

Tell us more about yourself:

I'm Jacqueline Adams, and my life's work has always been rooted in family, community, and service. As a proud wife, mother of six, and resident of DeKalb County, I've spent years dedicated to causes close to my heart. My entrepreneurial spirit came alive early—I opened my first business at 23. Since then, I've continued to grow, co-founding a youth mentorship program and a ministry alongside my husband. Through all of these experiences, my passion has been clear: helping others thrive, whether it's guiding the next generation or standing up for seniors and veterans.

In my professional life, I've held several leadership positions, including serving as the first female Executive Administrator and Director for two international organizations. This role helped me navigate complex systems and learn how to bring people together for a common cause. Throughout my career, I've remained committed to advocating for equitable access to resources, ensuring that public services are fairly distributed, and expanding economic opportunities for all. As your next Commissioner for Super District 7, I plan to keep these values at the forefront of my work, ensuring DeKalb County remains a place where everyone can live, work, and thrive.

Where did you go to school?

I am a proud graduate of Bass High School. I earned my bachelor's degree in criminal justice and human services from Colorado Technical University, graduating with a 3.92 GPA. Juggling my studies while being a mother of six strengthened my resolve to advocate for vulnerable groups. My academic focus on criminal law, juvenile justice, and victim advocacy helped shape my work in pushing for crime prevention and youth development policies.

Later, I pursued further education, receiving my Doctorate from GIA International. These academic experiences have deepened my understanding of how laws and policies directly impact residents' lives. Since graduating, I've applied my education to advocacy work, focusing on crime prevention, youth justice reform, and policies promoting social equity. As Commissioner, I will use this foundation to shape policies addressing the pressing social issues affecting vulnerable populations in our county.

What is your job/occupation?

I'm currently a Master Stylist at Salon Meek in Decatur, GA, where I combine my love for beauty with my entrepreneurial drive. With over 30 years in the industry, I've had the opportunity to run my own business, Simply Class by Jackie, which has allowed me not only to showcase my craft but also to create jobs and mentor others. Being a business owner has given me invaluable insight into what it takes to support a community and help it flourish.

In addition to my work in the beauty industry, I serve as a mentor for DRLL INC and an Advocate for Veterans Benefits. Through these roles, I provide guidance and support to individuals striving for success in various areas of life, particularly veterans seeking the benefits they deserve. I am also the Lead Mother of Restoration in Christ Ministries, Inc., where I lead efforts to support and uplift the congregation and the wider community through spiritual and practical outreach.

Through these experiences, I've gained a deep understanding of how to create economic stability, develop businesses, and foster job creation in local communities. I've always believed that small businesses are the backbone of a thriving economy, and as Commissioner, I'll continue working to ensure that DeKalb's local economy remains strong and that businesses can flourish, creating opportunities for all.

What city/neighborhood do you live in?

I've called Hiawatha Estates in DeKalb County home for many years, and this community holds a special place in my heart. It's where I've raised my family and where I've devoted myself to improving the lives of those around me. From my early volunteer work to my leadership today, my focus has always been on ensuring that every DeKalb resident, no matter their background, has access to the opportunities and resources they need to succeed.

Living in DeKalb has given me a firsthand view of the challenges our community faces, such as rising housing costs, the need for more public transportation options, and concerns over public safety. I've worked on various initiatives that seek to tackle these issues head-on, always with a focus on inclusion and accessibility. As a long-time resident and community advocate, I'm motivated to take the next step in leadership to ensure that DeKalb continues to be a place where people can afford to live, feel safe, and build their futures.

What is your top policy priority if elected?

If elected, my number one priority will be strengthening public safety, addressing homelessness, and boosting economic development across DeKalb County. A safe community is the foundation for growth, so I plan to focus on improving the coordination between law enforcement, emergency services, and local organizations. This will ensure that our neighborhoods are secure and that our first responders have the resources they need. Alongside public safety, I'm committed to tackling homelessness by pushing for long-term solutions like affordable housing, mental health support, and job training. I also plan to enhance animal welfare programs and shelter conditions, ensuring we're doing right by both people and pets in our care.

As someone who has spent years in business and community advocacy, I'm well-equipped to lead initiatives that address these complex issues. I believe public safety, homelessness, and economic development are interconnected, and by focusing on each of these areas, we can create a community that is not only safe but also supportive and prosperous. As Commissioner, I'll work to bring resources, funding, and innovative programs to DeKalb County that ensure all residents have the opportunity to thrive, whether it's through safer neighborhoods, better job opportunities, or more supportive services.

What steps would you take to ensure that your constituents are protected from the impacts of climate change?

I'm committed to taking bold action to protect DeKalb County from the effects of climate change, including extreme weather and rising energy costs. One of my top priorities is to develop a comprehensive Climate Action Plan that will transition all county operations to 100% renewable energy. By reducing greenhouse gas emissions and investing in clean energy infrastructure, we can lower energy bills for families while building a more sustainable future. I'm also eager to collaborate with existing initiatives, such as the DeKalb Green New Deal, to make sure we're ready to face climate challenges head-on and protect our community.

In addition, I will advocate for improved emergency preparedness, including modernizing our emergency communication systems. By updating tools like the Code Red system, we can better prepare residents for extreme weather events and other climate-related emergencies. Protecting the environment goes hand-in-hand with protecting our citizens, and I believe these efforts will lead to both financial savings and a healthier, more resilient community.

What long-term changes or reforms do you hope to achieve during your time in office?

In the long run, I envision a DeKalb County that is both thriving economically and fair for everyone. My goal is to reform zoning laws to encourage sustainable development and create more affordable housing, particularly in neighborhoods that have historically been underserved. By fostering partnerships with developers and offering incentives for sustainable building practices, I hope to make affordable housing accessible to more residents while also promoting environmentally friendly development.

Public safety is another key priority—I plan to implement community-based safety programs that not only reduce crime but also build trust between residents and law enforcement. These programs will focus on crime prevention through community engagement, working closely with residents to address concerns before they escalate. Lastly, I'm committed to advocating for environmental protections to address the effects of environmental racism, ensuring a healthier environment for all communities in DeKalb. My vision is to create a county where people feel safe, supported, and included, no matter where they live or work.

What steps would you take to increase transportation options for your constituents and how would you fund proposed projects or plans?

I plan to push for a study to explore the possibility of a county-run bus service that complements MARTA's existing network. While MARTA does a great job providing regional transit, a county-operated service could better connect local businesses, schools, and neighborhoods, improving access to jobs and essential services. This new system would enhance connectivity within DeKalb County, offering residents more convenient and efficient transportation options. Additionally, I'll continue advocating for MARTA's expansion in underserved areas like South DeKalb, working closely with state leaders and seeking out new funding sources to support these vital transportation improvements.

Expanding alternative transportation options is also a priority of mine. I will advocate for the expansion of trail networks throughout District 7, such as the South River Trail and Michelle Obama Trail, to provide both recreational opportunities and alternative commuting routes. These trails can serve as a cost-effective solution to transportation needs, particularly as the use of E-bikes grows. To fund these initiatives, I will push for the extension of the SPLOST tax and seek additional grants and federal funding to support both trail and broader infrastructure improvements.

Housing costs in many parts of Georgia continue to rise. What should be done to keep housing affordable?

DeKalb County needs a well-rounded strategy to combat the rising cost of housing. One of the key steps we can take is to incentivize developers to include affordable housing in new projects, especially in areas where options are limited. Offering tax credits and financial incentives can encourage more developers to build affordable units. I also support reforming zoning restrictions that stand in the way of affordable housing development. It's time to rethink policies that block mixed-use developments and explore innovative housing solutions—like tiny homes or container homes—that can provide more affordable choices for residents.

As commissioner, I will also advocate for expanding homeownership programs that provide down-payment assistance to first-time buyers and repurposing vacant buildings for use as temporary shelters or affordable housing units. Addressing the housing crisis requires collaboration between city governments, developers, and the community. By creating a comprehensive strategy that tackles both the supply and accessibility of affordable housing, we can ensure long-term solutions that benefit everyone in DeKalb County.

How do you plan to ensure that public funds allocated to your office are used efficiently and effectively?

Ensuring that public funds are used wisely and transparently is a top priority for me. With my experience managing multimillion-dollar budgets, I understand the importance of accountability when it comes to taxpayer money. If elected, I will introduce regular audits and make financial reports easily accessible to the public through online platforms. I also believe in involving the community in budgeting decisions by holding town halls and encouraging residents to share their input on how funds should be allocated. Transparency builds trust, and I'll make sure every dollar is spent to benefit the people of DeKalb County.

Additionally, I plan to advocate for the expansion of the county's open data portal, which will make it easier for residents to track how public funds are being spent. By ensuring that financial decisions are made with public input and are clearly communicated to residents, we can create a government that is more responsive to the needs of the community. I also plan to involve local residents in oversight committees to ensure community priorities are reflected in budgeting decisions.