

PRESS RELEASE

October 8, 2009

The Independent Judicial Election Qualification Commission (IJEQC) for the Twelfth Judicial District, comprising Bronx County, completed its review of candidates for judicial vacancies in that District and published the rating for each candidate.

The criteria for evaluation under Part 150 of the Rules of the Chief Administrative Judge include “professional ability; character, independence and integrity; reputation for fairness and lack of bias; and temperament, including courtesy and patience.” The guidelines and procedures for the Commissions, including the information to be provided by each candidate, are set forth in Appendix A to Part 150.

Each Commission consists of fifteen members, including attorneys and lay people, selected by the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals, the Presiding Justices of each Appellate Division, the State Bar Association and local bar associations, and represents a cross section of the community in each district. Two Commissions were established to review the qualifications of candidates for judicial offices in the First Department, one for the First Judicial District, comprising New York County, and another for the Twelfth Judicial District, comprising Bronx County.

This year the IJEQC for the Twelfth Judicial District rated candidates running in Bronx County as follows:

Ruben Franco, Esq.-Judge of the Civil Court of the City of New York-Qualified
Judge Doris M. Gonzalez-Justice of the Supreme Court-Qualified
Judge Lizbeth Gonzalez,-Justice of the Supreme Court-Not Found Qualified
Judge Stanley Green-Judge of the Civil Court of the City of New York-Qualified
Justice Lucindo Suarez-Justice of the Supreme Court-Qualified
Justice Kenneth L. Thompson, Jr.-Justice of the Supreme Court-Qualified
Judge John H. Wilson-Justice of the Supreme Court-Not Found Qualified

In 2008, the IJEQC for the Twelfth Judicial District rated candidates running in Bronx County as follows:

Justice Alexander W. Hunter-Justice of the Supreme Court-Qualified
Judge Nelida Malave-Gonzalez-Justice of the Supreme Court-Qualified
Maria Matos, Esq.-Judge of the Civil Court of the City of New York-Qualified
Judge Julia I. Rodriguez-Justice of the Supreme Court-Qualified

In 2007, the following candidates were rated “Qualified” by the IJEQC for the Twelfth Judicial District:

Donald A. Miles, Esq.- Judge of the Civil Court of the City of New York
Judge George R. Villegas-Justice of the Supreme Court
Judge Edgar G. Walker-Justice of the Supreme Court

Candidates found “Qualified” for election to judicial office are deemed qualified for that office for three years, in absence of any new information that may have a negative effect on his or her qualifications and background, pursuant to Part 150, Appendix A, Section 3.

The members of the IJEQC for the Twelfth Judicial District are Maxwell S. Pfeifer, Esq., Chair; Earamichia Brown, Esq., Office of the Inspector General, Metropolitan Transit Authority; Hugh W. Campbell, Esq., Rodman & Campbell; Ruth Friendly, Executive Director and Vice President, Fred Friendly Seminars, Columbia Graduate School of Journalism; William A. Gallina, Esq.; Gregory D. Harmon, Esq.; Marjorie Lesch, Esq., Lesch & Lesch; Veronica H. Mandel, Esq.; Helen Milonas; John S. Park, Esq., Park & Nguyen; Marvin Ray Raskin, Esq.; and Michael Torres, Esq.

The statewide screening process was approved by the Court of Appeals following a recommendation of the Commission to Promote Public Confidence in Judicial Elections, chaired by John Feerick, the former Dean of Fordham University School of Law and then Chair of the Commission on Government Integrity. The Commissions in New York City are responsible for reviewing the qualifications of judicial candidates seeking election to Supreme, Surrogate’s and New York City Civil Courts.

For further information, contact Rachell Sirota, Esq., Director, IJEQC at (212)340-0572.