

2016 Candidate Questionnaire

SECTION I

BASIC CANDIDATE INFORMATION

1. Name as it will appear on the ballot

First Name	Middle Initial or Nickname	Last Name
Michelle		Darnell

2. Office sought (include office, jurisdiction, position/district number):

3. Are you the incumbent? Yes x No

4. How long have you resided in this district/city? 3 years

5. How long have you resided in King County? 3 years

6. Is the office sought partisan or nonpartisan? x Partisan Nonpartisan

7. If partisan, please indicate party: Libertarian

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name: Michelle For the House

Address: 830 Kirkland Way #203

City/State/Zip: Kirkland WA 98033

Campaign Phone: 360-720-6899

Campaign E-mail: michellefothehouse@gmail.com

Campaign Website: _____

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

1. Beginning with the most recent position, please list public offices you have held. Include positions on appointive boards or commissions.

Public Office	Elective or Appointive?	Dates Held	Leadership Role (if any)
Delegate	Elected	2016	

2. If you ran for public office but were not elected, please list those races below:

Office Title	Year of Run
State Senate 48 th LD	2014

SECTION II

In this section, we are seeking responses that reflect the four ratings criteria: involvement, effectiveness, character, and knowledge. These are defined as follows:

- **Involvement:** What has the candidate done previously in family, neighborhood, community, volunteer work, employment or public life to suggest readiness to accomplish challenging objectives? How do these activities demonstrate readiness for the challenges unique to the office sought?
 - **Effectiveness:** Has the candidate demonstrated promise of being productive in the office sought? Has the candidate shown the ability to work with other people?
 - **Character:** Do the candidate's personal traits show the ability to take on the responsibilities of campaigning for and holding the public office she or he is seeking? Is the candidate a leader, participant or observer? Is the candidate trustworthy, reliable and candid?
 - **Knowledge:** Has the candidate demonstrated the willingness and ability to learn and adapt? Does the candidate understand the duties and challenges of the office sought? Does the candidate have a firm grasp of the issues important to his or her constituency and their potential effects?
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1. In one page or less, why are you running for this office? (Note: the interview committee will be given a copy of this statement before your interview; at the beginning of your interview you will have the opportunity to expand on this statement in any way you wish.)

I am running for office to be a voice for people who feel that they have little voice with the current leadership. I have been working as a foreclosure defense paralegal and homeowner advocate for several years. Because of my work I witness the economic struggle facing so many people right now. I am particularly sensitive to the plight of small business owners as they navigate a labyrinth of taxation and regulation that is stifling their ability to grow and provide the sorts of jobs our community needs. Current leadership seems to be out of touch.

I would hope to continue the work I have already been doing in a more direct and powerful capacity. I have been working in Olympia to support legislation in response to the foreclosure issue. Foreclosure contributes to not only homelessness but a variety of other issues that our state is currently facing. Mental health issues, crime, and economic impact to families and communities are all indirect consequences of unnecessary foreclosure.

I first testified in 2011 and most recently this last session. I was effective in organizing an effort to extinguish an unfavorable bill in 2015. I would hope to either repeal or amend the Deed of Trust act in our state, because the system is not working and the WA Foreclosure fairness act is wholly insufficient. Out of 4000 referrals to the program in 2015, only 800 families were able to keep their homes and only 10% of eligible borrowers even participate in the program. We have had over 640,000 foreclosures in our state since 2007. Most could have been avoided if the homeowner had been treated justly. Most are told to stop making their payments to qualify for HAMP.

Because of my work, I have learned how the legislative process works and what it takes to build coalition and support for the sorts of change that I believe this state needs. I would seek to represent the voters in my district and not simply rule over them. I will remain actively engaged, even after I am elected and am setting up platforms right now to facilitate that.

Washington is facing many critical issues. We need to not only fund education, in response to McCleary but reform the entire system. 1 in four children do not graduate and even more graduate uninspired and unprepared. Our transportation system is failing us, and small businesses are struggling. Over regulation is inhibiting our ability to build affordable housing and foreclosure continues to be an issue.

I don't have all the answers but I do know how to find talent, inspire action and work collaboratively with parties from all sides of an issue to arrive at solutions. This is what I do in my work as a homeowner advocate/paralegal. I have the bank on one side and the homeowner on the other. I have been extremely successful helping both parties arrive at a work-out to avoid foreclosure and avoid litigation. I would hope to take this skill to Olympia.

Other skills I have developed over the years are effective use of technology systems and tools and public speaking. I recently spoke to a crowd of over 1000 while on live tv!

2. Describe your most important personal characteristics or traits as they relate to the office you seek.

I am a skilled negotiator. I am also a very good communicator. I am realistic and I seek to find out what parties have in common and work out from there. It starts with listening, identify goals and then creating a plan to reach those goals.

I am an avid researcher and if I don't know something, I know where to find the information or the experts to assist me. Over the course of several years, I have amassed an extensive network of skilled people from various industries.

As a representative it is not my job to be an expert. It is my job to identify problems and the concerns of the people in my district and then set about organizing the resources and talent to respond to those concerns as effectively and efficiently as possible. That is a skill I have developed over time and a skill I would take to Olympia.

As a Libertarian, I believe in individual empowerment versus government control. Most everything I would do would be an effort to adopt policy or repeal legislation in an effort to empower individuals and small businesses in our state. A government that governs least governs best.

My job as a paralegal affords me many skills that would apply to my position as a representative. Meeting deadlines, drafting legislation or guiding others to do so and performing research in support of bills I am considering are all skills I have developed. I have also developed significant leadership abilities because of my advocacy work.

I believe my empathy for people, compassion, tenacity and common sense are also traits that would empower me to be an effective legislator.

3. Please describe, in sufficient detail, one to three accomplishments or contributions of which you are most proud. These examples should illustrate skills and capabilities you think apply to the office you are seeking. These accomplishments may have occurred at any time in your personal, professional, or public life.

I was able to negotiate a work out for a homeowner recently to help him avoid foreclosure. He had been trying for 3 years on his own. When the usual methods did not work, I reached out to the servicer of face book. I was soon contacted. Within a week we had an offer. He closed the deal a few weeks ago. He said "You did what no man or woman could do before you." I don't give up and I "think outside the box." I often am working with attorneys well beyond my level of education but have earned the respect of most all of them and often prevail over them! (I have represent borrowers as "other advocate"per statute)

In February 2015, my former opponent, Cyrus Habib, alerted me to a bill that I believed to be unfavorable to the homeowner's position. I was in his office discussing some other proposed legislation and he brought the bill to my attention. I immediately went home and alerted my network and put out a call to action. They emailed their legislators. I was on my way to the scheduled hearing when I was called and told the hearing was canceled and the bill died in committee. I know the power of engaging people in the political process.

I have successfully raised three children to adulthood under difficult circumstances (recession and divorce). My eldest is graduating from UW this week, my son is 22 and a plumber's apprentice, making well over what most of his friends are with no student debt. If he chooses to go to college he has a good job to pay for it. My youngest daughter is 18 and already a full-time pre-school teacher.

I have had a variety of experiences being a mother, business owner, community activist and the sole paralegal in a busy law practice. I have helped grow the practice by about 40% in three years. I have enjoyed many accomplishments under difficult and stressful circumstances.

4. Please list or describe current and past activities in the community in which you have acquired skills that relate to the office you seek. Include your role in the activity and the year(s) in which you were involved. Involvement consists of many areas such as family, neighborhood, community, employment, or public life.

I organized former Presidential candidate Rand Paul's rally in Seattle in less than 5 days. We had 800 in attendance at 8 m on a weekday.

I am currently president of a non-profit established to connect local charities and for profit organizations to the needs in their communities using a web-based platform, though that project has been put on hold for this campaign.

I believe I have inspired many people to become engaged in their communities and I have helped many families retain their homes with out having to file am expensive law suit.

5. Please describe the duties of the office you seek. Which are the most important duties and why?

Communicating with my constituents and responding to their concerns. Collaborating with other legislators, stakeholders and people with opposing veiwpoints. Drafting and sponsoring legislation. Setting an example of activism and civic duty.

I think communicating with my constituents and inspiring them to become involved in policy discussion and political activities are the most importnt things I can do. Many of the problems we face today are a consequence of apathy and complacency. I would hope to show people that no matter what your background is or your education level, you too CAN make a dfference if you work hard, stay focused and collaborate with others. I think setting this example would be as important as any legislation I might champion.

I think the fact that my expeience is similar to that of most people in my district, puts me more in touch with their concerns. I know enough about law to be effectve and yet maintain my middle class populist perspective.