

Dear Fellow Bar Member:

My name is Frances Castillo and I came before you last year seeking your support of my candidacy for appointment to serve the remainder of Judge Buckner's term. Although I was not appointed, the candidacy and interview process allowed me to fully examine my reasons for wanting to serve as a judge. My commitment to ensuring a fair, impartial and compassionate venue for the hearing of cases still motivates my decision to pursue appointment to the Bench. I am seeking appointment to serve the remainder of Judge Scarlett's term and I am asking for one of your votes in the upcoming Bar vote.

I am attaching my candidate statement from last June as it is still relevant. My reasons for seeking appointment have not changed. I still believe that justice should be blind but that those charged with meting it out must be fully aware of and willing to address their own biases. People coming before the court need the assurance that they will be judged solely on the facts before the court. I also still believe that judges can work within the framework of the law to deliver just results while recognizing the humanity of those before them.

I still believe that judges should possess not only intellect but common sense and that legal rulings must, within the bounds of the law, encompass both. My diversity of experiences would inform and enable well-reasoned applications of the law. I am confident that I can digest the information presented, ask the right questions to fully inform my decision-making and accurately apply the law. Lawyers before the court are the subject matter experts in their cases before the court. I will thoughtfully consider all legal arguments and facts presented and I can assure you I will do the necessary work to ensure, whether the case be civil or criminal, that the application of the law to the facts is well-reasoned and sound.

Orange and Chatham County stakeholders continue to do significant work shining a light on disparities within the judicial system and proposing and implementing reforms. I still believe that judges must be a part of this work. As a judge I would commit to working with stakeholders to identify impediments to fair and impartial justice and to proposing and promoting court policies that will lead to more equitable outcomes.

I invite you to visit my candidate [website](#) to learn more about me. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions you may have regarding my qualifications or desire to serve. I can assure you that, as a District Court Judge, I would be a thoughtful, responsive and respectful member of the Bench. I again ask that you cast one of your votes for me in the upcoming Bar vote.

Sincerely,

Frances Castillo
voteforfrancastillo@gmail.com

Candidate Statement 2020

Why do I want to serve as a Judge? I was the kid who needed things to be fair. If I perceived something as unfair, I questioned everything about the issue and I wasn't content until I understood the reasoning behind an outcome. If the outcome ultimately was not what I'd wanted, as long as I felt I'd been heard and understood how the decision was reached, I could live with the result. This need for understanding and to be heard, traits both admired and loathed by my parents, led me to become an advocate for others. Prior to receiving my law degree, I volunteered as a rape crisis center victims' advocate. In working with both victims of crime in that volunteer position and working with those accused after law school, I recognized the same desire in the individuals I served as I saw in myself — a need to be heard and a need to understand the rules, the process and ultimately the outcome.

After law school, I chose to become an indigent defense attorney because of my belief that justice should be accessible to all. Throughout my legal career of over a decade I represented clients in criminal cases both at the trial court level (ranging from misdemeanors to first degree murder) and also in capital post-conviction cases. I have also held management positions, supervising a team of post-conviction lawyers and paralegals at North Carolina Prisoner Legal Services, and assisting with the oversight and management of four regional Defender offices while serving as Deputy Capital Defender at the Office of the Capital Defender. I've had the privilege of teaching other public defenders at the UNC School of Government and served as adjunct faculty at UNC School of Law supervising students in the Juvenile Justice Clinic. My current work as a consultant at a Fortune 50 company has honed skills in drafting, interpretation and negotiation as I manage complex negotiations of corporate agreements.

Inequities in the justice system and its disparate impact on communities of color and the poor still need to be addressed. Justice in many instances has not been blind and that offends my sense of fairness. In the Orange County Government mission statement one of the tenets is "to treat all our residents and all our employees with fairness, respect, and understanding." This mission speaks to my values and I could contribute to this community that I love by putting those values forward every day in the justice system. There is impactful work being done by community partners in Orange County to address the needs of court involved individuals and I believe judges have a role in those efforts by ensuring fairness, impartiality and by balancing justice with mercy.

I do not pretend to know it all, but these are the things I do know and these are the traits I will bring to the bench. My work and volunteer experiences have given me wisdom and that wisdom, combined with life experience, has given me a practical, common sense approach to problem solving. I have found that the legal system operates more efficiently if both of those skills are deployed—good old fashioned common sense and wisdom. I know how to apply wisdom and common sense to facts, but I am humble enough to ask questions and allow myself to be educated by the people before me. I know how to distill information and I have the legal courage to apply the law and do what is lawfully required even if it is unpopular. I know how to listen and will do so compassionately. I

know firsthand how hard legal advocates work and that advocacy deserves to be heard fairly, impartially, respectfully and compassionately. I also believe that justice should be balanced with compassion and that cases must be heard with an open mind and open heart. I believe it is only through this approach that people can know they have been fully heard and that their position has been completely and fairly considered and faith in the court system can be restored.

If you cast your vote for me I can assure you that you will be casting your vote for someone who will listen carefully, consider fully, treat you respectfully, follow the law and rule with an eye and commitment toward ensuring justice is served without pretension.

I again humbly request one of your votes.

voteforfrancastillo.com

Frances Castillo

EDUCATION

JD, 2003

Campbell University

School of Law

BA, Psychology, University of North Carolina at
Wilmington

Candidate, LLM, University of Nottingham

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Judicial District 18 Bar

North Carolina State Bar

Eastern District of North Carolina

Middle District of North Carolina

Western District of North Carolina

ADDITIONAL TRAINING

Annual Public Defender Conferences, UNC School of
Government

New Misdemeanor Defender Training, UNC School of
Government

Felony Defender Training, UNC School of
Government

National Capital Voir Dire Training Program

Making the Case for Life Capital Defense Training

National Drug Treatment Court Conference

PUBLICATION

Castillo, Frances. Chapter Editor,

Chapter 1: "Criminal Courts Motions

Practice in North Carolina." Klinkosum

on Criminal Defense Motions Third

Edition, edited by Sarah Jessica Farber,

The North Carolina Advocates for Justice

and LexisNexis, 2014, pages 1-26.

PRESENTATIONS

Small Group Facilitator & Full Group

Presenter, UNC School of Government New

Misdemeanor Defender Trainings

Presenter, North Carolina Paralegal

Association Annual Conference, Juvenile

Law Primer

Presenter, Asian Law Students Association,

UNC Law School, The Importance of

Mentor Selection

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Chairperson, Orange County Human Relations
Commission

Board Member, EmancipateNC

Former Board Member, Wake County Re-

Entry & Sentencing Services

Former Board Member, New Hanover County

Department of Social Services

Rape Crisis Center Victims Advocate,

Wilmington, NC

Crisis Line/Open House Crisis Counselor,

Wilmington, NC

Contract Management Consultant, MetLife, Cary, North Carolina

June 2016 - December 2016 temp; August 2017 - present

Negotiates commercial contracts on behalf of MetLife lines of business

Creates training materials and educates procurement personnel as to

best practices in contracting

Assistant Capital Defender/Deputy Capital Defender, Office of the

Capital Defender, Durham, North Carolina, August 2014 - June 2016

Represented clients charged with first-degree murder

Interviewed and selected expert witnesses for inclusion on defense

teams

Reviewed discovery and investigated cases

Consulted with outside attorneys regarding trial strategies and expert
funding needs

Assisted in mitigation investigations

Assisted in the management of the capital roster and four regional

Capital Defender offices

Managing Attorney, North Carolina Prisoner Legal Services Post-

Conviction Unit, Raleigh, North Carolina, August 2013 - July 2014

(left position due to legislative funding cuts)

Supervised eight attorneys and two paralegals in filing statewide post-
conviction litigation claims

Assisted attorneys in identifying issues and developing hearing
strategies

Conducted legal research

Coordinated trainings on new and emerging criminal defense issues for
in-house attorneys and local Bar members

Assistant Public Defender, Wake County Public Defender's Office

Raleigh, North Carolina, July 2005-August 2013

Served as the attorney for Adult Drug Treatment Court

Represented clients in juvenile, district and superior courts at plea

hearings, bench and jury trials

Drafted motions and orders

Conducted extensive legal research

Interviewed clients and investigated their claims

Worked collaboratively with criminal justice stakeholders to craft
alternative sentences

Adjunct Faculty, University of North Carolina School of Law,

Chapel Hill, North Carolina, Fall Semester 2010

Juvenile Justice Clinic

Provided in-court supervision to Third-Year Clinic students

representing juveniles

Met individually with the students to assist in the formulation of case
theory and trial preparation

Assisted in teaching the co-requisite class, Criminal Lawyering

Process

Staff Attorney, Center for Death Penalty Litigation

Durham, North Carolina, August 2003 - July 2005

Represented capital defendants in post-conviction proceedings

Drafted motions for appropriate relief

Conducted mitigation and fact investigations

Interviewed and selected expert witnesses

