

Oregon State Bar Judicial Voters Guide 2020

1) Full name:

Nathan J. Ratliff

2) Campaign web site (if applicable):

ratliff4judge.com

3) List college and law school attended, including dates of attendance, and degrees awarded.

University of Oregon School of Law, 2000- 2003, Juris Doctor

Oregon State University, 1995 -1999, B.A. Political Science, B.A. International Studies

Universidad Iberoamericana (Mexico City, Mexico) via exchange program, 1997 -1998.

4) List employment since graduation from law school, including years employed, your position and the nature of the practice or activity.

2003 – 2004, Ratliff & Whitney Smith, PC, Associate Attorney, Klamath Falls, OR. Criminal defense, domestic relations, general civil litigation.

2004-2011 Ratliff & Ratliff, PC, Partner, Klamath Falls, OR. Domestic relations, estate planning, trust probate administration/litigation, real estate transactions/litigation, business formation/transaction, litigation, general civil litigation.

2011-Present Parks & Ratliff, PC, Partner. Special District/Local Government representation, domestic relations, water and natural resources law, estate planning, trust probate administration/litigation, real estate transactions/litigation, business formation/transaction, litigation, general civil litigation.

5) List state and federal bars, courts and administrative bodies to which you are currently admitted.

Oregon State Bar, U.S. District Court for the District of Oregon

6) If desired, list any publications and/or articles you have authored.

n/a

7) If desired, list any community, teaching or civic activities.

Former member Klamath Sunrise Rotary, former board member Area Agency on Aging, Current Board Member Youth Rising, YMCA Youth Basketball coach, Klamath County Bar Association Lay Person Legal Spanish language presenter regarding family law, Klamath Hospice Estate Planning Presenter.

8) What is the general character of your practice? If desired, please indicate any legal areas in which you concentrate.

The general character of my practice can be described as a general civil practice. I represent several special districts, two municipalities and one ditch company. I provide services related to estate planning services, trust/estate administration and litigation, real property transactions and litigation, business formation, transactions and litigation, water and natural resource law and work with clients to resolve general civil matters through negotiation and litigation where necessary. I pride myself on being able to assist my established clients with most of the legal matters on which they require assistance.

9) Describe any litigation practice in the last five (5) years and address both the courts and types of cases.

I have litigated numerous real estate, trust/probate, custody, dissolution of marriage, landlord-tenant, and general civil matters in the past five years, primarily in the Klamath County Circuit Court, but also in Lake County.

10) Describe any appellate court experience not included above.

I have worked as appellate counsel on between 10 – 20 cases, including landlord tenant, custody, divorce, trust administration and criminal cases. I have one pending water law matter at the Court of Appeals. I have participated in three cases with substantive opinions issued by the Court.

**Weatherford v. County of Klamath, 201 Or. App. 601 (Or. 2005)
English and English, 223 Or. App. 196 (Or. App. 2008)
Moreau v. Samalin, 295 Or App 534 (Or. App. 2019)**

11) Describe any experience serving as an arbitrator or mediator.

I have served as a Court appointed arbitrator in Klamath County since approximately 2011 and in Lake County since 2013, handling approximately 50 cases.

12) List any experience you have as a pro tem or municipal judge, and the names of the courts you have served.

City of Klamath Falls Municipal Court Judge Pro Tem, Approx. 2009 – 2016.

City of Klamath Falls Municipal Court Presiding Judge, 2016 – Present.

13) List any bar association memberships, and if desired, any offices held or committee/project assignments.

Oregon State Bar, House of Delegates, Elected Delegate, 2006 -2017, 2018 – Present.

Oregon State Bar, New Lawyer Mentorship Program, Mentor (2015)

Oregon State Bar, Public Service Advisory Committee, (2008-2009)

Oregon State Bar, Leadership College Fellow, 2007

14) Have you ever been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a violation of any federal, state, county or municipal law, regulation or ordinance? If so, please give details. *Do not include or parking offenses or traffic violations for which a fine of less than \$500 was imposed.*

No.

15) Have you ever been the subject of a formal disciplinary proceeding as an attorney? If so, please give the particulars and the result. ***Include only proceedings that were authorized for prosecution by the SPRB.*

No.

16) Why do you want to be a judge?

I want to be a judge to help people. As an attorney, I have always enjoyed the opportunity to learn and apply complex legal concepts, while learning about the people involved. If elected, I wish to provide our community with the assurance that any dispute can be resolved in a manner that affords due respect to the people involved and their rights, and legitimacy in the result. As a judge, I would have the opportunity to keep learning about the people in my community and the laws that govern us all.

17) Briefly describe your philosophy of the judicial role, the qualities that are most important for the role, and the greatest challenges to the role.

The judicial role requires the judge to recognize their place as one part, and only one part, of the intricate system of checks and balances that make our county great. A judge should not seek to make policy, but recognize that as the province of the legislative/political branch. A judge must do everything possible to give meaning to the words that have been chosen by the legislature, or other courts, to formulate rules, while seeking to be absolutely impartial as to the individuals involved. A judge must also recognize the importance of her/his role as the counterbalance of the executive and legislative branches should they take unauthorized action.

Humility, experience, fairness and intelligence are the most important qualities a judge must embody to appropriately carry out the role.

The biggest challenge of the role of the judge is to assure that steps are taken to allow the judicial system as a whole to modernize and improve, without jeopardizing the traditional role of the court, and to do so in way that strengthens the legitimacy of the judicial branch.

18) Briefly describe a case, or a legal issue on which you worked, of which you are particularly proud, or which is reflective of your legal ability, work ethic, judicial philosophy, or temperament.

Due to confidentiality concerns, I must speak generally. I am proudest of the case in which I represented a client in a divorce matter that also included allegations of criminal conduct. I was told that no other attorney in town would provide representation. The divorce itself involved jointly owned real property that was subject to remediation under federal regulations. After the divorce, significant procedural litigation occurred to effectuate its terms. Because of my experience, my ability to reach out and keep learning, and my perseverance, my client reached a favorable result on all matters.

19) Briefly describe an issue, related to Oregon's justice system, that concerns you, or that you have interest in working toward improving.

I would like to take steps to eliminate barriers to the justice system that exist to the public in Klamath County. This concerns me because in rural Oregon I can see that there are financial, educational and even geographical barriers that limit access. I would like to use technology, such as remote communication, and education, including training staff to provide assistance and streamlining pro se filings, in order to make the Courts easier to access and to reduce costs to the State and to the public.

20) Briefly describe a legal figure, personal, fictional or historical, whom you admire and why.

I admire my father, as an attorney and a person, because he always sought to teach my sister and I what he knew, he sought to use what he knew to help others, and he never hesitated to take the opportunity to learn something he may not have known.

21) State any other information that you regard as pertinent to your candidacy.

Because of my experience and my ability to relate to and interact with my community, I can provide the citizens of Klamath County with fair, level-headed, thorough decision-making. This County deserves judges of the highest caliber to assure that disputes are resolved in a fashion that provides legal recognition of the rights of all participants and I promise to bring that level of professionalism and respect to this County.