

Judicial Profile-Bobby Gunther

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Governor Bob Graham appointed Broward Circuit Court Judge Bobby Gunther to succeed Supreme Court Justice Rosemary Barkett on the Fourth District Court of Appeal. Judge Gunther, 44, received her law degree from the University of Florida in 1965 and her B.A. in political science from the University of Florida in 1963. She was a Broward County court judge from January 1973 to March 1981, and was appointed by the Governor to the circuit court in 1981.

While sitting on the appellate court, Judge Gunther looks forward to studying the cases in depth before ruling, unlike the lower court where, "decisions are often made on the spur of the moment with little research assistance." On January 23, 1986 she resigned her circuit court seat to begin her first day on the appellate court on February 10, 1986; after a short respite skiing in Kitzbuhel, Austria.

The judge resides in Fort Lauderdale with her son, Jason Gunther, a 17-year-old senior at St. Thomas Aquinas High School. She plans to move her residence to Palm Beach County after he graduates. When asked if her son aspires to study law she replied, "His father, Dieter K. Gunther, is a lawyer, I'm a lawyer, our friends are lawyers, he thinks that's what everyone does."

When discussing the, "very consuming" and often enervating experience of raising her son, "which is a full time job," running her home, "another full time job," and the duties and responsibilities of the judgeship she exclaims, "I don't know how other women do it." She has little time left over for hobbies and sports and enjoys "settling in" at home. She described herself as being a "home oriented, nesty person" who enjoys cooking and reading fashion, art and antique magazines to relax. She also expresses a strong desire to keep in touch with the needs of the people she serves so as not to be considered the "nefarious, tyrant sitting up there messing up the case."

One issue which is, "near and dear to the hearts" of Broward County attorneys is creating an appellate district court for Broward County. Judge Gunther knows this is an important goal with tremendous support in Broward County but has not formulated her policy decisions as yet and has not discussed the matter with her colleagues on the bench.