

Press Release – June 18th 2020

**Women's Bar Association Releases
Judicial Evaluations**

For more information, contact: info@grawa.org



A Chapter of the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York

The Judicial Evaluation Committee (JEC) of the Greater Rochester Association for Women Attorneys (GRAWA) convened recently to review the qualifications of the candidates running for seats on the Monroe County Court and Monroe County Surrogate's Court. GRAWA will be releasing ratings for candidates running for Rochester City Court and Monroe County Supreme Court at a later date.

The GRAWA JEC is a non-partisan group representing a cross-section of attorneys in the greater Rochester area. The attorneys on the Committee come from a variety of political backgrounds, purposefully balanced, and work for a variety of public and private firms and agencies which practice in relevant courts.

GRAWA's evaluation process involves reviewing a detailed questionnaire completed by the candidate, reviewing writing samples, conducting reference checks and holding an in-depth interview with each candidate. Evaluation criteria include: experience, integrity, professional competence, judicial temperament, service to the law and contribution to the effective administration of justice and service to the community. Evaluation criteria for a candidate currently sitting as a judge also include: preparation, attentiveness and control over judicial proceedings, judicial management skills, courtesy to litigants, counsel and court personnel, public disciplinary sanctions and quality of judicial opinions.

Candidates who participate in the evaluation process are rated "exceptionally well qualified," "well qualified," "qualified," or "not qualified." A rating of "commended" is also given to those candidates who have demonstrated outstanding sensitivity to issues of women, minorities, and bias. Candidates who refuse to participate in the evaluation process are not recommended.

GRAWA's ratings for the 2020 judicial candidates are as follows:

Monroe County Court

Meredith Vacca, Esq.	Qualified
Derek Harnsberger, Esq.	Not recommended for refusal to participate in the evaluation process

Monroe County Surrogate's Court

Hon. Christopher Ciaccio	Exceptionally Well Qualified and Commended
Elena Cariola, Esq.	Not recommended for refusal to participate in the evaluation process

The Greater Rochester Association for Women Attorneys is a chapter of the Women's Bar Association for the State of New York. Launched in October 1980 through an "informational meeting," GRAWA brought together about 50 female attorneys (of 150 locally) in its initial months. Today the chapter has over 250 members – mostly women, but men are also encouraged to join. GRAWA's mission is to promote the advancement of the status of women in society and of women in the legal profession; promote the fair and equal administration of justice; and act as a unified voice for its members with respect to issues of statewide, national, and international significance to women generally and women attorneys in particular.