

**Broward County Hispanic Bar Association  
Judicial Candidate Questionnaire**

1. Name:  
Nina Weatherly Di Pietro
  
2. Current county of residence:  
Broward County
  
3. Date and place of birth:  
July 25, 1981, Fort Lauderdale, Florida
  
4. Campaign website and Facebook page:  
[www.voteformina.com](http://www.voteformina.com)  
[www.facebook.com/judgeninaweatherlydipietro/](http://www.facebook.com/judgeninaweatherlydipietro/)
  
5. Education:  
Nova Southeastern University - Juris Doctor, 2006  
University of Florida - Bachelors in Science, Psychology, Cum Laude 2003
  
6. Military:  
No
  
7. Employment history:  
June 2015 to present:  
State of Florida, 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit, Broward County Court Judge  
Presides as a County Court Judge in the County Civil division  
  
March 2013 to June 2015:  
David Di Pietro Law, P.A., Vice President and Managing Law Partner  
Managed and served as lead litigation counsel for a civil litigation practice focusing on commercial litigation, probate litigation, probate administration, and medical provider representation.  
  
March 2008 to March 2013:  
The Kreiss Law Firm, Associate Attorney  
Practiced law as an associate attorney at a boutique law firm focusing on State and Federal criminal defense.  
  
September 2006 to March 2008:  
Broward County Public Defender's Office, Assistant Public Defender

Practiced law as an Assistant Public Defender in misdemeanor and felony divisions.

8. Arrests:

None

9. Criminal convictions:

None

10. General nature of practice:

As a County Court Judge, I am prohibited from practicing law. Previously, I practiced the following areas of law: criminal law, civil law, probate, and guardianship.

11. Types of cases I preside over:

County court civil cases, including PIP litigation, homeowners' insurance litigation, landlord/tenant, and small claims. For approximately one year, I also presided over injunction hearings for the following types of cases: domestic violence, stalking, repeat violence, sexual violence, and dating violence.

12. As a judge, cases appealed and overturned:

None that I am aware of.

13. Percentage of litigation or trial experience (as an attorney):

Civil – 35%; Criminal - 65%

14. Cases tried to verdict (as an attorney):

12

15. Three of my most significant litigated matters:

1. In Re: The Marriage of Laurel Virginia McBride and Michael Kenneth McBride, 17<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court in and for Broward County, FMCE11-000227. In this matter, my law partner was appointed to serve as a Receiver for nine companies fully or partially owned by Husband/Respondent, Michael Kenneth McBride. I was retained as counsel for the Receiver and handled the drafting, filing, and litigation of all legal matters for the receivership from the date of the Receiver's appointment on March 12, 2013, until the termination of the receivership on May 28, 2014. The receivership was put in place after it became apparent to the court that Mr. McBride was not being truthful regarding his ownership interests in various businesses and the cash flow for same. This case presented a wide scope of legal issues, and the legal work performed ranged from handling basic business formalities to dealing with Federal tobacco laws. I further encountered many

difficulties in this case dealing with Mr. McBride's attempts to derail the receivership in order to take back control of his businesses.

2. Crew Concierge, LLC v. Seisnarine Moonilal d/b/a Fitness Center Service Tech., Inc., et. al, 17<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court in and for Broward County, CACE13-015729. In this matter, my office was retained to represent several Defendants/Respondents to defend against a civil law suit and an Emergency Motion for Temporary Injunction. One of my clients, Seisnarine Moonilal, had previously worked for the Plaintiff/Respondent, Crew Concierge, LLC, and after leaving that job, started a new, competitive business along with the other Defendants/Respondents. Although my clients had been accused of many civil causes of action, they were more immediately concerned with the possibility of an injunction that would render them unemployed and restricted from working at any other job in their current industry. As lead counsel, I was responsible for researching and drafting all responsive pleadings to the Complaint and the Emergency Motion for Temporary Injunction. I also sat first chair during the multiday non-jury injunction trial.

3. United States of America v. Jean Paul, United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida, 11-CR-20739-DMM. In this matter, my former boss, Jason W. Kreiss, Esq., was appointed by the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida as a Criminal Justice Act panel attorney to represent the Defendant, Jean Paul. Mr. Paul had been indicted for one count of Conspiracy to Possess with the Intent to Distribute a Controlled Substance, specifically 500 grams or more of cocaine and 28 grams or more of cocaine base (crack cocaine). If found guilty, Mr. Paul was facing a maximum imprisonment of 40 years and a minimum imprisonment of 10 years. This case was further complicated as Mr. Paul was arrested for a State law controlled substance violation while out on bond for the Federal offense and the Assistant United States Attorney was attempting to present evidence of this new arrest in the Federal trial. I assisted Mr. Kreiss in the preparation of this matter by meeting with Mr. Paul at the Federal Detention Center on numerous occasions, reviewing and organizing discovery and other evidence collected, researching case law, and drafting pre-trial motions. At trial before Hon. Donald M. Middlebrooks, I sat second chair with Mr. Kreiss.

16. Why I want to continue to be a judge:

I want to continue my judgeship because I am passionate about my job. I love the academic nature of interpreting and applying the law while simultaneously proving me with the opportunity to serve the citizens of Broward County. I pride myself on having a welcoming courtroom environment and incorporating procedures to simplify things for litigants so that they can have a better understanding of, and find it easier to navigate through, the complexities of the legal system.

17. The qualities I believe are most important in a judge:

I believe a good judge should be intelligent, fair, patient, compassionate, a hard worker, and have a very pleasant overall disposition. I believe I possess all of these qualities and demonstrate them every day in my courtroom, however I encourage you to “be the judge” and take the opportunity to observe me in person as I preside over hearings and trials (201 S.E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street room 310 Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33301).

18. Why I believe I am the best candidate for my seat:

I am the current County Court Judge in this seat. I have been successfully handling the exact job and performing the exact duties that this position requires. I have extensive knowledge of the cases I preside over as well as a comprehensive understanding of the law. I have exclusively and overwhelmingly received the support of the legal community, which I believe is a testament to my reputation, judicial abilities, and friendly disposition.

19. Civic activities/community involvement:

Florida Department of Medicine’s Board of Medicine – Consumer Board Member 2013-2015  
Broward County Bar Association – member 2015 to present  
Broward County Women Lawyers Association – member 2015 to present  
Florida Association of Women Lawyers – member 2015 to present  
Crockett Foundation – supporter/participant 2015 to present  
Handy – supporter/participant 2015 to present

20. Noteworthy professional and personal accomplishments:

In 2013, I was appointed to the Florida Department of Medicine’s Board of Medicine as a Consumer Board Member. In 2015, I was appointed to my current position as a Broward County Court Judge.

21. Federal and State courts where I am admitted to practice:

State of Florida – admitted September 20, 2006, member in good standing  
Southern District of Florida – admitted July 11, 2008, (members of the State of Florida judiciary are not permitted to be active members in federal courts)  
Middle District of Florida – admitted October 22, 2014, (members of the State of Florida judiciary are not permitted to be active members in federal courts)

22. Times I took the Florida Bar Exam:

1

23. Have I ever failed a bar exam in any state?

No.

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

I have never been investigated by the JQC. During the course of my legal career, I had three Florida Bar complaints filed against me (two of which were filed by the same person), with all complaints being dismissed without any finding of probable cause.

25. Discipline or Reprimands for conduct as a lawyer or judge:

None

26. Have I or my former law firm ever been sued by a client?

No

27. View/opinion of proper judicial temperament:

A judge must always maintain a respectful, patient, and gracious demeanor.

28. If I am seeking election or re-election to a criminal court, discuss my views of plea bargains and when they should and should not be accepted:

N/A

29. Plans to improve the administration of the court or make it more efficient:

There are two separate areas, which when both improved, can make a tremendous impact on the operations and productivity of the courts. First, there needs to be further improvement in the logistics through which access to the courts is provided. Recently, the courts have greatly improved their technological capabilities. Attorneys can now file cases and legal documents, submit electronic orders, and view the availability of a judge's schedule and reserve time for hearings, all online. While this is a huge step in the right direction, the courts currently do not provide the same type of online access to self-represented litigants. Therefore, a mechanism needs to be put in place which will provide a means for those parties without attorneys to be able to access the courts in the previously mentioned manner. The second area of needed improvement has to do with my fellow judges working harder in general and also availing themselves to the abovementioned technological advances. I encourage my colleagues to open up their schedules so there is more hearing time available and to sign up to participate in the online scheduling of hearings and electronic order program.

30. Law school classes or CLEs taught:

"Is Professionalism Dead?" – June 27, 2016, Association of South Florida Mediators and Arbitrators (CLE and CME credits given)

31. Significant pro bono work:

As a County Court Judge, I have been prohibited from performing pro bono legal work due to my position. Prior to that, on many occasions in my practice as a criminal and civil litigator, I assisted clients who did not have the financial means to hire an attorney. Some examples include representing clients for free in criminal matters, providing free legal advice in civil matters, and drafting letters and other legal documents free of charge.

32. Leadership positions, or participation in any committees in voluntary bar associations and/or professional societies:

None.

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:

2013-2015, Board Member for the Florida Department of Health's Board of Medicine. During my tenure I served on the following committees: Rules and Legislative Committee (co-chair), Surgical Quality Care and Assurance Committee, Probation Committee, Finance Committee (chair), and Nominating Committee.

34. My judicial philosophy:

As a County Court Judge, my role is to fairly and impartially administer justice. I handle my dockets efficiently, yet compassionately, and I ensure that each party has equal access and a full opportunity to present their side of the case.

35. Contributions to the Hispanic community in the past 5 years:

My specific involvement in the Hispanic community has been through my participation in BCHBA and Hispanic Vote events. However, I was born and raised in Broward County and therefore have been raised with, and interacting on a daily basis with, members of the Hispanic community and their culture.

36. Member of the Broward County Hispanic Bar Association:

Not sure (I have participated in many BCHBA events, however I am not sure if when signing up and paying for those events, I also signed up to be a member)

37. My greatest strengths and weaknesses as a sitting judge:

As a County Court Judge, I run my courtroom the way that I always wanted a judge to do so when I was a practicing attorney. My schedule is open for hearings all day, every day; I review all matters set for hearing so that I am aware of what the case is about and on what issues the parties are asking me for a ruling; I begin my hearings on time; I provide each side the opportunity to fully explain and argue their side of the case; and I treat people with dignity and respect. As for weaknesses, I have not yet had the opportunity to preside as a judge over a jury trial. Although I have set many cases for jury trial, each

case has settled so far. I have however, presided over more than 50 non-jury trials in the past year.

38. Why I am the best candidate for the position:

I am the current County Court Judge in this seat. I have been successfully handling the exact job and performing the exact duties that this position requires. I have extensive knowledge of the cases I preside over as well as a comprehensive understanding of the law. I have exclusively and overwhelmingly received the support of the legal community, which I believe is a testament to my reputation, judicial abilities, and friendly disposition.