

2017 Candidate Questionnaire

**SECTION I**

**BASIC CANDIDATE INFORMATION**

1. Name as it will appear on the ballot

First Name	Middle Initial or Nickname	Last Name
<b>Linda</b>	<b>Michelle</b>	<b>Darnell</b>

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?

**4 years**

5. How long have you resided in King County?

**4 years (Washington since I was 17)**

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

7. If partisan, please indicate party:

**CAMPAIGN CONTACTS**

Campaign Name:                    Friends for Michelle

Address:                                830 Kirkland Way #203

City/State/Zip:                    Kirkland WA 98033

Campaign Phone:                 360-720-6899

Campaign E-mail:                 Michelle4washington@gmail.com

Campaign Website:               Michelle4washington.org

**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)

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

Office Title	Year of Run
<b>State Senate</b>	<b>2014</b>
<b>State Representative</b>	<b>2016</b>

## 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 because I believe the people of our district need an effective, transparent, responsive, and sympathetic legislator.

For too long Olympia has been paralyzed by partisan gridlock. Our legislators typically vote party line. They are more responsive to lobbyist groups and big money than they are to the people. Consequently, government effectiveness is getting worse despite increasing state revenues. Homelessness and the cost of housing, which I have been calling attention to since I first testified in Olympia in 2011, are at crisis levels with some areas in our county seeing up to a 37% decrease in population. My own adult son is moving his family away because despite a fairly well paying job, he does not want to spend \$1,800 per month for a one-bedroom apartment.

We need to adequately fund education, but we shouldn't give big corporations subsidies and exemptions and shift the burden to middle class taxpayers. We must explore models that are working elsewhere to increase choice and empower teachers, parents, and students. We spend approximately \$14k of federal, state, and local funds per child, and 1 in 4 doesn't graduate. Still more graduate prepared for little more than taking on debt. Yet we have many industries, such as construction and technology, which are short on workers.

Traffic here on the Eastside is horrible. More time in the car means not only decreased productivity and time with family, but also increases stress and greenhouse gases. The tolls have not helped. Most recently, voters in my district were shocked by the increase in car tabs and property taxes as we allocated funds for fixed rail. This will provide little relief in my lifetime.

Voters in my district are frustrated and have been for years. I am running again because I am determined to provide them an alternative. What I lack in funding and experience, I make up in tenacity, determination, and compassion.

I spend 16 years raising a family. I want families in my community and state to have the luxury of more time with their kids and enjoying our beautiful state, not sitting in traffic or working 50-60 hours a week keep up with the rapidly increasing cost of living. Enough is enough.

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

My strongest qualities are determination, tenacity, and empathy. My work ethic is likely unparalleled. A leader must be confident enough to attract a people, compassionate enough to care about them, and humble enough to keep them.

I do not claim to have all of the answers to the complex problems that this county and state is facing but I am determined to respond to them. I suspect problems are going to increase as we lose federal funding and the economy eventually adjusts. Olympia needs leaders who are not only determined, but truly empathetic to this plight and will of the people. We need elected officials with a trained ear not just to lobbyists - though I understand their function - but also to the people. We need legislators who will inspire engagement from constituents and empower them to respond to the needs on their communities. I am that sort of person.

I am a paralegal and consumer advocate. I represent homeowners in WA FFA Mediation as "other advocate," working directly with bank attorneys at times. I am very good at getting opposing sides to compromise for the greater good and to avoid litigation. This is a skill that I will leverage as a legislator.

I have a large and growing network of people in various industries that I can and will go to for policy advice, and I learn quickly.

As a Libertarian Senator I will be in a unique position without a formal partisan caucus, and will be most accountable to my constituents. I am married to and funded by neither major party and cannot be bought. My allegiance has been and will continue be to the people in my community.

Running while working full time is one of the most challenging things I have ever done. The fact that I am here again is evidence of my determination, tenacity, and empathy. I feel I have been working hard for the last 8 years to prepare for this role.

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.

First, I have run two low budget campaigns while working full time in a busy law office! My last campaign I raised \$18k as a 3<sup>rd</sup> party candidates, managed a 15-person team and secured 29% of the vote. Running a campaign is a good exercise for preparing for office. Managing people and multiple tasks, while educating yourself on policy are skills a legislator should have.

Second, after running two campaigns, I learned that if the Libertarian Party is ever to be relevant or successful, we must build a party apparatus. With that goal in mind, I established the Libertarian Party of King County, of which I am now chair. In just a few short months we have launched a website, recruited 6 candidates, established a board of 13. One of the reasons I am running is to lead by example: I lead my team in doing politics differently. Our motto is "Love, Logic, Liberty" and we hope to work to respond to the needs of our community while recruiting and equipping candidates. "BE the change" you wish to see, in action.

Third, in my law firm I have assisted many families in avoiding litigation and securing loan modifications after years and years of trying. It really should not be this difficult if a borrower has sufficient income and should qualify, but the fact that it is not is one of the reasons I am running for office. I think my ability to navigate this Kafkaesque labyrinth of administrative process has equipped me pretty well for Olympia!

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not mention that I have raised 3 children to adulthood and they are happy, healthy, and productive!

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.

In addition to the above, when my children were young I was very involved in church and school activities. I was assistant youth director for a year and grew the program from a dozen for over 50 in one year and had a board of 10. I served on the PTA in Lynden Washington, coached a basketball team on Orcas Island, and served on a preschool committee at Sunrise Baptist Church in Custer.

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

My job as a State Senator will be to represent the interests of my district in the State Senate, sponsor, co-sponsor, and vote for legislation, and serve on a variety of committees. It is also the job of a Senator to engage their constituents in the political process.

I have learned how much influence engaged citizens can have on the political process, as I helped organize an effort to extinguish a bill. Unfortunately, once elected, few legislators do this. They are often elected and then virtually disappear until the next election cycle. I will not do this. I will leverage technology to keep my constituents informed and engaged in the process. I believe this IS the most important thing I can do as a Senator, as we are a government of, by and for the people. I can't imagine getting elected and not maintaining the connection with the people who have supported me as stakeholders.