

Camas man is new district court judge

Chad Sleight succeeds retiring James Swanger

By [Dawn Feldhaus](#) | March 16, 2017 5:30 am |

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Chad Sleight

A man who was born and raised in Camas has been sworn in as a Clark County District Court Judge.

Chad Sleight, a 1996 graduate of Camas High School, has served as a pro tem judge in District Court for four years. He has practiced primarily criminal law since 2002.

Sleight was elected president of the 472-member Clark County Bar Association last year.

He was appointed in February, by the Board of Clark County Councilors, to the District Court bench. Other candidates included Washougal City Councilman Brent Boger.

The Court's Position 2 became vacant March 1, when Judge James Swanger retired. He served 16 years on the District Court bench. He was previously a District Court

commissioner, a judge pro-tem in Clark County Superior Court and Battle Ground Municipal Court, a deputy prosecuting attorney and an attorney in private practice.

Sleight will have to run for election in November 2018, in order to potentially keep the seat.

At CHS, he was a varsity letterman in football, basketball and track for three years.

Sleight's father, Jerry, and grandfather, Harold, worked at the paper mill in Camas and Pendleton Woolen Mill in Washougal. His mother, Eunice, worked for certified public accountant Gary Douglass in Camas.

Sleight earned a bachelor's degree in political science in 2000, at Western Washington University, in Bellingham. He graduated from Willamette University College of Law in Salem, Oregon, in 2003.

During Sleight's first two summers in law school, he worked for the law firm of Knapp, O'Dell, Lewis, and MacPherson, in Camas.

"Mr. [Roger] Knapp was the only attorney that I knew, and he was nice enough to give me a job," Sleight said. "His wife, Mrs. Knapp, was the librarian at CHS, and I am sure that she made him hire me."

Sleight worked as a prosecutor for the City of Camas, and he did legal research and projects.

During his last year in law school, he started working for Jeff Barrar and the law firm of English, Lane, Marshall, Barrar, Stahnke, and Vanderwood in Vancouver. Sleight worked as a prosecutor for the City of Washougal, and he represented court-appointed clients on misdemeanor criminal cases.

In April 2005, he, Andrew Wheeler and CJ Montgomery started the law firm of Wheeler, Montgomery, and Sleight, in Vancouver. A few months later, they added a fourth partner, Chris Boyd.

During Sleight's 11 years as a partner there, he represented clients on felony and misdemeanor cases and prosecuted cases for the cities of Battle Ground, Ridgefield, and La Center. He also worked as a public defender for Washougal.

In 2011, Sleight left the firm to open Sleight Law Office. His practice focused on criminal defense, and he continued serving as the prosecutor for Battle Ground, Ridgefield and La Center.