



THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS®

KIDS VOTERS GUIDE

General Election - November 3, 2009



DISTRICT ATTORNEY

JOB DESCRIPTION

The District Attorney is the chief law enforcement officer in Bucks County. He/she is responsible for all criminal investigations and prosecutions that are brought to trial. The District Attorney works closely with the police to ensure that our laws are upheld and our citizens are safe.

The District Attorney investigates all types of crime, including harmful and violent acts, illegal drug and alcohol use, and computer crimes. The District Attorney or Assistants appear in court to present the case against the accused person before a judge and jury. He/she is also responsible for crime prevention and education programs such as Parental Internet Awareness and Project Safe Neighborhood.

In Bucks County, the District Attorney manages a staff of 32 Assistant District Attorneys, 16 County Detectives, and a support staff of approximately 30 people.

Term: 4 years
Salary: \$156,439.98



Democratic Candidate (In PA, the Governor's party is always placed first on ballots)

CHRIS ASPLEN

Hometown: New Britain Borough

Date of Birth: 5/13/64

Education: Pennsbury H. S., West Chester Univ., Dickinson School of Law at Penn State

Occupation: Attorney

Qualifications: My entire career has been a mission to fight crime. I have served as Senior Deputy District Attorney for Bucks County, Assistant United States Attorney for the U S Department of Justice and DNA Unit, Director at the National District Attorneys' Association.



Answer to Questions:

1) What is the most important characteristic of a successful District Attorney?

The most important characteristic of a successful District Attorney is an overriding dedication to truth. Such dedication to truth will drive a District Attorney to use all available technologies and techniques to ensure that victims are protected, the guilty are effectively prosecuted and the innocent are not wrongly convicted.

2) What do you think is the best way to reduce crime?

The best way to reduce crime is to be consistently innovative, aggressive and tough on people who commit crime. Criminals always look for new ways to commit their crimes such as smuggling drugs or using the internet to victimize children. Ultimately, reducing crime results from being aggressive and energetic enough so criminals go elsewhere.

3) With cyber-bullying on the increase, how will the District Attorney deal with this issue?

One way to prevent cyber-bullying is to actively educate parents about what cyber-bullying is, how to recognize it and how to prevent it. Parents who would not accept traditional bullying by their children may not even recognize when their children are bullying over the computer or by texting.

Republican Candidate



DAVID HECKLER

Hometown: Doylestown Township

Date of Birth: 3/7/47

Education: Central Bucks H.S. 1965, Yale University BA 1969, University of Virginia LLB 1972

Occupation: Lawyer

Qualifications: 29 years public service including: 7 years Bucks County Deputy DA, obtained convictions – all major felonies and murder, 7 years advisor/educator to all Pennsylvania’s DAs, 11 years Judge conducting hundreds of criminal trials.

Answers to Questions:

1) What is the most important characteristic of a successful District Attorney?

District Attorneys can personally prosecute only a few of our 12,000 cases annually; therefore he or she must be an effective leader. Leadership means making wise decisions and setting high standards, then inspiring and motivating Assistant DAs and County Detectives to implement those decisions and live up to those standards.

2) What do you think is the best way to reduce crime?

Every criminal places his desires above the rights of his victim. Raising citizens who respect the rights and humanity of others is best. Governmentally, the DA must work closely with police so criminals are made to fear being caught, held responsible for their actions and, if dangerous, removed from society.

3) With cyber-bullying on the increase, how will the District Attorney deal with this issue?

Following recommendations of the Violence Prevention Task Force, Bucks County’s Judges and DAs work with schools and organizations like NOVA, teaching potential offenders empathy, encouraging victim reporting and raising awareness among adults. The DA must continue prosecuting appropriate cases and continue reaching out so victims need not suffer in silence.