

JUDICIAL PROFILE OF MAURICE HALL

1. **Name of Judge:** Maurice J. Hall
2. **Judicial Positions held and terms (most recent first) :** Maurice Hall became a Circuit
3. **If appointed, by whom and when:** Maurice Hall was appointed by Governor Bob Graham as a Circuit Court Judge. While assigned to prosecute organized crime cases at the Office of the State Attorney, one day, he was out in the field with law enforcement officers on a wiretapping case. The telephone rang. One of the law enforcement officers passed the telephone to him. The caller said “hold for the Governor” On that day, the law enforcement officers were playing a practical joke. Approximately two weeks later however, while sitting in his office preparing for trial on a major drug trafficking case, the telephone rang. Upon answering, he was told to “please hold for the Governor.” He thought, yes, sure! Governor Bob Graham actually spoke with him and congratulated him on his judicial appointment. Hall recalls that as a very exciting time.
4. **If elected, when:** Two years after being appointed, Judge Hall was retained by the electorate. He ran to keep his seat without challenge. Judge Hall remained on the bench for a total of approximately 5 ½ years.
5. **Bar Positions or other offices held:** N/A
6. **Legal Experience:** Assistant State Attorney, Office of the State Attorney, 15th Judicial Circuit. Maurice Hall served as a prosecutor for seven years (1977-1984). He then worked as an attorney with the law firm Robert Montgomery, Jr. where he practiced in the area of Medical Malpractice. Today, he continues to practice law in the area of Medical Malpractice, and he also works tirelessly in the area of Street Law- helping citizens with everyday legal problems.
7. **Other work experience:** In 1964, at the age of 15, Hall became the first African American to be employed at Butler’s Shoe Store on Clematis Street in downtown West Palm Beach. He worked as a shoe salesman. Becoming employed at Butler’s represented a tremendous milestone. “Since I had attended all Black Roosevelt High School, this was my first exposure to working with all kinds and colors of people. I found it to be a great experience that helped me to grow immeasurably.” There he developed his work ethic.
8. **Education:** Maurice Hall attended Roosevelt High School in West Palm Beach. As an undergraduate, he attended Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia. Hall received a B.A. degree in Political Science from Florida State University and in 1976 he earned a J.D. degree from the University of Florida’s College of Law.
9. **Publications:** N/A
10. **Notable Decisions:** One of the most difficult cases to come before Judge Hall involved a domestic assault. A woman came into court seeking a restraining order. Judge Hall issued the order. However, the day after the order was issued to the complainant, her husband appeared at her place of employment with a gun. He shot his wife and then killed himself. Judge Hall lamented the limited power of a court order. Judge Hall also found child abuse cases to be very difficult. Those of the type of cases that you have concern for “even until this day,” he said.

- 11. Family members, history:** Mother: Margaret; Father, Johnny. Maurice Hall was born in Pine Ridge Hospital, a segregated hospital here in West Palm Beach. The hospital was located on 13th Street and Sapodilla Avenue, not far from where he practices law today. Hall has three sisters and one brother. He is married and has children as well as grandchildren.
- 12. Memorable influences or life experiences:** Judge Hall's mother had a tremendous influence on his life. At the age of three (3), his parents were divorced. As a single parent, his mother was determined to get an education. After sending Maurice Hall to live with an aunt and uncle in Pennsylvania, she enrolled at Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College in Tallahassee along with her daughters. She arrived at FAMU with few dollars in her coffers but a complete faith in God. Maurice Hall became a lawyer because of his mother's astuteness. She recognized that Hall's interests in psychology, engineering, English and science overlapped in the law, and she encouraged him to pursue a legal career.
- Hall and his wife, Susan Rodriguez Hall, are ministers who operate H.O.P.E. (Healing Other People to Exist). The primary focus of H.O.P.E. is to minister to youth at the county's Juvenile Detention Center(s).
- 13. Community service:** Past President of the Palm Beach County Chapter of the NAACP. As president, the organization pursued fair housing, employment, equity in education and loan issues. "Being a judge was very instructive for me. I learned about people and about the law. However, serving as President of the NAACP was more instructive for my growth as an individual. The dynamics of working with people with challenges was (most) insightful."
- 14. Hobbies:** Maurice Hall enjoys gardening, which allows him to see God's beauty. "Gardening is very relaxing and peaceful."
- 15. Pets:** N/A