

Amanda L. Maris
4609 Rollingwood Drive
Durham, NC 27713

April 16, 2017

Dear **People's Alliance PAC**:

With this letter, I respectfully submit my name, Amanda L. Maris, for your consideration for endorsement for appointment to the vacant District Court Judge seat. I am a 14-year Durham resident, a longtime Assistant Public Defender, and I am duly authorized to practice law in this district. I am also a member of the People's Alliance, serve on the Board, and I am a co-chair to the Education Team. My commitment to PA and working on issues that impact our youth will continue if selected as the next District Court Judge in Durham. I have attached a resume for your review and describe my experience and qualifications herein. It is my express intention to seek this appointment out of a sincere desire to serve this city inside and outside of the courtroom to ensure our justice system is fair, equitable and accessible to all.

I am graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (B.A., 2000), and I earned my Juris Doctor from N.C. Central University School of Law in 2006. While in law school, I was a research assistant in family law for two years and a published law journal member. Prior to joining the Public Defender's Office in 2007, I practiced in child support court, criminal court and juvenile court. I also volunteered as a Guardian ad Litem in abuse, neglect & dependency court in Wake County for two years. During this time, I worked as a paralegal for a civil law firm and as a legal assistant for a family law and estate planning law firm.

Throughout my career, I have focused primarily on issues affecting youth and families in the court system, education system and community. I have worked to mitigate the collateral consequences of contact with the criminal justice system by creating opportunities for youth and adults alike to have a second chance at education, employment and housing with public expunction clinics. I am the Asst. Public Defender in the Misdemeanor Diversion Program for youth ages 16-21, and I represent the Public Defender's Office on the Durham Crime Cabinet where I served on a committee to establish a mental health court in Durham. I practice in juvenile delinquency court, criminal court, domestic violence and traffic court. I am on the boards of youth-oriented community organizations including, the Teen Court & Restitution Program and Rebound - Alternatives for Youth.

In Teen Court, I have acted as a judge and mentor for years. I am also on the board of the Durham People's Alliance, and I currently co-lead the Education Team with Molly Parks. I am especially concerned about the impact of discipline policies on student success, disparities present in suspension data and the school-to-prison pipeline. In 2009, I co-founded a free public expunction clinic to help Legal Aid of NC meet a growing need in our city during an economic recession. As a member of the Durham Co. Bar Association's Public Service Committee, I saw an opportunity to do more for our community in establishing the clinics and later expanded them in number with the participation of the NCCU Law criminal litigation clinic. I was honored to be

a nominee for the NCBA Chief Justice Award in 2015 for this work. Also in 2015, I became an adjunct professor at NCCU School of Law in legal writing.

I have always been a hardworking person. I am also a wife and a mother in the LGBTQ community, and I value how our community protects and serves all families. I have served Durham for more than a decade as an Asst. Public Defender litigating and resolving numerous cases in District and Superior Court, and I have developed a thorough understanding of the law and court procedure. I am ready to be Durham's next district court judge, and my commitment to this city and to improving the justice system will only grow. Be it the collateral consequences of a conviction or the effect of a custody case or a crime of domestic violence on a family, I understand that judicial decisions extend far beyond the courtroom and that every courtroom has significance. Therefore, if chosen as Durham's next district court judge, I will ensure that my decisions are weighed carefully, respectfully and in full consideration of the law.

This city and community have played a major role in my professional and personal life and will continue to do so if I become a judge. I will work to ensure that every courtroom I preside over operates efficiently and equitably. I will listen to all arguments and concerns with empathy and respect.

Yours Truly,

Amanda L. Maris
Candidate for District Court Judge
www.amandamarisforjudge.com

Enc.

AMANDA L. MARIS

Assistant Public Defender, District 14
amandamaris@hotmail.com

EDUCATION

Juris Doctor

May 2006 | North Carolina Central University School of Law, Durham, NC

- Law Journal published member
- Research Assistant, Prof. Cheryl Amana-Burris, Family Law (2004-6)
- Civil Litigation Clinic, Legal Aid of NC (2006);
- Environmental Law Society, President/Vice President (2004-6).

Summer 2005 | International Human Rights Law Program, Whittier Law School, Amsterdam, Netherlands

- CALI Excellence for the Future Award, highest grade, AIDS & International Law

Bachelor of Arts

May 2000 | University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC

- Dean's List (Fall 1997/9)
- Sophomore Honors Program (1997-8)
- Phi Sigma Pi National Honor Fraternity
- Co-Chair, B-GLAD (1999-2000) & Founder, B-GLAD Visibility Cmte. (1997-9)

Freshman Yr. 1996-1997 | Smith College, Northampton, MA (Dean's List)

BAR ADMISSION: August 2006 | North Carolina State Bar

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

Office of the Public Defender – District 14

Durham, North Carolina

Assistant Public Defender

January 16, 2007 - *present*

- Litigated and disposed of numerous cases in juvenile delinquency court, traffic court and criminal (and domestic violence) court. Accumulated significant trial experience in district and superior court with numerous bench and jury trials. Represented clients on a wide range of misdemeanor and felony offenses: probation violations, motor vehicle/DWI, assaults, violent crimes, property, weapons and drugs.
- Act as the public defender in the **Misdemeanor Diversion Program** founded in 2014.

N.C. Central University School of Law

Durham, North Carolina

Adjunct Professor of Law (Legal Writing)

August 2015 – June 2016

Instructed first-year law students on the building blocks of legal writing and analysis. Courses taught included: Legal Reasoning and Analysis & Legal Research and Persuasion.

Amanda L. Maris, Attorney at Law

Durham, North Carolina

Private Attorney

October 2006 – January 2007

Represented clients in district court on criminal, juvenile and child support matters.

N.C. Central University School of Law

Durham, North Carolina

Research Assistant to Prof. Cheryl Amana-Burriss
2006

August 2004 – January

Researched family law topics as directed. Prepared an annual update of legislative changes to the N.C. family law statutes. Conducted research to support law journal articles and other writings.

N.C. Assoc. of Black Lawyers' Land Loss Prevention Project Durham, North Carolina

Law Intern

May – November 2005 (Excl. July)

Worked independently on matters involving: predatory lending, foreclosure, partition, mortgages/liens, property ownership among multiple heirs/property disputes, encroachments, mistaken boundaries and nuisance law. Drafted pamphlet for the public entitled "A Citizen's Guide to Environmental Justice."

N.C. Trusts for Public Lands, American Planning Association Raleigh, North Carolina

(N.C. Chapter), N.C. Sierra Club, N.C. Wildlife Federation March; May – August 2004

Legislative Intern to Lobbyist

Researched prior legislation and matters relevant to targeted legislation. Compiled manual on House Bill 1213: Billboard Compensation. Drafted handouts and materials. Directly informed legislators of positions on pending legislation. Attended committee meetings.

Sharon Thompson Law Group

Durham, North Carolina

Legal Assistant

July 2001 – January 2003

Assisted in drafting estate planning documents. Prepared court forms, exhibits, and trial materials in family and estate law cases, incl. divorces, adoptions and custody disputes.

Young, Moore & Henderson, P.A.

Raleigh, North Carolina

Paralegal

June 2000 – March 2001

Drafted pleadings, discovery, and case evaluation letters in residential & commercial stucco construction cases involving faulty EIFS (exterior insulating finishing systems). Summarized depositions and managed documents for trial. Responded to new client inquiries. Trained litigation team to use new software.

Legal Aid of North Carolina

Durham, North Carolina

NCCU Civil Litigation Clinic Participant

January 2006 – May 2006

Assumed cases from initial intake in the areas of: landlord-tenant law, consumer debt collection, and divorce. Engaged in settlement negotiations, prepared settlement letters and appeared in family court.

Wake County Guardian Ad Litem Program

Raleigh, North Carolina

Guardian Ad Litem

May 2000 – May 2002

Investigated a juvenile case of neglect. Interviewed relatives, foster parents, teachers, and case workers and reviewed records. Monitored the children's environment to ensure their health and well-being. Submitted detailed court reports and testified.

Domestic Violence Advocacy Program

Durham, North Carolina

Intern

Fall 1999

Assisted the Domestic Violence Advocate in interviewing victims and organizing case files.

ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION & PRESENTATIONS

Adjunct Professor of Law (Legal Writing), N.C. Central School of Law (Aug. 2015 – June 2016).

Expunctions in North Carolina, Law to the People, LLC, CLE (Nov. 2015), Presenter.

Defending Probation Violations, Durham County Bar Assoc. YLD CLE (June 2015), Presenter.

New Misdemeanor Defender Training, UNC School of Government (2010-2016 annually*), Faculty. Lead multi-day workshops for new public defenders and private counsel. *except 2013

Impeachment by Prior Omission or Inconsistent Statement, UNC School of Government, 2012 Spring Public Defender Conference, Co-Presenter with John C. Donovan.

Defective Pleadings I Have Known in District Court, UNC School of Government, 2011 Spring Public Defender Conference, Co-Presenter with John C. Donovan.

Expunctions in North Carolina, George H. White Bar Association CLE (2011), Presenter.

PUBLICATIONS

Clean Air, Clean Conscience: Evaluating the Early Action Compact Program under the Shadow of the Clean Air Act in the Five-Year Wake of Whitman v. American Trucking Ass'ns, Inc., 28 N.C. Cent. L. Rev. 260 (2006).

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS & CIVIC INVOLVEMENT

14th Judicial District Bar, Member.

North Carolina Advocates for Justice (NCAJ), Criminal & Juvenile Defense Sections.

Durham Orange Women's Association (DOWA), Member.

N.C. Association of Women Attorneys (NCAWA), Member.

NC PD CORE (North Carolina Public Defender Committee on Racial Equity), Member.

Durham County Bar Association, Public Service Committee (2007-present)

- Co-Founded a quarterly public expunction clinic with Legal Aid of NC in Durham.

Durham Crime Cabinet Representative (2009-present) –

- Member of **The Mental Health and Criminal Justice Advisory Team**, Member of **The Mental Health Court Planning Committee**.

Durham County Teen Court & Restitution Program, Past Board Chair & Current Board Member (2009-present), Teen Court Judge, Mentor.

Rebound – Alternatives for Youth, Board Member, Durham, NC (August 2016 – *present*).

People's Alliance, ex-officio Board Member & Education Action Team Co-Chair, Durham, NC (January 2016 – *present*).

District Court Probation Reform Committee, District 14 (2009-2010), Member.