



## Cleveland Heights City Council Candidate Questionnaire

Dear Candidate:

This questionnaire is a prerequisite for consideration for endorsement by the Cleveland Heights Democrats at our endorsement meeting at 7:00 p.m. on September 13, 2017 at the Cleveland Heights Community Center, One Monticello Boulevard, Cleveland Heights, Ohio. You are encouraged to attend this meeting, and if you choose to do so, you will be given an opportunity to speak to the Club prior to the voting on endorsements.

With respect to the endorsement meeting, only club members who are in good standing and on the official membership roster for thirty or more consecutive days prior to September 13, 2017 may vote on the endorsements. A majority of those members in good standing present and voting make an endorsement for office.

Please complete and return this questionnaire to Screening Committee Chair Katura Simmons at [katuras414@yahoo.com](mailto:katuras414@yahoo.com), 1736 Wood Road, Cleveland Heights, 44121, no later than September 4th at 5:00 PM. This is a Word Document, and we request that you insert your responses in the appropriate spaces in the questionnaire.

**Name:** DeAngelo Little

**Residence Address:** 35 Severance Circle #210, Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118

**Home Tel:** 216-288-7449

**Mobile Tel:** same

**Email:** [ddl\\_wisdom@hotmail.com](mailto:ddl_wisdom@hotmail.com)

**Please answer all of the following questions.**

I. What do you hope to accomplish on behalf of the community as a judge in Cleveland Heights?

I aspire to be a judge not to be a politician but to inspire people to reach their ultimate potential in life. I envision myself as being the "people's judge." The court serves as a mechanism to dispense justice with firmness and fairness. However, I strongly believe the court has a role in uplifting and empowering the community as well.

I would expand the community outreach of the court especially as it relates to having a strong presence in the local school district; and also by implementing recidivism programming in the general community. More specifically, I would establish a partnership with the local school

district to provide prevention education to students on a weekly basis to emphasize the importance of obeying the law, staying out the legal system, and intensive development of positive behavior. This same programming would be featured in the court on a weekly basis to eligible offenders and community members to encourage compliance with the law and to educate and/or reeducate individuals that have come into the criminal justice system on how to use emotional intelligence and life planning to avoid future incarceration.

2. What qualities, skills, insights, or perspectives do you possess which would be of value as a judge in Cleveland Heights?

I have extensive experience in the courts in all three facets as a former chief city prosecutor, former county prosecutor, criminal defense attorney, and as a presiding municipal court magistrate for more than five and a half years. This extensive and diverse experience has equipped me with invaluable knowledge, keen understanding, and expertise in courtroom practice, trial procedure, and municipal law (including criminal, civil, and housing). As a judge, I will serve the public well in administering justice fairly and impartially as well as ensuring the safety of our community by being firm on crime and bringing in effective rehabilitation programming that I have already implemented and facilitated throughout Cuyahoga County (Berea Municipal Court, East Cleveland Municipal Court, Euclid Municipal Court, and Garfield Municipal Court). My legal career in both the public and private sector has immensely prepared me for this opportunity.

3. What education, employment, and/or life experiences have prepared you to serve as a judge in Cleveland Heights?

As a current Municipal Court Magistrate, I preside over the housing docket, forcible entry and detainer actions (evictions), small claims docket, and general civil litigation division. Further, I preside over the traffic trial docket, and handle the criminal docket cases including arraignments, pre-trials, preliminary hearings, and bench trials as assigned by the Judge.

As a former Chief City Prosecutor as well as Assistant County Prosecutor, I have handled and tried a vast number of cases ranging from minor offenses up to the more egregious and offensive crimes. I worked diligently to protect the community and vindicate victims' rights by prosecuting individuals and holding them accountable for their actions. My diverse life experiences have given me a deep and solid understanding of the concerns of victims and how crime affects the community.

As a Private Practice Defense Attorney, I have handled and tried a multitude of cases in every municipal court and county court in Northeast Ohio and beyond. I understand and know that in order for justice to be administered fairly and impartially, everyone's constitutional and statutory rights must be protected and every case must be examined on its individual merits. Furthermore, I am certified by the Court of Common Pleas to represent individuals on the Mental Health docket and I also serve on the Mental Health Board in the South Euclid Municipal Court. This experience has given me the insight that some individuals need extended sentencing including programming and treatment to assist them in living productive law-abiding lives.

4. Describe your recent community, professional and charitable, and involvement. Is there one situation where your participation made a difference?

Recidivism Reduction Program Facilitator entitled the **Finish First Program** which is a life skills and personal development course program. The goal of the program is to educate participants on what they should and should not do when encountering the police and help them develop the necessary skills to avoid negative interaction with the police and legal system.

Volunteer Juvenile Magistrate, Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas- Conduct hearings with first time juvenile offenders and sanction children to participate in various community service programs and life enriching classes. Responsible for diverting children from the juvenile court system to a more productive life.

Legal Aid Society-Brief Advice & Referral Clinic-assisted individuals with brief advice regarding a variety of civil and criminal legal issues (housing, eviction process, sealing criminal records, child support, divorce) and referred them to the appropriate agency to provide further assistance.

Board Member, South Euclid Municipal Court Mental Health Court

Board Member, Golden Ciphers, Inc. Youth Development & Cultural Arts Center

5. How do you ensure your campaign is sustainable?

As with all things, in order to ensure sustainability good leaders put qualified people in place to meet the required objectives. First, one must create a budget and set fundraising goals that align with the budget. Second, strategic planning should begin at least a year in advance. Further, anyone who intends to serve in elected office, it helps if you have spent your life serving and inspiring others who believe in you and know firsthand your ability to get things done. Due to these leadership qualities and the hard work of regular people this campaign continues to exceed expectations everyday. I am proud of the work my team has done thus far, and I am confident of our ability to sustain through November 7, 2017.

6. What do you see as a priority of issue(s) in Cleveland Heights? Pick your top three and briefly describe.

A. Installation of Drug and Mental Health Court- Far too often, substance abuse and mental health problems play a big role in many of the crimes heard by the municipal court. The installation of a drug and mental health court would aid individuals to receive the necessary treatment to live a stable law abiding life, while also reducing recidivism, and making the community safer and stronger.

B. Housing- The quality of our housing stock plays a very intricate role in being a solid partner with our vibrant business community in keeping a strong tax base here. It also helps shape our overall community stock and the people we attract to live in our community. In order to improve the housing quality of our neighborhoods this must be a collective effort on all branches of local government (city manager, council, and judicial)

- C. Court Correspondence and Overall Effectiveness-Stake holders and taxpayers deserve government to run efficiently and smoothly for them. Everyday as I walk the streets, residents express concern with inefficient correspondence from our court. I am learning more that an outdated system as well as a lack of updated technology seem to be the cause of this major concern.