

# Sullivan, Ashworth elected to judgeships

By Susan Wood

The women running for the two judgeships in El Dorado County will join presiding Judge Suzanne Kingsbury in what will be a slightly more gender balanced Superior Court.

Superior Court Commissioner Dylan Sullivan and Deputy District Attorney Vicki Ashworth won judgeship offices 5 and 1, respectively, in the June 3 primary election – both with resounding turnouts in their favor. Sullivan received 18,124 votes or 59.99 percent against attorney Joe Hoffman. Ashworth pulled in 15,841 votes at 51.5 percent to beat business owners David Combellack and Joe Weinberger.



Dylan Sullivan, right, receives support election night from El Dorado County Superior Court Judge Suzanne Kingsbury. Photo/Wendy David

Sullivan seemed humbled by the win – declaring hard work, perseverance and strong familial influences as leading her to the office. She was the oldest of three children born to a teenage mother and knew she'd have to work hard, be strong and take responsibility to mold her path to success.

"My mother instilled that in me," she told *Lake Tahoe News*. They were the only two college graduates in the family.

She pledged to continue the diligent work ethic, find fair resolutions and truly listen to people, much like she attempted to do in the campaign. She even talked about listening as if it were a lost art.

"That was the most effective part of my campaign – to really talk to them and go to the public forums. I think that's an important part of being on the bench," she said, during a break at her celebration with about two dozen people in a suite at MontBleu on Tuesday night.

Sullivan acknowledged Judge Kingsbury as yet another strong role model who helped "create an environment for me to succeed."

Sullivan mentioned pounding the pavement as the most interesting component to the campaign because of the residents' surprised reactions.

"I felt it's the least I could do. My one regret is that there was no way I could make it to every voter," she said.

Ashworth had a similar experience in her door-to-door interactions with voters.

"Most people don't expect that," she said, while driving home after her gathering.

But then again, anything's possible in El Dorado County. She was pleasantly surprised by so many people showing up at the public forums during the campaign season. She even attributes much of her success in her win as "voters educating themselves and being involved."

Ashworth has long learned how to balance being a conscientious observer, capable of a proactive bent. Meaning, she's a doer, which her record prosecuting high-profile cases proves, but

has watched others such as longtime Judge Eddie Keller in action on the bench which has taught her another aspect of the law.

A judgeship isn't necessarily a lifelong dream – but a recent quest.

“It's been (there) since the children were getting older,” she said.

And so it goes, the balance of family and work.

She promises El Dorado County she'll be “fair and impartial.”