

NAME: Veronica Cope
PARTY: Nonpartisan
SEEKING: Superior Court, Davis seat



Why are you seeking the office?

I'm running for Superior Court Judge because I believe that the last words of our Pledge of Allegiance "Justice for All" should be more than just mere words that we memorize and recite effortlessly. I believe that any person who comes into court should be before a judge who makes decisions based on the law and the facts alone and without regard to race, gender, financial status, or pedigree. Any person who comes into a courtroom is entitled to be before a judge who is courteous, compassionate, and who displays a commitment to being fair and impartial.

What distinguishes your candidacy?

I am the only candidate in this race who has spent my entire professional career as a general litigator. As such, I have handled many of the various types of cases that would come before a Superior Court Judge. I spent the first nine years of my career as a civil litigator and have incorporated criminal defense and juvenile law into my practice over the last eight years. I have dedicated the majority of the last four years to indigent criminal defense and juvenile cases--often handling cases on a reduced fee or pro bono basis to ensure equal access (100)

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

I believe in the rule of law. All people and institutions should be held accountable to the law as written by our founding fathers in our Constitution, our legislature, and according to prior decisions made by our appellate courts. It is a judge's role and responsibility to avoid the arbitrary exercise of power and to ensure that decisions are based on the state of the law as it exists at the time those decisions are made. This practice is critical to the effectiveness of the separation of powers as expressed in our Constitution.

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

My personal experience of being raised from very humble means and growing up as a Christian have uniquely equipped me with the temperament, humility, and servant's heart needed to effectively serve Gwinnett County residents as a judge. Growing up as a Christian taught me to treat everyone equally and to judge a person by their character and not their race, gender, or any other immutable characteristics. This is the very foundation which is imperative to be fair and

impartial as a judge. This foundation would enable me to treat everyone as a person and not just a court file.

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

A judge must treat everyone from bailiffs, court reporters, police officers and lawyers to witnesses, defendants, and litigants with a high level of respect. Superior Court Judges handle cases that will impact individuals for the rest of their lives including felony matters, divorce, child custody, adoption, property disputes, and equity. A judge must be able to use discretion to balance the need to protect the public with the need to protect each individual's Constitutional rights. A judge must be committed to being fair and ensuring justice for all who come before her.

Please give a 100 word summary of your background.

I grew up in Tarboro, NC, before obtaining my undergraduate and law degrees from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill as a first generation college student. I began my legal career at a large firm in Atlanta before ultimately starting my own practice as a general litigator. For over 16 years, I have handled cases in Gwinnett County and throughout Georgia taking both civil and criminal cases to trial. I am the mother of three sons, and reside in Grayson with my family. I believe in putting God first and giving back to the community at every opportunity.