

From: [Melissa P. Bright](#)
To: [Garcia, Jesus](#); [Vandegrift, Holly](#)
Cc: [Athena Groves](#); [Juliet Fisher](#)
Subject: For the Fiduciary Adjudication Committee
Date: Friday, December 05, 2025 9:47:23 PM
Attachments: [Ames, George - 2018 election article, bottom.pdf](#)
[Ames, George - 2018 election article, top.pdf](#)

Ms. Vandegrift and Mr. Garcia,

I was unable to get this to you during the work week, but I would like very much to share it with the committee, if at all possible, please, including my introduction, below. Thank you very much for whatever you can do toward that goal.

Best regards,
Melissa Bright

Dear Senator Charles and Members of the Task Force,

I hope that this reaches all of you while you are still engaged in the work of the Task Force. I am sending it to you both to pay tribute to an outstanding Orphans' Court Judge, and to share with you that among the lay judges, we are blessed to have some truly superlative individuals. Judge George Ames of the Dorchester County Orphans' Court has been on the bench since 1994. Following the last election, as Chief Judge of that court he was responsible for the integration and training of two brand new lay judges. He encouraged them to complete the requisite training, but more importantly, he carefully, patiently, and respectfully taught them in every court session where to find the applicable statutes and rules, what to look for in a case, how to evaluate the evidence, and so much more. In addition, he has always nurtured his court's relationship with the Register of Wills, both the person and the office, and he modeled for his new judges how that relationship should look, feel, and work. And beyond that, he has heeded the urgings of Judge Robert Bell, more recently reiterated by Chief Justice Fader, to get out into the community and be seen by the people so that the constituency can know who the Orphans' Court judges are, what they do, and why it matters. To that end, in addition to his own incredibly impressive community involvement, he has led the entire Dorchester County Orphans' Court in visiting local schools, introducing themselves to young children and helping them to understand, in gentle, age-appropriate ways, what this court means to their families and why the Orphans' Court can be your friend when certain important work needs to be done. Sparking interest and

curiosity in the judicial system - how better to teach young minds and open up to them possibilities they are seeing for the first time.

The article attached is from the 2018 election cycle, in which Judge Ames explains in simple terms what the Orphans' Court is, and also details his own record of community service and involvement. That's important because the independent probate court was designed to be part of the community, with an innate understanding of the community it serves. Judge Ames is a superlative example of what we, all of us who serve this court across the state, should strive to be: educated in our craft and always seeking to improve; respectful to our teammates on the bench and in the Register's office; respectful and caring towards the people we serve; and involved with our community in ways that enhance trust in the judiciary.

Thank you for taking time to meet Judge George Ames.

Melissa Bright

Melissa Pollitt Bright
Chief Judge, Orphans' Court for Wicomico County, Maryland
443-735-2631

Ames seeks re-election

Dorchester Banner

CAMBRIDGE – Dorchester County Orphans' Court Judge George Robert Ames Jr. has filed for re-election in District One. He has 24 years of experience as an Orphans' Court Judge. Only one case has been reversed on appeal during his 24 years on the Orphans' Court bench.

Listening, reading and comprehension skills are imperative and important which an Orphans' Court Judge should possess. The Orphans' Court, unlike a policy making board is governed by rules, codes and regulations. These rules, codes and regulations must be adhered to in decisions of the Orphans' Court. An Orphans' Court Judge should be involved in continuing education and training, as rules, codes and regulations may change.

Orphans' Court rulings are based upon the facts presented in Court hearings by applying the applicable law. The Orphans' Court is charged with the responsibility of managing the assets of the deceased estate. Some estates have wills, while other estates do not have wills.

Each Maryland County consists of a three-Judge panel with the exception of Harford and



The Rev.
George Ames

Montgomery counties. The Circuit Court Judge in Harford and Montgomery, have jurisdiction over the management of estates of deceased persons.

During my 24 year tenure, as an Orphans' Court Judge, I have been blessed to have the insight and knowledge of a Register of Wills Staff that I consider second to none. They are very competent and as an Orphans' Court Judge has been very helpful to me.

If allowed to continue as an Orphans' Court Judge, I pledge to listen, read, comprehend, and be involved in continuing education and training to be an effective Orphans' Court Judge. I also plan to listen to the facts, comprehend, and read the rules, codes and regulations applicable to each case. They are important in rendering the decision(s) of an Orphans' Court Judge.

gy-Salisbury. (2008)

6. Masters Arts Degree-Ministry-Christian World College of Theology-Salisbury, (2011)

7. Doctoral Degree-Ministry-Eastern Shore Theology-Cambridge, (2013)

Community Participation

1. Dorchester Chamber of Commerce President-2004

2. Character Counts Coach-Dorchester County Public Schools (16 years)

3. Dorchester Chamber of Commerce Ambassador of the Year (2006)

4. Maryland Conference of Orphans' Court Judges Board Member (2017-2018)

5. Dorchester Chamber of Commerce Associate of the Year (2007)

6. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Basketball Classic Image Award (2017)

7. Maryland Senior Citizen Inductee (2016)

8. Hall of Fame Mallard Bay Community Leader (2016)

9. Chaplain Cambridge, Maryland Police Department (2016)

10. Chaplain American Legion South Eastern Shore District-Dorchester, Wicomico, Somerset, Worcester counties (2017-2018)

11. Dorchester County School Bus Contractor President (1988-2000)

12. Dorchester County Branch NAACP President (1987-2004)

13. Lifetime Member Dorchester County Branch NAACP

14. Dorchester County Branch NAACP active member (32 years)

15. Lifetime Member Corporal Herman Hughes Post 87 (44 years) having served Judge advocate, Past adjutant, Past Historian

16. Dorchester American Legion County Commander (3 times)

17. Pastor, Wesley Chapel Church (15 years)

18. Dorchester County District Court Commission (1980-1989)

19. Dorchester County Library Trustee (1994-2018) having served as Member, Treasurer, Vice President, President, Chairman Personnel Committee

20. Board of Directors Member, Dorchester Center for the Arts

21. Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Achievement Award, Tri-County Organizations Coalition

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Montgomery counties. The Circuit Court Judge in Harford and Montgomery, have jurisdiction over the management of estates of deceased persons.

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Education

1. 1959 Graduate of Somerset Junior/Senior High School-Princess Anne, Md,

President 1959 Graduating Class

2. Associate Arts Degree-Humanities/Social Science-Chesapeake College, Wye Mills (1978)

3. Associate Arts Degree-Law Enforcement-Chesapeake College, Wye Mills, (1982)

4. Associate Arts Degree-Ministry Christian World College of Theology-Salisbury, (2003)

5. Bachelors Arts Degree-Ministry

12. Dorchester County Branch NAACP President (1987-2004)

13. Lifetime Member Dorchester County Branch NAACP

14. Dorchester County Branch NAACP active member (32 years)

15. Lifetime Member Corporal Herman Hughes Post 87 (44 years) having served Judge advocate, Past adjutant, Past Historian

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20. Board of Directors Member, Dorchester Center for the Arts

21. Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Achievement Award, Tri-County Organizations Coalition (1987-2000)

22. Dorchester County School Buss Contractors Award (2000)

23. Ministers and Citizen for Change Inc. Exceptional Leadership and Dedicated Services Award (2012)

24. Served as Dorchester Chamber of Commerce Representative on the Maryland Chamber of Commerce

25. Chaplain Veterans' Recognition Committee of the Eastern Shore

26. Award Beta Epsilon Chapter, Iota Phi Lambda Sorority, Inc (2001)

27. Delmarva Shore Birds Hometown Hero Award (2001)

28. Dorchester Sickle Cell Com-