



INDIANA SUPREME COURT

200 W Washington St | Rm 324
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204
COURTS.IN.GOV

CHAMBERS OF Justice Christopher M. Goff

February 19, 2021

The Honorable Eric J. Holcomb,
Governor of Indiana
c/o Ms. Sharon Jackson, Deputy General Counsel
206 Indiana State House
200 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2732

Re: St. Joseph Superior Court JNC Finalists

Dear Governor Holcomb,

On February 18, 2021, pursuant to Indiana Code section 33-33-71-36 and in compliance with the Marshall Circuit Court's finding (Number 9) in its January 6, 2021, Order in *Grabill et al. v. Holcomb et al.* (Case Number 50C01-2012-PL-000024), I convened a meeting of the St. Joseph Superior Court Judicial Nominating Commission (JNC) with validly seated Commission members at the County-City Building in South Bend for the sole purpose of deciding whether to confirm the same panel of five nominees we agreed upon in September 2020. In addition to me, the following four JNC members attended that meeting, establishing the required quorum under Indiana Code subsection 33-33-71-36(d):

Charles Leone (Attorney Member)
James (Jay) Lewis (Attorney Member)
Karen Barnett (Non-Attorney Member)
Joseph Grabill (Non-Attorney Member)

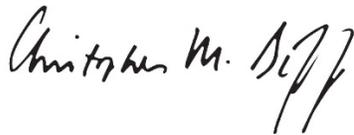
With that quorum having unanimously voted to confirm the same panel of five nominees that were submitted to you September 30, 2020, I hereby recertify those nominees, pursuant to Indiana Code section 33-33-71-38, for the position of Judge of the St. Joseph Superior Court, filling the vacancy left by Judge Jane Woodward Miller on December 31, 2020. Those nominees, listed in alphabetical order, are as follows:

Magistrate Andre Gammage
Magistrate Elizabeth Hardtke
Jeffrey Kimmell
Stephanie Nemeth
Stephanie Steele

Attached to this notice are individual biographical statements for each nominee.

It has been an honor to serve as Chairman to the St. Joseph Superior Court Judicial Nominating Commission.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christopher M. Goff". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Christopher M. Goff, Chairman
St. Joseph Superior Court Judicial
Nominating Commission

Nominees for Judge of the St. Joseph Superior Court (Listed Alphabetically)

Magistrate Andre Gammage

Andre Gammage was born and raised in South Bend, Indiana. The first person in his family to attend college, he earned his undergraduate degree (1985) and law degree (1988) from Valparaiso University. After graduating law school, Mr. Gammage began his legal career as a deputy prosecutor in St. Joseph County, arguing bench and jury trials for four years. In 1993, he transitioned to private practice where he spent the next twenty years—first as an associate and then as a managing partner—representing clients in major criminal cases in both state and federal court. Mr. Gammage’s record of judicial experience began in 2003 and continues to present day. He served for ten years as Administrative Law Judge with the South Bend Department of Code Enforcement. In 2013, Judge Michael Gotsch appointed Mr. Gammage as Magistrate of the St. Joseph Circuit Court where he has presided over both civil and criminal cases and has helped shape the Protective Order Court. Magistrate Gammage also serves as faculty for the National Judicial College and as an adjunct professor of trial advocacy at the University of Notre Dame Law School.

Magistrate Gammage has strong ties to the local community, having served as moderator for South Bend’s anti-group violence initiative, spokesman for the YMCA of Greater Michiana, and as chairman of the Trustee Committee at Macedonia Baptist Church. In partnership with the St. Joseph County Prosecutor and St. Joseph County Judiciary and Faith Leaders, Magistrate Gammage recently launched “Fresh Start Fridays,” a program designed to help former convicts overcome barriers to employment, housing, and transportation.

Magistrate Elizabeth Hardtke

Elizabeth Hardtke was born and raised in Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin. After earning her bachelor’s degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Ms. Hardtke pursued her juris doctorate at Chicago Kent College of Law. Following her law school graduation, she moved to South Bend, Indiana, where, from 2000 to 2005, she successfully argued over 200 felony cases for the St. Joseph County Prosecutor’s Office. In 2005, Ms. Hardtke joined the St. Joseph County Public Defender Department as a full-time deputy assigned to the Juvenile Division of the Probate Court. After five years

in that position, she became a part-time deputy public defender in the Traffic and Misdemeanor Division while maintaining a small private practice focusing on family and criminal law. In 2015, the St. Joseph Superior Court appointed her as Magistrate Judge, a capacity in which she continues to serve in the Traffic and Misdemeanor, Small Claims, and Title IV-D Divisions. During her time in this capacity, Magistrate Hardtke has spearheaded the revision of court forms and local trial rules, developed COVID-19 procedures for local courts, and has served on the Probation Committee of the Indiana Judicial Conference and the Criminal Rule 26 Pilot Program for St. Joseph County. She also serves as guest lecturer on court procedure at the University of Notre Dame Law School.

Magistrate Hardtke is married to her husband, Sean, with whom she is actively involved in the lives of their four children, ranging in age from eleven to sixteen.

Jeffrey Kimmell

Raised in Bremen, Indiana, Jeffrey Kimmel enlisted in the United States Navy following high school, spending six years overseeing submarine operations. Following his honorable discharge in 1988, he pursued his bachelor's degree from IU-South Bend, graduating in 1992. In 1995, after earning his juris doctorate from the Mauer School of Law, Mr. Kimmel launched his legal career as a solo practitioner in South Bend, representing clients in both civil and criminal matters. That same year, he became a part-time public defender for St. Joseph County, representing indigent clients in misdemeanor and major felony cases. Today, Mr. Kimmel continues his work as both a private practitioner and as a part-time public defender.

Mr. Kimmel is married with three children. He currently serves as a board member for the St. Joseph County Community Corrections and volunteers at the Dismas House, a non-profit organization that provides transitional housing and support services to those recently released from incarceration. Mr. Kimmel also enjoys coaching his kids' sports activities and the high school mock trial team.

Stephanie Nemeth

Stephanie Nemeth spent her formative years in Holland, Michigan. In 1998, she moved to Indiana, where—despite the adversity of her sister's death and the challenges of raising a child—she would earn her undergraduate degree from the University of

Notre Dame (2002) and her law degree from Valparaiso University (2005). After law school graduation, Ms. Nemeth returned to South Bend where she began her legal career in private practice, representing clients in both civil and criminal matters. She continues in this capacity today, having also served two years as a part-time public defender for St. Joseph County.

Ms. Nemeth is a member of the Volunteer Lawyers' Network, assisting clients, pro bono, with divorces, guardianships, and other matters. She also volunteers for the St. Joseph County Veterans' Court as the legal assistance liaison and serves as Secretary and Treasurer of the Robert A. Grant Inn of Court.

Stephanie Steele

Stephanie Steele earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan in 2002 and her juris doctorate from the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University in 2009. In 2018, she received her certificate in State and Local Government Executive Leadership from the Harvard Kennedy School. In 2011, after a brief stint as a small business owner, Ms. Steele began her legal career as a deputy with the St. Joseph County Prosecutor's Office, where she handled major felony cases for the Special Victim's Unit. From 2015 to 2017, she served as the Assistant City Attorney for the South Bend Police Department. In this role, she drafted the department's first disciplinary matrix, developed the City's new police duty manual, and facilitated communications between the community and the City's public-safety departments. Today, she serves as Corporation Counsel for the City of South Bend, handling contract disputes and employment issues, advising department heads, and managing all litigation for the City.

Ms. Steele serves as immediate past president of the St. Joseph County Bar Association, and on the boards of the IUSB Arts Foundation, Memorial Hospital, South Bend Kroc Center, and St. Joseph County Bar Foundation, among other organizations. She also serves on the ISBA's Coalition for Court Access and on the Indiana Continuing Legal Education Commission.