

James T. Miller (deceased)

*Catrett v. State of Florida / Rougas v. State of Florida / Cummings v. State of Florida*

First District Court of Appeal

Case Nos. 1D10-3094, 1D10-3117, 1D10-3569

February 15, 2011

58 So. 3d 300

Opposing counsel:

Barbara J. Busharis (*counsel for Melinda Jean Catrett and Porsha J. Rougas*),  
[barbara.busharis@flpd2.com](mailto:barbara.busharis@flpd2.com), (850) 606-8516

William B. Richbourg (*counsel for Michael S. Cummings*), [willyb68@gmail.com](mailto:willyb68@gmail.com),  
(850) 434-9993

*State of Florida v. Sanchez*  
Third District Court of Appeal  
Case No. 3D08-1085

April 28, 2009

Unpublished Disposition – Per Curiam Affirmed

Opposing counsel:

Natalia Costea, [ncostea@jud11.flcourts.org](mailto:ncostea@jud11.flcourts.org), (305) 679-1690

14. Within the last ten years, have you ever been formally reprimanded, sanctioned, demoted, disciplined, placed on probation, suspended, or terminated by an employer or tribunal before which you have appeared? If so, please state the circumstances under which such action was taken, the date(s) such action was taken, the name(s) of any persons who took such action, and the background and resolution of such action.

No.

15. In the last ten years, have you failed to meet any deadline imposed by court order or received notice that you have not complied with substantive requirements of any business or contractual arrangement? If so, please explain full.

No.

16. For your last six cases, which were tried to verdict or handled on appeal, either before a jury, judge, appellate panel, arbitration panel or any other administrative hearing officer, list the names, e-mail addresses, and telephone numbers of the trial/appellate counsel on all sides and court case numbers (include appellate cases). *This question is optional for sitting judges who have served five years or more.*

*Darbar v. YMCA of South Florida, Inc.*

Fourth District Court of Appeal

Case Nos. 4D24-2378 and 4D24-2587

Opposing counsel:

Earl Issac Higgs, Jr., [ehiggs@higgslawpa.com](mailto:ehiggs@higgslawpa.com), (407) 459-7921

*Ramirez v. McKennon*

Fifth District Court of Appeal

Case No. 5D24-3169

Opposing counsel:

Morgan Weinstein, [morgan@twiglaw.com](mailto:morgan@twiglaw.com), (954) 540-2755

Co-Appellees counsels:

Kenneth B. Rugh, [ken@hrmlegal.com](mailto:ken@hrmlegal.com), (407) 926-7460

Matthew P. McLauchlin, [matt@mpmlawyers.com](mailto:matt@mpmlawyers.com), (904) 755-6639

Ann M. Allison, [ann@allisonlaws.com](mailto:ann@allisonlaws.com), (813) 985-6447

Daniel S. Weinger, [dweinger@insurancedefense.net](mailto:dweinger@insurancedefense.net), (954) 761-9000

Bonnie M. Sack, [bsack@insurancedefense.net](mailto:bsack@insurancedefense.net), (305) 377-8900

*Sinno v. Walmart Stores East, LP*

Fourth District Court of Appeal

Case No. 4D24-1752

Opposing counsel:

Brian Lee, [blee@forthepeople.com](mailto:blee@forthepeople.com), (904) 456-6816

*Lobsinger v. Riggin's Crabhouse, Inc.*

Fourth District Court of Appeal

Case No. 4D25-0616

Opposing counsel:

Matthew Sean Tucker, [matt@tuckerup.com](mailto:matt@tuckerup.com), (954) 204-0444

*Roe v. NPC International, Inc.*

Fifth District Court of Appeal

Case No. 5D24-2323

Opposing counsel:

Dimitrios A. Peteves, [dpeteves@appellate-firm.com](mailto:dpeteves@appellate-firm.com), (904) 350-0075

Bryan S. Gowdy, [bgowdy@appellate-firm.com](mailto:bgowdy@appellate-firm.com), (904) 350-0075

*Escambia County, Florida v. Whitesell-Green/Caddell JV, LLC, DLR Group, Inc.*

First District Court of Appeal

Case No. 1D24-1373

Opposing counsel:

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Kristina L. Marsh, [kmarsh@grsm.com](mailto:kmarsh@grsm.com), (813) 444-9700

- 17.** For your last six cases, which were either settled in mediation or settled without mediation or trial, list the names and telephone numbers of trial counsel on all sides and court case numbers (include appellate cases). *This question is optional for sitting judges who have served five years or more.*

*Vales v. Montclair Homeowners' Association, et al.*

Fifth District Court of Appeal

Case No. 5D25-1038

Appellate and trial counsel for Vales:

Ronald W. Sikes, [rsikes@sikeslawgroup.com](mailto:rsikes@sikeslawgroup.com), (407) 877-7115

Trial counsel for Montclair Homeowners' Association:

Jeffrey Partlow, [jeffrey.partlow@csklegal.com](mailto:jeffrey.partlow@csklegal.com), (321) 972-0079

Allaa Tayeb, [allaa.tayeb@csklegal.com](mailto:allaa.tayeb@csklegal.com), (689) 205-5403

\* For the five years leading up to May 2026, my practice was dedicated to appellate practice and litigation support. There are numerous cases that were settled while I was handling

either the case on appeal or helping prepare a case for trial. However, because of the timing of the settlement negotiations and trial counsels' familiarity with the facts and parties, these resolutions were largely handled by that specific case's trial counsel without my assistance. While I participated in appellate mediations, these cases did not resolve due to the nature of the issues, and therefore, are not listed in this response. However, please see below additional cases that I settled either with or without mediation during the time period I handled trial litigation with my firm. Please note that these cases were resolved between 2015 and 2018.

*Robert Nichols, Jr. and Suzanne Nichols, his wife, v. Irfan Imami, M.D, B.S.A., LLC, a Florida Limited Liability Company, d/b/a Tepas Healthcare, Joseph A. Wasselle, M.D., Osler HMA Medical Group, LLC, a Florida Limited Liability Company d/b/a Osler Medical Group, and Holmes Regional Medical Center, Inc.*

Eighteenth Judicial Circuit, In and For Brevard County, Florida

Case No. 2016-CA-015340

Trial counsel for Robert Nichols, Jr. and Suzanne Nichols:

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Michael S. Smith., [msmith@halberglaw.com](mailto:msmith@halberglaw.com), (561) 208-5334

Trial counsel for Irfan Imami, M.D. and B.S.A., LLC:

Kevin T. O'Hara., [kevin.ohara@fmglaw.com](mailto:kevin.ohara@fmglaw.com), (689) 240-6875

Trial counsel for Joseph A. Wasselle, M.D.:

Robert Swift (deceased)

Trial counsel for Osler HMA Medical Group:

Richards Ford, [rford@wickersmith.com](mailto:rford@wickersmith.com), (407) 843-3939

Chad Leeper, [cleeper@wickersmith.com](mailto:cleeper@wickersmith.com), (321) 610-5800

Michael Kerwin, [michael.kerwin@thehartford.com](mailto:michael.kerwin@thehartford.com), (954) 364-5150

Trial counsel Holmes Regional Medical Center:

Mary Jaye Hall, [mhall@mmdorl.com](mailto:mhall@mmdorl.com), (407) 423-8571

R. Samuel Dunaway, III, [sdunaway@forthepeople.com](mailto:sdunaway@forthepeople.com), (407) 420-1414

*W. John Sauter, as Personal Representative for the Estate of Patricia Sauter, deceased, v. Robert E. Barden, M.D., Robert Emmet Barden, M.D., P.A., and Rockledge HMA LLC d/b/a Wuesthoff Medical Center Rockledge*

Eighteenth Judicial Circuit, In and For Brevard County, Florida

Case No. 2017-CA-010917

Trial counsel for W. John Sauter:

J. Clancey Bounds, [clancey@boundslawgroup.com](mailto:clancey@boundslawgroup.com), (407) 644-5151

T'anjuiming "Ming" A. Marx, [ming@boundslawgroup.com](mailto:ming@boundslawgroup.com), (407) 644-5151

Trial counsel for Robert E. Barden, M.D. and Robert Emmet Barden, M.D., P.A.:

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Trial counsel for Rockledge HMA LLC:

Scott Shelton, [scott.shelton@csklegal.com](mailto:scott.shelton@csklegal.com), (321) 972-0011

*Francisco Villanueva and Mildred Fernandez, husband and wife, v. 205 West Highway 436 Holdings, LLC, a foreign limited liability company, EcoLab, Inc., a foreign corporation,*

Eighteenth Judicial Circuit, In and For Seminole County, Florida

Case No. 2016-CA-000811-11J-K

Trial counsel for plaintiffs:

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William Lee Clark, [lee@wleeclark.com](mailto:lee@wleeclark.com), (941)231-4929

Trial counsel for 205 West Highway 436 Holdings, LLC:

Robert Swift (deceased)

Trial counsel for EcoLab, Inc.:

Jon Hernan (deceased)

Justin Niznik, [justin.niznik@bowmanandbrooke.com](mailto:justin.niznik@bowmanandbrooke.com), (407) 585-7602

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Doug Pfeifer, [doug.pfeifer@huschblackwell.com](mailto:doug.pfeifer@huschblackwell.com), (612) 852-2687

*Thomas G. Caffery and Kathryn Caffery, as Co-Guardian Advocates for Anna Caffery v. American Living, Inc., a Florida corporation, and Behavioral Support Services, Inc., a Florida corporation*

Ninth Judicial Circuit, In and For Orange County, Florida

Case No. 2015-CA-11679-O

Trial counsel for Plaintiffs:

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Dominick Salfi (deceased)

Trial counsel for American Living, Inc.:

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Doug Polk, [douglas.polk@mymanatee.org](mailto:douglas.polk@mymanatee.org), (941) 745-3750

Trial counsel for Behavioral Support Services, Inc.:

Robert Swift (deceased)

*James M. Hustoles and Laura Hustoles, his wife, v. John P. Griffin, M.D., Brevard Emergency Services, P.A., Jeffery P. Borkoski, M.D., Med-Link Staffing, Inc., Lloyd E. Bennett, M.D., Health First Physicians, Inc., Holmes Regional Medical Center, Inc. d/b/a Holmes Regional Medical Center*

Eighteenth Judicial Circuit, In and For Brevard County, Florida

Case No. 2014-CA-023946

Trial counsel for Plaintiffs:

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Trial counsel for John P. Griffin, M.D. and Brevard Emergency Services, P.A.:

Kevin T. O'Hara, [kevin.ohara@fmglaw.com](mailto:kevin.ohara@fmglaw.com), (689) 240-6875

Trial counsel for Jeffery P. Borkoski, M.D. and Med-Link Staffing, Inc.:

Robert Swift (deceased)

Trial counsel for Lloyd E. Bennett, M.D., Health First Physicians, Inc., and Holmes Regional Medical Center, Inc. d/b/a Holmes Regional Medical Center:

Scott Baughan, [scott@adrsources.com](mailto:scott@adrsources.com), (321) 403-4078

- 18.** During the last five years, on average, how many times per month have you appeared in Court or at administrative hearings? If during any period you have appeared in court with greater frequency than during the last five years, indicate the period during which you appeared with greater frequency and succinctly explain.

During the last five years until May 2026, I averaged one appellate court appearance every few months. This number varied each year depending on how many cases were set for oral arguments. In the past few years, I had between two and five oral arguments per year. In addition to presenting oral arguments, I averaged one or two trials a year where I attended as appellate counsel.

From 2015 through 2017, my practice largely focused on litigating at the trial level in the areas of medical malpractice, wrongful death, and professional liability. For these cases, I would have Court appearances in the trial court approximately three to six times a month.

During my time as an Assistant Attorney General handling criminal appeals for the Florida Office of the Attorney General and as the Chief Appellate Counsel handling administrative appeals for the Florida Department of Health, I had approximately two to three oral arguments per year. This time period was from 2010 through 2015.

- 19.** If Questions 16, 17, and 18 do not apply to your practice, please list your last six major transactions or other legal matters that were resolved, listing the names, e-mail addresses, and telephone numbers of the other party counsel.

Not applicable.

- 20.** During the last five years, if your practice was greater than 50% personal injury, workers' compensation or professional malpractice, what percentage of your work was in representation of plaintiffs or defendants?

99% of cases for defendants, and 1% of cases for plaintiffs.

- 21.** List and describe the five most significant cases which you personally litigated giving the case style, number, court and judge, the date of the case, the names, e-mail addresses, and telephone numbers of the other attorneys involved, and citation to reported decisions, if any. Identify your client and describe the nature of your participation in the case and the reason you believe it to be significant.

*Bilal v. Hodges, et al.*  
Case No. 23-11703  
Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals  
Judges: Branch, Jill Pryor, Hull  
Date of case: March 26, 2025 (oral argument)  
Client: John Hodges, Ph.D.  
2025 WL 3240264 (unpublished)

I handled all aspects of this appeal, including briefing and oral argument. This case is significant based on what the appellant purported it represented: a split in the federal circuit courts of appeal on how to interpret a United States Supreme Court opinion based on a suggestion that it had been overturned. However, as Hamilton discussed, an independent judiciary is one that should be bound by “strict rules and precedents” and not bend at the suggestion that a case has been overturned.

From 2001 until 2019, Mr. Bilal was civilly committed pursuant to the Jimmy Ryce Act. My client, Dr. Hodges, was a member of the multi-disciplinary team for Florida’s Department of Children and Families and evaluated Mr. Bilal. In 2021, Mr. Bilal filed a malicious prosecution claim against Dr. Hodges and others, including the Escambia County Sheriff. The complaint was removed to federal court, Dr. Hodges and the Sheriff independently moved to dismiss the complaint, and the United States District Court for the Northern District of Florida dismissed Mr. Bilal’s complaint. Two issues were discussed regarding the malicious prosecution claims: 1) the applicability of *Heck v. Humphrey*, 512 U.S. 477 (1994), and 2) Mr. Bilal’s claims were barred by Florida’s four-year statute of limitations.

Mr. Bilal appealed to the Eleventh Circuit with the Court appointing counsel for Mr. Bilal. One of the arguments presented focused on *Heck* and a “circuit split” regarding its interpretation and application. Specifically, Mr. Bilal argued that Justice Souter’s concurrence in *Spencer v. Kemna*, 523 U.S. 1 (1998), a post-*Heck* opinion where three additional justices agreed with Justice Souter, along with the disagreement by other circuit courts of appeal, demonstrated the direction and interpretation of *Heck* to be employed by the Eleventh Circuit. However, this notion disrupts the importance of precedent as warned by Hamilton and acknowledged by the United States Supreme Court, whose prerogative it is to overrule its decisions, with lower courts following precedent even if it appears to be weakened. I argued the Eleventh Circuit should decline Mr. Bilal’s invitation to decline the invitation to rely on dicta in *Spencer* and instead, look to the holding of *Heck*.

Co-Appellee counsel:

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Opposing counsel:

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*Florida Department of Health v. Peter V. Choy, M.D.*

Case No. 1D14-3233

First District Court of Appeal

Judges: Thomas, Wetherell, Soud (Associate Judge)

Date of case: March 13, 2015

Client: Florida Department of Health

Citation to opinion: 160 So. 3d 412 (Table) – Per Curiam Affirmed

In this Department of Health appeal, I handled all aspects of the appeal, from initiating the appeal, through briefing, motion practice, oral argument, and post-Opinion motions. This

case is significant to me because it highlighted the concerns with agency deference and foreshadowed its downfall both at the state and federal levels.

The cases presented concerns from the beginning. Dr. Choy, a licensed medical doctor, provided medical care to a 77-year old patient who complaints of pain in her left lower quadrant. Dr. Choy ordered numerous tests and labs leading to a CT scan of her abdomen, which showed a large pancreatic malignant mass. Aware of this finding, Dr. Choy continued to treat the patient but never advised her of the pancreatic cancer. Dr. Choy later testified he did not like to use the “c” word for “cancer” and did not want to provide this diagnosis to his patient because he was afraid of upsetting her as he was a self-described “soft person” who did not want to give a patient bad news. Dr. Choy’s care of the patient continued for approximately two years until the patient’s family had concerns about Dr. Choy’s practice. At that point, it was too late, with the patient passing away.

The family requested Dr. Choy’s medical records of the patient. The records provided, however, included notes that Dr. Choy specifically discussed with the patient the malignant findings. During the Department of Health’s investigation, a forensic analysis was performed of Dr. Choy’s electronical medical findings, showing time and date stamped changes that proved Dr. Choy altered the medical records *after* the family requested the records to include notations that he discussed the CT scan findings with the patient.

After a formal hearing before an Administrative Law Judge, the ALJ issued a Recommended Order and found that Dr. Choy did not advise the patient of pancreatic cancer and that upon learning of the patient’s death from pancreatic cancer, Dr. Choy electronically revised his original, contemporaneous medical records to show Dr. Choy did not advise the patient of the diagnosis. Dr. Choy admitted to altering these records during the Department’s case against his license. The ALJ found the Department proved that Dr. Choy: made deceptive, untrue, or fraudulent representations in the practice of medicine; failed to identify the material, later alterations he made to the patient’s medical records; committed medical malpractice while treating the patient by failing to inform the patient in a timely manner of the pancreatic tumor and not referring the patient in a timely manner to a specialist; and concealing a material fact by altering the original medical record and producing the altered records to the Department. The ALJ recommended revocation of Dr. Choy’s license, in accordance with the disciplinary guidelines.

The recommended order was then presented to the Board of Medicine and the Board adopted all factual findings and legal conclusions in the Recommended Order, with the exception of the recommended discipline. The Board deviated downward from the Recommended Order’s discipline, noting Dr. Choy’s prior disciplinary actions against his license, and changing the discipline to suspension for six months, followed by probation for five years. This Final Order was appealed to the First District Court of Appeal. Two issues were raised: 1) the Board’s downward deviation was not supported by the evidence and constituted impermissible reweighing of evidence; and 2) the Board failed to comply with section 120.57(1)(I). Despite extensive briefing and oral argument, the First District *per curiam* affirmed.

One of the issues that arose in the case was the deference that was provided to the Board of Medicine in choosing to impose a far less discipline than the one recommended by the ALJ as supported by the evidence. Only a few years after this case was decided based on deference given to the Board of Medicine, the citizens of Florida voted by supermajority to amend the Florida Constitution and remove deference to agencies' interpretation of statutes, rules, and regulations. *See* Art. V, § 21, Fla. Const. ("In interpreting a state statute or rule, a state court or an officer hearing an administrative action pursuant to general law may not defer to an administrative agency's interpretation of such statute or rule and must instead interpret such statute or rule de novo."). Even more recently, the United States Supreme Court continued the importance of the separation of powers by dismantling *Chevron* and its deference in *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo*, 603 U.S. 369 (2024).

Appellate Counsel for Dr. Choy:

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Trial Counsel for the Department:

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*Pitts v. Neptune*

Case No. 1D22-0960

First District Court of Appeal

Judges: Long, Roberts, Tanenbaum

Date of case: March 6, 2024

Client: Respondent, Jeannette Neptune

Citation to opinion: 396 So. 3d 619

I handled all aspects of this appeal.\* This petition for writ of certiorari presented the cross-roads for many personal injury lawyers: is someone a treating physician or an expert witness? If the latter, the defense then would be entitled to financial bias discovery pursuant to *Allstate Ins. Co. v. Boecher*, 733 So. 2d 993 (Fla. 1999). Because this petition and underlying trial court ruling occurred pre-tort reform, the ruling still has impacts on cases that pre-dated the overhaul regarding letters of protections. Additional significance is attached at a most fundamental level as *Pitts* reinforces the historical notion and underpinning of this County's founding that evidence should be accessible and confronted during a trial of your peers. The trial court's ruling found that the defense should be entitled to do just that, which was upheld on appeal, with the First District dismissing the petition.

The petitioners, who were the plaintiffs in the trial court, opposed the defense's request for financial discovery evidence. However, the petitioners disclosed "hybrid" witnesses in their pre-trial expert disclosure, meaning the witness was both a treating physician and would be used to opine on legal issues generally reserved for retained experts. The First

District described that “[a] party’s label for a witness matters little” and that the substance of the testimony should drive the analysis. The Court described how the “physicians were given litigation binders that contained various medical records from Petitioners’ other providers and planned to offer testimony based on their review of those records and their treatment of Petitioners” which was the work of an expert, not a treating physician.

While *Pitts* predated House Bill 837 and subsequently enacted section 768.0427, it demonstrates the importance of allowing a jury to hear bias testimony and evidence and expose a relationship the plaintiff’s lawyer may have with the treating physician.

\*The Opinion in this case lists two additional attorneys, Lissette Gonzalez and Carly Weiss. However, they were not involved in the drafting or handling of the appeal and only appeared to monitor the case pending Opinion.

Counsel for Petitioner:

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Additional counsel listed for Respondent:

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Carly Weiss, [cweiss@taftlaw.com](mailto:cweiss@taftlaw.com), (561) 655-2250

*Gridine v. State of Florida*

Case No. 1D10-2517

Court: First District Court of Appeal

Judges: Hawkes, Roberts, Wolf

Date of case: Opinion issued December 30, 2011; certified question of great public importance to Florida Supreme Court; opinion quashed and remanded on March 19, 2015, case no SC12-1223.

Client: State of Florida

Citation to opinion: 89 So. 3d 909

I handled all aspects of this appellate litigation. This case was significant as it was one of the first few cases in Florida that addressed sentencing of juveniles tried as adults for non-homicide crimes, particularly whether a term of years sentence was the functional equivalent to a sentence of life without the possibility of parole, and whether the sentence violated the then-recent opinion of *Graham v. Florida*, 560 U.S. 48 (2010). At that time, I was fortunate to handle the majority of cases that involved this issue. Two years after *Graham*, the United States Supreme Court issued its decision in *Miller v. Alabama*, 567 U.S. 460 (2012) which held that mandatory life imprisonment without parole for juveniles violated the Eighth Amendment.

Gridine was 14-years old when he was charged as an adult for the crimes of attempted first degree murder, attempted armed robbery, and aggravated battery. He pled guilty to the three counts, was adjudicated guilty on all three counts, and received a 70-year sentence. The First District affirmed the judgment and sentence, which was subsequently quashed and reversed by the Florida Supreme Court.

This case was a “tip of the spear” case, where I addressed constitutional issues and application in the wake of a United States Supreme Court case that found a particular type of sentence unconstitutional. This left the State with a statute that did not definitively provide what type of sentence a juvenile defendant could receive, only what type of sentence a juvenile defendant could *not* receive. Front and center for this case, and those similar ones that followed, were the separation of powers for the judicial and legislative branches, as the courts could not engage in policy making. Indeed, Madison described such separation as “an essential precaution in favor of liberty.”

Instead, any analysis was an objective analysis under the Eighth Amendment. The sentiment of Justice Scalia rings true for this case that while severe, a mandatory penalty “may be cruel, but they are not unusual in the constitutional sense, having been employed in various forms throughout our Nation's history.” *Harmelin v. Michigan*, 501 U.S. 957, 994-95 (1991).

Appellate Counsel for Gridine:

Gail Anderson, [gailanderson004@centurylink.net](mailto:gailanderson004@centurylink.net), (850) 766-0855

*Clarence William Burnette v. State of Florida*

Case No. 1D11-920

First District Court of Appeal

Judges: Wolf, Van Nortwick, Lewis

Date of case: January 10, 2013

Client: State of Florida

Citation to opinion: 103 So. 3d 1059

I handled all aspects of this appellate litigation that was decided on the briefs.\* This case was significant because it addressed a fundamental error involving the jury instruction of a criminal defendant being presumed innocent until proven guilty. Mr. Burnette was charged with possession of child pornography video files. Despite overwhelming evidence of his guilt, at no point in the trial did any of the attorneys or the trial court realize that the jury was not instructed that Mr. Burnette is to be presumed innocent until proven guilty.

The failure to have this jury instruction read to the jury was one of several errors raised by Mr. Burnette on appeal. Because it was not objected to at the trial court level, the argument was presented as fundamental error. Understanding the importance of having these historically significant requirements in place for a criminal defendant, I conceded error and acknowledged that the case should be reversed and remanded for a new trial.

This case was not a popular case to have a concession on file. The record and evidence unquestionably showed that Mr. Burnette committed a heinous crime. But the courage to ensure that the constitutional underpinning reign supreme was more important. The framers sought to ensure due process even though they lived in an era where many did not have such protections, a wrong they sought to right through our Constitution.

\*After briefing concluded, I left the Office of the Attorney General for the Department of Health, and another Assistant Attorney General's office was substituted as counsel. The substituted counsel had no other involvement in the case and did not actively litigate the case based on its procedural posture and oral argument not being held on the issue.

Appellate Counsel for Clarence William Burnette:

Honorable Adam Tanenbaum, [tanenbauma@flcourts.org](mailto:tanenbauma@flcourts.org), (850) 488-0125

22. Attach at least two, but no more than three, examples of legal writing which you personally wrote. If you have not personally written any legal documents recently, you may attach a writing sample for which you had substantial responsibility. Please describe your degree of involvement in preparing the writing you attached.

Attached are two appellate filings during different points of my career. First, the Initial Brief in *Brickell Bayview Owner, LP and Carer Haston Real Estate Services, Inc. v. Alba Toro*. Second, the Amended Answer Brief in *Daryl D. Thomas v. State of Florida*. I personally wrote both briefs.

#### **PRIOR JUDICIAL EXPERIENCE OR PUBLIC OFFICE**

23. Have you ever held judicial office or been a candidate for judicial office? If so, state the court(s) involved, the dates of service or dates of candidacy, and any election results.

Yes. I was appointed by Governor Ron DeSantis on April 20, 2026, to serve as a Circuit Court Judge for the Ninth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida.

24. If you have previously submitted a questionnaire or application to this or any other judicial nominating commission, please give the name(s) of the commission, the approximate date(s) of each submission, and indicate if your name was certified to the Governor's Office for consideration.

*October 2020*

- Submitted judicial application to the Fifth District Court of Appeal Judicial Nominating Commission
- Name certified to the Governor's Office for consideration

*January 2021*

- Submitted judicial application to the Fifth District Court of Appeal Judicial Nominating Commission
- Name certified to the Governor's Office for consideration

*September 2022*

- Submitted judicial application to the Fifth District Court of Appeal Judicial Nominating Commission
- Name certified to the Governor's Office for consideration

*January 2023*

- Submitted judicial application to the Fifth District Court of Appeal Judicial Nominating Commission

*August 2025*

- Submitted judicial application to the Sixth District Court of Appeal Judicial Nominating Commission

*January 2026*

- Submitted judicial application to the Ninth Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission
- Name certified to the Governor's Office for consideration
- Received appointment

**25.** List any prior quasi-judicial service, including the agency or entity, dates of service, position(s) held, and a brief description of the issues you heard.

Not applicable.

**26.** If you have prior judicial or quasi-judicial experience, please list the following information:

- (i) the names, phone numbers and addresses of six attorneys who appeared before you on matters of substance;
- (ii) the approximate number and nature of the cases you handled during your tenure;
- (iii) the citations of any published opinions; and
- (iv) descriptions of the five most significant cases you have tried or heard, identifying the citation or style, attorneys involved, dates of the case, and the reason you believe these cases to be significant.

None at this time.

**27.** Provide citations and a brief summary of all of your orders or opinions where your decision was reversed by a reviewing court or where your judgment was affirmed with significant criticism of your substantive or procedural rulings. If any of the opinions listed were not officially reported, attach copies of the opinions.

None.

**28.** Provide citations for significant opinions on federal or state constitutional issues, together with the citation to appellate court rulings on such opinions. If any of the opinions listed were not officially reported, attach copies of the opinions.

None.

**29.** Has a complaint about you ever been made to the Judicial Qualifications Commission? If so, give the date, describe the complaint, whether or not there was a finding of probable cause, whether or not you have appeared before the Commission, and its resolution.

No.

**30.** Have you ever held an attorney in contempt? If so, for each instance state the name of the attorney, case style for the matter in question, approximate date and describe the circumstances.

No.

**31.** Have you ever held or been a candidate for any other public office? If so, state the office, location, dates of service or candidacy, and any election results.

No.

#### **NON-LEGAL BUSINESS INVOLVEMENT**

**32.** If you are now an officer, director, or otherwise engaged in the management of any business enterprise, state the name of such enterprise, the nature of the business, the nature of your duties, and whether you intend to resign such position immediately upon your appointment or election to judicial office.

Not applicable.

**33.** Since being admitted to the Bar, have you ever engaged in any occupation, business or profession other than the practice of law? If so, explain and provide dates. If you received any compensation of any kind outside the practice of law during this time, please list the amount of compensation received.

Not applicable.

#### **POSSIBLE BIAS OR PREJUDICE**

**34.** The Commission is interested in knowing if there are certain types of cases, groups of entities, or extended relationships or associations which would limit the cases for which you could sit as the presiding judge. Please list all types or classifications of cases or litigants for which you, as a general proposition, believe it would be difficult for you to sit as the presiding judge. Indicate the reason for each situation as to why you believe you might be in conflict. If you have prior judicial experience, describe the types of cases from which you have recused yourself.

None.

#### **PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES**

**35.** List the titles, publishers, and dates of any books, articles, reports, letters to the editor, editorial pieces, or other published materials you have written or edited, including materials published

only on the Internet. Attach a copy of each listed or provide a URL at which a copy can be accessed.

Author

*Common Cents: A Current Accounting of Financial Bias Discovery in Civil Litigation*, The Briefs Magazine, Orange County Bar Association, January 2025. \*A copy is attached.

*When “C” Meets “Z”: Can Character, Competence, Commitment, and Civility Be Friends with Zealous Representation?*, The Briefs Magazine, Orange County Bar Association, March 2024. \*A copy is attached.

*Living in a Barbie World: Dismantling Stereotypes*, The Briefs Magazine, Orange County Bar Association, February 2024. \*A copy is attached.

*Chat GPT, Gamma, Open AI – Oh My!: Ethical Concerns in the Era of AI*, The Briefs Magazine, Orange County Bar Association, August 2023. \*A copy is attached.

*Florida Law Update: New Law Requires Consent for Pelvic Examinations and Defines Reproductive Battery*, CSKLegal.com, News and Events, July 1, 2020, available at <https://www.csklegal.com/news/florida-law-update-new-law-requires-consent-for-pelvic-examinations-and-defines-reproductive-battery/>

*Unchartered Waters? An Overview of Navigating Department of Health Disciplinary Proceedings*, THE TRIAL ADVOCATE, VOL.39, NO. 2 (July 2020). \*A copy is attached.

*Araujo v. Winn-Dixie Supermarkets*, CSKLegal.com, News and Events, April 1, 2020, available at <https://www.csklegal.com/news/araujo-v-winn-dixie-supermarkets/>

*The Growing Pains of Graham v. Florida: Deciphering Whether Lengthy Term of Years Sentences for Juvenile Defendants can Equate to the Unconstitutional Sentence of Life Without the Possibility of Parole*, 25 ST. THOMAS L. REV. 473 (Spring 2012). \*A copy is attached.

Editor

Patrick M. Delaney, *Sorry Linus, I Need Your Smartphone, I Mean Security Blanket: How the Rise of the Smartphone, Constant Connectivity with the Internet, and Social Networks Provide a Platform for Juror Misconduct*, 24 ST. THOMAS L. REV. 473 (Summer 2012). \*A copy is attached.

HUGH M. THOMAS, *THE NORMAN CONQUEST: ENGLAND AFTER WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR* (ROWMAN & LITTLEFIELD PUBLISHERS, INC. 2008). *Excerpt of book available at:* [https://www.google.com/books/edition/The\\_Norman\\_Conquest/5xnvEVqzUIMC?hl=en&gbpv=1&printsec=frontcover](https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_Norman_Conquest/5xnvEVqzUIMC?hl=en&gbpv=1&printsec=frontcover)

During law school, I served as the Notes and Comments Editor for the St. Thomas Law Review. In that role, I reviewed, edited, and revised articles to be published by the St.

Thomas Law Review as well as providing extensive feedback on new member's notes and supporting sources.

- 36.** List any reports, memoranda or policy statements you prepared or contributed to the preparation of on behalf of any bar association, committee, conference, or organization of which you were or are a member. Provide the name of the entity, the date published, and a summary of the document. To the extent you have the document, please attach a copy or provide a URL at which a copy can be accessed.

From May 2023 through May 2024, I served as the Chair of the Orange County Bar Association Professionalism Committee. The Florida Bar not only requires each judicial circuit to have a Professionalism Committee but also that each Professionalism Committee provide an end-of-the-year report to the Florida Bar's Henry Latimer Center for Professionalism. This report includes information about the Committee's monthly meetings, committee activities including outreach efforts to local law schools and CLEs, available mentoring programs, publications and communications with members, and an update on the Local Professionalism Panel. Prior to providing this report to the Florida Bar, the Honorable Lisa T. Munyon as the Chief Judge of the Ninth Judicial Circuit received a copy of the report and approved its contents. The report was provided to the Florida Bar in July 2024.

I also prepared confidential reports and communications as the Chair of the Florida Investigative Panel for the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals Committee on Lawyer Qualifications and Conduct, and as a member of the Ninth Judicial Circuit Local Professionalism Panel.

- 37.** List any speeches or talks you have delivered, including commencement speeches, remarks, interviews, lectures, panel discussions, conferences, political speeches, and question-and-answer sessions. Include the date and place they were delivered, the sponsor of the presentation, and a summary of the presentation. If there are any readily available press reports, a transcript or recording, please attach a copy or provide a URL at which a copy can be accessed.

Panelist, *Professional Identity Formation – Session 3: What is Wellness?*, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University College of Law (Webinar, March 23, 2026).

I served as a panelist on a three-person panel for this CLE presented to 1Ls at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University College of Law to discuss aspects of professional identity formation focusing on mental health and wellness, how to balance stressors of the career, habits to incorporate, and resources if someone needed assistance during a difficult time. This presentation was in collaboration with the Orange County Bar Association Professionalism Committee.

Panelist, *Professional Identity Formation – Session 2: Incorporating Feedback*, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University College of Law (Webinar, Oct. 27, 2025)

I served as a panelist on a three-person panel for this CLE presented to 1Ls at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University College of Law to discuss how to incorporate feedback into your practice, how to seek feedback, types of feedback

received during practice, how to manage difficult feedback, and providing examples of the most effective feedback received during law school. This presentation was in collaboration with the Orange County Bar Association Professionalism Committee.

Guest Speaker, *Perspectives from an Appellate Practitioner*, St. Thomas University School of Law, (Webinar, Sept. 27, 2025)

This presentation was directed to 2Ls and 3Ls of the Moot Court team to discuss how to approach brief writing and oral arguments, the similarities and differences between moot court and “real world” practice, important appellate doctrines and how to apply them as strategy, and to engage in a question and answer session with the students.

Panelist, *What’s New from the Sixth DCA – Legal Updates*, Beyond the Bar: Introducing Florida’s Sixth DCA CLE, Appellate Practice Section of the Florida Bar, Florida Bar No. 8912 (In-Person – Orange County Courthouse, April 3, 2025).

I was part of a three-attorney panel that presented one portion during this all-day CLE. I discussed updates regarding civil law opinions from the Sixth District Court of Appeal. I chose cases I believed would be important to practitioners, including those where the Sixth District certified conflict and the status of those certifications. This presentation was before appellate practitioners and many of the judges from the Sixth District.

Panelist, *Professional Identity Formation – Session 3: What is Wellness?*, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University College of Law (Webinar, March 20, 2025).

I served as a panelist on a three-person panel for this CLE presented to 1Ls at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University College of Law to discuss mental health and wellness, how to balance stressors of the career, habits to incorporate, and resources if someone needed assistance during a difficult time. This presentation was in collaboration with the Orange County Bar Association Professionalism Committee.

Panelist, *Professional Identity Formation – Session 2: Incorporating Feedback*, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University College of Law (Webinar, Feb. 13, 2025).

I served as a panelist on a three-person panel for this CLE presented to 1Ls at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University College of Law to discuss how to incorporate feedback into your practice, how to seek feedback, types of feedback received during practice, how to manage difficult feedback, and providing examples of the most effective feedback received during law school. This presentation was in collaboration with the Orange County Bar Association Professionalism Committee.

Panelist, *Professional Identity Formation – Session 1: Exploring Professional Identity & Why is Civility Important*, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University College of Law (Webinar, Oct. 31, 2024).

I served as a panelist on a three-person panel for this CLE presented to 1Ls at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University College of Law to discuss the importance of being involved during law school, how the panelists' experiences during their 1L years helped developed their own professional identities, how to improve your professional identity, examples of civility, and the importance of ethical rules in practice. This presentation was in collaboration with the Orange County Bar Association Professionalism Committee.

Co-Organizer/Presenter, *Changes to Florida Case Law – Florida Rule Changes: What You Need to Know*, Cole, Scott & Kissane, P.A., Florida Bar Course No. 24076518N (Webinar, Oct. 2, 2024).

With the advent of the new Florida Rules of Civil Procedure, I co-presented this presentation with another partner at Cole, Scott & Kissane. We wanted to ensure that all attorneys had the ability to discuss and hear the scope of the new rules since the changes drastically altered the landscape of litigation for the parties. This presentation was presented numerous times internally as well as to insurance carriers.

Guest Speaker, *Summer 2024 Field Placement Class on Ethics and Professionalism*, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University College of Law (In Person – Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University College of Law, June 7, 2024).

I spoke to 2Ls and 3Ls about the importance of ethics and professionalism. This discussion was a candid discussion about the effect of ethics in real practice and the need for professionalism. I provided real world examples of how to, and how not to, address situations. I discussed the importance of reputation, professional identity, and ethical requirements.

Guest Presenter for Panel, *Punitive Damages: The Statute Means What It Says*, Florida Defense Lawyers Association Liability Claims Conference (In Person – Disney's Yacht and Beach Club Resort, June 7, 2024).

This presentation discussed the state of punitive damages across the different intermediate appellate courts in the state of Florida, as well as pending issues before the Florida Supreme Court. I was asked to attend this as one of my cases was used in the presentation and requested to provide insight into the appellate court's Opinion and its impact on punitive damages, particularly in the nursing home context.

Organizer/Moderator, *Trending: Keeping Up with Latest Technology Advance, Disciplinary Issues, and Views from the Bench*, CLE for Orange County Bar Association Professionalism Committee, Florida Bar Course No. 2402669N (In Person – Orange County Bar Association, March 28, 2024). \*Sponsored by Thomson Reuters.

I organized and moderated this 3.5-hour CLE as Chair of the Orange County Bar Association's Professionalism Committee. The CLE included three portions: 1) current trends in technology and impact on professionalism from a Chief Technology Officer; 2) what to know about Florida's disciplinary system and how to avoid it by then-Florida Bar President, Scott Westheimer; and 3) a panel

discussion from members of the judiciary on professionalism and ethics. The judicial panel was comprised of local judges at both the state and federal level, including: Judge Skip Dalton (District Judge, Middle District of Florida); Judge Dan Irick (Magistrate Judge, Middle District of Florida); Judge Dan Traver (Chief Judge, Sixth District Court of Appeal), Judge Lisa Munyon (Chief Judge, Ninth Judicial Circuit).

Panelist, *Panel on Professionalism*, Barry University School of Law Orientation 2.0 for 1Ls, (In Person – Barry University School of Law, Oct. 6, 2023).

I served as a panelist along with another attorney and a trial court judge to discuss the importance of networking, professional reputation, professionalism, and ethics in the practice of law. This discussion was presented to incoming 1Ls during a second orientation.

Organizer/Moderator, *Best Practices for PDs and SAs*, Joint CLE for Orange County Bar Association Professionalism Committee and Criminal Law Committee, Florida Bar Course No. 2308361N (Virtual/In-Person – Orange County Bar Association, Sept. 27, 2023).

This one-hour CLE was a joint CLE between the Orange County Bar Association’s Professionalism Committee and Criminal Law Committee during my time as Chair of the Professionalism Committee. The CLE was directed towards newer criminal attorneys and discussed the Oath of Admission, practicing professionalism while communicating with opposing counsel, practicing professionalism for file management and collecting / disclosing evidence, best practices for addressing plea negotiations / pleas to the bench, best practices for witness management / speaking to victims / and conducting depositions, and best trial practices and the do’s and don’ts for opening statements and closing arguments. These topics were discussed by a three-member panel, including: the Honorable Robert Egan (Ninth Judicial Circuit), Melissa Vickers (defense attorney), and Lauryn Day (state attorney).

Presenter, *The Nuts and Bolts of Civil Practice*, In-house Presentation at CSK, Florida Bar Course No. 2309891N (Recorded CLE, Sept. 20, 2023).

This recorded CLE was presented in-house to newer associates in the firm about the basics of civil litigation and the Florida Rules of Civil Procedure. This covered a broad range of topics from scope of pleadings, impact of jury instructions on affirmative defenses, motion practice, types of discovery, scope of discovery, when and how to update discovery, objections to discovery, proposals for settlement, when a case should be settled, experts, pre-trial motions, mediation, and practical pointers.

Co-Presenter, *2023 Basic Appellate Law – “Preservation of Error,”* The Florida Bar Young Lawyers Division Board of Governors, Florida Bar Course No. 7994 (Recorded CLE, Sept. 2023).

This recorded CLE was one panel of a multi-panel CLE for an introductory CLE on appellate practice. The presentation focused on preserving error for appellate review, including how to prepare for trial and how to object during trial. I prepared all materials that were used during this presentation. Topics that were covered

included the contemporaneous objection rule, fundamental error, pre-trial issues, trial issues, and post-trial motions.

Presenter, *The Great Recession: Lessons Learned from the 2008 Financial Crisis*, American Bar Association, Section of Litigation: Miami Judicial Intern Opportunity Program Orientation, Part I (Webinar, June 19, 2020).

This presentation was made to judicial interns and focused on how law students can still excel despite the coronavirus pandemic. The judicial interns heard from a panel of attorneys that graduated in 2008 and 2009 on how to overcome limited opportunities in the workplace, make the most of difficult situations, and to remain positive despite unknowns due to societal and economic forces.

Presenter, *Recession Proof! Lessons Learned – Getting Hired During a Time of Crisis*, St. Thomas University School of Law (Webinar, Aug. 26, 2020).

This presentation to recent law school graduates focused on how law students can still excel despite the coronavirus pandemic. The graduates heard from a panel of attorneys that graduated in 2008 and 2009 to hear how to overcome limited opportunities in the workplace, make the most of difficult situations, and to remain positive despite unknowns due to societal and economic forces.

- 38.** Have you ever taught a course at an institution of higher education or a bar association? If so, provide the course title, a description of the course subject matter, the institution at which you taught, and the dates of teaching. If you have a syllabus for each course, please provide.

Not applicable.

- 39.** List any fellowships, honorary degrees, academic or professional honors, honorary society memberships, military awards, and any other special recognition for outstanding service or achievement. Include the date received and the presenting entity or organization.

The Florida Bar Ninth Judicial Circuit Grievance Committee “B – Meritorious Public Service (May 2026)

Best Lawyers – Appellate Practice (2026)

Orlando Family Magazine 2026 Awesome Attorneys – Appellate Law (2026)

Bishop Moore Catholic High School’s 40 Under 40 (2023)

Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office – Pro Bono Service Certificate of Appreciation (Fall 2023)

Recognition for Service as Chief Appellate Counsel from Department of Health (August 2015)

- 40.** Do you have a Martindale-Hubbell rating? If so, what is it and when was it earned?

No.

**41.** List all bar associations, legal, and judicial-related committees of which you are or have been a member. For each, please provide dates of membership or participation. Also, for each indicate any office you have held and the dates of office.

- Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals Committee on Lawyer Qualifications and Conduct (2024 – 2026)
  - Florida Investigative Panel – Chair (2024 – 2026)
- The Federalist Society (2017, 2020 – present)
- The First District Appellate American Inn of Court – *Alumni* (2014 – present)
- Catholic Lawyers Guild of Central Florida (Oct. 2025 – present)
- Christian Legal Society (Sept. 2025 – present)
- Ninth Judicial Circuit Local Professionalism Panel (2024 – present)
- The Florida Bar Ninth Judicial Circuit Grievance Committee “B” (Feb. 1, 2026 – April 30, 2026)
- Orange County Bar Association (2015 – present)
  - Professionalism Committee – Chair (2023 – 2024)
  - Appellate Practice Committee
- Florida Defense Lawyers Association (2020 – 2026)
- Florida Bar Appellate Practice Section (2010 – present)
- Federal Bar Association (2025)
- Central Florida Association for Women Lawyers (2016 – 2018)
- American Bar Association (2010 – 2012)

**42.** List all professional, business, fraternal, scholarly, civic, charitable, or other organizations, other than those listed in the previous question to which you belong, or to which you have belonged since graduating law school. For each, please provide dates of membership or participation and indicate any office you have held and the dates of office.

- St. Mary Magdalen Catholic Church (2006 – present)

**43.** Do you now or have you ever belonged to a club or organization that in practice or policy restricts (or restricted during the time of your membership) its membership on the basis of race, religion (other than a church, synagogue, mosque or other religious institution), national origin, or sex (other than an educational institution, fraternity or sorority)? If so, state the name and nature of the club(s) or organization(s), relevant policies and practices and whether you intend to continue as a member if you are selected to serve on the bench.

No.

**44.** Please describe any significant pro bono legal work you have done in the past 10 years, giving dates of service.

In 2023, I provided appellate pro bono services to the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office, Defending Best Interest Project in three cases involving termination of parental rights. Each case provided unique factual circumstances in analyzing section 39.801, Florida Statutes, which provides numerous enumerated grounds for termination. Along with the statutory requirements and framework, some of the arguments presented discussed the manifest best interests of a child, and that terminating a parent's rights was, in those specific set of facts, the least restrictive means. All three cases were affirmed on appeal.

I also served as mentor in the Orange County Bar Association Mentorship Program in the Fall of 2023. As part of this program, a volunteer experienced attorney is paired with a new attorney from a different firm. Over the course of several months, the two meet to discuss questions, concerns, and general insight into the practice of law and how to address day-to-day issues as an attorney and colleague.

45. Please describe any hobbies or other vocational interests.

I enjoy traveling, reading, playing the piano, learning new languages, and spending time with my family.

46. Please state whether you have served or currently serve in the military, including your dates of service, branch, highest rank, and type of discharge.

No.

47. Please provide links to all social media and blog accounts you currently maintain, including, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram.

Facebook: Profile – Therese Savona  
Twitter: Profile – ThereseSavona  
LinkedIn: Profile – Therese A. Savona  
Instagram: Profile – theres savona

## **FAMILY BACKGROUND**

48. Please state your current marital status. If you are currently married, please list your spouse's name, current occupation, including employer, and the date of the marriage. If you have ever been divorced, please state for each former spouse their name, current address, current telephone number, the date and place of the divorce and court and case number information.

I am married to Charles Ray Criddle. He is an Engineer/EMT with the City of Orlando Fire Department. We were married on December 22, 2018.

49. If you have children, please list their names and ages. If your children are over 18 years of age, please list their current occupation, residential address, and a current telephone number.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**CRIMINAL AND MISCELLANEOUS ACTIONS**

**50.** Have you ever been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor, including adjudications of guilt withheld? If so, please list and provide the charges, case style, date of conviction, and terms of any sentence imposed, including whether you have completed those terms.

No.

**51.** Have you ever pled nolo contendere or guilty to a crime which is a felony or misdemeanor, including adjudications of guilt withheld? If so, please list and provide the charges, case style, date of conviction, and terms of any sentence imposed, including whether you have completed those terms.

No.

**52.** Have you ever been arrested, regardless of whether charges were filed? If so, please list and provide sufficient details surrounding the arrest, the approximate date and jurisdiction.

No.

**53.** Have you ever been a party to a lawsuit, either as the plaintiff, defendant, petitioner, or respondent? If so, please supply the case style, jurisdiction/county in which the lawsuit was filed, case number, your status in the case, and describe the nature and disposition of the matter.

I was a defendant in a litigation that was brought by a medical professional whose license was prosecuted by the Florida Department of Health during my time as the Department's Chief Appellate Counsel. The case was *James A. Cocores, M.D. v. Therese A. Savona*, case number 2017-CA-009553, filed in the Circuit Court of the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit, Palm Beach County, Florida. The case was dismissed.

After the Department issued an Emergency Suspension Order of Dr. Cocores' license, Dr. Cocores petitioned the First District Court of Appeal for review of that emergency order in case number 1D13-1391. As the Department's Chief Appellate Counsel, I filed a written response on behalf of the Department to explain why the First District should affirm the Department's emergency order. The First District issued a *per curium* opinion denying Dr. Cocores' petition.

Several years later, Dr. Cocores filed numerous civil lawsuits against individuals who were involved in some part with the Department of Health and the prosecution of Dr. Cocores' medical license. Even though Dr. Cocores filed a complaint naming me as a defendant, the complaint was silent as to any action I took on the Department's behalf, or any alleged malpractice. Instead, the complaint alleged libel and slander against other Department

individuals who also were involved with and handled the prosecution of Dr. Cocores' medical license. In addition to bringing this complaint against me personally, Dr. Cocores also filed 26 other complaints against other individuals and entities related to the Department's investigation and prosecution of Dr. Cocores. Dr. Cocores moved to dismiss the case voluntarily, which was granted by the trial court.

**54.** To your knowledge, has there ever been a complaint made or filed alleging malpractice as a result of action or inaction on your part?

No.

**55.** To the extent you are aware, have you or your professional liability carrier ever settled a claim against you for professional malpractice? If so, give particulars, including the name of the client(s), approximate dates, nature of the claims, the disposition and any amounts involved.

No.

**56.** Has there ever been a finding of probable cause or other citation issued against you or are you presently under investigation for a breach of ethics or unprofessional conduct by any court, administrative agency, bar association, or other professional group. If so, provide the particulars of each finding or investigation.

No.

**57.** To your knowledge, within the last ten years, have any of your current or former co-workers, subordinates, supervisors, customers, clients, or the like, ever filed a formal complaint or accusation of misconduct including, but not limited to, any allegations involving sexual harassment, creating a hostile work environment or conditions, or discriminatory behavior against you with any regulatory or investigatory agency or with your employer? If so, please state the date of complaint or accusation, specifics surrounding the complaint or accusation, and the resolution or disposition.

No.

**58.** Are you currently the subject of an investigation which could result in civil, administrative, or criminal action against you? If yes, please state the nature of the investigation, the agency conducting the investigation, and the expected completion date of the investigation.

No.

**59.** Have you ever filed a personal petition in bankruptcy or has a petition in bankruptcy been filed against you, this includes any corporation or business entity that you were involved with? If so,

please provide the case style, case number, approximate date of disposition, and any relevant details surrounding the bankruptcy.

No.

**60.** In the past ten years, have you been subject to or threatened with eviction proceedings? If yes, please explain.

No.

**61.** Please explain whether you have complied with all legally required tax return filings. To the extent you have ever had to pay a tax penalty or a tax lien was filed against you, please explain giving the date, the amounts, disposition, and current status.

I have complied with all legally required tax return filings.

## **HEALTH**

**62.** Are you currently addicted to or dependent upon the use of narcotics, drugs, or alcohol?

No.

**63.** During the last ten years have you been hospitalized or have you consulted a professional or have you received treatment or a diagnosis from a professional for any of the following: Kleptomania, Pathological or Compulsive Gambling, Pedophilia, Exhibitionism or Voyeurism? If your answer is yes, please direct each such professional, hospital and other facility to furnish the Chairperson of the Commission any information the Commission may request with respect to any such hospitalization, consultation, treatment or diagnosis. ["Professional" includes a Physician, Psychiatrist, Psychologist, Psychotherapist or Mental Health Counselor.] Please describe such treatment or diagnosis.

No.

**64.** In the past ten years have any of the following occurred to you which would interfere with your ability to work in a competent and professional manner: experiencing periods of no sleep for two or three nights, experiencing periods of hyperactivity, spending money profusely with extremely poor judgment, suffering from extreme loss of appetite, issuing checks without sufficient funds, defaulting on a loan, experiencing frequent mood swings, uncontrollable tiredness, falling asleep without warning in the middle of an activity. If yes, please explain.

No.

**65.** Do you currently have a physical or mental impairment which in any way limits your ability or fitness to properly exercise your duties as a member of the Judiciary in a competent and professional manner? If yes please explain the limitation or impairment and any treatment, program or counseling sought or prescribed.

No.

66. During the last ten years, have you ever been declared legally incompetent or have you or your property been placed under any guardianship, conservatorship or committee? If yes, provide full details as to court, date, and circumstances.

No.

67. During the last ten years, have you unlawfully used controlled substances, narcotic drugs, or dangerous drugs as defined by Federal or State laws? If your answer is "Yes," explain in detail. (Unlawful use includes the use of one or more drugs and/or the unlawful possession or distribution of drugs. It does not include the use of drugs taken under supervision of a licensed health care professional or other uses authorized by Federal or State law provisions.)

No.

68. In the past ten years, have you ever been reprimanded, demoted, disciplined, placed on probation, suspended, cautioned, or terminated by an employer as result of your alleged consumption of alcohol, prescription drugs, or illegal drugs? If so, please state the circumstances under which such action was taken, the name(s) of any persons who took such action, and the background and resolution of such action

No.

69. Have you ever refused to submit to a test to determine whether you had consumed and/or were under the influence of alcohol or drugs? If so, please state the date you were requested to submit to such a test, the type of test required, the name of the entity requesting that you submit to the test, the outcome of your refusal, and the reason why you refused to submit to such a test.

No.

70. In the past ten years, have you suffered memory loss or impaired judgment for any reason? If so, please explain in full.

No.

## **SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION**

71. Describe any additional education or experiences you have which could assist you in holding judicial office.

There are several experiences that I believe would assist me in holding a position on the Fifth District Court of Appeal.

First, my family. I believe my family background and upbringing have shaped my core values and beliefs into what they are today, and who I am both as a person and a professional. To start, I am a first generation on my father's side. He emigrated from Italy when he was about 10 years old, making his way across the Atlantic from Sicily to be welcomed to the United States of America through Ellis Island. He witnessed firsthand hardships that led his father and older brothers to make the journey first to work in the

shipyards in New York City and send their earnings back to my grandmother and the three youngest children so that one day, they would be reunited as citizens of this great country. My father once told me that growing up, he was called every name imaginable because he was an Italian immigrant. But this did not deter or dissuade my father from achieving great things. With little schooling and no ability to speak English, he learned the language by watching cartoons. He became the first person in his family to complete high school but did not stop there. He went on to receive a college degree followed by his medical degree, despite adversity he faced throughout. He even served our country through the United States Navy as an officer, understanding that public service assisted in giving back to his country for all the freedoms it gave him. My father's faith in God and deep appreciation for the freedoms enshrined in our Constitution have provided a foundational footing of respecting the system of government designed by the founders. Growing up, he often reminded us: "There is no greater country in the world than this one."

Second, my appreciation for history. In college, I had two majors: communication and history. Often, I am asked if someone chose the latter for me. The answer is always a resounding "no." Not only were both these majors routed in writing and research but also allowed me to learn how to interpret documents and original sources from hundreds of years prior. As a history major, particularly upper-level classes, we read original sources instead of textbooks. Classes focusing on the Middle Ages read sources written from the time, discerning words and phrases that may have fallen out of favor in modern times. Understanding language and words in the context of how individuals at the time used them prepared me for becoming an attorney, and even more so, an appellate attorney. This education and experience would assist me in judicial office, as it has as a practitioner, in using the ordinary meaning of words at the time a statute or the Constitution was drafted.

Third, my current role as a circuit court judge. The appointment came with much excitement. The day after receiving the appointment came to be the day of understanding – that I would be donning a simple, black robe which symbolizes the humility one must have when taking judicial office. Wearing the robe for the first hearing was also met with that weight – to uphold the Constitution and the laws in a manner consistent with the plain, ordinary, and contextual meaning of the text with historical analogs. It was that first hearing that tested my understanding and application of procedural due process – whether to rule on any and all issues that the parties wish to advance and act as a "philosopher king," or to ensure the limited rule of the judicial branch and ensure that the parties receive notice and an opportunity to be heard. I chose the latter. Having understood this concept as a practitioner, they became more focused in application as the concerns became more palpable and immediate. Even though there were times in practice that I learned humility. The experiences I have had on the bench to date act as a consistent reminder of the importance of humility as a member of the judiciary, and the importance of reason and restraint in that role.

Fourth, my respect for those who protect our freedoms. My husband currently serves as a firefighter for the City of Orlando Fire Department, but his public service did not start there. After high school, he enlisted in the United States Army and was part of the 82 Airborne Division. He served as a paratrooper, then a rigger (person who is responsible for folding and packing parachutes), and then became one of the youngest jumpmasters for his unit at that time. His role as jumpmaster required him to ensure his paratroopers and any equipment were prepared for a jump/drop and was responsible for making sure they all exited the aircraft at the right time to get them to their landing zone/drop zone. My husband's service came at a time of great national importance – September 11th. After the deadly terror attacks, my husband served in the second wave of military presence in Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom from 2002 to 2003. He then joined the Special Forces for a second combat tour in Operation Iraqi Freedom in Iraq during 2006 and 2007. His military career, coupled with my history background, further establishes the appreciation and respect for this Country and those who serve. In June 2019, we traveled to Normandy, France for the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-Day, where we met veterans who landed on the beaches during Operation Overlord and heard firsthand accounts of the perils of that day and the sacrifices made to end tyranny. We witnessed American flags flown next to French flags in the sectors of Normandy liberated by American troops, a sight not common outside of government buildings or embassies abroad. We watched as people from Europe and northern France still said “thank you” to us, as if we were the ones freeing them from the oppressive forces all those years ago. I will never forget standing on Pointe du Hoc hearing the sounds of the C-130s flying overhead, dawned with invasion stripes paying homage to the aircraft from that time, imagining how those aircrafts must have sounded to the residents at the time – the sounds of liberty and freedom. This experience was invaluable to me as it reaffirmed the necessity of holding true to our freedoms not as defined by the whims of the present, but rather, as determined by our founders.

72. Explain the particular contribution you believe your selection would bring to this position and provide any additional information you feel would be helpful to the Commission and Governor in evaluating your application.

As an appellate practitioner, I was fortunate to address and handle different issues across different practice areas. My extensive background included handling criminal appeals, administrative law appeals, and civil appeals throughout Florida's appellate courts and before the federal Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals. This resulted in being responsible for 647 appeals handled to final resolution, with numerous other open appellate cases that were reassigned when I was appointed to the Ninth Judicial Circuit. I handled all aspects of these appeals, including brief writing and oral arguments.

While in private practice, I handled cases in the areas of professional liability, medical malpractice, wrongful death, construction, products liability, trademark, copyright infringement, personal liability, and homeowners/condominium association. I was fortunate to work alongside trial counsels, both within the firm as well as outside trial

counsel, to provide litigation support. My dedication and commitment to this area of law led me to becoming Board Certified in Appellate Practice by the Florida Bar in 2018, and I received recertification in 2023. The scope of my appellate practice included appellate mediation that, even if unsuccessful, requires parties to have reasonable understandings of the facts, law, and circumstances of the case.

The scope of my appellate practice provided me with the understanding of a court's role in deciding a case. Often times as counsel for the appellee, I would argue this exact principle, which couples with party presentation, issue preservation, jurisdiction of the court, and the unwavering ideal that the court is to interpret the law, not make the law, and to explain what the law says and not what it ought to be. Based on my experience on the trial bench, this view has been further cemented that the court remains the neutral arbiter and does not become an advocate for a party or counsel.

On a more personal note, my parents instilled in me a sense of duty to others through respect and hard work, with a foundation in faith and doing what is right, even when it is difficult. It is that mentality, work ethic, and perseverance which I believe have allowed me to excel in my field and would continue to allow me to contribute to the citizens of the state of Florida as a judge on the Fifth District Court of Appeal. I believe the role of a judge is not to legislate from the bench but to be guided by the plain text and ordinary meaning of a rule, statute, or constitutional provision. Throughout the course of my career as a practitioner, I often argued and litigated for the application of the plain language of a rule, statute, or constitutional provision, regardless of whether it was in a criminal, administrative, or civil case. So, too, has this approach been utilized in my current position as a circuit court judge. For example, I consult and rely on the plain language of statutes to determine whether a petitioner's ex parte temporary injunction for domestic violence, stalking, dating violence, repeat violence, or sexual violence is sufficient for the relief requested. It is this contextualist constructionist approach that has been reenforced through my life that I would bring to the appellate court.

## REFERENCES

73. List the names, addresses, e-mail addresses and telephone numbers of ten persons who are in a position to comment on your qualifications for a judicial position and of whom inquiry may be made by the Commission and the Governor.

The Honorable Stephanie W. Ray  
First District Court of Appeal  
2000 Drayton Drive  
Tallahassee, FL 32399  
[rays@1dca.org](mailto:rays@1dca.org)  
Office: (850) 717-8162

The Honorable Thomas Winokur  
First District Court of Appeal  
2000 Drayton Drive  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001  
[winokurt@1dca.org](mailto:winokurt@1dca.org)  
Cell: [REDACTED]

The Honorable Mary Alice Nardella  
Sixth District Court of Appeal  
811 East Main Street  
Lakeland, FL 33801  
[nardellam@flcourts.org](mailto:nardellam@flcourts.org)  
Office: (386) 947-1530

The Honorable Alan Forst  
Fourth District Court of Appeal  
110 S. Tamarind Ave.  
West Palm Beach, FL 33401-4610  
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The Honorable Brian Sandor  
Ninth Judicial Circuit  
425 N. Orange Ave.  
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The Honorable (Ret.) Elizabeth Gibson  
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Office: (850) 825-4334

CERTIFICATE

I have read the foregoing questions carefully and have answered them truthfully, fully and completely. I hereby waive notice by and authorize The Florida Bar or any of its committees, educational and other institutions, the Judicial Qualifications Commission, the Florida Board of Bar Examiners or any judicial or professional disciplinary or supervisory body or commission, any references furnished by me, employers, business and professional associates, all governmental agencies and instrumentalities and all consumer and credit reporting agencies to release to the respective Judicial Nominating Commission and Office of the Governor any information, files, records or credit reports requested by the commission in connection with any consideration of me as possible nominee for appointment to judicial office. Information relating to any Florida Bar disciplinary proceedings is to be made available in accordance with Rule 3-7.1(1), Rules Regulating The Florida Bar. I recognize and agree that, pursuant to the Florida Constitution and the Uniform Rules of this commission, the contents of this questionnaire and other information received from or concerning me, and all interviews and proceedings of the commission, except for deliberations by the commission, shall be open to the public.

Further, I stipulate I have read and understand the requirements of the Florida Code of Judicial Conduct.

Dated this 4th day of June, 2026  
Therese Ann Savona \_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name Signature

State of Florida  
County of Osceola

Sworn to (or affirmed) and subscribed before me by means of

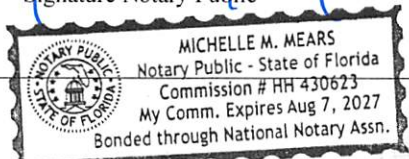
physical presence OR  online notarization  
this 4 day of June, 2026

By Therese Ann Savona

Personally known \_\_\_\_\_  
 Produced ID \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Identification \_\_\_\_\_

Michelle M. Mears  
Signature Notary Public



Printed name of Notary Public

(Pursuant to Section 119.071(4)(d)(1), F.S.), . . . The home addresses and telephone numbers of justices of the Supreme Court, district court of appeal judges, circuit court judges, and county court judges; the home addresses, telephone numbers, and places of employment of the spouses and children of justices and judges; and the names and locations of schools and day care facilities attended by the children of justices and judges are exempt from the provisions of subsection (1), dealing with public records.

**FORM 6**  
**FULL AND PUBLIC**  
**DISCLOSURE OF**  
**FINANCIAL INTEREST**

**PART A – NET WORTH**

Please enter the value of your net worth as of December 31 or a more current date. [Note: Net worth is not calculated by subtracting your *reported* liabilities from your *reported* assets, so please see the instructions on page 3.]

My net worth as of June 3, 2026 was \$ 895,410.58.

**PART B - ASSETS**

**HOUSEHOLD GOODS AND PERSONAL EFFECTS:**

Household goods and personal effects may be reported in a lump sum if their aggregate value exceeds \$1,000. This category includes any of the following, if not held for investment purposes; jewelry; collections of stamps, guns, and numismatic items; art objects; household equipment and furnishings; clothing; other household items; and vehicles for personal use.

The aggregate value of my household goods and personal effects (described above) is \$ 266,000

**ASSETS INDIVIDUALLY VALUED AT OVER \$1,000:**

DESCRIPTION OF ASSET (specific description is required – see instructions p. 3)	VALUE OF ASSET
401(a) with State of Florida (retirement account made up of stocks and bonds)	\$77,933.05
Roth IRA (Charles Schwab)	\$15,328.42
401(k) with Cole, Scott & Kissane (Charles Schwab)	\$241,423.29
Savings Account (American Express)	\$50,267.17
Bank accounts (USAA)	\$12,092.55
Property, Volusia County, FL	\$515,500.00
Series I Savings Bond (Treasury Direct)	\$4,916.92

**PART C - LIABILITIES**

**LIABILITIES IN EXCESS OF \$1,000 (See instructions on page 4):**

NAME AND ADDRESS OF CREDITOR	AMOUNT OF LIABILITY
Lakeview Loan Servicing (mortgage; joint and several liability) 4425 Ponce de Leon Blvd. 5-251 Coral Gables, FL 33146	\$303,954.81
Navy Federal Credit Union (personal vehicle) PO Box 3000 Merrifield, VA 22119-3000	\$21,978.36

**JOINT AND SEVERAL LIABILITIES NOT REPORTED ABOVE:**

NAME AND ADDRESS OF CREDITOR	AMOUNT OF LIABILITY

**PART D – INCOME**

You may ***EITHER*** (1) file a complete copy of your latest federal income tax return, *including all W2's, schedules, and attachments*, ***OR*** (2) file a sworn statement identifying each separate source and amount of income which exceeds \$1,000 including secondary sources of income, by completing the remainder of Part D, below.

I elect to file a copy of my latest federal income tax return and all W2's, schedules, and attachments.  
 (if you check this box and attach a copy of your latest tax return, you need not complete the remainder of Part D.)

**PRIMARY SOURCE OF INCOME (See instructions on page 5):**

NAME OF SOURCE OF INCOME EXCEEDING \$1,000	ADDRESS OF SOURCE OF INCOME	AMOUNT
Florida State Court System	9150 S Dadeland Blvd, Ste 1400, Miami, FL 33156	\$200,836.08

**SECONDARY SOURCES OF INCOME** [Major customers, clients, etc., of businesses owned by reporting person—see instructions on page 6]

NAME OF BUSINESS ENTITY	NAME OF MAJOR SOURCES OF BUSINESS' INCOME	ADDRESS OF SOURCE	PRINCIPAL BUSINESS ACTIVITY OF SOURCE
N/A			

**PART E – INTERESTS IN SPECIFIC BUSINESS [Instructions on page 7]**

	BUSINESS ENTITY #1	BUSINESS ENTITY #2	BUSINESS ENTITY #3
NAME OF BUSINESS ENTITY	N/A	N/A	N/A
ADDRESS OF BUSINESS ENTITY			
PRINCIPAL BUSINESS ACTIVITY			
POSITION HELD WITH ENTITY			
I OWN MORE THAN A 5% INTEREST IN THE BUSINESS			
NATURE OF MY OWNERSHIP INTEREST			

**IF ANY OF PARTS A THROUGH E ARE CONTINUED ON A SEPARATE SHEET, PLEASE CHECK HERE**

**OATH**

I, the person whose name appears at the beginning of this form, do depose on oath or affirmation and say that the information disclosed on this form and any attachments hereto is true, accurate, and complete.

**STATE OF FLORIDA**

**COUNTY OF** Osceola

Sworn to (or affirmed) and subscribed before me this 4 day of June, 2026 by \_\_\_\_\_

Theresa Ann Savona

(Signature of Notary Public—State of Florida)

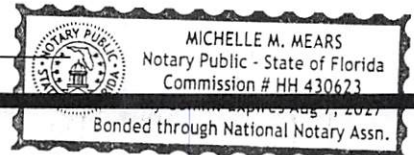
(Print, Type, or Stamp Commissioned Name of Notary Public)

Personally Known \_\_\_\_\_ OR Produced Identification \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Identification Produced \_\_\_\_\_

[Handwritten Signature]

SIGNATURE



Redacted Copy of Application  
Non-Public Financial Information, Writing Samples,  
and FDLE Disclosure Are Not Attached.