

Judge Reginald Corlew

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DIF scores, tax returns, notice of federal tax liens, revenue rulings, audits and briefs...not common terms used in our State's court system. Fast forward to misdemeanors, arraignments, plea bargains, and suppression hearings. Judge Corlew's unexpected legal career began as an attorney with the Office of Chief Counsel for the IRS where he litigated cases in the United States Tax Court and handled other matters that had national and international implications, including one case which resulted in a \$1.8 billion tax adjustment. This leaves one wondering about the path that led him to become a judge in Palm Beach County. Well, it's rather simple—his dedication and commitment to public service.

Judge Corlew was born in Detroit, Michigan and is the youngest of three children. Both of Judge Corlew's parents were civil service employees. At age 12, his family relocated to the Florida panhandle to the city of Niceville, Florida where he grew up and graduated from high school. His parents continue to reside in Niceville. Judge Corlew was a natural in sports and qualified every year to run in the high school State Championship track and field. As a result of his athletic talent, he was heavily recruited in football and was offered scholarships to play at many universities. He narrowed his choices to Notre Dame, Alabama, Northwestern, Vanderbilt and Florida. After long deliberation and looking for a strong athletic and academic environment, he accepted a scholarship with the University of Florida where he was a four year letterman and enjoyed a successful football career. He graduated in the spring of 1988 with a liberal arts degree.

Although Judge Corlew worked out for many NFL teams he did not believe his future was in professional football. He never considered going to law school until after graduating from UF. Shortly after graduation from UF he met, Jerilyn, his future wife, notably at his best friend's wedding. Both happened to be in the wedding party. He claims that when he first saw her he knew he was going to marry her, it was just a matter of convincing her of the same. He graduated in 1992 from Southern University Law Center in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Wanting to do something different, Judge Corlew continued with his legal education by obtaining an LL.M in Tax from Southern Methodist University Law School in 1993. This helped open the door with the United States Department of Treasury where he worked as a tax litigator representing the IRS for thirteen years. Judge Corlew was also an adjunct professor at Nova Law School where he taught Tax Procedure and Litigation.

Judge Corlew applied for and was appointed to a vacancy on the Palm Beach County Bench by Governor Jeb Bush on April 3, 2006. Judge Corlew believes judging is an art and a skill which is developed through personal experiences and thoughtful consideration of arguments about what legal principals mean and how they are applied. Judge Corlew strives to overcome public skepticism of the criminal justice system by addressing each case before him with professionalism, dignity and fairness, particularly since life, liberty and property are usually at stake. There is no cookie cutter approach in his courtroom. Judge Corlew believes law reflects life, and life is complicated. Therefore, there are no simple answers to legal problems. You must decide them case by case.

In 1997, Judge Corlew married Jerilyn McCall, a labor relations consultant. They have three children together, Micaela, Matthew and Clark. You might find it interesting to learn that Judge Corlew's cooking may rival that of Emeril Lagasse. He is the designated chef at most family gatherings and, with the assistance of the Food Network, he mastered his self-taught culinary skills. From the sound of some of his specialties, Judge Corlew doesn't have a cookie cutter approach in his kitchen either.

In addition to his docket and current responsibilities, Judge Corlew is on the campaign trail for election to retain his position as County Court Judge this coming August, 2008.

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