



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TOMPKINS COUNTY

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ADDENDUM TO THE 2019 GENERAL ELECTION LOCAL VOTER GUIDE FOR TOMPKINS COUNTY VOTERS

NEW YORK STATE SUPREME COURT JUSTICE 6TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Cortland, Delaware, Madison, Otsego, Schuyler, Tioga, Tompkins
(ELECTIONS.NY.GOV)

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INTRODUCTION

The League of Women Voters of Tompkins County (LWV-TC) is participating in the national League of Women Voters nonpartisan VOTE411 electronic voter guide as a community service for candidates and voters for the 2019 General Election. The League of Women Voters does not support or oppose any candidate or political party. The web-based system allows Candidates to enter their contact and biographical information, and their responses to open-ended questions themselves.

In addition to the online voter guide, the following three documents are available on the League website and are provided in an effort to provide information to voters for the upcoming 2019 General Election:

- **2019 General Election Overview for Tompkins County Voters:**
(a trifold flyer) includes:
 - A list the State, County, City and Town Offices and Candidates;
 - November 5, 2019 Poll site hours; Early voting locations; dates; times; Board of Election contact information,
- **2019 General Election Voter Guide for Tompkins County Voters**
(59 pages) includes:
 - November 5, 2019 Poll site hours; Early Voting Locations, dates, hours; State and County Board of Elections contact information;
 - County, City and Town Candidates' responses to questions posed by the LWV-TC (Candidates' exported Vote411 submitted response text)
- **Addendum to the 2019 General Election Voter Guide for Tompkins County Voters for NYS Supreme Court Justice – 6th Judicial District:**
(6 pages) includes:
 - NYS Supreme Court Justice - 6th Judicial District Candidate responses requested by and received by the League of Women Voters of Tompkins County.
 - If candidates also submitted their answers to questions on the web-based Vote411 form, in response to the New York State (LWV Broom-Tioga) Vote411 invitation, those responses will be available on VOTE411.ORG for the ten counties.

NEW YORK STATE SUPREME COURT JUSTICE - 6TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT CANDIDATES
14-Year Term; 3 Open Seats; 5 Candidates (Vote for any three)

JUDICIAL CANDIDATE RESPONSE: Christopher Paul Baker

Education

- LeMoyne College, B.A., 1991
- State University of New York College at Buffalo, J.D., 1995

Bar admissions, credential

- New York, 1996

Past employment/experience

- Assistant District Attorney, Chemung County District Attorney's Office, 1997 – 2000
- Confidential Attorney, Counselor and Principal Law Clerk for State Supreme Court Judge, 2000 - 2016

Current employment

- Judge, Family Court, Chemung County, 2016 – present
- Acting Judge, State Supreme Court, 2018 - present
- Acting Schuyler County Court Judge and Drug Treatment Court Judge, 6/19/19 - present

Contact information that you wish the public to have:

- Email: cpcbCourts@gmail.com

I am a 1991 graduate of Le Moyne College and obtained my J.D. in 1995 from the State University of New York at Buffalo. After practicing in Manhattan at a large firm concentrating in personal injury and Workers' Compensation litigation, I returned to my hometown of Elmira to accept a position as an Assistant District Attorney in 1997. Along with trying cases in all Courts, including Chemung County Court where I now sit as a Judge, I also argued appeals before the Appellate Division.

In 2000, I accepted a position as the Principal Law Clerk to Supreme Court Justice Judith F. O'Shea, where for 17 years, I drafted legal opinions, jury charges, conducted preliminary, pre-trial and settlement conferences in all civil matters. During Justice O'Shea's service as the Administrative Judge for the 6th District, I served as the Program Coordinator for the Attorney-Client Fee Dispute Resolution Program, the Town and Village Court Action Plan, and was a Panel Member for the Statewide Foreclosure Working Group.

From 2000-2016, I was appointed by the Deputy Chief Administrative Judge to serve as a Judicial Hearing Officer for the Unified Court System, where I presided over trials involving misconduct and disciplinary charges levied against court employees.

In 2016, I was elected as Chemung County Judge, handling criminal, family and surrogate matters.

Upon Justice O'Shea's retirement in November 2018, I was appointed to serve as Acting Supreme Court Justice, where I handle both contested and uncontested matters, including presiding over non jury and jury trials.

I also currently serve as the Acting Schuyler Country Court Judge, handling criminal matters and preside over Drug Treatment Court.

Why are you running for Justice of the NYS Supreme Court?

If elected, I intend to utilize my depth of experience in Supreme Court, as both a Principal Law Clerk and a current Acting Supreme Court Justice, together with my direct judicial experience, to continue to run a fair and efficient Court, where litigants and their attorneys will continue to receive timely, rational and equitable decisions based in law and fact, along with always being afforded their due process rights. Litigants and Attorneys will continue to encounter a Justice who is faithful to established legal principles and processes, approachable and open to argument, who is vigilant in remaining neutral, and who has a track record of being a problem solver in both routine and complex litigation.

What experience qualifies you for this position?

I firmly believe that I am the best candidate given my unmatched qualifications of working exclusively in Supreme Court for 17 years, along with the confidence in my abilities as shown by my appointment as Acting Supreme Court Justice and my election as Chemung County Court Judge. Living in the "Judicial World" everyday reinforces the responsibility and privilege I have in serving as a member of the judiciary.

NEW YORK STATE SUPREME COURT JUSTICE - 6TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT CANDIDATES
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JUDICIAL CANDIDATE: Oliver Blaise

Education

- State University of New York at Albany, B.A. History, cum laude, 1993
- State University of New York at Albany, M.A. History, 1994
- Syracuse University College of Law, J.D., cum laude, 1997

Bar admissions, credentials

- New York, 1998
- United States District Court for the Northern (1999), Western (2002) and Southern (2015) Districts of New York
- United States District Court, District of Columbia, 2006
- United States District Court, District of Colorado, 2006
- United States Second Circuit Court of Appeals, 2003
- United States District of Columbia Court of Appeals, 2007
- United States Supreme Court, 2007

Past employment/experience

- Commissioner, Broome County Board of Elections, 2016-2019

Current employment

- Attorney, Coughlin & Gerhart, LLP, 1997 – present
- Partner, Coughlin & Gerhart, LLP, 2004 – present

Contact information that you wish the public to have:

- Phone: (607) 584-4159
- oliverblaiseforsupremecourt@gmail.com

Why are you running for Justice of the NYS Supreme Court?

To me, serving on the Supreme Court is our profession's highest form of public service. I have worked throughout my career to benefit and improve our community. This work has included representing the towns, schools, counties and fire departments throughout the district, as well as serving as Election Commissioner for Broome County. I have also dedicated many hours to improving our community through my volunteer work. I recently served as President of the Broome County Bar Association, which is one of the largest and most active in Upstate New York. I have served on the Board of Directors for the United Way of Broome County for many years and am a longtime member and Past President of the Binghamton Sertoma Club. All of this professional and volunteer work has been done in the spirit of serving the greater good in our community. I am humbled and very excited at the prospect of this new opportunity to serve.

What experience qualifies you for this position?

My experience in the courtroom is what qualifies me for the position of Supreme Court Justice. I have handled jury trials, bench trials, hearings and motions in every courthouse in the Sixth Judicial District, and other parts of the state. I have handled federal jury and bench trials in the Northern and Southern Districts of New York. I have prepared and argued numerous appeals to the Second, Third and Fourth Departments, as well as the Second Circuit. I have handled hundreds of hearings before the state's administrative agencies.

Outside the courtroom, I served as Election Commissioner for Broome County from 2016-2019, where I managed a governmental agency that oversees one of the most important aspects of our democracy. My work at the Board of Elections included adjudicating legal challenges made by candidates to various aspects of the electoral process. I also oversaw the logistics of primary and general elections, preparing and presenting budgets to the County administration and legislature, handling staffing issues, public relations, and the testing and purchase of equipment and technology.

NEW YORK STATE SUPREME COURT JUSTICE - 6TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT CANDIDATES
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JUDICIAL CANDIDATE: Peter P. Charnetsky, Esq.

Education

- Ulster County Community College, AAS
- Clarkson University, BA, 1977
- Florida State University, MSW, 1980
- Stetson University College of Law, JD, 1984

Bar admissions, credentials

- Year of First Admission
- New York, 1990
- Florida, 1984
- Supreme Court of the United States
- United States District Court – Northern District of New York;
- U.S. Court of Appeals Second Circuit
- U.S. District Court - Middle District of Florida

Past employment/experience

- Judge, Broome County Family Court, 2005 – 2014
- NYS Acting Supreme Court Justice, 2006-2014

Current employment

- Private Practice, Charnetsky Law Offices

Contact information that you wish the public to have:

- Phone: 607-743-1840
- Email: charnetskylaw@gmail.com

Why are you running for Justice of the NYS Supreme Court?

Supreme Court is the most important trial court in the New York State System. Many issues are resolved in Supreme Court, including contested and uncontested matrimonials, guardianships and personal injury matters. These matters tend to be emotionally charged, especially the contested matrimonials which may include litigation for the resolution of custody and visitation for minor children. My years of experience as a judge, social worker and Attorney for the Child have provided me with the knowledge and skills to resolve these matters in a fair and just manner.

If elected, I will perform my duties in the same manner as I have conducted my personal and professional life and discharged my judicial responsibilities; with integrity, fairness and respect.

I reside in Vestal, NY with my wife, Dr. Susan Blue. We have two adult children, Jordan and Joshua. I am a current board member of the Crime Victims Assistance Center and ACCORD. I also enjoy being a judge for the High School Mock Trial competition.

What experience qualifies you for this position?

As a Family Court Judge for 10 years, I resolved issues of custody and visitation, adoptions, neglect and abuse and juvenile delinquency matters. As an Acting Supreme Court Justice for 9 years, I resolved contested and uncontested divorces, foreclosures and presided over the Integrated Domestic Violence Court.

As an Attorney for The Child, I have represented children in Supreme Court and Family Court on contested custody and visitation issues. I have also represented clients in Supreme Court on contractual issues, personal injury and real property matters.

I believe my years of experience as a Judge and an attorney have provided me with the knowledge and insight to preside as your next Supreme Court Justice with integrity, fairness and respect.

NEW YORK STATE SUPREME COURT JUSTICE - 6TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT CANDIDATES
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JUDICIAL CANDIDATE: Mark Masler

Education

- Cornell University, B.S., 1982
- Cornell University, J.D., 1993

Bar admissions, credentials

- New York , 1994
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of New York, 1995
- U.S. District Court, Western District of New York and U.S. Tax Court, 1995

Past employment/experience

- Attorney, Harris Beach PLLC, Ithaca, New York, 1993 – 2008
- Dairy Farmer, Truxton, New York, 1983 – 1990
- Agricultural loan officer, NBT Bank, Norwich, New York, 1982 – 1983

Current employment

- Attorney and Principal Law Clerk to State Supreme Court Justice, 2008 – present
 - Trial Court 2008 – 2017
 - Appellate Division, Third Dept. 2017 – present

Contact information that you wish the public to have:

- Email: maslerforsupremecourt@gmail.com
- Website: <http://www.maslerforsupremecourt.com/>

Why are you running for Justice of the NYS Supreme Court?

I am running because the skills I have gained over the course of my career would allow me to serve the community as an effective Supreme Court Justice. Before my legal career began, I was a banker and a dairy farmer and I also have a life-long record of community service. I have coached youth sports and served on the Homer Central School Board of Education and also in leadership roles in numerous community organizations, including the YMCA and Racker, where I was a director and officer. My professional and volunteer experiences allow me to understand the law and the people who are served by Supreme Court. I would appreciate the opportunity to use my experiences to continue to serve the community in this important office.

What experience qualifies you for this position?

The breadth of my experiences makes me the best candidate to serve the people of the Sixth Judicial District and Tompkins County as Supreme Court Justice. An effective Supreme Court Justice must have the legal skill, knowledge and experience to correctly analyze and decide complex legal issues. He or she must also have the ability to understand the people who appear in court and to reach practical decisions. Throughout the course of my career, I have demonstrated that I have these necessary skills. I also know Tompkins County. After graduating from Cornell Law School, I practiced law in Ithaca with Harris Beach PLLC for 15 years. For the past 11 years, I have served as attorney and law clerk to respected Supreme Court Justice Phillip Rumsey as he presided over many cases in Tompkins County. In that role, I have written over 900 proposed decisions which are known for following the law and being clear, concise and correct. I have also earned a reputation for treating everyone with fairness, dignity and respect. For these reasons Justice Rumsey, who recently retired, and more than 60 attorneys who live or work in Tompkins County have endorsed me for election.

NEW YORK STATE SUPREME COURT JUSTICE - 6TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT CANDIDATES
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JUDICIAL CANDIDATE: Claudette Newman

Education

- State University of New York at Binghamton, B.A., 1991
- Albany Law School of Union University, J.D., 1994

Bar admissions, credentials

- New York, 1995

Past employment/experience

- Principal Law Clerk for State Supreme Court Justice, 1999 – 2018
- Court Attorney for Chenango County, Family and Surrogates Courts, 1996 - 1998
- Private Practice, 1994 - 1996

Current employment

- Court Attorney, Chenango County Court, 2019 – present
- Town Justice, Butternut Town Court, Otsego County, 2012 - present

Contact information that you wish the public to have:

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Why are you running for Justice of the NYS Supreme Court?

I am running for Justice of the New York State Supreme Court for the same reason I became an attorney, to help people. The residents of the ten counties that make up the Sixth Judicial District deserve judges who have the knowledge, experience and temperament required. I would not seek this position if I did not know that my experience working for and practicing in nearly every trial level court in the State of New York made me well qualified.

There has never been a more important time to make sure those who sit on the bench are fair and impartial. Our State Supreme Court Justices must believe that justice is for everyone. They also must uphold New York State law regardless of their own personal perspective on an issue. Recognizing the sanctity of the law, viewing each case impartially and valuing each person who comes before the bench is how I approach my work as the Judge in the Town of Butternuts in Otsego County, as the Court Attorney for the Chenango County Court and, previously, as the Principal Law Clerk in State Supreme Court. It is how I will approach my work if elected to the State Supreme Court for the Sixth Judicial District.

What experience qualifies you for this position?

My combination of experience in all trial level courts and experience on the bench make me uniquely qualified to be a Supreme Court Judge. I have worked, exclusively, in Supreme Court for 19 years. As the attorney working for four Supreme Court Judges, I have been involved with all the wide areas of law that Supreme Court handles. Additionally, I have worked in all the other trial level courts: County, Family, Surrogates, Town and Village. Not only did I handle cases in all these courts, as well as Supreme Court, as a practicing attorney, but I have worked for the Court System in all these courts. I am experienced in legal research, analysis, writing, reviewing motions, and communicating with attorneys and self-represented litigants.

I also have judicial experience. I have been a Town Justice since 2012, serving in Butternuts Town Court in Otsego County. I make important decisions regarding liberty, safety and property issues. That experience making hard decisions is what is needed by the highest trial level judge, Supreme Court Judge.

I have also been very involved in conferencing cases throughout my legal career. I conference civil cases, matrimonial actions and foreclosure settlement conferences. I also conference Family Court cases, including abuse, neglect, custody and visitation matters. I am a Special Referee, having been designated by the Sixth Judicial District in 2000. This allows me to conference more cases. Resolution of cases through agreement is always preferable and a goal the Courts have moved towards, which I embrace.