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PRESS RELEASE

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Akron Bar Association Announces 2020 Judicial Ratings

The Akron Bar Association Commission on Judicial Candidates has been established by the Akron Bar Association to evaluate candidates for local judgeships. The Commission rates the candidates “Excellent,” “Good,” “Adequate,” or “Not Acceptable.” Ratings are based on seven criteria: integrity, legal knowledge and ability, professional experience, judicial temperament, diligence, personal responsibility, and public and community service.

The Akron Bar Association has created a website – <http://www.YouBeTheJudgeSummitCounty.com> – to not only promote the Commission’s ratings, but to serve as a central source of information about the local judicial candidates appearing on the November ballot. In addition to the ratings, links to the candidates’ websites and social media pages can be found easily.

All ratings require a majority vote of the Commission; a rating of “Excellent” requires two thirds supermajority of the Commission. The ratings are not intended to be a comparison or endorsement of candidates, but only represent the Commission’s evaluation of each individual candidate’s qualifications for the specific office sought.

A rating of “Adequate” requires a vote of a majority of the Commission members present. If a candidate is rated “Adequate,” a second ballot is taken to determine if the rating “Good” will be awarded, also requiring a vote of the majority of the Commission members present. If a candidate is rated “Good,” a third ballot is taken to determine if the rating “Excellent” will be awarded. The “Excellent” rating requires the affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of the Commission members present.

The Commission is comprised of 28 experienced members of the Akron Bar Association selected by its Municipal Courts Committee, Common Pleas & Appellate Courts Committee, Family Law Section, Probate Law Section, the Chair of the Commission, and the Bar President. No more than 50% of the Commission may be from any one political party. All candidates complete a questionnaire containing extensive biographical data and submit relevant materials, including writing samples. References for the candidates are interviewed and intensive interviews of the candidates are conducted.

This year, the Commission, chaired by Attorney Chris Esker with Attorney Michael Elliot serving as vice-chair, evaluated the judicial candidates running in contested races in the general election scheduled for November 3, 2020. There are eight additional judgeships on the November ballot but in each of those races the candidates are running unopposed. Please visit <http://www.YouBeTheJudgeSummitCounty.com> for information about each of those races.

The 2020 ratings are as follows:

	Candidate	ABA Commission Rating
Ninth District Court of Appeals	Julie A Schafer	GOOD
	Betty Sutton	GOOD
Domestic Relations Division – Summit County Court of Common Pleas	Katarina Cook	GOOD
	Kani Hightower	GOOD

The Akron Bar Association was founded in 1875 and is an Ohio not-for-profit corporation with a membership base of over 1,300 members consisting of lawyers, judges, paralegals, legal staff, law students, and paralegal students. In addition to serving our members, we serve the public by providing referrals to pre-screened lawyers and investigating grievances against attorneys with a Summit County mailing address.

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