

Judge Ted Booras

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Recently during a meeting of the Judicial Relations Committee for the Palm Beach County Bar Association, the committee chair asked for volunteers to author judicial profiles. As I reviewed the list of jurists, one in particular stood out to me. It was most fitting for me to write about County Court Judge Ted Booras, as he offered me an interview at the Office of The State Attorney (15th Judicial Circuit) when I graduated from law school, was my first mentor, and a former “boss”/supervisor.

Some of you may not know this, but there are many sides to Ted Booras: Ted Booras the son; Ted Booras the father; and, Ted Booras the overachiever

TED BOORAS the SON: Judge Booras absolutely adores his mother. Marie Durham provided an ideal and loving home for Ted. And, although she was met with many obstacles faced by a young single parent of a boy in the 60’s, she overcame and taught all of life’s important lessons to young Ted. All the while, she ensured he seized every opportunity available to him, backed by a sense of pride, self respect and amazing work ethic. Marie continues to live in Broward County where she has lived since 1968. Although a county away, Ted continues to share a loving relationship with Marie. It has been said that behind every successful man stands a woman – behind Judge Ted Booras, stands Marie.

TED BOORAS the FATHER: Judge Booras’ son Dalton, born in 1993 and currently a freshman in high school, is literally his world, and he does not have to tell anyone that, as it is very obvious. When speaking of Dalton, the sparkle in his eye is blinding. Ted enjoys speaking about Dalton and will proudly go on and on about him and his many accomplishments – at school, with the boy scouts (where Ted is the Assistant Scout Master), on the soccer field (where Ted coached for more than 5 years), and at sea (Dalton and Ted spend most of their time together on the boat and scuba diving). In fact, Ted and Dalton have such a bond that Dalton, when discussing going away to college, has stated he wants to stay close to home so he can be near his dad.

TED BOORAS the OVERACHIEVER: Judge Booras attended high school in Dania Beach, Florida. Upon graduation he enlisted with the United States Marine Corps, where he served on active duty status for 4 years, reaching the rank of Sergeant. He received a Bachelors degree from Florida Atlantic University in 1983 and his J.D. Degree from Nova University in 1986. In 1985, while still a law student, he moved to Palm Beach County to intern at the Office of The State Attorney, and remained there for approximately 18 months. He then

went into private practice (2 years with Salnick & Krischer and 4 years as a solo practitioner) where he specialized in appellate practice and criminal defense. In 1993, he returned to the Office of the State Attorney where he remained for 14 years until he was elected County Court Judge. While an Assistant State Attorney, Ted was 'Chief of County Court' and then one of four Chief Assistants to the Hon. Barry Krischer (for a total of 10 years). His responsibilities included handling all appeals from county court to circuit court, supervising 28 attorneys (on average), and handling his own case load. As if he did not have enough to do, Ted was also an auxiliary Captain with the Florida Highway Patrol for approximately 12 years.

Judge Ted Booras is one of the brightest legal scholars in town. He has a reputation of being a "walking encyclopedia" when it comes to the law.... he knows everything, regardless of what the issue is. And, he has always been more than willing to share his knowledge. While at the Office of The State Attorney, he worked tirelessly creating outlines on all current topics and issues, and provided copies to young lawyers and assistant state attorneys across the state and country. All knew that when walking in to a courtroom, armed with one of Ted's outlines, it would be a successful day.

Over the years, Ted took the lead in authoring and arguing motions that formed the law on pressing legal issues, such as the admissibility of Field Sobriety Tasks (argued before a panel of County Court Judges), and Control Test procedures (concerning the intoxilyzer/breath testing machines). He also authored and lobbied for the Reckless Driving with Serious Bodily Injury criminal statute, which became law in October 2001.

When the Florida Prosecuting Attorneys Association held a conference, it was almost guaranteed that Ted was on the faculty. He has lectured on all topics, but takes pride in focusing on ethics, and even created a seminar dedicated to same. Ted built a national reputation arising from the numerous occasions he served as an instructor at the National Advocacy Center, teaching assistant state attorneys from across the country.

Ted's accomplishments have not gone unnoticed. Over the years he has been recognized by many organizations. He has received, to name a few, the following awards: 1999 MADD Florida Prosecutor of the Year; Publication Award (FPAA); Distinguished Faculty Award (twice) - FPAA; and Florida Wildlife Commission Florida Prosecutor of the Year-2006. Ted Booras loves the role of Judge, but he misses teaching and lecturing. He hopes this new adventure will not limit the opportunity to teach young lawyers. One thing is certain.if he is not in the courtroom, in his chambers, or lecturing across the state or country, he will be found with Dalton and Dixie (their Australian Shepherd) in the Atlantic maintaining his sanity. His boat is, after all, named "Sanity Maintenance".

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