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## Judges Beckstead, Maciarello file for election

Jul 12th, 2017 · by Susan Canfora · Comments: 0

Wicomico County Circuit Court Judges Kathleen Beckstead and Matthew Maciarello this week filed jointly to continue their terms, with Beckstead running for re-election and Maciarello, who was appointed last summer, seeking election for the first time.

They will run on a slate that assures the community of their dedication and experience, they said.

A committee was formed to retain Maciarello, former Wicomico County state’s attorney, and Beckstead, judge of the First Circuit Court since 2000.

“Judge Beckstead and I are very much problem solving judges. We come from that mindset. I think I exhibited that as a state’s attorney. I was a very proactive, problem solving state’s attorney. I believe Judge Beckstead does the same,” said Maciarello, who began his term as state’s attorney in January 2011.

Both believe in fair application and everyone having a voice and their day in court, in a courtroom dedicated to fidelity to law and justice, Maciarello said.

Since being appointed, he’s presided over scores of cases, including those involving domestic violence and child support, and received specialized training, including judicial conferences and continuing education he compared to a boot camp, in Mount Washington. Furthering his experience, Maciarello presides over court in Dorchester County two weeks each month.

Beckstead, reached this week while she was attending a conference, is a native of Galveston, Texas.

She earned a bachelor’s degree in political science from Villanova University in 1983 and law degree from the University of Baltimore School of Law in 1987. She was admitted to the Maryland Bar in 1987.

Running on the same ticket, Beckstead said, “lets (the voters) kind of know what they’re getting because the two of us were vetted very carefully before we were appointed to the bench for our ethical and other qualifications.”



Judge Kathleen Beckstead

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“It takes politics away from it. It doesn’t completely remove politics but this is a not a political position. In fact we are required to be apolitical. We are to treat all people the same. We are not to consider politics in our dealings. We are not to consider politics in the outcome of situations,” Beckstead said.

“By us saying we are presenting ourselves as a slate, we are both qualified as sitting judges. We will remove the incentive to make it a part politics decision on behalf of the public. That way they can look at our qualifications. We’ve been doing this job. And he (Maciarelo) is a fabulous judge. He was a fabulous states attorney. I knew when he came on board we were going to get somebody who was very ethical, very hard working. I was really excited to say, ‘Let’s go ahead and pair up. Let’s do it this way,’” she said.

“We want to give the best results to the citizenry so they don’t have to go to extra expense unnecessarily. We are bringing in more experts, more child counselors, so the litigant, if he has to go to trial, will feel justice was served. And, if you have to go to trial, you want to be a judge who listens and explains her decisions and that’s always what I’ve tried to do,” Beckstead said.



Judge Matt Maciarelo

“We’re pooling our resources,” Maciarelo added.

“It’s a shared vision with someone that is experienced, who shares your values. Those common bonds are advantageous. You’re on the ticket with someone who is an incredible, good jurist and a strong jurist, someone who understands the values and requirements of the judiciary,” he said.

As state’s attorney, Maciarelo was responsible for the prosecution of more than 5,000 cases per year. He was admitted to Maryland Bar in 2003 and to the Delaware Bar in 2007.

Both judges said they thoroughly enjoy their careers.

“It’s a blessing to be able to work in the field that you love, and I love it,” Maciarelo said.

“I look forward to it. Every day is a challenge. I come to work every day prepared and ready to work. It’s a solemn and serious undertaking,” said Maciarelo, who, during his investiture last year, promised to “strive each and every day to prove myself worthy of your trust and your confidence.”

Beckstead said she continues to embrace her position.

“I love giving back. I love helping families. I still love my role and I love the law. I’m a really hard worker. When you’re doing what you love it turns out to be a passion,” she said.

A 1997 graduate of Salisbury University, where he earned his bachelor's degree in political science, and the University of Maryland Carey Law School, where he received his law degree in 2003, Maciarelo said he is looking forward to campaigning and talking to local residents. "I think that makes you a good office holder, when you get to meet that many people," he said.

He and Beckstead have already begun campaigning and will visit public events including the 41st Annual J. Millard Tawes Annual Crab and Clam Bake in Crisfield on July 19.

Reach Susan Canfora at [scanfora@newszap.com](mailto:scanfora@newszap.com).

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