

Judge; Superior Court; County of Stanislaus; Office 6

Nancy Williamsen – Superior Court Commissioner

Shawn Bessey – Deputy District Attorney

In the six-candidate June primary, Bessey finished first with 24.21% of the vote, while Williamsen finished second with 21.12%.

Bessey has received \$63,117 and spent \$47,730 since January. Williamsen has received \$37,937 and spent \$27,749.

Williamsen’s campaign is centered on the fact that her 11 years as a court commissioner – “doing the work of a judge” – makes her most qualified – “I have the broadest area of knowledge along with the most extensive experience.”

Bessey is basing his campaign on his effectiveness as a Deputy District Attorney – “I truly believe if the voter gets to know me, looks at my body of work as a prosecutor, sees my efforts in keeping the community safe, and understands my work with victims of crime, they will join men and women of law enforcement in supporting me as judge.”

Nancy Williamsen: Do not recommend

Judicial Index Average: 5

Activist - Constructionist Rating: 5

Qualifications Rating: 8

Background

56 years old

Married for 29 years with 2 adult children – Moved to Stanislaus County in 1991 to raise their children in a family-friendly environment.

Qualifications

1999 – Present – Works in Stanislaus County Superior Court as a Superior Court Commissioner. Hears and makes decisions in court cases as assigned by the Presiding Judge. Decides cases in Superior Court dealing with children removed from their homes because of abuse or neglect. (9)

Describes her judicial work as tried, trusted, and exemplary.

Has been a lawyer since 1984. Was a sole practitioner managing her own firm before moving to Stanislaus County in 1991. (13)

Has handled a variety of different matters including criminal, civil, family law, estate planning, landlord-tenant construction and juvenile law (10)

She is trying to position herself as the candidate to most easily handle the shift to a judgeship, since as a court commissioner she is chosen by County Judges to make decisions on a limited number of legal matters. She acknowledges that making the change from law firm work 11 years ago was rocky. Said making that transition was not always smooth, but that now she is up and running.

Says her time “doing the work of a judge” by hearing cases makes her the best-qualified candidate. Noted her past as a private attorney included criminal, civil, and family law casework. “I wear the black robe. I am the best candidate for this position.” (9)

AA, Business, Canada College (Redwood City) (5)

Paralegal Certificate, Canada College

JD, San Francisco Law School – Worked full time in the day while attending law school in the evening (7)

Judicial Philosophy

Reason for running: “In the eleven years I have served as Superior Court Commissioner, thousands of people in crisis have appeared before me. Their struggles and triumphs continue to develop my heart for our community. As a Superior Court Judge, I can do more.” (5)

Top priority is to apply the law fairly, to listen to everyone with courtesy, and to afford equal treatment to all. (7)

Says she will follow the law and would not be an activist judge; says she is rarely overturned by the Court of Appeals, which she says demonstrates that she follows the law as written; says she is not an activist court commissioner and would not be an activist judge (7)

Committed to giving all who appear before her a fair hearing, to listen attentively to the evidence, and to make prompt and appropriate decisions based upon the rule of law (7)

She says that the struggles and victories of the people in crisis who have come before her have formed her heart for her community (5)

Described by her friends as one of the most caring activists for children. They say that she has a big heart. (5)

Says that thousands of people have come before her, and that serving as a judge will allow her to do more. (5)

Stresses the importance of giving each side a voice in the courtroom. “It seems like it would be easy to do, but we all come with our own biases. We have to set that aside.” (7)

Endorsements:

Current Presiding Judge Donald E. Shaver who is retiring – Shaver has also contributed to Pete Wilson twice (2)

7 other Superior Court Judges

3 Superior Court Commissioners

Stanislaus and Tuolumne Counties Central Labor Council (2)

AFSCME, Local 10 (2)

Modesto Bee Newspaper (6)

Nancy Cline – Who has also supported Kristin Olson for Assembly, who is pro-life and pro-traditional marriage (9)

Arthur Azevedo, Attorney – Has also contributed to Stanislaus County Democratic Central Committee, Central Valley Democratic Club, Tri-County Democratic Club, Dennis Cardoza (D) 8 times (rated 0 by National Right to Life Committee), Dianne Feinstein twice (rated 0 by National Right to Life Committee and 0 by American Family Association) (0)

Nick Blom, Former Stanislaus County Supervisor (Has contributed to the Stanislaus County Republican Central Committee) (8)

Dr. Curt Andre, Former Turlock Mayor (has contributed to Dick Monteith (R)) (9)

Shawn Bessey: Recommend

Judicial Index Average: 7

Activist – Constructionist Rating: 7

Qualifications Rating: 7

Background

46 years old. Born in Lindsay, CA
Single, no children

Lives in Hughson, CA

Has an online Poker Player Profile on PokerPages.com. Has won over \$18,000 in poker tournaments.

Ambition: To someday be his own boss and make a living at it

Hobbies: Fishing, golf, cooking, and hiking

Favorite Movie: Outlaw Josey Wales

Favorite Music: Country

Favorite Place: South Lake Tahoe or San Luis Obispo

Favorite Celebrity: Sam Elliott

If He Could Change Anything In the World: Drug and Gang Free World

If He Could Change Anything in the Poker World: Poor losers and casino smoke

Qualifications

Works as Stanislaus County Senior Deputy District Attorney, 1999-Present (8)

Has most recently prosecuted gang cases for the County District Attorney's Office. Touts his experience working as a victim's advocate

Began his career in the District Attorney's Office as a victims advocate assisting them with the judicial process ensuring they had a voice in the courts

Has prosecuted a variety of cases including: murder, drive-by-shootings, gang violence, robberies, kidnappings, sexual assault, carjacking, arson, auto theft, rural crime, drug sales, and driving under the influence. (10)

In 2006, the law enforcement officers of Stanislaus County elected him as the President of the Stanislaus County Peace Officers Association

Believes what sets him apart from the other candidates are his courtroom experience as a prosecutor, his record on public safety, his numerous endorsements from law enforcement, and his time as an advocate working with victims of crime

Says he is the only candidate who has done jury trials in the last 11 years, including murder, multiple defendant gang homicide and special circumstance cases

His 11-year career has been limited to prosecution. But he says that isn't a liability as 13 of the county's 21 courts do criminal cases, and the majority of civil court judges have backgrounds as prosecutors (5)

Says the number of cases he's taken before a jury gives him the edge – "It's more than most attorneys will do in their lifetime"

Has trained other prosecutors, police officers, fire officials, and legal professionals across the country and state. Has lectured at local universities and area schools on topics of judicial process, the role of a prosecutor, career development, drug prevention, and gang awareness.

BS, Criminology, Fresno State (7)

JD, Humphreys School of Law, Stockton (5)

Judicial Philosophy

Is endorsed by the Stanislaus County GOP (8)

Will follow the law and not legislate from the bench (9)

Will be fair, impartial, and follow the law (7)

Says he will stand up for the victims, their rights, their needs, and make sure they have a voice in the courts (9)

Will run an efficient courtroom and impose just sentences (8)

Says the most important thing facing the Superior Court is working with and developing partnerships with (customers) of the court system to make it more efficient (7)

Says the most important issue facing Stanislaus County residents is public safety; says we need to be proactive in the fight against crime and drugs (8)

“I’ve been there with victims of crime through the judicial process and I’ve seen it through their eyes” (8)

Will fight to make sure we have the safest neighborhoods in California (8)

Says he has dedicated his professional career to protecting schools, neighborhoods, and businesses, from dangerous criminals by convicting them and keeping them off the street (8)

Wants to achieve justice for crime victims and their families, and fairly implement the law (8)

Says he has a huge concern for crimes in general, but specifically about the sale of drugs, auto thefts, agricultural crimes, and especially gangs. (8)

Says the gang problem is attributed to a breakdown in the family unit; would do three things about gang problems: (1) provide resources and education to young families; (2) provide police, sheriff, DA Office, and probation departments with personnel and

tools to be proactive against gang violence; and (3) when serious and violent felons are found guilty in the court of law, make sure there are judges in place that are not afraid to apply the penalties to fit the crime (9)

Says that as a judge, he will adhere to bail schedules and ensure just sentences to ensure public safety.(8)

Running to continue his public service to the community. Wants to do his part to make the community safer and believes he can do this from the bench. (7)

Single most important priority is to achieve justice in every case. Will do this in a fair, impartial, efficient, and swift manner while keeping in mind the rights of all involved as well as the community safety interest. (7)

Will apply the law in a way that promotes safety in our community impose sentences that are just (8)

Will protect the rights of victims and be fair and efficient (8)

Endorsed by Modesto Police Officers Association and 11 other law enforcement associations. Is the only candidate supported by law enforcement organizations

Endorsed by:

30 Deputy District Attorneys

Stanislaus County Supervisor Jeff Grover. Grover has also contributed to:

Dean Andal (R) – pro-life

Dennis Cardoza (D), three times – Rated 0 by National Right to Life

George Radanovich (R), twice – Rated 100 by National Right to Life

Moderate Victory Fund

Dianne Feinstein (D) – Rated 0 by National Right to Life

Richard Monteith (R) – Pro-Life

Claire Berryhill (R) Pro-Life (6)

Stanislaus County Supervisor Jim DeMartini – Demartini has also contributed to the Stanislaus Republican Central Committee 6 times (8)

Viteo Chiesa, Stanislaus County Supervisor – Chiesa has also contributed to the Stanislaus Republican Central Committee (8)

Jim Ridenour , Mayor of Modesto – Ridenour has also contributed to George W Bush (8)

Farrell Jackson, Mayor of Oakdale

John Lazar, Mayor of Turlock – Lazar has also contributed to Dennis Cardoza (D) and Dianne Feinstein (0)

Ed Katen, Mayor of Newman

Brad Hawn, Modesto City Council

Amy Bublak, Turlock City Council

Adam Christianson, Stanislaus County Sheriff – Christianson has also contributed to Stanislaus Republican Central Committee (8)

Les Weidman, Former Stanislaus County Sheriff – Weidman has also contributed to Dennis Cardoza (D) (0)

Charlie Goeken, Former Mayor of Waterford

Anthony Cannella, Mayor of Ceres

Louie Arrollo, Former Mayor of Ceres

Birgit Fladager, District Attorney – Fladager has contributed to Stanislaus Republican Central Committee (8)