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Office Justice of the Supreme Court of Appeals Division 1

Name Tim Armstead

Party Non-partisan

Biography

B.A. History and Political Science, University of Charleston; Law Degree, WVU College of Law; 57th Speaker of the West Virginia House of Delegates and 20-year member of the House; Assistant to Chief of Staff to Governor Cecil Underwood; Intern to Governor Arch Moore; Married to Anna Armstead; one daughter and son-in-law and two grandchildren. ArmsteadforWV.com

Legal/Judicial Experience

Currently Chief Justice of the West Virginia Supreme Court; Appointed and subsequently elected to the Supreme Court in 2018; practiced law in West Virginia for nearly 30 years; attorney, Spilman, Thomas, Battle and Klostermeyer; Steptoe and Johnson; In-house Counsel Columbia Gas / NiSource; Law Clerk to Federal Judge David A. Faber; former Adjunct Professor of Constitutional Law, University of Charleston.

1. What changes would you like to see to the state's court system?

The opioid crisis in our state has had a devastating effect on our state's children, resulting in increases in abuse and neglect of children. Our judges need additional tools, such as added drug counseling and family services and additional Family Treatment Courts to help ensure each child can grow up in a safe, healthy and loving home.

2. How would you prioritize budget allocations for the court system (e.g., family court, drug court)?

As a fiscally conservative justice, I have helped streamline the court's budget resulting in a FY2021 budget \$4 million less than the court's budget five years ago. Moving forward, the court will need to prioritize funding for a sufficient number of probation officers to address the growing opioid challenge and Family Treatment Courts to protect our children and restore families.

Office Justice of the Supreme Court of Appeals Division 1

Name David Hummel Jr.

Party Non-partisan

No Reply

Office Justice of the Supreme Court of Appeals Division 1

Name Richard Neely

Party Non-partisan

Biography

A.B. Dartmouth College (economics) 1965; LL.B. Yale Law School 1967; Captain, U.S. Army Artillery, awarded Bronze Star in Vietnam; Member, WV House of Delegates, 1971-73; Justice & Chief Justice, WV Supreme Court of Appeals, 1973-1995; Partner, Neely & Callaghan, *Lawyers*, 1995-2020.

Legal/Judicial Experience

Private practice, Fairmont, WV 1969-1973; Justice & Chief Justice, WV Supreme Court, 1973-1995; Private practice, 1995-2020. Author of 7 books and numerous articles on court systems and judicial issues including *How Courts Govern America*, Yale U. Press and "The Politics of Crime," *Atlantic*, cover story, August, 1980

1. What changes would you like to see to the state's court system?

We need to return to Art. 8, Sec. 4 of the State *Constitution* to reduce the inordinate delay in dispatching cases appealed to the WV Supreme Court. It currently takes between 19 and 28 months for a case to be resolved. We also need to improve “abuse and neglect” litigation to get abused children into “forever” homes more quickly.

2. How would you prioritize budget allocations for the court system (e.g., family court, drug court)?

The most important courts in the State are the Magistrate Courts and Family Courts because those are the courts that ordinary people see. Of the two, the more important is the Family Court because it controls the most important issues in any family’s life whenever divorce or child custody become prominent.

Office Justice of the Supreme Court of Appeals Division 2

Name Jim Douglas

Party Non-partisan

Biography

See website: Douglas4Justice.com. Born in Sutton and attended Clay County High School. Received BA from UC(73); MA(75) and JD(77) from WVU. Member BOD and officer of the WV Symphony Orchestra. Member CCUMethodist, Charleston. Divorced, 3 children, Justin. MD, Jarod, JD, Jennifer, paralegal. Six grandchildren. Published author.

Legal/Judicial Experience

Clerk to Hon. Wm. Kidd; Prosecuting Attorney; Adjunct Professor, Business/Family Law at two colleges; RESA IV(Special Education); 39 1/2 years Solo Attorney, Divorce and Family Law over 44 of State's 55 counties; Family Court Judge, Kanawha County; argued 40+ cases before the WVSCA; taught 32 CLEs in Family Law; AAML; admitted: USSC, SDWV, NDWV, 4th Circuit, Colorado

1. What changes would you like to see to the state’s court system?

Priority should be given family law cases in the decision process of the WVSCA. Children, grandparents and parents should not have to wait. Also, pay homage to the predictability function of the law; i.e., be aware of and apply precedent. Finally, the Court should require annual domestic violence and LGBTQ sensitivity training for all judges.

2. How would you prioritize budget allocations for the court system (e.g., family court, drug court)?

Foster families should be fully funded through the WVSCA rather than through the Legislature. Guardians ad Litem should be restored adequate funding. Counseling for children of addicted parents should be initiated. Training for grandparent Guardians should be created. In all Family Court Circuits, daycare centers should be established and one mandatory Saturday court per month should be funded.

Office Justice of the Supreme Court of Appeals Division 2

Name Kristina "Kris" Raynes

Party Non-partisan

Biography

I received a B.A., Criminal Justice, Marshall University, *cum laude* and J.D., University of Akron School of Law. I have been a state and federal prosecutor for 20 years. I am a presenter/faculty for National District Attorneys Association, presenter/faculty for ChildFirst (training forensic interviewers for children who are physically/sexually abused). I am currently endorsed by WV State GOP Party. RaynesforJustice.com.

Legal/Judicial Experience

I started my career in the Summit County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office in Akron, OH. In 2006, I returned home to WV to become a Special Assistant United States Attorney for the Southern District of WV and came to the Putnam County Prosecutor’s Office in 2008. Licensed to practice WV, OH, Southern District of WV and Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals

1. What changes would you like to see to the state’s court system?

As a state and federal prosecutor for 20 years, it has been my job to hold people accountable for their actions. I believe I can bring that skill set to the WV Supreme Court. I will return accountability and transparency to the Court and to the citizens of WV and will raise the bar of professionalism among the litigants.

2. How would you prioritize budget allocations for the court system (e.g., family court, drug court)?

As an administrative oversight agent for the Court, our budget structure should reflect what is most needed in our state now. I would structure a significant budget for drug courts to discover the most effective treatment for our opioid crisis and also encourage funding for abuse and neglect cases in juvenile courts to address the foster parent shortage in WV

Office Justice of the Supreme Court of Appeals Division 2

Name Joanna I. Tabit

Party Non-partisan

Biography

I am a lifelong West Virginian. I was born in Montgomery and raised by my parents, along with my two sisters, in Charleston. I graduated from Marshall University with a B.B.A. in 1983 and earned my law degree from the WVU College of Law in 1986. Learn more at <https://judgejoannaforwv.com/>

Legal/Judicial Experience

Initially, I was a personal law clerk to Supreme Court Justice Thomas McHugh. I served as Deputy Attorney General in the Office of the Attorney General. I joined Steptoe & Johnson PLLC, where I was a member attorney until 2014, when I was appointed to the Kanawha County bench by Governor Tomblin. I was elected to that seat in 2016.

1. What changes would you like to see to the state’s court system?

The recusal process should be changed to ensure public confidence in the judiciary. The decision is now made solely by the challenged Justice. No mechanism exists to appeal that decision. The Court should adopt a process to review recusal decisions by the full Court, and written decisions should be required so that there is a record of the decision.

2. How would you prioritize budget allocations for the court system (e.g., family court, drug court)?

Our Court system is experiencing unforeseen challenges stemming from the drug epidemic. Continued funding for treatment courts, including adult and juvenile drug courts and family treatments courts, is essential to combat the crisis. Providing funding to maximize the use of technology to enhance communication and access to justice, particularly through use of electronic filing, is also critical.

Office Justice of the Supreme Court of Appeals Division 2

Name William R. “Bill” Wooton

Party Non-partisan

Biography

I am a Marshall University and WVU College of Law graduate and small town lawyer with extensive experience in virtually every type of legal proceeding one can imagine. I’m a retired National Guard Colonel, worked as a prosecuting attorney, served as Majority leader of the House of Delegates, and was the long-time Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee. Website: www.WootonForJustice.com

Legal/Judicial Experience

Private practice of law for more than 40 years, involved in virtually every type of legal proceeding possible in WV. Editor-in-Chief, WV Law Review; Order of the Coif; graduated top of class; law clerk for the Honorable John A. Field, Jr., Judge, US Court of Appeals; former Assistant Attorney General; former prosecutor; extensive quasi-judicial experience as Judiciary Chair in legislature.

1. What changes would you like to see to the state’s court system?

The existing structure of our state judicial system is adequate for the needs of West Virginia. I believe I can improve the administration of justice while serving in that system. I don't think we need radical change to our existing system, and don't believe we need an intermediate appellate court. However, that is a legislative decision permitted by our constitution

2. How would you prioritize budget allocations for the court system (e.g., family court, drug court)?

The judicial budget has limited dollars available for discretionary spending; 84% goes for personnel expenses. Notwithstanding the current coronavirus pandemic, our opioid crisis persists and must be addressed. Responsibility for addressing this crisis rests primarily with other branches of government, but even with its budgetary limitations the judicial branch can help by prioritizing Drug Courts, Veteran's Courts and Truancy Courts.

Office Justice of the Supreme Court of Appeals Division 3 Unexpired Term

Name Lora A Dyer

Party Non-partisan

Biography

I was the first in my family to attend college. I grew up the daughter of a coal miner in Southern West Virginia. I am proud that I learned the "can do" attitude from my Seabee Veteran dad. I graduated from Marshall University. I then studied environmental engineering in England, and ultimately earned my law degree at West Virginia University.

Legal/Judicial Experience

My first legal job was with the West Virginia Supreme Court for Justice Albright. I worked as a law clerk for Judge Stucky, and then as an assistant prosecutor before leaving for private practice. I also worked as general counsel for the West Virginia Auditor before being elected circuit judge in the Fifth Judicial Circuit, Jackson, Mason, Calhoun, and Roane.

1. What changes would you like to see to the state's court system?

Improve communication among the different branches of the judiciary. For example, the Supreme Court has limited interaction with the lower courts, especially the family and magistrate courts. That in particular needs to be revamped to have more interaction among all of the judiciary officials from the clerks' offices to the Supreme Court. Any trainings should incorporate officials from all levels.

2. How would you prioritize budget allocations for the court system (e.g., family court, drug court)?

I am proud of the drug court that I started in Jackson County. Drug courts and alternative sentencing for non-violent offenders need reviewed for more funding. I would place more funding in early intervention programs for children in the abuse and neglect system. I would emphasize more training programs for all levels dealing with the abuse and neglect crisis.

Office Justice of the Supreme Court of Appeals Division 3 Unexpired Term

Name John A. Hutchinson

Party Non-partisan

Biography

Born and raised near Beckley, I learned the value of hard work on my grandparents' farm. I attended Davis & Elkins College where I put myself through school working as a carpenter, laborer and a steelworker. Before graduating from WVU College of Law I also worked as a public school special education teacher. www.justicehutch.com

Legal/Judicial Experience

I served as an attorney for 15 years before being appointed to the 10 th Judicial Circuit Court in 1995. I won elections for that court in 1996, 2000, 2008 and 2016 before being appointed to the State Supreme Court in 2018. I have 40 years working experience as a practicing attorney, Circuit Court Judge, and Supreme Court Justice.

1. What changes would you like to see to the state’s court system?

Courts should not make law but rather interpret legislative intent when disputes arise about the law. Expand drug courts to break the cycle of addiction and help keep people from re-offending and ending up back in jail. Additionally, the court should work with educators and law enforcement to keep our kids in the classroom and out of the courtroom.

2. How would you prioritize budget allocations for the court system (e.g., family court, drug court)?

I’m proud that during my first year on the Supreme Court we returned more than \$10 million to the state treasury through technology and modernization. Special courts such as drug courts Family Treatment Courts, Military Service Members Courts and Truancy Courts need adequate funding because they dramatically lower recidivism rates thus saving taxpayers money and improving our communities.

Office Justice of the Supreme Court of Appeals Division 3 Unexpired Term

Name Bill Schwartz

Party Non-partisan

Biography

I’ve been a lawyer in Charleston for the last 32 years. I’m graduate of St. John’s University and earned my Juris Doctor from Washington & Lee where I served on Moot Court Board and was a Regional Champion in the National Trial Competition.

Legal/Judicial Experience

I’ve been named Top 100 by the National Trial Lawyers, a Litigation Star by Benchmark Litigation and given the President’s Award from the Association for Justice.

1. What changes would you like to see to the state’s court system?

I would like to see changes in our court system where I believe former justices and politicians put us in a mess so we don't need more of the same. I'm an agent for change as a lawyer, business owner and taxpayer who will work to have the best administrator of 130 million tax dollars and I will always remember that those dollars belongs to the taxpayer.

2. How would you prioritize budget allocations for the court system (e.g., family court, drug court)?

I would prioritize the budget to the family and drug courts that deal with an opioid crisis and 7,000 children in state custody. These are problems that need to be dealt with immediately