

PA PAC Questionnaire for North Carolina Court of Appeals Candidates – 2022

Please return the completed form along with your resume or biographical statement describing education, work history, community service, and prior political experience, as well as a high-resolution headshot of yourself as soon as possible, but by Sat Mar 19 at 5pm, at the latest.

Please e-mail your responses to PAC Coordinators at papacboard@googlegroups.com by Saturday, March 19 at 5pm.

Please note that following the Saturday, March 19 at 5pm deadline, the People's Alliance PAC may publish your responses to this questionnaire and your resume.

When answering this questionnaire, please repeat the questions in your response document with each question numbered and organized as it appears here. Type your responses in italics, bold, or a different font to distinguish your responses from the questions. Do not use colors or shading. Please try to confine your responses to no more than 300 words unless another word limit is indicated. Do not feel obliged to exhaust the limit for each question.

If you use words or ideas from another person, please attribute your source.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire and your willingness to serve the people of Durham.

Candidate's name: Gale Murray Adams

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Judges and judicial candidates in North Carolina are allowed substantial freedom of political speech. PA PAC believes that every question in this questionnaire may be answered fully within the scope of the applicable rules. For more information on the scope of permitted political speech for judicial candidates, we refer you to the January 2, 2020 memorandum of the Judicial Standards Commission on Permitted Political Conduct. You may find it at:

<https://www.nccourts.gov/assets/inline-files/2020-Political-Conduct-Memo.pdf?lqEnTi0CGRseARDEGD.mXt60PMdBDGef>

About you:

1. Please describe how your religious and philosophical beliefs may affect your conduct and decision-making if you are elected.

In the context of my position as a judge, my religious and philosophical beliefs will not affect my conduct or decision-making. As it relates to cases that are before me, other than to treat all litigants with dignity and respect, I will follow the law, as is required, in order to ensure just decisions for all.

2. Would you support requiring race equity training for all North Carolina judges? If not, why not? What, if any, other training should be mandatory?

I support mandatory race equity training for judges. I was a moderator and participated in planning training sessions for race equity training for Superior Court Judges. The feedback was positive and eye-opening for the participants.

3. Please describe a situation in which you took a controversial position and explain how you handled it.

A controversial position I took involved a personnel matter. We simply discussed the matter and compromised on a resolution.

4. Why should progressive voters support you? What expertise do you bring to your race?

Progressive voters should support me because I will listen to someone's position objectively and with an open mind before making a decision. It is important to me that anyone who appears before me feels like they were heard and my decision was fair and based on the law.

The expertise I bring to my race is my diverse legal experience which I believe broadens my perspective and allows me to fully consider matters from various viewpoints.

5. What special expertise or competency would you bring to the Court of Appeals if you are elected?

I have served on a number of three-judge panels, including ones involving voting issues. In addition, I serve on the Pattern Jury Instruction Committee for Superior Court Judges. In that role, I am tasked with drafting jury instructions based on newly-enacted statutes and recent court decisions.

6. Have you ever been the subject of a complaint to the North Carolina State Bar or the North Carolina Judicial Standards Commission? If the answer is yes, please explain the circumstances and the outcome.

No.

About your practice of law:

7. Please describe your practice as a lawyer. Describe the areas of your practice and your specialties. If, over time, your practice has evolved or changed, describe the changes. Describe your various client bases as a part of your answer.

My background is primarily in criminal law, although I've gained a great deal of exposure to civil law serving as a Superior Court Judge. As a U.S. Navy JAG officer, I primarily practiced criminal defense and some civil law. After I completed my active-duty service, I worked as an Assistant District Attorney and as an Assistant Federal Public Defender. I was

either prosecuting or defending defendants charged with various property, violent, or drug offenses.

This diverse legal experience serving as a JAG officer, Assistant District Attorney, Assistant Federal Public Defender and Superior Court Judge provides me with great insight into our judicial system.

8. If you have been a member of an appellate division court, please choose a recent decision you wrote for the court which you feel best illustrates your learning, values, skills, outlook, and temperament as a jurist. If the decision is published, you may simply cite it. If the decision you have selected is unpublished, please provide us with a copy. Please explain why you selected the decision and tell us how it demonstrates your particular fitness to hold the judicial office you are seeking.

N/A

9. If you have not been a member of an appellate division court, please describe your practice, if any, in that division. Please provide us with the citation of an appellate decision in a case in which you advocated as lead attorney for one of the parties. The decision you choose should best illustrate the learning, values, skills, outlook, and temperament you would bring to the court as the holder of the judicial office you seek. If the decision you have chosen is unpublished, please provide us with a copy. You may also provide us with the brief you wrote in that case. Explain why you selected this decision.

N/A

10. Please describe the nature and extent of any pro bono legal work or other volunteer work you have done which best illustrates your values as a lawyer and as a person.

I mainly volunteer with youth activities designed to mentor and keep youth occupied and in a safe environment.

11. What is your judicial philosophy?

My judicial philosophy is to follow the law, listen to all sides, and render a fair and just verdict, while treating the parties with the utmost dignity and respect.

12. Have you ever been the subject of a complaint to the North Carolina State Bar or the North Carolina Judicial Standards Commission? If the answer is yes, please explain the circumstances and the outcome.

No.

Concerning law and policy:

13. What do you perceive as the greatest obstacle(s) to justice, if any?

The greatest obstacle to justice is economic inequality. Those with money get better results than those without. If a defendant cannot afford to make bond, their end result is likely harsher. If a defendant cannot pay restitution, the charge of which he or she is convicted is likely more serious. If a defendant cannot pay probation fines and fees or other monies, the

disruption of their daily lives is more likely prolonged, as probation is extended. Finally, there are the collateral consequences that are simply devastating.

In civil matters, a party cannot hire an attorney to pursue an equitable remedy.

14. How can our legal system be more equitable and accessible to all?

Judges should be more sensitive to the realities of everyday life for so many individuals and think outside the box in handling various legal matters that come before them.

15. What is your position on appointment versus election of judges? Should judicial elections be partisan?

I support the election of judges and those elections should be nonpartisan.

16. How would you define the relationship between the North Carolina Legislature and the North Carolina Court of Appeals? What changes, if any, would you make to that relationship?

I would define the relationship as one in which we balance the other's power for the good of the people of North Carolina. I would describe the relationship as antagonistic, at times.

As far as balancing the power of the other, I would not make any changes because those checks and balances are necessary to prevent any one branch from becoming too powerful.

17. What is the most important function of the North Carolina Court of Appeals?

The most important function of the Court of Appeals is to apply the law and to apply it fairly and to ensure the lower courts do the same.

18. What changes, if any, should be made to the composition of the court to which you seek election?

The Court needs more diversity.

19. What changes, if any, should be made to the Rules of Appellate Procedure? How would you change access to the appellate courts?

The text should be written in a way that the public can more easily understand. This plain language creates easier access for the public.

Your politics:

20. For whom did you vote in the 2020 United States Senate and presidential elections?

I voted for Cal Cunningham for U.S.Senate and Joseph Biden for President.

Again, thank you. **Please do not forget to provide us with your headshot and resume or biographical statement.**