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By: Justus Reid

Judge James Sherman grew up with a love of the law as he followed in the footsteps of his father, a highly respected and talented appellate attorney practicing in Broward County, handling appellate work throughout the state of Florida and elsewhere. It was just assumed Judge Sherman and his older brother Richard Jr. would go to law school, become lawyers and practice law in Florida.

Judge Sherman was raised in the town of Davie where he was able to do things kids did before the advent of the wide use of cell phones. He and his friends would play and ride bicycles along the canals of Davie when Davie was just a small town and when you knew everyone who lived in Davie, and they knew who he was. In those days, he had the luxury of being able to stay out until it was time for dinner, head home with his brother as it started getting dark and maybe stop for a slurpy at the local convenience store. When home, he would frequently ask his father if he had any “fun” cases that day. The “law seed” was planted and it was only a matter of time until he fulfilled the dream of becoming a lawyer.

Memories of his early days include trips to Key Largo where fishing for good-eating Mangrove Snapper was the order of the day. Of course, Judge Sherman treasures these memories and continues to visit the Keys with his family. His wife Sarah, a lawyer, and his two daughters, Macy and Riley keep him busy with their activities. The young girls are avid readers which has stood them well at their school where Riley works toward her goal to becoming an astronaut and Macy to be involved in the theater.

Judge Sherman attended St. Thomas Aquinas and thereafter to The Florida State University. Upon graduating he felt it was time to leave Tallahassee and attend the University of Miami School of Law where he met his wife. Things were off to a good start between the two young law students until the “Canes” pulled off a last-minute victory over FSU and it seemed to Judge Sherman Sarah just did not realize the wrong team won the game. It was a quiet time for a while but because Sarah and Judge Sherman had so much in common, things smoothed out a bit, and the two were ultimately married. Things will probably be just fine until the Fall when the Canes and Noles square off again.

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After graduating from the University of Miami School of Law, Judge Sherman practiced with his father for over ten years doing appellate work and was a Board-Certified appellate lawyer. He decided to branch out to take on new challenges and to explore new areas of the law, so in 2018 he joined the South Florida Water Management District as Senior Legal Counsel. As the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts, Judge Sherman had to tackle thorny and complicated legal matters which came on a day-to-day basis. However, in the back of his mind Judge Sherman had a burning desire to become a judge. After discussing this with Sarah, a mutual decision was made and the rest was history. Judge Sherman was initially appointed by Governor DeSantis to the County Court bench in 2022, and a year later to the Circuit Court bench of Palm Beach County.

Judge Sherman enjoys solving legal problems, researching these legal matters, and writing about the law. Lawyers appearing in front of Judge Sherman will take comfort to know he has read what has been submitted to him well in advance of any hearing or trial. The judge naturally expects attorneys appearing before him to be well-prepared, as he will be. You may be assured Judge Sherman will know the law, as should we all when appearing before Judge Sherman or any of our distinguished Jurists. Do not be surprised if you are asked questions about the subject matters being presented to the Court while you are arguing motions.

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