

# The Times recommends: G. Helen Whitener for state Supreme Court, Position 6

Oct. 9, 2020 at 10:14 am Updated Oct. 9, 2020 at 10:30 am



G. Helen Whitener

By [The Seattle Times editorial board](#)

A long, respected record in the law and a compelling personal story make G. Helen Whitener the best candidate to the Washington Supreme Court, Position 6.

In April, Gov. Jay Inslee appointed the Pierce County Superior Court judge to fill the Supreme Court seat vacated when Justice Charles Wiggins retired. She is on the ballot

Nov. 3 to retain the seat and, if reelected, would be up for reelection for a full term in 2022.

Whitener's experience, both professional and personal, make her a welcome addition to the court. In addition to serving as a judge since 2015, she also has been a prosecutor and a defense attorney. And she knows the state. In her role as a judge on the Board of Industrial Insurance Appeals and as a mentor to young attorneys and students, she has traveled the state many times. The Seattle University School of Law graduate has served on the Washington State Minority and Justice Commission and as a member of the Civil Legal Aid Oversight Committee.

Among her noted cases on the Pierce County bench was finding against the city of Tacoma for violating the Public Records Act and ordering Backpage.com to pay \$200,000 to two teenagers who claim they were sold for sex on the website, according to [a profile](#) in the News Tribune of Tacoma.

On the personal side, she is a native of Trinidad, immigrating as a teenager for medical treatment for a back problem. She would be the first Black female justice in Washington.

Her opponent, Richard Serns, suspended his campaign June 15, but remains on the ballot.

The diversity of Whitener's experiences, in the law and in life, make her the best candidate for Position 6.

The Seattle Times editorial board members are editorial page editor Kate Riley, Frank A. Blethen, Brier Dudley, Jennifer Hemmingsen, Mark Higgins, Derrick Nunnally and William K. Blethen (emeritus).