

NAME: Shawn Bratton
PARTY: Non-Partisan
SEEKING: State Court Judge



1. Why are you seeking the office?

I want to continue to serve as a Gwinnett County State Court Judge in order to serve the community, by using the knowledge and wisdom acquired over my lifetime and legal career to solve legal problems. I have been a Gwinnettian since 1973, and am a product of our schools. At 44, I am one of the youngest Judges in the County and I worked tirelessly as an attorney for over 11 years prior to my appointment. The last two years in private practice, I worked a second job as a part- time Magistrate Judge.

2. What distinguishes your candidacy?

Experience, dedication and focus are the distinguishing attributes of my candidacy. I have been a State Court Judge since 2014 and previously served as a Magistrate Judge. Both as an attorney and as a trial judge, I have tried a wide variety of civil and criminal cases. My background as a military veteran, a prosecutor, a civil litigator, and a judge evidence that I respect the position (and the voter), by illustrating my focus on doing the work necessary to become qualified to seek this position.

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

Judges are not policy makers. The proper role of a judge is that of the neutral application of the law as it exists, to a factual set of circumstances germane to the material issues of a given case. Policy arguments are more properly addressed through legislative and executive branches of government. On rare occasions a judge may be asked to make a ruling based upon the interpretation of a law or the Constitution and in those circumstances a judge looks to precedent and to legislative intent for guidance of such interpretation.

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

My experience as a judge for the last four years makes me very well qualified to continue in my role on the judiciary. Thirty years ago I competed in the high school mock trial program. That experience planted the seed and set me on course. Anything worth doing is worth doing well. A judgeship requires focus, discipline and responsibility. I have worked my entire legal career with an eye towards being a judge and even spent years working two jobs in order to serve the public in this capacity.

5. What do you think are the attributes of a good judge?

The virtues of patience, humility and temperance are vital attributes of a good judge. All persons stand equal before the law and a good judge should ensure that each party knows that he or she has been heard and understood in each case. Likewise, a judge should be patient, dignified and courteous to litigants, jurors, witnesses, lawyers and others with whom they deal in their official capacity.

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

I was educated K-12 in Gwinnett schools, graduating in 1990 from Shiloh High School. I served in the US Navy on a nuclear submarine and held a top secret clearance. I then obtained my college degree from UGA in 36 months while working weekends. I was an engineering aide for Siemens and then attended Georgia State College of Law. During that time I clerked in Cologne, Germany, and then for Bobby Lee Cook. I also worked for The Federal Defender Program, and at the Georgia Court of Appeals. My experience includes criminal prosecution, civil litigation and two judgeships.