

Jacob Meister

DEMOCRAT FOR CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT

Jacob Meister has been a practicing attorney in Chicago for 29 years. In his law practice, he has been a near daily user of the Cook County Court system and he has experienced firsthand the tragically antiquated and inefficient operation of the Clerk of the Circuit Court's office.

Meister is also the founder and chairman of the Civil Rights Agenda (TCRA), a leading non-profit statewide civil rights organization dedicated to advancing and protecting the rights of LGBT people around the state. Among its programs, TCRA helps victims of discrimination in the workplace and at the ballot box. In his role as Chairman of TCRA, Meister served on the steering committee of Illinois Unites for Marriage, the successful statewide campaign that made marriage equality a reality in Illinois.

Through his law practice and TCRA, Meister has represented hundreds of individuals on a *pro bono* basis in matters ranging from discrimination in the workplace, public accommodations, and housing to defending low income people from predatory lending practices. He was also instrumental in obtaining a heart transplant for an infant whose health insurer refused to provide coverage. In addition, Meister has successfully secured educational and staffing needs for autistic children in claims arising under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Meister has successfully litigated cases in state and federal courts throughout the Country, including Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana, New York, Florida, California, Colorado, Arkansas, Texas, and other states. His experience around the country has given him extensive knowledge of how different court systems are operated and managed (or mismanaged). In this regard, Meister has become increasingly angered at the mismanagement of the Cook County Clerk of Court's office and he firmly believes that, as the second largest unified court system in the nation, the Cook County Courts should be leading in technology and efficiency.

As the Chairman of a non-profit, the managing attorney of a successful law firm, the hiring partner of a 350 attorney law firm and the Chief Operating Officer of a real estate development company with offices in multiple states, Meister has managed hundreds of employees in multiple locations and instituted effective management practices and procedures.

Meister has been deeply involved in government and Democratic electoral politics since a young age. He was employed in the United States House of Representatives and was a Law Clerk for the Wisconsin Senate Committee on Judiciary and Consumer Affairs. More recently he ran as a countywide candidate for Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County (2016), as a statewide candidate (U.S. Senate, 2010), and was instrumental in providing extensive resources and operational management for the 2010 Illinois Democratic Coordinated Campaign, Quinn for Illinois, Obama for America, Illinois Unites for Marriage, and the campaigns of numerous Democratic statewide and local candidates and elected officials. Meister continues to be generous with his time and resources for a host of Democratic candidates and progressive causes.

Democratic endorsements for Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County in 2016

CHICAGO SUN*TIMES

Meister has litigated cases across the country and knows first-hand what an efficient court system looks like. We like his common-sense plan to keep files for all open cases at the very courthouses where cases are pending and moving files to off-site warehouses only when cases are closed.

Chicago Tribune

Spend an hour with the energetic Meister and you come away convinced: He knows how to fix this moribund office and has the passion to do it. We hope voters give him the chance.

Daily Herald

Meister is no party insider, which is an important consideration if you think the circuit court clerk's office should be hiring employees based on skill and not patronage. The circuit clerk's office must be run by professionals, not politics. Giving Jacob Meister the Democratic nomination would be a good first step.

Professional Experience

Law Offices of Jacob J. Meister & Associates (Chicago, Illinois)

Commercial Litigation, Real Estate and General Business Practice (April 2002 - present)

The Civil Rights Agenda (Chicago, Illinois)

Founder and Board Chairman of statewide LGBT civil rights advocacy not-for-profit (Feb. 2010 – present)

Randolph Equities, LLC (Chicago, Illinois)

Chief Operating Officer and General Counsel of real estate development company (2006-2008)

Schwartz & Freeman/Michael Best & Friedrich LLC (Chicago, Illinois)

(Schwartz & Freeman combined with the law firm of Michael Best & Friedrich LLC on May 1, 2001)

Partner (January 1998 – April 2002) • *Associate* (October 1993 – December 1997)

Gottlieb and Schwartz (Chicago, Illinois)

Associate (February 1992 – October 1993)

Martin, Craig, Chester & Sonnenschein (Chicago, Illinois)

Associate (June 1990 – February 1992) *Summer Associate* (Summer 1989)

Wisconsin Senate - Committee on Judiciary and Consumer Affairs (Madison, Wisconsin)

Law Clerk (September 1988 – May 1989)

Other Experience

- **Candidate**, Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County (2015 - 2016) - Endorsed: Chicago Tribune, Chicago Sun-Times, Daily Herald
- **Candidate**, United States Senate, Illinois (August 2009-February 2010)
- **Teaching Associate**, Institute for International Studies and Training, Komiide, Japan (Summer 1987), instructed Japanese executives in advanced English
- **Research Assistant**, Jeffries and Associates – International Consultants, Washington, D.C. (Spring 1987), Japan/U.S. economic relations research
- **Special Projects Assistant**, Congressman Jim Moody, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. (1985 –1986)
- **Intern**, City of Milwaukee Mayor's and Milwaukee County Executive's Offices (1982 – 1983)

Education

University of Wisconsin Law School (Madison, Wisconsin)

J.D., *with honors* (May 1990) - Recipient, George Young Memorial Award

The American University (Washington, D.C.)

B.A., *cum laude*, International Studies and Political Science (1986)

Membership

- Admitted to practice law: Illinois (1990); Wisconsin (1990); Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals; and U.S. District Courts of the Northern and Central Districts of Illinois and the Eastern and Western Districts of Wisconsin.
- American Bar Association, Chicago Council of Lawyers, Lesbian and Gay Bar Association of Chicago, State Bar of Wisconsin.