

NAME: Tamela Adkins
PARTY: Non-Partisan
SEEKING: Gwinnett Superior Court

1. Why are you seeking the office?

Our elected officials should be accountable and fiscally responsible. I am running against Judge Rich because he does not sit on the bench and hear his assigned domestic cases. Between 55%-70% (depending on the year) of assigned cases to each Superior Court Judge in Gwinnett are domestic cases that affect our families and children.

Instead of hearing his assigned domestic cases, Judge Rich uses judges from the Magistrate Court, who are not elected by the people of Gwinnett.

Judge Rich's published civil calendars from 01/01/2016 (public records) are posted to my webpage. <https://adkinslaw.us/judge>

2. What distinguishes your candidacy?

Since 1993, I have been a domestic trial lawyer. My background uniquely prepares me for being a judge, especially on domestic cases which make up the majority of cases a Superior Court Judge is assigned in Gwinnett County. Domestic cases are: divorce; visitation; custody; contempt actions (ie. failure to pay child support); and modifications of custody & support orders. I have tried thousands of bench trials and many jury trials.

These are very important matters that affect our families and children. I have the compassion and understanding of what people face in a court case.

3. What is the proper role of a judge in interpreting the laws and Constitution?

Judges interpret laws. That is the official judicial function under our Constitution & I would adhere to that principle. However, in the real world, judges have wide discretion. I have counseled clients over the years that "the law is whatever your judge says it is unless you have enough money to appeal". If elected, I would follow the law as written because that would be my function as a judge, but also because I have seen the devastation in cases where judges have ruled based on their own biases and opinions, instead of following the law.

4. What in your life experience makes you believe that you are or would be a good judge?

At 57, the list is long. Challenges that life throws at you and personal failures are my most

valued experiences. Hardships have molded my character and my heart. I have overcome health issues and divorce. I have lost cases that I should have won. I had to fight for my education, being the first Adkins to attend college. I starting my own practice right out of law school, an education that I paid for with student loans. I have a work ethic and drive that will never be matched.

5.What do you see as a new challenge for judges in a post-pandemic court system?

Justice delayed is justice denied. Many people and businesses will be damaged by not being able to have their legal issues addressed.

Video court might work for very routine tasks. However, as our courts are open to the public....the technology would need to be able to allow everyone to “tune in”.

However, video is not a viable option in most court matters. It is essential that a judge or jury be able to be in the physical presence and observe how witnesses speak and behave to be able to judge their credibility. A video would not suffice in trials.

6.Please give a 100 word summary of your background?

I graduated high school in 1981 and received a B.S. in Biology from Meredith College in 1985. (NC) I worked in a medical genetics lab at UNC-Chapel Hill while I started a commercial cleaning company. I sold that company to attend law school and graduated early (2.5 years) cum laude from Quinnipiac University in 1992, where I was on Law Review.

I immediately started my own practice in domestic relations and moved to Suwanee in 2000. I am happily married (finally). My parents are 85 & 88 and still live on their own in Suwanee.