



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF THE WILKES-BARRE AREA AND PENNSYLVANIA

Citizen Education Fund **NONPARTISAN VOTERS' GUIDE**

GENERAL ELECTION

NOVEMBER 7, 2023

Polls open 7 A.M. to 8 P.M.

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(Information obtained from Vote411.org and from candidates.)

2023
CAMPAIGN
"A STEP AHEAD OF THE VOTE"

FOR ELECTION INFORMATION

Contact your county Board of Elections or visit www.VotesPA.com. The League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania Citizen Information Center also provides election information. Call 717-234-1576 with any questions or go to www.Vote411.org.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The material in this Guide was compiled by the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania-Citizen Education Fund. This material may not be altered or reprinted without the permission of the League. Each candidate's reply has been printed as submitted. Candidates were invited to participate in the Vote411 online voters' guide sponsored by the LWVPA-CEF and Patriot-News/PennLive via email. All reasonable efforts were made to encourage candidates to participate.

The candidates listed are those whose names appear on the ballot as of September 28, 2023. They are listed according to their party and then alphabetically.

Nothing in this guide should be construed as an endorsement or non-endorsement of any candidate, party, or initiative by the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania-Citizen Education Fund.

PURPOSE AND POLICY OF THE LEAGUE

The purpose of the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania-Citizen Education Fund is to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government. The League is nonpartisan: it neither supports nor opposes any political parties or candidates.

**JUSTICE OF THE
SUPREME COURT**

JOB DESCRIPTION

The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania is the highest court in the Commonwealth and the oldest appellate court in the nation. The Supreme Court's administrative powers and jurisdictional responsibilities are vested with the seven-member court by the Pennsylvania State Constitution and a collection of statutes known as the Judicial Code. The justice with the longest continuous service on the Supreme Court automatically becomes Chief Justice. Administratively, the courts within the Unified Judicial System are largely responsible for organizing their own staff and dockets; however, the Supreme Court has several committees and boards responsible for writing and enforcing rules for judges, attorneys, and litigants to ensure an efficient and fair judicial review. Annually, the seven justices receive over 3,000 requests for appellate review.

Term: 10 years
Base Salary: \$244,793

Vote for ONE.

DEMOCRAT

DANIEL MCCAFFERY (DEM)

COUNTY: Philadelphia

OCCUPATION: Judge of the Pennsylvania Superior Court

EDUCATION: Temple University School of Law, J.D., 1991 Temple University, SCAT, B.A., 1988

Father Judge High School, 1982

QUALIFICATIONS: 32 years as an attorney, trial and appellate court judge, tried more cases and presided over more litigation than any other candidate. Highly Recommended by the PA Bar, the only Veteran on PA's Appellate Courts. Judge, Court of Judicial Discipline, supervising judge for PA wiretap applications.

Q. Pennsylvania's three co-equal branches of government – Executive, Legislative, and Judicial – each act as a check on the power of the others. In practical terms, what does this relationship of checks and balances mean to you?

A. In its most general terms, as it pertains to the question, the court has a duty to ensure the Constitutional rights of the people are appropriately applied and protected. I would describe my approach to constitutional interpretation as "Living Constitution" – meaning that the constitution was intentionally drafted using broad language to allow its concepts to evolve with changing societal conditions. As to my approach to interpreting rules, legislation & statutes, I would describe myself as a textualist in that I attempt to give a common sense meaning and will give the intent to apply a reasonable analysis to interpret any ambiguous word or provision.

Q. What criteria would you consider in deciding a case that could affect long standing precedent?

Every case must be considered based on the facts of the individual case, the laws pertaining to the case and were the appropriate Constitutional rights and protections fairly applied to the people and case in question.

PA BAR ASSOCIATION: Highly Recommended

REPUBLICAN

CAROLYN CARLUCCIO (REP)

COUNTY: Montgomery

OCCUPATION: Court of Common Pleas Judge

EDUCATION: Dickinson College, Widener University School of Law

QUALIFICATIONS: First female President Judge of the Montgomery County Court of Common Pleas serving in the Criminal, Family, and Civil Court Benches. Montgomery County Chief Deputy Solicitor, Director of Human Resources, Chief Public Defender, Assistant United States Attorney.

Q. Pennsylvania's three co-equal branches of government – Executive, Legislative, and Judicial – each act as a check on the power of the others. In practical terms, what does this relationship of checks and balances mean to you?

A. Our system of checks and balances is vital to our democracy and should be carefully guarded. We must ensure one branch does not overstep its authority. For the Executive Branch, it could be excessive Executive Orders which can circumvent Legislative powers. For the Judiciary, it is legislating from the bench which can also circumvent Legislative powers. The Judiciary also has the duty of ensuring that Legislative and Executive actions do not overstep their constitutional roles. It's critical that the Judiciary only applies the law as it is written in the Pennsylvania and United States Constitutions. Inappropriate actions taken by the Executive branch and even the Judiciary takes power from our legislature which is closest to the people.

Q. What criteria would you consider in deciding a case that could affect long standing precedent?

A. In deciding a case that could affect long-standing precedent, just as in any case that comes before me, I will apply the law as it is written in the constitution. Justices of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court must not allow themselves to be swayed by the media, Executive or Legislative branches, and certainly not by the popular opinion of the day. Even our own personal beliefs must be tempered to ensure that the Judiciary remains unbiased and only make rulings based on the law.

PA BAR ASSOCIATION: Highly Recommended

**PENNSYLVANIA JUDGE
OF THE SUPERIOR COURT**

JOB DESCRIPTION

The Superior Court is one of Pennsylvania's two statewide intermediate appellate courts. This court, established in 1895, reviews most of the civil and criminal cases that are

appealed from the Courts of Common Pleas in the Commonwealth's 67 counties. The Superior Court consists of 15 judges. The president judge is elected to a five-year term by his/her colleagues. A large number of appeals flow to the Superior Court from the trial courts. Generally, appeals are heard by panels of three judges sitting in Philadelphia, Harrisburg, or Pittsburgh. The court often is the final arbiter of legal disputes. Although the Supreme Court may grant a petition for review of a Superior Court decision, most petitions are denied, and the ruling of the Superior Court stands.

Term: 10 years
Base Salary: \$230,974
 Vote for not more than TWO.

DEMOCRAT

TIMIKA LANE (DEM)
COUNTY: Philadelphia
OCCUPATION: Judge
EDUCATION: Howard University - Bachelor of Arts, Rutgers Law School - Doctor of Law (JD)
QUALIFICATIONS: Elected in 2013 to the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas and immediately assigned to one of the busiest trial divisions in Pennsylvania. Judge Lane has presided over thousands of jury and bench trials and authored over 100 judicial opinions. She currently serves in the civil division.

Q. Pennsylvania's three co-equal branches of government – Executive, Legislative, and Judicial – each act as a check on the power of the others. In practical terms, what does this relationship of checks and balances mean to you?

A. Checks and balances are an integral part of our government, essential to ensuring that no one branch can overpower its boundaries. The role of the Judicial branch ensures that the legislative and executive branches maintain constitutional rights within the law, furthering that justice be equally, effectively and lawfully maintained and upheld. In short, checks and balances are critical to a functioning government and must be maintained.

Q. What criteria would you consider in deciding a case that could affect long standing precedent?

A. Presiding a case in which in theory could affect a long-standing precedent must be weighted carefully and with respect to the past precedent. Long standing precedents are not without fault, and throughout history the judicial system has seen changes occur to long standing precedents for better and for worse. It is through this evolution, as society changes and laws are adapted to those changes that consideration of both the changes in the legal system and society should be considered, as well as aforementioned respect to the long standing precedent and whether its reasoning still stands solid within the judicial and societal systems.

PA BAR ASSOCIATION: Highly Recommended

JILL BECK (DEM)
COUNTY: Allegheny
OCCUPATION: Commercial litigator & appellate attorney
EDUCATION: B.A. in Criminal Justice - The George Washington University (cum laude graduate); J.D. - Duquesne University School of Law (cum laude graduate)
QUALIFICATIONS: Jill has practiced in every area the Superior Court hears, has practiced in the Superior Court & appellate courts across the country, and spent 10 years on the other side of the bench as a law

clerk - 6 on the Superior Court, 4 on the Supreme Court - where she drafted over 500 decisions.

Q. Pennsylvania's three co-equal branches of government – Executive, Legislative, and Judicial – each act as a check on the power of the others. In practical terms, what does this relationship of checks and balances mean to you?

A. The judiciary is a separate but coequal branch of government. It is not the role of the Court to legislate, but neither is it permissible for the Court to serve as a rubber stamp for the legislative and executive branches of government (or the courts below). Appropriate deference to these bodies must be given when reviewing & interpreting their work, but it is solely in the Court's purview to determine the constitutionality of the measures taken and the legal correctness of their actions. The Court serves a critical role of interpreting our statutes and our constitutions (federal and state), which must be viewed in terms of the intent of the drafters at the time of their passage as well as the evolving standards of decency of our society.

Q. What criteria would you consider in deciding a case that could affect long standing precedent?

A. The decision to overrule precedent, particularly longstanding precedent, should not be taken lightly. Factors to consider include, but are not limited to, the correctness of the prior reasoning, its consistency with related precedent, changes in the law & society subsequent to the decision, & the level of reliance on the precedent by the legal system and the public.

PA BAR ASSOCIATION: Highly Recommended

REPUBLICAN

MARIA BATTISTA (REP)
COUNTY: Clarion
OCCUPATION: Attorney/Executive
EDUCATION: Clarion University, B.S.; Westminster College, M.Ed.; Ohio Northern University, J.D.; University of Pittsburgh, Ed.D.
QUALIFICATIONS: 15+ years experience in Civil, Criminal and Administrative Law; Former Assistant District Attorney; Former Attorney with the Governor Corbett Administration; Served as an Administrative Hearing Officer where I presided over hundreds of hearings and issued hundreds of administrative decisions.

Q. Pennsylvania's three co-equal branches of government – Executive, Legislative, and Judicial – each act as a check on the power of the others. In practical terms, what does this relationship of checks and balances mean to you?

A. The Framers' purpose in dividing power between the three branches of government was to ensure that no branch of government became too powerful. James Madison's wisdom in Federalist 51 was to create a check against the authority of a single branch of government, sharing the decision-making power of the new federal government. For Pennsylvania, this model of separation of powers has created its own form of checks and balances between our three co-equal branches. In practical terms, this has empowered the courts, particularly the appellate courts, to better protect the rights of the people of this Commonwealth. By serving as a check against the executive and legislative branches, the judiciary serves to safeguard against abuses by either.

Q. What criteria would you consider in deciding a case that could affect long standing precedent?

A. Stare decisis, a Latin term which means "let the decision stand," or "to stand by things decided," is a central tenet of the American legal system. This doctrine highlights the importance of precedent in our legal tradition. Applying precedent to the particular facts of a case is a way to provide predictability and consistency in the law. While I cannot speak directly about how I would rule in any case that may appear before me, precedent may be used

as a guide, as well as the law as it has been written and the particular facts of a case. In some instances, the issue of constitutionality may be raised by the parties.

PA BAR ASSOCIATION: Not Recommended; Failure to Respond

HARRY F. SMAIL, JR. (REP)
COUNTY: Westmoreland
OCCUPATION: Judge
EDUCATION: Grove City College Class of 1988 Duquesne School of Law Night School Class of 1997
QUALIFICATIONS: 14 years as a practicing attorney and nearly 9 years as sitting judge in Westmoreland County

Q. Pennsylvania's three co-equal branches of government – Executive, Legislative, and Judicial – each act as a check on the power of the others. In practical terms, what does this relationship of checks and balances mean to you?

A. The Founders' in their wisdom established a system of checks and balances as an attempt to ensure that no branch of our government could have unbounded power. Our system is based on the freedom of our people and these checks and balances ensure that is difficult to pass laws or regulations that can curtail that freedom. Our constitution is our guiding light and any branch that strays from that document can be quickly put in line with it by another branch. It is the judiciary's role, as the only branch to not face regular election, to ensure that the constitution is being adhered to by intermediary courts and by the the legislative and executive branches.

Q. What criteria would you consider in deciding a case that could affect long standing precedent?

A. My guiding principle when deciding a case is the text of the constitution and the intent of a statute when applying that statute in the course of a case. Precedent or stare decisis is critical in this review. Stare Decisis is critical in providing predictability and stability to the courts. I leave open the possibility that a court must at times correct previous encroachments by the judiciary relative to constitutional review and deviation of the facts. I believe it is a heavy burden to demonstrate such encroachments when weighing prior precedents.

PA BAR ASSOCIATION: Recommended

RETENTION CANDIDATES

PRESIDENT JUDGE JACK A. PANELLA
Rating: Recommended for Retention
 The candidate is currently the president judge of the Superior Court and has served on that court for nearly 20 years after having served as a trial judge for 12 years. He is extremely well regarded by his colleagues and has an excellent reputation for high moral character, integrity and professionalism. His legal opinions are well-written and well-reasoned. He is known to have an exceptional judicial temperament, to be well-prepared and to treat everyone fairly and with respect. The candidate possesses outstanding administrative skills. For the reasons stated above, the commission recommends the candidate's retention as a judge on the Superior Court of Pennsylvania.

IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW VOTERS

If you are a new voter or if you are voting at a polling place for the first time, then you must bring your voter ID card or a photo ID such as a driver's license, student ID or some other form of Federal or State government-issued ID. Some forms of non-photo ID are also acceptable, such as a firearm permit, current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, or government check. If you do not have any acceptable ID then you must be allowed to vote by provisional ballot.

If you are not a new voter and are not voting at your polling place for the first time, you are NOT required to bring or provide identification.

ON-LINE VOTERS GUIDE

The Vote411 Online Voters Guide is available at www.vote411.org. Useful information for voters can be found on the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania homepage: www.palwv.org. Links to this guide containing Luzerne County Council Candidate Information is available on the League of Women Voters of the Wilkes-Barre Area homepage: lwvwa.org.

JUDGE VICTOR P. STABILE

Rating: Recommended for Retention

The candidate has served on the Superior Court of Pennsylvania for the past 10 years, having first been elected to the bench in 2013. The candidate is highly regarded by his peers and is described by lawyers and judges alike as having a positive judicial temperament and broad legal knowledge. The candidate's judicial opinions are uniformly well-reasoned and thorough and his decision to seek retention after a decade on the bench is reflective of his longstanding dedication to the profession. For the reasons stated above, the commission recommends the candidate's retention as a judge on the Superior Court of Pennsylvania.

JUDGE OF THE COMMONWEALTH COURT

JOB DESCRIPTION

The Commonwealth Court is one of Pennsylvania's two statewide intermediate appellate courts. This court, established in 1968, is unlike any other state court in the nation. Its jurisdiction generally is limited to legal matters involving state and local government and regulatory agencies. Litigation typically focuses on subjects such as banking, insurance, utility regulation, and laws affecting taxation, land use, elections, labor practices, and workers compensation. The Commonwealth Court also acts as a court of original jurisdiction, or a trial court, when lawsuits are filed by or against the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth Court is made up of nine judges. The president judge is elected to a five-year term by his/her colleagues. Generally, appeals are heard by panels of three judges sitting in Philadelphia, Harrisburg, or Pittsburgh.

Term: 10 years
Base Salary: \$230,974
Vote for ONE.

DEMOCRAT

MATT WOLF (DEM)

COUNTY: Philadelphia
OCCUPATION: Judge
EDUCATION: B.S. Political Science, LeMoyné College, J.D., Loyola University School of Law, numerous judicial education training courses.
QUALIFICATIONS: The only sitting judge in the race. 25 years of civil rights trial experience. 5 years plus of judicial experience, with a majority of that as a Supervising Judge. 20 years of military experience, 17 as an Army JAG, awarded Bronze Star Medal, service in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Q. Pennsylvania's three co-equal branches of government – Executive, Legislative, and Judicial – each act as a check on the power of the others. In practical terms, what does this relationship of checks and balances mean to you?

A. The rule of law. Each branch of government serves as a check on the others. Legislatures pass laws, sometimes in reaction to judicial decisions and executive actions. Courts interpret the law and the facts and the Executive essentially carries out the functions of the government, subject to the laws as interpreted by the Courts. People who serve as elected officials usually take an oath of office to uphold the laws and the state and federal constitutions. I take such oaths seriously and would commit to upholding the law, as should each member of the other branches of government.

Q. What criteria would you consider in deciding a case that could affect long standing precedent?

A. It depends on the case, the facts and the law. This question cannot be answered in vacuum. There are antiquated decisions in Common Law that are long standing precedent which call to be overturned such as the Supreme Court's 1896 Plessy v. Ferguson decision which upheld the legality of racial segregation in America. It took 58 years for that case to be overturned in Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka.

Some long standing precedent should be overturned such as the "separate but equal" line of cases as an example. Other long standing precedent should be respected, particularly as it relates to the preservation and recognition of fundamental constitutional rights.

PA BAR ASSOCIATION: Recommended

REPUBLICAN

MEGAN MARTIN (REP)

COUNTY: Cumberland
OCCUPATION: Attorney
EDUCATION: JURIS DOCTOR, May 1994, Widener University School of Law, Harrisburg, PA; BACHELOR OF ARTS, June 1991, University of Delaware, Newark, DE
QUALIFICATIONS: I am honored to be endorsed by the PA Republican Party and recommended by the PA Bar Association. I also have the unique distinction of having served in all 3 branches of our state government and as an attorney for the US Navy. My qualifications stand alone in the race for Commonwealth Court.

Q. Pennsylvania's three co-equal branches of government – Executive, Legislative, and Judicial – each act as a check on the power of the others. In practical terms, what does this relationship of checks and balances mean to you?

A. I respect the very different yet equally important roles of the three branches. When it comes to our judges, the people deserve to have judges who are fair & impartial, respect & defend the rule of law, protect our Constitutional rights & freedoms, apply the law as it was written by our General Assembly, & who hold government accountable because government must follow the law, too. Our judges must be exemplary public servants who act in the public's interest, not to further any political agenda or their own personal agenda. Judges must not make policy decisions from the bench that are reserved for our elected representatives to make. We need our judges to be independent as our Constitution created them to be. I will be that judge.

Q. What criteria would you consider in deciding a case that could affect long standing precedent?

A. Judges should approach every case keeping in mind their oath to support, obey & defend the Constitution. The Constitution should be their North Star. Judges should apply the law as it was written by the General Assembly. Judges should not be influenced by public opinion or pressure; they should follow the law. Precedent exists to maintain the rule of law. Defending the rule of law helps promote a world without chaos. It gives consistency to our judicial decision-making process. It ensures that individuals in similar situations are treated alike rather than being subject to the personal views of a particular judge. I respect the Constitution & rule of law. I respect precedent. I will continue to do so as a judge on our Commonwealth Court.
PA BAR ASSOCIATION: Recommended

LUZERNE COUNTY COUNCIL

JOB DESCRIPTION

The Luzerne County Council is the legislative body governing Luzerne County and providing direction to its operation of providing service and protection to the citizens of Luzerne County. Council is composed of 11 members.

Term: 4 years
Base Salary: \$8,000 per annum
Vote for no more than SIX (6).

REPUBLICAN

THOMAS DOMBROSKI (REP)

RESIDENCE: Dallas Township
OCCUPATION: Commercial real estate rental building owner
EDUCATION: King's College, two (4 year) business degrees.
QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICE: President of my own business 30 years. I am very good at finance. Resident of Luzerne

County 50+ years.

PRIORITIES IF ELECTED: I want Luzerne County to stay strong financially. I'd like to stay with 11 county council members. I think we should identify the (5) worst roads in the county and take steps to improve them.

HARRY HAAS (REP)

RESIDENCE: Kingston
OCCUPATION: Teacher and Professor
QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICE: As an effective former member of County Council, my votes shrank the debt by nearly 50%, trimmed an oversized workforce by 15%, and saved millions of taxpayer dollars after combing through every annual budget. I governed with integrity and respect for county staff, council colleagues, and members of the public.
PRIORITIES IF ELECTED: Guard our tax dollars: Wisely manage remaining Covid Relief Funds and stop wasteful spending. Speak truth to power: Halt political hires and hold leadership accountable when it violates the public trust. Work together: Equip our staff to pave the roads, secure fair elections, and avoid the nonsense.

LEE ANN MCDERMOTT (REP)

RESIDENCE: Kingston Township
EDUCATION: Dallas High School, Misericordia – no degree
OCCUPATION: Business owner – McDermott Real Estate Appraisals
QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICE: Business owner for 28 years; Serving my 4th year on Luzerne County Council; Chair of the Real Estate Committee for Luzerne County; Board member of the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton International Airport; President - Junior League of Wilkes-Barre 2016-2017; President – Diamonds in the Rough women's golf league 2017-2019
PRIORITIES IF ELECTED: Continue to improve the county's financial rating and pay down the debt to be debt free in 8 years. Create a coalition which will create affordable housing for the people who live and work in Luzerne County. Seek more funding to supplement the county with improving infrastructure.

STEPHEN J. URBAN (REP)

RESIDENCE: Kingston
OCCUPATION: IT Support Coordinator
EDUCATION: Attended Pennsylvania State University and LCCC
QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICE: Vast business sense to protect tax dollars. Corporate operations experience to be frugal with tax dollars. Technologically savvy to recommend modern solutions to manual processes to save time and tax dollars. Dedicated trusted public leader.
PRIORITIES IF ELECTED: Sponsor another ordinance revive the Homestead Exemption. Vote to retain elected tax collectors. Continue a track record to invest in infrastructure and capital projects such as roads and bridges. Continue to vote against initiatives that aren't taxpayer friendly. I will not vote for any budgets that contain tax increases.

ELECTION DAY PROBLEMS

If your right to vote is challenged at the polls on Election Day and the problem cannot be resolved at the polling place, the judge of elections at the polling place should telephone the county Board of Elections. The problem could be resolved by phone if your name appears on the county records. If it does not and you want to try to resolve the problem, then you can go in person to the county Board of Elections where a judge from the Court of Common Pleas will be on duty to resolve election problems. Alternatively you can ask for and vote by provisional ballot. If it is later determined that you were eligible to vote your ballot will be counted. You will be given instructions on how to determine if your vote was counted.

If you have any questions or need to report any problems, call 1-866-OUR-VOTE for assistance in English or Spanish or 1-888-API-VOTE for assistance in Asian languages.

MATTHEW MITCHELL (REP)
Candidate Did Not Respond

KIMBERLY PLATE (REP)
Candidate Did Not Respond

DEMOCRAT

PATRICIA KRUSHNOWSKI (DEM)

RESIDENCE: Wilkes-Barre

OCCUPATION: Service Assistant

EDUCATION: Bishop Hoban Graduate

QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICE: I have been Judge of Elections for over a decade. I am also an Executive Board member of the Greater Wilkes-Barre Labor Council, and a proud IBEW member. Together these roles give me the necessary experience to make Luzerne County a place that WE are proud to call home.

PRIORITIES IF ELECTED: I would like to expand access to the trades via an apprenticeship program for high school students, and funding for a career transition programs. I also want to increase the efficiency and transparency of the Election process. To vote with confidence and participate freely in our Democracy. The American Dream

MICHELLE ROTHENBECKER (DEM)

RESIDENCE: Bear Creek Township

OCCUPATION: Small Business Owner.

I own a small educational consulting company called Ruby Run LLC.

EDUCATION: A Master of Business Administration and a Master of Education in Instructional Design, both from Western Governors University

QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICE:

I graduated with an MBA during the pandemic while working full-time as an executive, and I believe my leadership skills and background in managing budgets, modernizing operating procedures, and preventing wasteful spending will help save money that can be invested back in the people.

PRIORITIES IF ELECTED: My priorities as a Luzerne County Council member are to bring accountability and transparency to our government and to ensure that the most qualified people who make data-driven decisions are appointed to important county positions. Additionally, I want to create a dedicated environmental services department to protect our beautiful natural

spaces and waterways and to better manage our stormwater.

JIMMY SABATINO (DEM)

RESIDENCE: Drums

EDUCATION: BA International Area Studies

QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICE: As a small business owner, I have daily interactions that provide insights into community concerns. My identity as an openly gay, first-generation American, and business owner equips me to address diverse community issues, actively working to enhance the lives of everyday citizens.

PRIORITIES IF ELECTED: I'm determined to bring a fresh perspective, transparency, and accountability to local governance, ensuring that the council prioritizes the needs of our community over personal agendas and contributes to the betterment of Luzerne County.

JOANNA BRYN SMITH (DEM)

RESIDENCE: Wyoming

OCCUPATION: Public Interest Attorney

EDUCATION: Bishop O'Reilly H.S. '05

(H.S.D., General Studies); St. Joseph's University '09 (B.A., Magna Cum Laude Philosophy, Fine and Performing Arts); City University of New York School of Law '13 (J.D., Magna Cum Laude)

QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICE:

Serving on multiple community boards provided me with the needed qualifications for the Luzerne County Council, including the Executive Board of Directors of the Wilkes-Barre Law and Library Association, of the Little Theatre of WB, of K.I.S.S. Children's Theatre, the Charitable Organization of the WBLLA, and the Fine Arts Fiesta.

PRIORITIES IF ELECTED: Protecting our elections and ensuring that each legitimate vote is counted; efficiency, accountability and transparency in our government; implementing real property tax reform while encouraging large businesses to move to the area; and prioritizing our schools and apprenticeship programs, understanding that education and economic opportunities are inextricably intertwined.

BRITTANY STEPHENSON (DEM)

RESIDENCE: Plymouth

OCCUPATION: Academic Coach/

Assistant for the Office of Diversity, Retention, and Outreach Initiatives

at Commonwealth University- Bloomsburg Campus, formally known as Bloomsburg University.

EDUCATION: (1) Bachelor of Arts in Interpersonal Communication Studies, (2) Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education (3) Bachelor of Arts in English Literature, and will be completing (4) a Master of Education in Educational Leadership, College Student Affairs

QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICE: I am a lifelong resident of Luzerne County, who has extensive experience working with diverse populations. I am dedicated to community building and committed to a life of social justice and equity. I have experience with community governance and policy reform, which are all transferable skills that I plan to implement here with Luzerne County residents.

PRIORITIES IF ELECTED: Assess the budget and municipalities to determine primary areas of need for the reallocation of funding; Introduce the Responsible Contractor Ordinance; Combat housing insecurity in Luzerne County

MARYANN VELEZ (DEM)

RESIDENCE: Duryea Borough

OCCUPATION: Founder President CEO

of a local nonprofit UNA (unacorp.org)

EDUCATION: B.S. in Health Science

(Nursing), B.S.PSYCH

QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICE:

Founder, President, and Executive Director of the non-profit organization UNA, which focuses on strengthening communities right here in Northeastern Pennsylvania (NEPA). Under her leadership, UNA has played a pivotal role in helping individuals gain access to much-needed resources that cater to various needs in the community

PRIORITIES IF ELECTED: The importance of addressing pressing issues that the people of Luzerne County face. Infrastructure, small businesses, community first programs, and finding solutions to help reduce tax payer burdens are some of the key issues she will focus on during her term.

WRITE-IN VOTING

Information for write-in voting will be available at the polling place.

JOIN US IN OUR MISSION TO EDUCATE AND ENCOURAGE ALL CITIZENS TO VOTE AND MAKE INFORMED VOTING CHOICES.

Consider joining the League of Women Voter's of the Wilkes-Barre Area

WHO WE ARE

As an all-volunteer organization, we work diligently to promote citizen participation in our democracy by educating our community about voting and the democratic process.

We encourage citizens to have a voice in their government by simply going to the polls to vote for the candidates who reflect THEIR views on how government should operate.

Voting truly is a simple act that can have profound effects on our county and how it operates.

Our nonpartisan status allows us to work effectively on voter education. The community knows that candidate meetings and our Voter's Guide will present information without bias. We are respected in our community because citizens know that we are fair in our presentations.

We never support political candidates or parties, nor do we do things that would appear to support one over another.

Our Wilkes-Barre League focuses on voter education. Our members include men and women.

WHAT'S IN A NAME? OUR HISTORY!

The Wilkes-Barre League of Women Voters was established in 1944. The League of Women Voters of the United States was founded in 1920 -- six months before the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified.

This amendment gave women the right to full voting rights after a 72-year hard-fought struggle.

The amendment was ratified on August 26, 1920. On November 2 of that year more than eight million women across the United States voted in elections for the first time. The League of Women Voters was created to help newly enfranchised women learn how to register to vote, how to vote, how to learn about their candidates, and how to learn about the workings of their governments.

The League of Women Voters is nonexclusionary -- all are welcome to join and participate in our programs.

Our name honors our rich history and those women who paved the way for all of us by working tirelessly to gain the right for disenfranchised women to vote so many years ago.

WHAT WE DO:

- Voter Registration Drives
- Candidate Forums - before Primary and General Elections
- Annual Breakfasts with Legislators
- Annual Publication of a Government Directory
- Publication of a Voter's Guide before each Primary and General Election
- Annual Meeting Dinner
- Annual Holiday Dinner

LEARN MORE: LWVWBA.ORG

CONTACT US: P. O. BOX 1480 , WILKES-BARRE, PA 18703-1480 570.675.3429

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE WILKES-BARRE AREA

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ON-LINE VOTERS GUIDE

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