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BEFORE THE
FLORIDA JUDICIAL QUALIFICATIONS COMMISSION

INQUIRY CONCERNING A JUDGE
JUDITH W. HAWKINS, NO. 11-550
_____/

SC12-2495

TRIAL MEMO

COMES NOW the Respondent, JUDGE JUDITH W. HAWKINS, by and through undesigned counsel, and hereby files this Trial Memo, and states:

JUDICIAL BACKGROUND:

On November 5, 1996, history was made in the Second Judicial Circuit when Judith Warren Hawkins was elected as a county court judge. It was a collection of firsts: never before had so many candidates filed for the seat (9); never had a minority been elected in any contested judicial race in the Second Judicial Circuit; never had there been a minority county court judge; and never had there been a minority female county court judge.

The community affirmed the endorsements by Tallahassee Women Lawyers, the Tallahassee *Democrat* and the *Capital Outlook* newspapers that Judge Hawkins' professional and life experiences and her commitment to be "fair and committed to justice" made her well qualified to serve as the People's court judge." When she publicly took office, her investiture was one of the best ever attended; people from all walks of life and backgrounds crowded the event. A new day had dawned in Tallahassee, Florida - one that many thought they would never see in their lifetime.

During her first four-year term, she established herself as being open-minded, even-handed, impartial, and demanding each side to meet its burden of proof. As the Tallahassee *Democrat* reported during the 2000 election, Judge Hawkins "doesn't just want the punishment to fit the crime – she wants the punishment to fit the criminal." Her creative sentences addressed young traffic offenders - community service hours could be exchanged for improvement in school grades or obtaining a GED. Several young defendants' lives were changed because of her "out-of-the-box" thinking. Defendants with building skills were specifically assigned to charities which needed painters, plumbers and the like.

Judge Hawkins created a partial-payment system for civil traffic fines which allowed defendants with suspended licenses to pay their fines and retain their licenses. She began the requirement that convicted DUI defendants take a victim-awareness class. While sitting in the civil division, she established procedures to assist pro-se litigants to better represent themselves. During her term in misdemeanor court, Judge Hawkins instituted sentencing guidelines to insure that similarly situated defendants received more consistent plea offers.

In both the 1996 and 2000 elections, Judge Hawkins' opponents were prosecutors, who were openly supported by the State Attorney. In 1998, when the assistant state attorney, who supervised misdemeanor court, filed to run against Judge Hawkins, she was not assigned to another division during the campaign period, and continued to appear before Judge Hawkins.

Judge Hawkins was re-elected in 2000, just shy of 70% of the votes. Without opposition, Judge Hawkins was re-elected in 2006 and 20012, which is her last term.

During the early years and continuing today, Judge Hawkins created standardized civil pro se forms; began the assignment of county court judges presiding over ex-parte dissolutions of marriage and uncontested adoptions; granting first appearance to felony violation of probation (VOPs) as a part of the morning first appearance docket; county court judges presiding over the felony drug court and passing worthless check dockets; and the Monday afternoon video-docket for in-custody defendants and 2 p.m. plea docket for out-of-custody defendants (this established time allows attorneys to dispose cases other than during the assigned criminal week and allows first-appearance judges to set in-custody defendants' cases for review before the defendants spend unnecessary time in jail.)

Judge Hawkins was assigned to the domestic violence docket and began the assignment of county court judges presiding over collections court for court costs fines and fees. She created the misdemeanor drug court program, and began the experiment which eventually resulted in the reorganization of county court judges' assignment

Until the recent attack upon Judge Hawkins, she was rarely appealed in the misdemeanor division. Even the recent appealed cases did not result in guilty verdicts.

Over the years of experience gained as a county court judge, Judge Hawkins has established policies and procedures which efficiently and effectively manage her judicial duties. Her courtroom administrative policies enhance minimizing waste of attorneys', litigants' and court personnel's time. Cases proceed to future docket soundings with a minimum of judicial effort. She initially created separate dockets for in-custody and out-of custody defendants

so that out-of custody defendants would not have to wait until in-custody defendants cases were addressed. Now, most in-custody matters are handled via video-conferencing, which saves transportation costs, increases inmate security, ease of adding last-minute defendants to the dockets, and better allocation of work assignments for deputies and bailiffs. No one can document any inefficiency in Judge Hawkins' courtroom, nor substantiate that cases have gone undisposed because of her un availability. Rather, it is her close watch on the aging of cases which show a steady and current disposition of cases. There has been no opportunity upon which to base the allegation that Judge Hawkins' participation in her personal ministry has been to the "detriment of the prompt and efficient administration of justice."

Furthermore, Opinion Number 2004-38n (12/22/04) of the *Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee* addressed the issue of vacation time for a circuit or county judge. In summary, there is no limit established by any governing regulation and "judges are specifically exempted from the attendance and leave provisions," "and are not in leave-accruing positions like other state employees." Canon 3A implies that judges must discharge their duties as constitutional officers before taking a vacation and must schedule their vacation days in a manner consistent with the needs of the court" such as there is no interference "with the administration of justice." In conclusion, the Opinion held that "it would be improper, and a violation of the Code, for judges to take vacation time if it interfered with the proper performance of judicial duties or created an appearance of impropriety."

It should not be overlooked that judges can only establish the framework upon which cases are disposed. Especially in the misdemeanor division, while there are both adequate time and

available judges to try cases, it is not Judge Hawkins' unavailability when the State disposes of cases via pleas or a nolle prosse.

Judge Hawkins' success with almost no VOP hearings is due to her advising defendants that they are expected to complete their conditions early, without any expectations of continuances and once violated, advising defendants proceeding to a VOP hearing that they have exactly five weeks to complete that which they did not do in six months. Also, at a defendant's midway point probation officers are authorized to bring the defendant before the court for a status hearing, at which time Judge Hawkins asks why the defendant is not on course. Often, during a status hearing, significant and dispositive issues surface, such as medical conditions which completely bar defendant's ability to comply with the terms of probation; disclosure of financial hardship which requires modification of terms; or an "attitude adjustment" conversation.

Judges are not hourly employees; when physically present in the circuit, they must be able to perform their constitutionally mandated duties. This includes after-work hours to assist law enforcement in the exercise of their duties; as an example, at 3 a.m. on October 29, 2009, TPD needed a search warrant signed. Judge Hawkins left her mother's bedside at a hospital, met the officer in

the ER and signed the warrant. In October, 2012,she received calls regarding information about search warrants while in Michigan attending her brother's funeral, and in Maryland spending time with her son after his father's, her husband's, fatal heart attack on May 27th, 2013. At no time has Judge Hawkins' personal ministries made her unwilling, not ready, or unavailable to fulfill her duties.

Judge Hawkins is a teacher/judge. Almost all of the misdemeanor attorneys assigned to her division have little, if any experience. Those who appreciate her efforts to share with them the benefit of her professional and life experiences become better lawyers and people. Judge Hawkins possesses and freely shares wisdom, insight and perspective.

The citizens of Leon County have had three separate opportunities to voice their evaluation of whether Judge Hawkins has kept her 1996 investiture oath: "To be measured by three standards: integrity in my professional and personal lives, excellent in courtroom administration, and consistent application of the law for all citizens." By their votes during the last four elections, they affirmed and confirmed that Judge Hawkins embodies the qualities of a good judge.

JQC INVESTIGATION:

Much has been alleged regarding Judge Hawkins' response to the Investigative Panel's inquiry into her fitness to serve as a Leon County Judge.

The Original Formal Notice of Charges alleged, in essence, that Judge Hawkins was pictured on the Gaza Road Ministries website in her robe, and sold her book, *Old Stories, New Insights*, in the Leon County Courthouse.

Judge Hawkins immediately admitted and corrected those allegations. The investigation became a fishing expedition, which went far beyond the scope of the Formal Charges. It was as if the Panel, under the special prosecutor's direction, determined that Judge Hawkins was to be intimidated, embarrassed or bullied into resigning or retiring. Much of the information reported to the Panel was either a misstatement or a misrepresentation of the facts.

Consider, for example, the Subpoena Duces Tecum filed February 5, 2013, which included all e-mails between Judge Hawkins and her judicial assistant exchanged by the work and any personal computer, electronic records concerning anything related to her ministry; her personal tax returns from 2010 to the present, including various forms; any tax returns filed on behalf of her ministry; all bank records and any tax information related to her ministry; in addition to other materials. Judge Hawkins objected, stating this discovery was outside the scope of the investigation, and the then-existing formal charges.

When Judge Hawkins was ordered to comply with the discovery, she made her computers, financial records, and e-mails available for inspection. Much has been made about the jump or flash drives she did not turn over. Judge Hawkins explained that the jump drives did not contain any information which was not on the hard drive of her laptops or home computer. The investigator had a mirror image of her laptops and the office computer. However, upon providing a list of the specified missing jump or flash drives, the list included her cameras, video camera, and her cell phone. Furthermore, the implication is that Judge Hawkins has in her possession *every* jump or flash drive which was ever inserted into her laptops, which on its face is unreasonable. How could she remember every jump or flash drive which was ever inserted into her laptops - over the space of years?

Then there are the issues regarding Judge Hawkins providing a complete list of the names of people to whom her book was sold at the Leon County Courthouse. She provided the handwritten list made at the time of the sales.

There is the issue of data deleted from her laptop and work computer. Data was moved, but not deleted. All financial information, which is maintained via the Quicken program, has always been stored on Judge Hawkins' home computer. Any information on the office computer was a backup to the materials stored on her personal laptops.

DISCOVERY ISSUES:

1. As to intentionally deleting relevant financial records on Respondent's personal Gaza Road Ministries (GRM) laptop, see Respondent's deposition, pages 14-15, lines 23-28:

At the time I filed this or prepared this Answer with my attorney, I had not deleted anything other than what I specified, but this I realized I had added to my laptop, my Gaza Road Ministries laptop-I had downloaded Quicken which is a bookkeeping procedure which before had never been on my laptop, my Gaza Road laptop, because it came free with my tax program.

I deleted whatever financial information had been put into the Quicken program, and I did that this morning.

Explanation: Respondent purchased the 2012 version of Turbo Tax, and a free trial version of Quicken was provided with Turbo Tax. There had never been an accounting program installed on Respondent's GRM laptop because she travels with the GRM laptop and did not want to place any sensitive financial data on that laptop. Respondent downloaded the free 2012 version of Quicken onto the Gaza Road Ministries laptop, thinking that she might use it to keep track of Gaza Road Ministries finances without using Quicken's internet bank downloading features. Then she realized that she did not want any financial information at all on the GRM laptop

for data security reasons, and deleted Quicken. However, Respondent has always maintained an accurate record of GRM's finances only on her home desktop, in addition to bank records. All this information was provided for inspection and/or copying.

2. As to Respondent willfully refusing to provide full discovery: Respondent stated in her Answer that various discovery sought exceeded the scope of the allegations and refused. In compliance with the March 13, 2013 Order on Status Conference and Pending Motions, which required Respondent to produce specified documents, Respondent complied. The extent of her compliance is documented by the Commission's Motion to Continue Hearing filed on March 28, 2013, based upon the completeness of materials provided by Respondent.

Explanation: The Respondent organized by year and month all of GRM's bank statements, including original deposit and credit card receipts, and provided copies to the Counsel for the JQC. The Respondent's old and current GRM laptops were made available for inspection and/or copying. Further,Respondent provided all items ordered by the JQC.

3a. As to misleading the Commission concerning the existence of USB flash or jump drives associated with the private business conducted in your judicial office: see Respondent's deposition, pages 17-18, lines 24-19:

I used thumb drives more to transfer information, so I would have copied it from my personal computer and just taken it over to the State computer and downloaded it there. So it's not really that I - the State's computer turned out to be for me nothing more than a significant large storage place.

Let me try to put that in plain English for you. The writings that I do - if I were to lose those writings, I would be up a creek without a paddle. Even if I had them printed out, I still don't have it in Word Perfect or a Word format.

So, to me, in my mind there was no better back-up than the State's computer. So that work would have gotten on the State's computer either by my e-mailing it to it or I would have put it on a jump drive and then downloaded the jump drive to the State's computer.

Explanation: Respondent disclosed the use of jump drives to move information back and forth between computers. There was/is no information on a flash drive which is not permanently stored on Respondent's personal GRM laptop, which was inspected and copied.

3b. As to misleading the Commission regarding the nature and extent of payments to Respondent's judicial assistant:

Explanation: All payments to Respondent's judicial assistant were/are paid from the GRM bank accounts. However, the discussion about any "gifts" to the judicial assistant was problematic because the judicial assistant did not want to consider Respondent's reimbursement of the judicial assistant's monthly deferred compensation as a "gift" and did not disclose it during her deposition. Afterward, Respondent disagreed with her judicial assistant and went back on the record to disclose that Respondent reimburses her judicial assistant for her monthly deferred compensation contribution, which is less than $50/month. Any confusion or misleading information was addressed on the date of the deposition and at the deposition.

3c. As to misleading the Commission as to Respondent's knowledge of the nature and

extent of her work for GRM during the work day, see Respondent's deposition, pages 80-89. Explanation: The editing, typing and layout design work done by Respondent's judicial assistant could not be done on state equipment because the programs she used are not installed on the work computer; she had to do it on her own equipment. As to whether she used state equipment to do any of the work on her computer, she has lunch and other breaks throughout the day and is free to do as she chooses. Respondent maintains only one calendar; all appointments of any kind were scheduled through Respondent's judicial assistant; consequently, any GRM speaking appointment request had to be cleared by Respondent's judicial assistant. Any further GRM appointment follow-up done by Respondent's judicial assistant, for which she was paid, would have been done on the judicial assistant's lunch/break time.

3d. As to misleading the Commission through incomplete responses to questions and discovery, without specific details, Respondent denies allegation.

LEGAL COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

Look at Judge Hawkins' resume; it demonstrates an ongoing commitment to the giving-back to the legal community. Her awards confirm that she cares about the responsibility that attorneys and judges carry to deliver justice. One of her most cherished contributions is serving as the originator and original "Sunshine Chair" of the Tallahassee Women Lawyers; she hand-writes to members cards of congratulations, sympathy, and encouragement.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

It is said that "Little things can make a big difference; it only takes a small pin to burst a big balloon." This sums up Judge Hawkins. A quick review of her resume confirms that she is

about doing all the good she can, for all the people she can, at any time she can. In fact, her spirit was recognized by the Conference of County Court Judges, when she was awarded the Harvey Ford Award in 2003.

Her giving-back spirit was first recognized in the community in 1992, when she was noted by the Tallahassee *Democrat* as a role model, citing her as "a conscientious attorney who finds time for children."

Two of the pictures on her personal ministry website, the subject of this JQC investigation showed Judge Hawkins speaking to second-graders at Oakridge Elementary School where she volunteered weekly for eight years. The teacher asked her to wear her robe, which she did. Oakridge Elementary School nominated Respondent for the 2006 *Tallahassee Democrat* Volunteer of the Year for Education Award, which she received. Judge Hawkins did not advance a private interest by using these pictures; rather, they showed her commitment to community service. The only thing preventing her now from a scheduled time of volunteering in the schools is a changing court calendar!

PERSONAL MINISTRY:

Judge Hawkins is a committed woman of faith. There is no restriction upon her First Amendment rights to freedom of religion and assembly.

Created in Fall 2010, Gaza Road Ministries (GRM) is a religious ministry of speaking, preaching, writing and presenting workshops on various biblical and legal issues, especially

including domestic violence. Judge Hawkins has a Human Development and Family Relations graduate degree from Ohio State University, and was board-certified in marital law before becoming a judge.

As the Investigative Panel of the JQC discovered from its detailed inspection of her personal income tax return and GRM bank records, Judge Hawkins is serious about her charitable donations. Gaza Road Ministries provides an additional revenue stream which permits Judge Hawkins to further her mission of helping others in need: Gaza Road Ministries. Her net income has been expended in a variety of ways, including, but not limited to paying for temporary housing for homeless people, helping struggling parents pay for their children's tuitions and child care; assisting unemployed women with financial support, paying for needy women and girls to attend women's retreats and conferences, cash gifts to those in need, and contributions to several charitable organizations. Except for primarily publishing expenses, almost all of the income from GRM has been spent on others.

It is unrealistic to think that she would have served since 1996, and not have made friends at the courthouse. Life happens to everyone, and no one, including judges and court personnel, is excused.; and when we share our workday with others, we often may share their concerns, burdens and accomplishments.

Of course, Judge Hawkins was excited about the publication of her first book, *Old Stories, New* Insights., which is a 90-day examination of the lives of 13 women in the Bible. Her enthusiasm and sharing of her book with others cannot be misconstrued as using her position to promote a private interest! Rather, her intention was only to share her writings which come from the heart, in the spirit of hope that readers would gather strength, find encouragement, gain insight and

healing.

Some judges use their time away from the bench to hunt or fish. Others prefer to travel. Each has his or her own special interests or hobbies. Judge Hawkins is committed to teaching and preaching the Gospel, both art home and abroad. Beginning with her 50th birthday in 2001, Judge Hawkins has participated in mission trips as far away as Indonesia and as close as Haiti.

It is because Judge Hawkins "walks the talk" of her faith, that the citizens of Leon County are better served when she considers their cases. Her intentional and meaningful face-to-face encounters with real-life situations and issues cause her to be better equipped to apply the law with greater fairness and justice.

Respectfully submitted,

Gerald Kogan

Gerald Kogan,
Attorney for the Respondent,
Judge Judith W. Hawkins

Leon County Judge Judith W. Hawkins received the 2003 Harvey Ford Award during the 30th anniversary of the Conference of County Court Judges recently held in Marco Island, Florida. The Award recognizes Hawkins for dedicated service to the community, the legal profession and the conference. The crystal award was signed by the Beth Bloom, first female president of the Conference of County Court Judges. The Conference is the organization that speaks on behalf of the County Judges and represents the County Judges at the Supreme Court and the Legislature.

The selection of the recipient of the Award was a surprise announced during the Conference Awards and Installation Banquet. Judge Jim Shelfer, who nominated and introduced Hawkins, stated that he nominated her because, "Her energy and enthusiasm to serve others made her the logical choice from our Circuit. I was very pleased, but not surprised, that the Conference chose Judi for this prestigious award."

For more than 15 years, Hawkins has volunteering in local schools. During the 2002-2003 school year, she returned to volunteer at PACE, an alternative school for girls, and volunteered in a second grade class at Oakridge Elementary School. Hawkins used her travels to encourage her young students to stay in school and study hard to get an excellent education. A frequent speaker at community, school and church programs, she delivered the Summer 2002 FAMU Commencement Speech. Judge Hawkins has sewn and donated girls' jumpers and shorts sets to the Guardian Ad Litem Program.

As county judge, Judge Hawkins has distinguished her judicial career by increased efficiency in moving the dockets, which includes introduction of forms for use by pro se litigants in county civil court. While assigned to misdemeanor court, she increased the use of video appearances by defendants, saving transportation and personnel costs. During 1997, Judge Hawkins instituted a program which allowed installment payments of traffic fines. Her reputation as a fair, consistent, crisp and personable adjudicator continues to grow. In February 2003, she was Judicial Law Delegate to South Africa in the People to People Ambassador Program.

Currently Judge Hawkins participates in the Conference of County Court Judges by serving on the Education and the Article V / Revision Committees. She has served as a Circuit Representative. She also participates as a presenter at Conference sessions.

Judge Hawkins serves or has served on several boards, including the Tallahassee Women Lawyers, Legal Aid Foundation, Legal Services of North Florida, Inc., Leadership Tallahassee, American Marine Institute. She is a Master with American Inns of Court, Tallahassee Section. She is a member of Leadership Tallahassee Class XIX (2001-2002). Judge Hawkins actively

participates with law related student activities at local high schools and Florida State University College of Law. She regularly serves as a judge for moot court and oral argument competitions.

Judge Hawkins' passion is serving - - wherever, whomever, whenever and however. In appreciation for her birthdays, she is a committed self supporting missionary. In 2001, she helped build a school in Costa Rica; in 2002, she preached in Kenya and in 2003 in Dominican Republic.

Judge Hawkins' 1996 election was historical for Leon County. The Governor did not appoint her to a judgeship; thus, she was the first African-American in the Second Judicial Circuit elected in a contested election as well as the first African-American female county judge.

Judge Hawkins received her Juris Doctor from Florida State University College of Law (1984), her Master Degree from The Ohio State University (1977) and her Bachelor's Degree from Andrews University (1972).

JUDITH WARREN HAWKINS, M.S., J.D.

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Professional History: Elected Leon County Judge in 1996 for a four- year term and re-elected in 2000 and 2006 for six-year terms; current term expires in 2012. County court's limited jurisdiction includes misdemeanor and criminal traffic cases, civil traffic infractions, small claims, landlord-tenant actions, and general jurisdiction over civil controversies up to $15,000 and simplified dissolution of marriage cases. Adjunct professor: Florida A & M University 2002-2007; FSU College of Law 2008 - 2009.

In 1987 established law firm specializing in the areas of family and marital law, plaintiffs' personal injury claims, probate, guardianship, juvenile dependency and juvenile delinquency law. Served as Public Defender Conflict Attorney for Juvenile Delinquency Court from 1994-1996. Designated in 1995 by the Florida Bar as Board Certified in Marital and Family Law. Certified in 1993 by the Florida Supreme Court in Family Mediation. Admitted to The Florida Bar in 1985.

Previous legal experience: Law Clerk, Legal Services of North Florida, Inc., September-December, 1984; Certified Legal Intern, Office of the Public Defender, May-August, 1984; Law Clerk, Philip Padovano, Esq., and Meyer & Brooks, September-April,1984; Condominium Specialist, State of Florida, Dept. of Business Regulation,1980-1984.

Educational History: B.A., Andrews University, 1973; M.S., The Ohio State University,1977; J.D., Florida State University, 1984. Study Abroad, Newbold College, England, 1970-1971.

Awards and Recognition: Community Leadership Recognition, Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church, 2013; *Everyday Heroes for Teens Newsletter* Woman of the Year, 2013; *Capital Outlook* Black History Honoree, 2012; Class of Leaders in Law Florida Association of Women Lawyers, 2011; Parks and Crump's Thurgood Marshall Judicial Excellence Award with the Legal Services North Florida Legal Services, 2011; *Tallahassee Democrat's* 25 Women You Need to Know 2010; Leon County Schools Outstanding Mentor Award 2008; Southeastern Conference of SDA Recognition Award, 2006; winner of *Tallahassee Democrat's* 28th Anniversary Volunteer of the Year for Education, 2006; Conference of County Judges Harvey Ford Award, 2003; Zonta International, Women in History, Local Women Achievers' Recognition, 2002; The Tallahassee Chapter American Association of University Women, Outstanding Woman of Our Community Award, 2002; Leadership Tallahassee Distinguished Leadership Awards Nominee, 2001; Operation ReachBack, Inc. Award Recipient, 2001; FAWL 50th Anniversary Golden Star Award Recipient, 2001; 100 Black Men of America, Inc., Achievement Award, 1999; Girl Scouts Council of the Apalachee Bend, Women of Distinction Award, 1998; Legal Services of North Florida pro bono service recognition, (1985-1996); Role Model Article, *Tallahassee Democrat,* 1992; Parents Anonymous Volunteer Recognition Award, 1990; Guardian Ad Litem Outstanding Attorney Award, 1989-1990; Barristers' Outstanding Involvement Award, 1987.

Legal and Professional Participation: Florida Bar: Traffic Rules Committee, 2011- 2012; Small Claims Committee, 2004-2010; Florida Statewide Drug Control Summit 2006,June 2006; Florida Law Related Education Program, delegate to Panama, 2004; Judicial Law Delegate to South Africa, People to People Ambassador Program, 2003; Conference of County Court Judges: Education Committee, 2002-present; President's Ad Hoc Committee on Community Service, 2001-2002; Committee for Review and Notification of Criminal and Juvenile Legislation, 2001-2002; Article V / Revision 7 Committee, 2002.

Participant (Supreme Court) Justice Teaching Institute, 1998-1999; Florida Courts Technology Commission, 1999; Florida Supreme Court Family Courts Steering Committee, 1996-1998; Conference of County Court Judges Circuit Representative, 1997; Tallahassee Women Lawyers, 1997-currently; Legal Aid Foundation Board, 1991-1994, 1999-2004; Tallahassee Bar Association since 1987 (Board Member, 1993); Legal Services of North Florida, 1990-1994 (President,1992-1993); Florida Bar Second Judicial Circuit Grievance Committee, 1993-1995; American Inns of Court, Tallahassee Section, 1992-1997; Tallahassee Barristers since 1987 (Treasurer,1987 and 1994-1996); Trial Court Work Performance Standards Advisory Committee, 1993-1994; Southern Union Society of Adventist Attorneys.

Community Organizations: Board of Directors, Life Skills Center, 2009-2011; Board Member, A Life Recovery Center, 2009; Leadership Tallahassee Class XIX (2001-2002); Board Member, Leadership Tallahassee, 2000-2001; Board of Directors, Adventist Health System Sunbelt, 1995-currently; American Marine Institute Board of Directors,1998-2001; ZONTA, 1998-2000; Florida High School Mock Trial Competition,1998-1999; Capital City Planning Commission, 1993-1996; Guardian Ad Litem, 1985-1996; Lincoln High School Partners for Excellence, 1992-1993; Executive Committee, Southern Union of Seventh-day Adventists, 1992-1996.

Other Interests: Traveling, playing Scrabble, mentoring and volunteering in Leon County public schools for over twenty years. Frequent speaker at churches, schools and universities, as well as other community functions.

International mission work: including helped build a school in Costa Rica, January 2001; lay evangelist in Kenya, Africa, June 2002; Dominican Republic, June 2003; Kaohsiung, Taiwan, November 2004; Romania, November 2005; Mongolia, September, 2006; Papua, Indonesia, October 2007; Mexico, 2008; Brazil, 2009; Haiti, 2010; and Guyana, 2012.

Founder, Gaza Road Ministries, 2010. Published devotional thoughts in women's devotional books, 1999 and 2002 and various materials related to Gaza Road Ministries.

Personal: Married since December 1972 to James E. Hawkins, Ph.D., Dean of the School of Journalism and Graphic Communication, Florida A&M University. He died, unexpectedly, Memorial Day 2013. Mother of adult married son, Jason Hawkins, law librarian, George Washington University College of Law, Washington, DC; and Grandmother "Oma" of Keira Noelle Hawkins, born March 21, 2008 and Kyla Christine Hawkins, born August 31, 2009.

Judith Hawkins honored for mission work

By Pauline E. Robinson
Special to the Chronicle

In February 2013, the Everyday Heroes for Teens newsletter unveiled its Women of the Year for 2013. These women were recognized for their philanthropic ideals and their abilities to convert challenges into opportunities. The awardees include Judge Judith Hawkins of Tallahassee and Cheryl "Action" Jackson of Plano, Texas.

Judge Judith Hawkins voluntary work includes participation in several international mission trips. These mission trips were at her own expense and include the following: building a school in Costa Rica (2001), and preaching in Kenya, East Africa (2002), Dominican Republic (2003), Taiwan (2004), Romania (2005), Mongolia (2006), Irian Jaya, Indonesia (2007), Mexico (2008), Brazil (2009), and Guyana (2012). She also spent her 2010 Thanksgiving week in Haiti with Mission of Hope. Judge Hawkins is a motivational speaker and author, whose writings "grew from her passion for service."

Her writings, which include *Women as Jewels*, *Kindness Matters*, and *From Fear to Faith*, are accessible at http://www.gazaroad ministries.com/.

Cheryl "Action" Jackson is the founder and president of Minnie's Food Pantry in Plano, Texas. Minnie's Food Pantry is a 501C3 charity that provides healthy nutritious food and red carpet treatment to every person that it serves in the community. The idea for the pantry grew from Ms. Jackson's personal experience of wanting assistance in the past and the manner in which she was treated. Minnie's Food Pantry is dedicated to Jackson's mother, Minnie Hawthorne-Ewing, who showed Ms. Jackson the benefits of sharing and caring from an early age. The pantry launched the IHOPE (Help Other People Eat) campaign to raise awareness about hunger in the communities. Donations to the IHOPE campaign can be made at http://www.minnies foodpantry.org/mfp/.

In January 2013, Everyday Heroes for Teens unveiled its Men of the Year for 2013.

These awardees include Daryl D. Parks and Benjamin L. Crump, Partners and Attorney-At-Law of Parks & Crump, LLC, Tallahassee, Florida, Ron Wetherington, Teacher at Elizabeth Cobb Middle School, Tallahassee, Florida, and Eric Fryson of Gretna, Florida.

In March 2013, Everyday Heroes for Teens newsletter will unveil its School of the Year for 2013.

The newsletter's goal is to connect leaders with teens and provide a blueprint for success for teens.

The newsletter is distributed electronically on a global scale and has an editorial board from across the global.

The contact information for the newsletter is 850-322-6085 or prpevans @gmail.com.

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Judge Judith Hawkins serves as a Leon County Judge in Tallahassee, Florida. When elected in 1996, she was the first African-American Leon County Court Judge. Her present term expires in 2012. As a county judge, she has jurisdiction over civil cases up to $15,000 in damages and criminal cases punishable by up to one year in jail.

Prior to her election, she developed her own law firm and became one of the few attorneys in the State of Florida who were board certified in marital and family law. During her practice, she participated in numerous legal and civic organizations, including serving on the boards of Legal Aid Foundation and Legal Services of North Florida.

Judge Hawkins' passions are traveling and service, and it shows in both her professional and personal lives. In March 2003, she participated in the Judicial Law Delegation to South Africa, People to People Ambassador Program. And, in September of 2004, she was a delegate to Panama with the Florida Law Related Education Program.

She was recognized by the Florida Association of Women Lawyers (FAWL) as a 2001 Recipient of the organization's 50th Anniversary Golden Star Award. Also in 2003, she received the Harvey Ford Award from the Conference of County Court Judges. She participated in the Governor Bush's Florida Statewide Drug Control Summit 2006.

For more than twenty years Judge Hawkins has volunteered in Leon County public schools, so it was a real honor when she was selected as the *Tallahassee Democrat's* 28th Anniversary Volunteer of the Year for Education in 2006 and recognized as the 2008 Outstanding Mentor at Apalachee Elementary School. In March, 2010, she was honored as one of *Tallahassee Democrat's 25 Women You Need To Know.* She was selected into the FAWL's 2011 Class of Leaders in Law and became the 2011 recipient of Legal Services of North Florida's The Parks and Crump, Thurgood Marshall Judicial Excellence Award. She was one of the 2012 Black History honorees in the February issue of the *Capital Outlook*. In March, 2013, she was awarded Woman of the Year in *Everyday Heroes for Teens Newsletter.* In September, 2013, she received Community Leadership recognition from Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church.

Since her 50th birthday, Judge Hawkins has combined her passion for travel and service to do international mission trips. She helped build a school in Costa Rica, January 2001; and she has conducted evangelistic campaigns for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Kenya, June 2002; Dominican Republic, June 2003; Taiwan, November 2004; Romania, November 2005; Mongolia, September 2006; Papua, Indonesia, October 2007; Mexico, October 2008; and Brazil, November 2009. During Thanksgiving 2010, she served in Haiti. In 2012, she preached in Guyana.

A 1973 graduate of Andrews University, Judge Hawkins obtained a Master's Degree from The Ohio State University in 1977, and earned a Juris Doctor from Florida State University College of Law in 1984.

For 40 years, Judge Hawkins was married to the late Dr. James E. Hawkins, retired Dean of the School of Journalism and Graphic Communication, Florida A&M University. He died, unexpectedly, Memorial Day 2013. Their son, Jason, and his wife, Dionne, made them the proud grandparents of Keira Noelle, born March 21, 2008 and Kyla Christine, born August 31, 2009.

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Black History Honorees for 2012: 25 leaders to know

By Paul Douglas
Outlook Staff Writer

Judith Hawkins
Judge

After accepting counsel from her boss while employed by the State of Florida, Judith Hawkins decided to enroll in Florida State University's College of Law.

She said she considered her supervisor's reprimand to be a "positive obstacle."

"Actually, my boss was reprimanding me," Hawkins said. "It was obvious that I wasn't a good fit at my state job. So, right after the reprimand, I walked across to the law school and applied.

Her life-changing decision to pursue a career in law would leave an everlasting-mark on the Leon County Court system.

In 1996, she was elected as the first African-American Leon County Court judge. Hawkins is currently a county judge in the Second Judicial Circuit of Florida. She is a native of Greensboro, N.C., and the fifth of eight children born to James and Margerye Warren.

She received a bachelor's degree in home economics from Andrews University in 1973 and her master's degree in family relations and human development from The Ohio State University in 1977. She earned her J.D. from Florida State University College of Law in 1984.

Admitted to The Florida Bar in 1985, Hawkins established her law firm specializing in all aspects of family and marital law. She was designated as board certified

HISTORY From Page 1

in marital and family law and certified by the Florida Supreme Court in family mediation in 1993.

Hawkins continues to look for ways to improve the local court system. She has also volunteered in Leon County public schools for more than 20 years.

Because of her outstanding commitment to education, Hawkins was selected as the *Tallahassee Democrat's* 28th Anniversary Volunteer of the Year for Education in 2006. She was also a recipient of the 2008 Outstanding Mentor at Apalachee Elementary.

In 2010, she founded Gaza Road Ministries; she followed her calling to help others search timeless Bible truths for today's applications.

"I started doing mission trips in 2001, and so it's kind of a natural outgrowth of all the speaking I've been doing," Hawkins said. "I would appreciate any and all invitations to participate."

"It is a ministry where I'm available to do motivational speaking, divine services and workshops," Hawkins said. "That's what's really consuming my time now. So I'm getting to travel nationally and internationally with that."

She is married to James E. Hawkins, current dean of FAMU's School of Journalism and Graphic Communication. They are the parents of one son, Jason; they have two grand-

Judith Warren Hawkins, M.S., J.D.

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Judge Hawkins is a county judge in Tallahassee, Florida. Her election in 1996 made history because she was the first African-American in the Second Judicial Circuit elected in a contested election; the first African-American county judge; and first African-American female county judge. She was re-elected in September 2000 with just shy of 70% of the vote. She ran unopposed in 2012 election.

Judge Hawkins has distinguished her judicial career by increased efficiency in moving the dockets. She created forms for Pro Se litigants to use in small claims court and established a special court time to plea incarcerated defendants. Judge Hawkins looks for ways to impose appropriate creative sentences. For example, high school students could exchange grades for community service hours.

Admitted to The Florida Bar in 1985, prior to her election, Judge Hawkins established her law firm specializing in all aspects of family and marital law. She was designated as board certified in marital and family law and certified by the Florida Supreme Court in Family Mediation in 1993.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION:
Judge Hawkins continues to receive recognition for her outstanding contributions to the community and the legal profession, including:

- September 2013 – Community Leadership Recognition, Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church
- March 2013 – Everyday Heroes for Teens Newsletter Woman of the Year
- February 2012 – Capital Outlook Black History Honoree for 2012
- June 2011 – 2011 Class of Leaders in Law Florida Association of Women Lawyers
- May 2011 – Parks and Crump's Thurgood Marshall Judicial Excellence Award Legal Services North Florida Legal Services
- March 2010 – Tallahassee Democrat's 25 Women You Need to Know.
- May 2008 – Leon County Schools Outstanding Mentor Award.
- May 2006 – Tallahassee Democrat's 28 Anniversary Volunteer of the Year for Education.
- July 2003 – Harvey Ford Award from the Conference of County Court Judges.
- June 2001 – FAWL's 50th Anniversary Golden Star Award
- 1998 – Girl Scouts Woman of Distinction Award.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

For more than 20 years, Judge Hawkins has volunteered in elementary, middle, high and alternative schools. She participated in the 2003 People to People Ambassador Program's Judicial Law Delegation to South Africa. In September of 2004, she was a delegate to Panama with the Florida Law Related Education Program. In June 2006, she participated in the Florida Statewide Drug Control Summit 2006. Within the community, Judge Hawkins serves or has served on several boards, including the Tallahassee Women Lawyers, Legal Aid Foundation, Legal Services of North Florida, Inc., Leadership Tallahassee, LifeSkills, and American Marine Institute.

Founded in 2010, Gaza Road Ministries grew out of Judge Hawkins' passion for service. The name reflects her calling, modeled after Philip's encounter with the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8. In clear and convincing language Philip explained the way to salvation. Likewise, Gaza Road Ministries is "searching timeless Bible truths for today's applications." A frequent speaker and presenter, Judge Hawkins is a gifted teacher of Bible truths, making plain the work of God so that "none need err" in the way of understanding and wisdom. Her workshops, sermons, and other presentations reflect her enthusiasm, enjoyment, and passion for the study of the word of God. She published devotional thoughts for women and Gaza Road Ministries offers various written materials.

Judge Hawkins has participated in several international mission trips. She helped build a school in Costa Rica in 2001 and preached her first evangelistic campaign in Kenya, East Africa in 2002. She has since preached in Dominican Republic (2003); Taiwan (2004); Romania (2005); Mongolia (2006); Irian Jaya, Indonesia (2007); Mexico (2008); Brazil (2009); Haiti (2010) and Guyana (2012). Her 2010 Thanksgiving week was spent in Haiti with Mission of Hope. In 2012, she will participate in the Share Him project in Guyana.

Judge Hawkins' card ministry allows her to stay in touch with fellow church members, friends, and family.

EDUCATION:
In 1973, Judge Hawkins received a Bachelor's degree in Home Economics from Andrews University and in 1977, her Master's degree in Family Relations and Human Development from The Ohio State University.

In 1984 she earned her law degree from Florida State University College of Law.

FAMILY:
Born in Greensboro, North Carolina, Judge Hawkins, is the fifth of eight children born to James and Margerye Warren.

In December 1972, she married James E. Hawkins, Ph. D., Retired Dean, School of Journalism and Graphic Communication, Florida A&M University. He died, unexpectedly, Memorial Day 2013.

Their son Jason and his wife Dionne have made them the proud grand-parents of Keira Noelle Hawkins, born March 21, 2008 and Kyla Christine Hawkins, born August 31, 2009.