

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
KETU		SHAH

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

KING COUNTY DISTRICT COURT, POSITION #7

3. Are you the incumbent? Yes X No

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

3 YEARS

5. How long have you resided in King County?

14 YEARS

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

7. If partisan, please indicate party:

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name: FRIENDS OF KETU SHAH FOR JUDGE

Address: P.O. BOX 1228

City/State/Zip: MERCER ISLAND, WA 98040

Campaign Phone: 206.790.5153

Campaign Fax: N/A

Campaign E-mail: K2FORJUDGE@GMAIL.COM

Campaign Website: WWW.K2FORJUDGE.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)
GOVERNOR'S AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY COMMITTEE	APPOINTIVE	1998-2004	BOARD MEMBER

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

Office Title	Year of Run
N/A	

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.)

The judiciary is at its strongest when it is diverse and reflects the community that appears before it. My broad and diverse professional experience would enhance the expertise and resources of the court. My demeanor is a natural fit for the bench because I am genuinely interested about all people who appear before me. I am running because I believe my combination of perspective, experience, and demeanor would strengthen the bench.

I am running for an open seat on the King County District Court - Position #7. If elected, I plan to improve the judiciary by making it more effective, more innovative, and more engaged with our community. As a pro tem judge for the past three years, I understand the significant impact the judicial system has on people's lives. I want to ensure the impact is just, fair, and thoughtful. It is critical that the judiciary listens to each case, makes a reasoned decision, and then holds the person accountable. I want to demonstrate by my decisions that each person is valued, respected, and accountable.

As a lawyer who tried over 100 cases to jury, I know how important it is for the court to efficiently process cases. While I was a domestic violence prosecutor for over 10 years, I worked with the court to lead a team that fast tracked DV cases so we could hold batterer's accountable and get them connected to services. Additionally, this afforded survivors quick closure so they could move forward with their lives. When implemented, this new concept created a more coordinated response and increased public safety.

Besides my many years of public service, I have also had a private practice focusing on immigration and other civil issues. By running my own practice, I understand how to be efficient with limited resources. I wish to apply this knowledge to our courts and make it as effective as possible.

Finally, one of the most important aspects of a jurist is their demeanor. By being patient, understanding, and firm, litigants leave the courtroom feeling they were treated fairly. It is important for the judge not only to be fair, but to appear to be fair. I believe my demeanor is a strong asset for the bench and would tremendously aid the bench. I will never forget what it was like the first time I appeared in court. I will apply that memory to those that appear before me and treat them with respect and humility. Ultimately, I am running for this position because I want to serve my community and I have excellent skills for the judiciary. I am fair, thoughtful, and patient.

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

My strongest personal characteristics include patience, openness, and sharp intellect. I strive to use these characteristics not only in my professional life, but also my personal life. I think it is very important for judges to be patient and listen to all the arguments before making a decision. It allows the parties to make their presentation and shows that the judge is listening.

A judge must allow the parties to develop their case and show restraint when intervening in a case. In conjunction with this, I believe openness is fundamental character trait necessary for judges. You must have an open mind to the positions that come before you and suppress or disregard any preconceived notions of an issue. I take great pride in listening to many sides of an issue, understanding each perspective, and giving careful consideration to all angles of a case. This openness has served me well in analyzing cases when I am a pro tempore judge, and has served me well throughout my career.

Finally, a judge must be able to use his or her intellect when analyzing cases and making decisions. I have worked hard to continue to learn and educate myself with the latest developments in the law. I will challenge assumptions so that I have a better understanding of an argument. I am also unafraid to ask questions to clarify an issue and satisfy my curiosity about the law. All of these traits assist me in applying my intellect in a rational and reasonable way.

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.

A. Pro Bono Case with Chaya. In 2003, as a pro bono attorney for Chaya, a DV advocacy group for survivors of domestic violence, I assisted a client in obtaining a U visa which was created by *statute* for victims of crimes but did not exist in *regulations*. The U.S. Congress passed a law authorizing this new type of visa but gave no instructions on how to obtain it. My client was abused by her spouse. When she and her two-year old child fled the relationship to make a new life for themselves, she had no status to work. Her visa status was dependent on her husband so she had no independent ability to work and support herself. If she returned to her home country, she would have been ostracized and pressured to return to the abusive relationship. I consulted with the National Immigration Project and the NOW Legal Defense Fund on how to obtain a U visa for my client. With their guidance, I was able to successfully obtain the visa for my client and her life was forever changed. With her new status, she went back to school, obtained a degree, started a career, relocated to another state, and now is in a safe place for herself and her child.

B. Vertical Prosecution for DV cases in Bellevue. I helped create a domestic violence team prosecuting cases for the City of Bellevue by adopting a vertical prosecution model. When hired, I was tasked to streamline the process of investigating, filing, and prosecuting domestic violence cases. That meant I would review cases early, decide whether to proceed or not, and then manage the case to trial or resolution. I collaborated with the domestic violence detective, the victim advocate, our specially trained paralegal, and the District Court to create a quasi-domestic violence court to more efficiently handle cases. The implementation of this process led to a dramatic improvement in resolving cases favorably and holding batterers accountable. We also collaborated with the Eastside Domestic Violence Program (EDVP) to offer services to victims and make sure their perspective was considered in the process.

C. Seattle v. _____ – 1999. I prosecuted a case where the defendant was charged with harassment of a bus driver. I tried the case to a jury who found he had threatened to shoot the driver

and convicted the defendant. During sentencing, I discovered the defendant had prior convictions for animal cruelty. I presented this information previously undiscovered and the judge agreed with my recommendation for an enhanced sentence because of his history of violence. The bus driver was appreciative because this happened shortly after a bus driver had been shot and the bus drove off the Aurora Bridge.

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 volunteered with Chaya for over 10 years. Initially, I did pro bono legal work for clients, helping them obtain immigration benefits or helping them obtain protection orders. I was asked to join the board of directors and since 2005, I have been an officer of the organization. As Board Co-chair, I have been involved with the day-to-day management of the organization from personnel issues to budget issues. I have led a search for an Executive Director two different times and I have been involved with our annual fundraiser/auction. The management and financial skills I developed during this time would directly correlate with some of the duties a judge needs to perform in administering the court.

I have also been a pro bono attorney with NWIRP, UW, and SABAW mentoring law students to assist clients who are survivors of domestic violence. By supporting them and teaching them how to practice law in a nuts and bolts kind of way, I have observed how much growth and learning has occurred over the past two years. As a judge, newer attorneys appear and it is important that I have the patience to see them improve the practice of law.

I also coach soccer on a volunteer basis. Before I had children, I volunteered with the Boys and Girls Club and Youth Soccer Association to coach kids. After we had children, I have been volunteering with their teams. I have volunteer coached for over 7 years and have enjoyed teaching kids the lessons of sports. To work cooperatively, to work hard, and to have fun are all lessons I enjoy teaching. These skills are exactly what I hope to apply on the bench with my fellow judges and court staff.

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

One of the most important duties is ensuring public safety. In making decisions, the judge must always keep in mind the impact the decision will have on the safety of the community. It is important to craft a decision that is clear in its ruling and specifically states what is required to keep the community assured that dangerous behavior will be curtailed.

Another important duty of the judge is to make sure the courtroom runs efficiently and effectively. Because the District Court is a high volume court, it is important all cases are heard, and heard fairly. There is a balancing act that must be accomplished between hearing a number of cases quickly and taking the time on an individual case so that a just and fair decision can be made.

Another important task is to be able to multi-task. There is often little time available in court chambers because court time is at a premium. That means while on the bench there are often readings that must be finished, emails that must be returned, and other administrative tasks completed while court is in session. Again, a judge must balance the approach of accomplishing his or her administrative tasks with ensuring an individual litigant is given the time they need to present their case.

Finally, another important aspect of the judge's duties is to be a careful steward of the public's resources. A judge must be conscientious about how to efficiently use limited resources by using technology, by utilizing available court time effectively, and by making sure the court is accessible to the public. By accomplishing these goals, the court can better serve the public and assist the community in resolving legal disputes.