

Oregon State Bar Judicial Voters Guide 2020

1) Full name:

Brandon S Thueson

2) Campaign web site (if applicable):

judgethueson.com

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

Brigham Young University – Idaho, Rexburg, ID – graduated 2006 with B.S. in Psychology, Minor in Political Science

Willamette University College of Law, Salem, OR – graduated 2010 with J.D.

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

Deputy District Attorney, Jackson County District Attorney’s Office – 2010-2016. Practiced as a prosecutor in criminal law trying many cases to a jury. Also spent considerable time working in the area of Juvenile Law, prosecuting both juvenile dependency and juvenile delinquency cases.

Assistant Attorney General, Oregon Department of Justice, Civil Enforcement Division, Child Advocacy Section – 2016-2019. Represented DHS Child Welfare in all aspects of juvenile dependency proceedings.

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

Admitted to the Oregon State Bar, OSB #105292

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

N/A

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

Serve as a church youth mentor/leader 2010-present

Serve as a high school mock trial coach, 2012-present

Served as a youth girls soccer and basketball coach, 2011-2016

Served as an elected City Councilor for City of Central Point, 2014-2019

Served as a board director of the Logos Public Charter School, 2017-2018

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

Early in career I was focused on criminal prosecution. Entire career has been also focused in juvenile law practice. As a judge, I hear the entire range of cases.

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

For the five years prior to joining the bench, I practiced almost exclusively in delinquency and dependency court. Delinquency is when a youth, generally between the ages 12 and 17, commits an offense that, if they were an adult, would constitute a crime. I represented the State of Oregon and engaged in all aspects of the case beginning with reviewing police reports, recommending charges, appearing in court for detention hearings, suppression hearings, adjudicatory and dispositional hearings, and engaged in plea negotiations. These hearings were all heard at the Circuit Court level.

Dependency is when a child is alleged to be neglected or abused following a DHS child welfare investigation. I represented DHS Child Welfare in nearly all aspects of the life of a case beginning with reviewing cases for legal sufficiency, recommending allegations to include on a dependency petition, appearing in court for shelter hearings, shelter review hearings, adjudicatory and dispositional hearings, review hearings, permanency hearings, guardianship hearings, and trials related to the termination of parental rights. These hearings were all heard at the Circuit Court level.

Since October 2019 I have served as a Circuit Court Judge in Josephine County. I have heard the entire range of court proceedings in my time on the bench. I have presided over traffic violations, small claims, landlord/tenant matters, delinquency and dependency matters, dissolution and custody proceedings, restraining orders, stalking orders, civil proceedings, criminal proceedings including arraignments, plea and sentencings, and jury trials, as well as probate proceedings.

10) Describe any appellate court experience not included above.

N/A

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

N/A

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

N/A

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

Served on the Oregon State Bar Juvenile Executive Committee from 2012-2017. Served as treasurer from 2014-2017.

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?

My desire to be a judge began around 2005 while I was still in college and focused on entering law school. During this time, I was required to watch C-SPAN for a set amount of time during the term for a political science course. This happened to be during the time in which Chief Justice Roberts and Justice Alito were working their way through the Supreme Court confirmation process. I was struck by how intelligent both justices were. I really admired them.

In 2010 after I graduated law school, passed the bar, and attended the swearing in ceremony, I was lucky to hear retired Oregon Supreme Court Justice Gillette say a few words to us newly admitted attorneys. He said something the effect that, "Becoming an attorney in the state of Oregon is a privilege that you have worked hard to achieve. Because of your education and your experience, and that privilege, there will be times in your life where you must step forward and serve, and give back to your community. Always be the one that steps up." While that is not nearly a direct quote, that is the sentiment I took away from his message. And it has always stuck with me.

Justice Gillette's message inspired me to coach my children in their sports when no other parents were able. It's inspired me to coach mock trial for nearly a decade. It inspired me to run for a city council vacancy and sign up to serve on a school board, knowing that those were opportunities to give back. And finally, his message inspired me to apply for a judicial vacancy, thinking that I might have something to add to the bench.

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.

Chief Justice John Roberts famously said, "It's my job to call balls and strikes and not to pitch or bat." A judge must remember that during court proceedings, it is not his or her courtroom, not his or her case, and is not about him or her. It is the courtroom of the state of Oregon, and each litigant, whether represented or not, needs to be given the opportunity to present the case.

A judge must be patient, kind, respectful, fair, and professional. People must believe that their position is being heard and considered, without bias.

My greatest challenge is that even though I strive to emulate these traits every day on the bench, sometimes I fall short. It helps when I attempt to imagine myself in the shoes of someone appearing in the courtroom, and imagine how I would want a judge to treat me.

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.

I handled a particularly difficult juvenile dependency case that spanned my entire time at DOJ. During the life of this case, I appeared in court on several multiday contested permanency hearings, losing one, and winning two. I appeared in multiple other contested proceedings ultimately leading up to a several day contested, and at times quite chaotic, termination of parental rights proceeding that was spaced out over a couple of months due to scheduling conflicts. After the appellate process was completed, one of my happiest days as an attorney was learning that the child at issue in the case was able to be adopted by her foster parents. It was the culmination of nearly four years of hard work and lost sleep.

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

I currently serve on the drug court team. Drug court is a program in which men and women who are facing criminal charges potentially related to drug addiction, can participate. In drug court, they are connected to services and programs to help overcome addiction. With hard work and dedication, they can graduate drug court with a fresh slate and a world of opportunities. They show that redemption is very real and that change is possible.

The problem, however, is that more social programs need to be available to help people dealing with mental health, drug addiction, and other ailments that often funnel them into the criminal justice system. I would like to be involved in finding solutions to this issue.

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

I have read biographies of Sandra Day O'Connor and Ruth Bader Ginsburg in the last year. I truly admire the leaps each made for women in the practice of law and beyond. I have three teenage daughters. Each of my girls is smart, extremely driven, and focused on future academic and professional exploits. I acknowledge that if my girls had been born two or three generations ago, their potential would have been stunted. Because of pioneers like Sandra Day O'Connor and Ruth Bader Ginsburg, my daughters will achieve far greater successes than I could ever imagine for them.

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

Serving as a Circuit Court Judge has been the greatest time of my career. It is exciting to go to work every day, knowing that a new and unique case will be presented that will cause me to truly listen, ponder, study, and make decisions. It is also exciting to serve as a cheerleader at times, as I get to encourage people to not allow current circumstances to define their lives, as there are many more opportunities that await them. To learn more about my candidacy, please visit my website at judgethueson.com, email me at judgethueson@gmail.com, or find my campaign Facebook page by searching "Retain Judge Brandon Thueson".