

**1. What is your full name?**

Michelle Lowney MacDonald

**2. Does your campaign have a website or facebook page? If so, please list it.**

[www.MacDonaldforJustice.com](http://www.MacDonaldforJustice.com)

Click the Facebook icon for Michelle Lowney Macdonald

FYI: I have a twitter: Michelle MacDonald @forMNjustice. Click the twitter icon on the website.

**3. List the colleges and law schools you have attended, including your dates of attendance and degrees awarded.**

In 1983, I graduated from Boston College, cum laude, B.A, majors: Communications and English; and in 1986, from Suffolk University Law School, Boston, MA. J.D.

FYI: In law school, I was a student prosecutor, editor of the law journal, and started the Battered Women's Advocacy Project still in existence today.

**4. List where you have been employed since graduation from law school, including dates employed, your position and the nature of your employment responsibilities.**

Since 1986, I have been a full time practicing attorney, MacDonald Law Firm, LLC, since 2004, and Kallas & MacDonald (1994 – 2004). Before I began my own law practice, I was associate attorney for Wilkerson, Lang & Hegna (1986 – 1994), and clerked for the criminal defense firm of Balliro, Mondano & Balliro, Boston, MA. [www.MacDonaldLawFirm.com](http://www.MacDonaldLawFirm.com)

For 22 years, I served as a conciliation/small claims court Judge, Hennepin County (1999 to 2014); and Adjunct Referee/Arbitrator in family and civil court (1992-2011), presiding over hundreds of small claims court matters and helping to resolve family court cases referred by Judges to the settlement program.

FYI: I received a Years of Service Recognition Award, Conciliation Court, Hennepin County.

I am Founder, Volunteer President and Board Member of Family Innocence, a nonprofit dedicated to keeping families out of court: resolving conflicts and injustices peacefully (2011-present) [www.FamilyInnocence.com](http://www.FamilyInnocence.com)

I am Founder, Volunteer President and Board Member of FAMILYcourt.com, INC. (2014 – present). We published and edited: Bullied to Death: Chris Mackney's Kafkaesque Divorce, by Michael Volpe. [www.FAMILYcourt.com](http://www.FAMILYcourt.com)

**5. Have you ever been convicted of a crime or publically disciplined by a lawyer or judicial standards board? If so, feel free to provide an explanation.**

I have been convicted of a crime. Before a traffic stop in 2013 described below, I had a parking ticket, and failure to register a boat (2004-2005).

I have not been publically disciplined by a lawyer or judicial standards board.

Explanation: In September 2014, I was found not guilty of DUI. However, I was convicted of Refusal to Submit to Test and Obstructing Legal Process. These convictions were appealed, case no. A14-1981. The Minnesota Supreme Court denied petition for further review on April 27, 2016.

The conviction stems from a traffic stop on April 4, 2013. I drank no alcohol. At the stop, I was not offered a breathalyzer. I invoked my right to take my own test, and tested zero. I also invoked Minn. Stat. 169.91, an arrest procedure law whereby a driver can demand from the officer an immediate appearance before a Judge.

As for the conviction for Refusal to Submit to Test, the Supreme Court of the United States granted the petition for writ of certiorari, relating to the constitutionality of Minnesota's Implied Consent Law, pending at the time. See WILLIAM R. BERNARD v. MINNESOTA, U.S. Supreme Court docket no. 14-1470.

FYI: While I have not been publically disciplined by a lawyer or judicial standards board, a complaint was made to the Lawyers Board about me by Judge David Knutson on February 11, 2014, two years ago. Judge Knutson's complaint came after I complained about him to the Board of Judicial Standards about this:

On September 12, 2013, Judge Knutson had me participate as an attorney in a client's child custody trial in handcuffs, a wheelchair, with no shoes, no glasses, no paper, no pen, no files, missing children – and no client.

This was the day after I had filed a federal civil rights action against him, on behalf of that client. See Sandra Grazzini-Rucki, et al v. David Knutson, et al, United States District Court no. 0:13-CV-02477-SRN; Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals no. 14-2569; and Petition for Writ to the United States Supreme Court, docket no. 15-220.

**6. What is/was the general nature of your practice? Indicate any areas of practice in which you concentrate or concentrated.**

Since 1987, I have worked with thousands of clients and lawyers to settle and litigate cases before numerous Judges on many legal matters. I have argued appeals, including lead counsel on 60 appellate decisions, researching and writing memorandums and briefs, appearances before the Appellate and Minnesota Supreme Court, and Petitions to the United States Supreme Court, where I am admitted to practice.

I wrote amicus briefs for the Minnesota Supreme Court, and asserted constitutional challenges to laws involving private family life and free speech: *Rew v. Borgstrom* (constitutionality of 50 year order for protection); and *State v. Nelson* (criminalizing nonpayment of monetary child support).

I have a general practice, concentrating in family law, estate planning and probate, adoptions, child protection, harassment, orders for protection, contracts, business, real estate, civil litigation and criminal defense.

I am Rule 114 qualified, mediate for Golden Rule Mediation, and facilitate restorative circles for Family Innocence.

**7. What percentage of your practice is/was litigation?**

50%

**8. Why do you want to be an appellate judge?**

I can restore faith in the fairness of the justice system for Minnesotans and their lawyers. I will hold judges accountable to stay within the bounds of the law, for the benefit of those of us who have to deal with them.

I will support the Supreme Court's vital role as the final arbitrator of the rights of the people, by participating in decisions that serve as precedent for lawyers and lower courts.

Our courts need reform. Lawmakers and Judges often disregard due process, which includes clear rules, government adherence to those rules, speedy trials, adequate legal representation, impartial decision makers, and an appellate process.

**9. What qualities do you believe are most important in an appellate judge? Explain how you have demonstrated that you possess those qualities:**

Courage and personal integrity are indispensable to the independence of the judiciary. Time and time again I have stood up to Judges on behalf of individuals and families, so that they could earn the basic recognition of their rights in our society --- rights once recognized as sacrosanct to everyone.

I believe each person is extraordinary, and their circumstances unique. I strive for the highest standards of integrity, and am committed as a member of the bar and court to work for the people and the attorneys who represent them.

I will courageously and compassionately embrace the role of keeping lower courts accountable to the constitution, law, equity, and their discretion in dispensing justice to citizens, by adhering to due process, their role as fact finder, and jurisdiction.

**10. Why do you believe you are the best candidate for the appellate judge seat?**

I take my oath to support the constitution seriously. I have the support of the people of Minnesota, receiving 46.5% of the vote for Minnesota Supreme Court in the 2014 election.

My years of experience in the trenches, compassionately serving people with a variety of legal matters before district and appellate court judges, and experience in public service as a referee in family court and conciliation court judge makes me the best candidate.

I can improve our appellate system to support extraordinary relief, like writs of mandamus and prohibition, rarely brought, regularly denied, and seen as futile by attorneys, even though writs

are designed to repair injustices as readily as they are inflicted by our law enforcement and judges.

I will expect all Judges to take the privilege of judicial immunity from suit seriously, rather than see immunity as permission to violate the law and civil and constitutional rights of our citizens, or their lawyers.

As your Minnesota Supreme Court Justice, I will protect and defend constitutional rights, and make certain there is oversight and reform of our judicial system.

Thank you for this opportunity.