

2010 Candidate Questionnaire

SECTION I

BASIC CANDIDATE INFORMATION

1. Name as it will appear on the ballot

First Name	Middle Initial or Nickname	Last Name
Charlie (Charles K.)		Wiggins

2. Office sought (include office, jurisdiction, position/district number):

Supreme Court Justice Position 6

3. Are you the incumbent? Yes **XX** No

4. How long have you resided in this district/city?

34 years in Washington State; 29 years on Bainbridge Island

5. How long have you resided in King County?

1976-1981

6. Is the office sought partisan or nonpartisan? Partisan **X** Nonpartisan

7. If partisan, please indicate party:

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name: Charlie Wiggins for Justice

Address: 241 Madison Avenue N.

City/State/Zip: Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

Campaign Phone: 425-572-0854

Campaign Fax: _____

Campaign E-mail: Info@charliewigginsforjustice.com

Campaign Website: www.charliewigginsforjustice.com

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

1. Beginning with the most recent position, please list public offices you have held. Include positions on appointive boards or commissions.

Public Office	Elective or Appointive?	Dates Held	Leadership Role (if any)
Civil Service Commission, Bainbridge Island	Appointive	Jan 2005 to present	Commission Chair
Judge, Washington State Court of Appeals Division II	Appointed to fill vacancy	Jan-Dec 1995	

2. If you ran for public office but were not elected, please list those races below:

Office Title	Year of Run
Judge, Washington Court of Appeals, Division II: after being appointed, I ran for election and lost	1995

SECTION II

In this section, we are seeking responses that reflect the four ratings criteria: involvement, effectiveness, character, and knowledge. These are defined as follows:

- **Involvement:** What has the candidate done previously in family, neighborhood, community, volunteer work, employment or public life to suggest readiness to accomplish challenging objectives? How do these activities demonstrate readiness for the challenges unique to the office sought?
- **Effectiveness:** Has the candidate demonstrated promise of being productive in the office sought? Has the candidate shown the ability to work with other people?
- **Character:** Do the candidate's personal traits show the ability to take on the responsibilities of campaigning for and holding the public office she or he is seeking? Is the candidate a leader, participant or observer? Is the candidate trustworthy, reliable and candid?
- **Knowledge:** Has the candidate demonstrated the willingness and ability to learn and adapt? Does the candidate understand the duties and challenges of the office sought? Does the candidate have a firm grasp of the issues important to his or her constituency and their potential effects?

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1. In one page or less, why are you running for this office? (Note: the interview committee will be given a copy of this statement before your interview; at the beginning of your interview you will have the opportunity to expand on this statement in any way you wish.)

1. Public service has always been an important part of my life and I would like to serve the public full time as a Justice of the Supreme Court. The importance of public service was impressed on me at an early age because I grew up in the military service as the son of a career Army warrant officer. I've always tried use my legal career and talents to serve others by sharing my legal skills by teaching in over 100 seminars for lawyers and by providing pro bono services free of charge to those who cannot afford a lawyer. I've also served on a wide variety of bar committees, attempting to improve the practice of law: Court Congestion and Improvement Committee (including a year as chair); the Court Rules and Procedures Committee (including two years as chair); the Disciplinary Hearing Officer Panel; the Disciplinary Review Board (including a year as chair); the Washington Chapter of the American Judicature Society (including two years as chapter president). I've also served the community in a variety of ways detailed below in answer to Question 4.

At this point in my career, instead of serving clients one at a time, I would like to serve all the people of Washington as a Justice of the Supreme Court.

2. I believe that everyone should put their talents to their highest and best use, which for me would be to serve on the Supreme Court. I have first-hand experience in the tasks that are the responsibility of the Supreme Court. (a) The Supreme Court reviews decisions of trial judges; I have tried cases as a lawyer and as a pro tem superior court judge in King County and in Jefferson County (Pt. Townsend). (b) The Supreme court reviews decisions of the Court of Appeals. I have served on the Court of Appeals in Tacoma and have argued literally hundreds of appeals in all areas of the law in all three divisions of the Court of Appeals. (c) The Supreme Court is responsible for adopting and improving the various court rules that govern the practice of law and the ethical rules that govern lawyers and judges. I have served on the Court Rules and Procedures Committee, as discussed above, as well as several task forces charged with rewriting various sets of court rules. (d) The Court disciplines lawyers who have violated the Rules of Professional Conduct and I have served on the Disciplinary Board and have served as a hearing officer in discipline cases.

3. I wish to leave to my children a better society, guided by the best principles and policies I can find in the law. I believe I have the experience and wisdom to assist the Court in interpreting laws and the federal and state constitutions to improve society.

2. Describe your most important personal characteristics or traits as they relate to the office you seek.

Personal integrity: Judges must be committed to following the law in their personal lives and behavior just as they are committed to following the law in the cases they decide. I have tried to live up to the legal and ethical demands placed on all of us by society and by my personal faith. I have never been charged with any violation of the ethical rules governing lawyers.

Impartiality: Judges must be able to set aside their personal biases and opinions and decide cases under the law, hearing all sides of the case without preconceived notions of the right outcome. I have represented litigants on both sides of just about every type of issue that comes before our courts. I have no agenda to accomplish a particular outcome or to move the law in a particular direction, but can remain impartial.

Independence: Judges must remain free of extraneous influences that might bias their decisions in a particular direction. I am not beholden to any special interest group for election, but am supported by a broad variety of citizens from all walks of life.

Conscientious: A Supreme Court justice must be motivated to carry out the responsibilities of the court diligently and promptly. No supervisor monitors the judge's performance. I have always been a self-starter, applying myself diligently to fulfill the obligations I have undertaken.

Collegiality: The Supreme Court is a collegial court, requiring judges to work together to reach the right decision and craft opinions joined by a majority of the court. I have a track record of working with others in a variety of settings, including bar committees, church groups, Habitat for Humanity projects, and other groups.

A heart for justice: I am willing to give up a successful and lucrative private practice because I have a deep desire to see justice done in every case, to protect the rights of those who have been wronged, to support reasonable and just punishment on those who have broken the law, and to provide fair recompense for those who have been injured.

3. Please describe, in sufficient detail, one to three accomplishments or contributions of which you are most proud. These examples should illustrate skills and capabilities you think apply to the office you are seeking. These accomplishments may have occurred at any time in your personal, professional, or public life.

1. Pro bono representation of the Washington Legal Foundation before the Washington Supreme Court, filing a brief and presenting oral argument to the Court on the proposed adoption of the IOLTA program in Washington, and suggesting and drafting amendments to the rule. Barbara Clark, then Executive Director of the Foundation, described my efforts in a letter:

Early in the Foundation's life, it became clear that some number of attorneys with a real estate practice were not participating in the program. . . . [T]he Washington State Bar Association put forward a proposed rule change to the Rules of Professional Conduct. This rule change would clarify that all attorneys, regardless of their practice area, must place client funds in an IOLTA account if they receive funds from a client that meets the other criteria of the IOLTA rule.

This was a very important rule change for the Foundation, as it would increase income by up to \$1 million dollars annually. Because of its importance, the Supreme Court chose to hold a hearing on the rule change, only the second time such a hearing was ever held to consider a rule. (The first hearing was for the creation of the IOLTA rule itself.)

Mr. Wiggins participated in innumerable meetings, wrote a brief, and traveled to Olympia to present oral argument to the Court. Following argument, he suggested important modifications in the language of the rule that helped to win the Court's approval. His presentation gave a careful enunciation of the reasons why the proposed rule was appropriate and responded to the legal concerns of the opponents. Mr. Wiggins's success in this matter has had a positive and continuing impact on the availability of civil legal services for the poor.

2. Presidency of Washington Chapter of the American Judicature Society, 2006-07 (and two

year term as President-Elect, 2004-05 and as Immediate Past President, 2008-09): I am proud of my efforts to improve judicial selection, including: supporting the 2005 and 2006 proposals for extending to judicial elections the campaign contribution limits on other state offices (successful in 2006); supporting the 2007 proposed Judicial Independence Act and the Judicial Election Reform Act; public education on judicial elections, including speaking to high school classes on how to vote for judges and supporting the web site www.votingforjudges.org; exploring the possibility of a commission system for appointment of judges in Washington; working on a rule within the Code of Judicial Conduct to require a judge to step down from a case based on campaign financial support.

3. Helping to lead the youth of our church on five trips to Tijuana to build homes in the slums of the city and two trips to New Orleans to work with Habitat for Humanity to build homes for those who lost homes in Hurricane Katrina. Working with teens, including my daughter and son, is both energizing and rewarding. It is also enormously satisfying to help someone in need.

4. Please list or describe current and past activities in the community in which you have acquired skills that relate to the office you seek. Include your role in the activity and the year(s) in which you were involved. Involvement consists of many areas such as family, neighborhood, community, employment, or public life.

I have served and continue to serve in a variety of leadership roles in my church, Rolling Bay Presbyterian Church on Bainbridge Island. I served a three year term on the session of ruling elders back in the late 80s and am currently in my second year of another three year term. This position has required me to find ways to convince other elders to move the church in what I perceive as the right direction, which can be a challenge with volunteer leaders who have different visions of the church's role. It has also required me to find ways to spend scarce budget funds in the most effective way. As mentioned above, I have also led the youth of our church on 7 trips to build homes, which has required advance planning and extensive fund-raising. I have taught every level of Sunday School, from 5-year olds to 99-year olds, trying to distill lessons into the most important points and to communicate them at a variety of levels of development and understanding. I chaired the search committee that recruited a new assistant pastor for the church. We began the task by re-defining the mission of the church, which proved to be surprisingly controversial. All of these leadership roles helped me to focus on the goal and purpose of each task and arrive at a consensus.

Several years ago, I was asked by Kitsap Habitat for Humanity to organize the lawyers of Bainbridge Island to build a Habitat house on Bainbridge. I formed a steering committee and we worked for several years to solicit contributions from lawyers, as well as doing some construction work on the house. More recently, I was asked to do so again, and we raised the money for a Habitat house in Suquamish.

I spent a year as a citizen member of the Editorial Board of the Kitsap Sun, which helped me understand the wide range of community issues and concerns in my home county and taught me something about the way newspapers approach public issues.

I am on the Bainbridge Island Civil Service Commission, which has given me insight into the functioning of an administrative body and the functioning of the police department, which is the primary concern of the Commission.

5. Please describe the duties of the office you seek. Which are the most important duties and why?

The most important duty of the Supreme Court is to interpret and apply the provisions of the constitutions of our country and our state. This involves preserving the separation of powers among the branches of government as well as protecting the rights and freedoms we enjoy.

The Court's second-most important duty is to interpret and apply the laws enacted by the legislature and by the people through the initiative process. The Court also continues the centuries old development of the common law.

The Court performs these primary duties through reviewing the decisions of trial courts and the appellate court. This process insures that the Court's role is limited to specific cases and protects the citizens of the State from errors of law and improper procedures.

The Court regulates the practice of law, which includes the rule-making function as well as regulating lawyer conduct and the administering the system of lawyer discipline.

The Court also works to insure that justice is administered fairly and openly, including working to diversify the judiciary and the legal profession and to insure that the doors of the courthouse are open to all, including our most humble and poor citizens.

Finally, the Supreme Court represents all of the courts and judges throughout the state, advocating for their budgets and protecting the independence of the entire judicial branch.