



## BROWARD COUNTY HISPANIC BAR ASSOCIATION

### JUDICIAL CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. **Full Name:** Deborah Carpenter-Toye

2. **Current County of residence.**

Broward

3. **Date and place of birth.**

Winter Haven, Florida, 1/14/1958

4. **Does your campaign have a website or Facebook page? If so, please list it.**

DeborahCarpenterToye4Judge.com / Deborah Carpenter-Toye for Judge (Facebook)

5. **List the colleges and law schools you have attended, including your dates of attendance and degrees awarded.**

University of Tennessee (8/76 – 12/78)

Florida State University (B.S., 1980)

University of South Carolina School of Law (J.D., 1983)

6. **Have you ever served in the military?**

No

7. **List where you have been employed since graduation from law school, including dates employed, your position and the nature of your employment responsibilities.**

(See Attached Resume)

8. **Have you ever been arrested? Explain.**

I was arrested in 1996 in Fort Lauderdale for Driving Under the Influence. The case was resolved by me entering a plea to the lesser offense of Reckless Driving.



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**9. Have you ever been convicted of a crime? Explain.**

Reckless Driving (see above)

**10. What is the general nature of your practice? Indicate areas of practice in which you concentrate or concentrated?**

The general nature of my practice is Criminal Defense, although I have handled cases in probate court, family court, juvenile court, and civil court.

**11. If you are currently a judge, what type of cases do you typically preside over in your court?**

N/A

**12. If you are currently a judge, have any of your decisions ever been appealed and overturned? How many times in the last two (2) years? When and what case?**

N/A

**13. What percentage of your litigation or trial experience was related to:**

- a. Civil? 1%
- b. Criminal? 99%

**14. How many cases have you tried to verdict?**

Over 200

**15. Describe three of the most significant litigated matters, which you personally handled and give the citations thereto, if the cases were reported.**

- 1) State vs. Luis Caballero; First Degree Murder (Death Penalty Case) 95-012715CF10A.
- 2) State vs. Aven Vaughn- Stand Your Ground Motion successfully argued (13-009631CF10A)
- 3) I represented Percy Cambel as a juvenile, Labeled "Crime Boy" (Google Crime Boy)

**16. Why do you want to be a judge (circuit or county)?**

I want to be a county court judge, because I believe my 33 years of experience as a trial attorney makes me extremely qualified. I want to be able to give back to the judicial system that has been so important in my life.



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**17. What qualities do you believe are most important in a judge? Explain how you have demonstrated that you possess those qualities.**

The most important qualities for a judge are knowledge of law, knowledge of the system, and the ability to apply the law fairly and impartially to everyone. My experience and my temperament make me extremely qualified to be a County Court Judge.

**18. Why do you believe that you are the best candidate for the seat you are running for?**

I believe I am the best candidate in my particular race, because I am the more experienced trial lawyer. All thirty-three (33) years of my career has been spent in the courtroom. My opponent is an experienced businessman, but has not been actively practicing law as long as I have. I have tried over 200 jury trials, while my opponent has had "several." Presiding over civil traffic infraction as a Traffic Hearing Officer is not the equivalent of trying serious criminal cases.

**19. Describe your civic activities and community involvement for the past five (5) years, listing what years you participated in each activity or were involved.**

I have been involved as a Board Member and a member of the advisory board of the Youth Automotive Training Center for well over the last five (5) years. I have been on the Board of my Homeowner's Association for the past five (5) years.

**20. Please list noteworthy professional or personal accomplishments.**

I am the only woman ever elected to serve as the President of the Broward Association of Criminal Defense Attorneys (1992).

I served as a Florida Bar Grievance Committee Member in 1999.

**21. Please list the federal and state courts where you are admitted to practice.**

I have been admitted to practice law in three (3) jurisdictions (Florida, South Carolina, and Massachusetts). I am also a member of the Federal Court, Southern District of Florida.

My greatest personal accomplishment has been having a successful marriage for the last fourteen years.

I am also personally proud that I served as a caregiver for my mother when she was diagnosed with Alzheimer's.

**22. How many times did you take the Florida Bar Exam?**

I passed the Florida Bar and the South Carolina Bar in the same sitting in 1983, both on the first try.



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**23. Have you ever failed Bar exams in any state? If so, when and where?**

No

**24. Have you ever been investigated by a State Bar grievance committee or by the State Commission on Judicial Conduct?**

No

**25. Have you ever been disciplined or reprimanded for your conduct as a lawyer or judge? If the answer is yes, please explain?**

No

**26. Have you or your law firm ever been sued by a client? If so, please explain.**

No

**27. Please discuss your view/opinion of proper judicial temperament.**

According to the American Bar Association, Judicial temperament means that a judge exhibits, "compassion, decisiveness, open-mindedness, sensitivity, courtesy, patience, freedom from bias and commitment to equal justice." My opinion is that a judge should exhibit all of those, and also have extensive trial experience and legal knowledge.

**28. If you are seeking election or re-election to a criminal court, discuss your view of plea bargains and when they should and should not be accepted.**

Judicial candidates are ethically prohibited from discussing potential sentences. Once elected, a Judge will be assigned to either the criminal or civil bench, by the Chief Judge. I believe a judge should consider each plea bargain individually and consider the input of each side before the court.

**29. Tell us about any plans you have to improve the administration of the court or make it more efficient.**

I believe the administration of the court will be most efficient if all of the parties that participate in the process communicate and work together. Some hearings could be handled telephonically, which would save the litigants time and money.



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**30. Have you ever taught any law school courses or any continuing legal education courses? If so, describe the extent and nature of those teaching experiences.**

I have lectured at several CLE seminars over the years. I have not taught a law school course, however, I would very much like to do that in the future.

**31. List any significant pro bono work completed since graduating from law school.**

I have represented many clients in both civil and criminal cases on a pro bono basis. The bulk of my pro bono work recently has been of juveniles or young adults referred to me from YATC or other programs assisting "at-risk" kids.

**32. List any leadership positions, or participation in any committees in voluntary bar associations and/or professional societies, which you believe to be of particular significance (e.g. judicial selection committees, disciplinary committees, grievance committees, etc.).**

Served as president of the Broward Association of Criminal Defense Attorneys.  
Served on a Florida Bar Grievance Committee.

**33. List all organizations and associations, or professional societies, other than bar associations, of which you are or have been a member, including civic, charitable, religious, educational, social, and fraternal organizations.**

Historic Preservation Board and Marine Advisory Board- City of Fort Lauderdale  
Youth Automotive Training Center Board  
Homeowner's Association Board  
2<sup>nd</sup> Century Broward  
The Junior League of Fort Lauderdale

**34. What is your judicial philosophy?**

Judicial philosophy is described as the way in which a judge understands and interprets the law. Writers have described judicial philosophy as conservative, liberal, and moderate. In the judicial world, people have also used the labels, activists, textualist, and strict constructionist to describe a judge's judicial philosophy. As it is against the Judicial Canons for a judicial candidate to offer an opinion on how he or she might handle a case, please allow me to say that I, as a judge, would apply the law fairly and impartially to all litigants before me.



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**35. Describe what contributions you have made to the Hispanic community in the past five (5) years.**

My biggest contribution to the Hispanic Community in the last five (5) years has come through my being involved with the Youth Automotive Training Center (YATC). Each year, the program accepts thirty “at-risk” students and offers them guidance, automotive training, life skills, and a high school diploma. This year our class graduated twenty-six students and six of them were Hispanic.

**36. Are you a Member of the Broward County Hispanic Bar Association?**

I am not a member of the Hispanic Bar, but I have attended many of their events over the years, long before I was a candidate.

**37. As a prospective judge, or as a current Judge, what do you consider your greatest strengths and weaknesses?**

My greatest strengths as a prospective judge are my legal knowledge and thirty-three years of trial experience, as well as my compassion and ability to listen.

My weakness as a prospective judge is that I often demand too much as myself, and I will have to work hard not to be too demanding of the attorneys that come before me.

**38. Why are you the best candidate for the position you are seeking?**

I am the best candidate in my particular race, because I am clearly the most experienced trial attorney with the most varied legal knowledge. I am also the best candidate, because I have been in the courthouse for all thirty-three years of my professional career, and I am most familiar with how the system works. Therefore, I will be able to step right in and assume the position immediately.

In closing, I have been interviewed in this race and endorsed by:

F.O.P (Fraternal Order of Police)

P.B.A (Police Benevolent Association)

AFL-CIO

Broward County Council of Professional Firefighters

Hispanic Vote

Sun Sentinel

Puerto Rican Bar Association

I would be honored to have your endorsement.

**ON BEHALF OF THE BROWARD COUNTY HISPANIC BAR ASSOCIATION, THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION!**