

## **In The Spotlight with: The Honorable Julie A. Schafer**

By Kate Feeks

Judge Schafer, will be on the show *Law Talk* with host John Celebrezze to discuss her position as judge on the Ninth District Court of Appeals. This show will run throughout the month of April on Wadsworth Cable (WCTV) Public Access Channel 15, Brunswick Area Television (BAT) Public access Chanel 21, and Armstrong Cable Access Channel 37 in Medina County along with Clear Picture Channels 21 & 22 in Wooster and Massillon.

Judge Julie Schafer, graduated from Medina Senior High School and went on to earn an associate degree from Brooks College in California. She operated her own business before graduating *summa cum laude* from Hiram College and then completing the dual degree program at the University of Akron, graduating with Master of Business Administration and Juris Doctorate degrees. During this time she was also elected to the Copley-Fairlawn City Schools Board of Education and after passing the bar exam, she opened her own law practice.

Judge Schafer was inspired to become a judge because she believes the law should be blind and applied equally to everyone. She does what she can to ensure we don't lose sight of what makes our country the best place to live. "It shouldn't matter what race, gender or socioeconomic background you are, the law should be applied equally to everyone. I have taken an oath to protect the United States Constitution and the laws of the State of Ohio six times over the past 16 years. To be free we have to defend the law every day." Schafer noted.

As an appellate judge, her responsibilities are to look at the laws and rules that were used in each case to see if the result conforms to the law or not. People that are not happy with a ruling from a municipal court, juvenile court, domestic relations court, probate court, or common pleas court can file an appeal if they feel the law was misapplied in their particular situation. An appellate judge reviews the written briefs filed by the parties. They look at the decisions of the lower courts to ensure that they did their job right. The appellant is the one with the complaint the trial court got it wrong, and the appellee is the other side explaining how the trial court got it right.

"The most difficult part of my job is when the court cannot rule on issues raised at the appellate level because a party's attorney did not object, or bring it to the court's attention, at the trial court level" Schafer explained.

If an objection is not raised by counsel below, a court of appeals cannot step in and make the argument for the appellant. The court can only address issues or mistakes that were raised either at the trial level or in the briefs filed by the parties. "It is frustrating to know what the party is asking our court to do and sometimes we know they should get relief, but we don't have the authority to change history!" Schafer said.

A typical day for the Judge is reading and researching briefs that have been filed for upcoming cases. The drafts circulate between three judges assigned to each case. They look up case law and rules that are being used in the cases. Each day the cases that are assigned to the judges are tracked to ensure they are getting done in a timely manner. "Reading, reading and researching is what I do!" Schafer emphasized.

To learn more about Judge Julie Schafer and her position watch for the interview with Judge Schafer and Mr. Celebrezze throughout the month of April on *Law Talk*.