

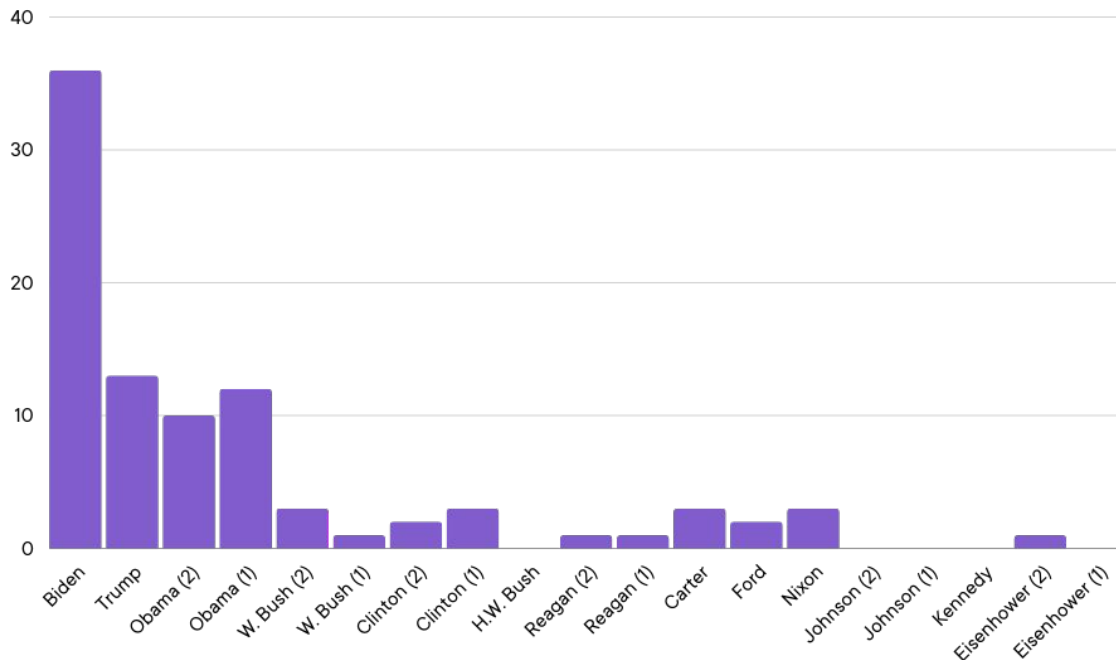
AANHPI Lifetime Judges Confirmed During the Biden Administration

President Biden has appointed and the Senate has confirmed **36 Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) lifetime judges, including 24 AANHPI women**, who are now serving lifetime appointments on the federal bench. Importantly, nearly half (17) of these judges come to the bench with significant experience protecting and advancing civil and human rights.

- In our nation's history, there have only ever been 91* lifetime confirmations of AANHPI judges. President Biden has appointed nearly 40 percent of them. These 36 confirmations represent more than double the number of confirmations than any previous single presidential term.
- Only 21 AANHPI judges have ever served on a federal circuit court, and President Biden has appointed more than a quarter (six) of them — including the first AANHPI judges on the Third Circuit (Judge Cindy Chung) and Seventh Circuit (Judge John Lee).
- President Biden has appointed the first AANHPI lifetime district court judges in six states: Colorado (Judge Regina Rodriguez), Connecticut (Judge Sarala Nagala), Michigan (Judge Shalina Kumar), New Jersey (Judge Zahid Quraishi), Virginia (Judge Jasmine Yoon), and Washington state (Judge Tana Lin). Additionally, Judge Mia Perez is the first AANHPI judge to serve on the Eastern District of Pennsylvania (but not the first in the state).
- Judge Zahid Quraishi and Judge Nusrat Choudhury (who are Pakistani American and Bangladeshi American, respectively) made history as the first two Muslim lifetime judges in our nation's history.
- In November 2023, the Senate confirmed Judge Shanlyn Park to the U.S. District Court for the District of Hawaii, making her the first Native Hawaiian woman to ever serve as a lifetime federal judge.

***Note:** This includes judges who have been confirmed twice to lifetime positions, including Judges Denny Chin, Lucy Koh, John Lee, Jacqueline Nguyen, Florence Pan, Atsushi Tashima, and Amul Thapar. These confirmations are each counted separately. We also include the confirmation of the late Judge Cyrus Nils Tavares (District of Hawaii), who identified as Native Hawaiian but who is identified as white by the Federal Judicial Center. We also include Judge Walter Meheula Heen (District of Hawaii), who is Native Hawaiian. Judge Heen received a recess appointment from President Carter and served as an Article III judge, but he was never confirmed by the Senate.

Appointment of AANHPI lifetime judges — by presidential term



AANHPI LIFETIME JUDGES CONFIRMED DURING THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Circuit Courts

[Cindy Chung](#), U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit (Pennsylvania)

- Judge Chung is the first AANHPI judge to serve on the Third Circuit.

[Roopali Desai](#), U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit (Arizona)

- Judge Desai is the first South Asian judge to serve on the Ninth Circuit.

[Lucy Koh](#), U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit (California)

- Judge Koh is the first Korean American woman to ever serve on a federal appellate court and the second AANHPI woman to serve on the Ninth Circuit.

[John Lee](#), U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit (Illinois)

- Judge Lee is the first AANHPI judge to serve on the Seventh Circuit.

[Florence Pan](#), U.S. Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit

- Judge Pan is the first Chinese American, and third AANHPI judge, to serve on the DC Circuit.

[Jennifer Sung](#), U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit (Oregon)

- Judge Sung is the first AANHPI judge from Oregon to serve on the Ninth Circuit.



District Courts

Loren AliKhan, U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia

- Judge AliKhan is the first South Asian woman to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Sanket Bulsara, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York

- Judge Bulsara is the first AANHPI man to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Nusrat Choudhury, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York

- Judge Choudhury is the first Bangladeshi American and first Muslim woman to serve as a lifetime judge on any federal court in the nation.

Dena Coggins, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California

- Judge Coggins is the first AANHPI woman and first Black woman to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

John Chun, U.S. District Court for the Western District Washington

- Judge Chun is the first AANHPI man to serve as a lifetime judge in the state of Washington.

Susan DeClercq, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan

- Judge DeClercq is the first lifetime judge of East Asian descent, and the second AANHPI lifetime judge, in the state of Michigan.

Sunil Harjani, U.S. District Court for the Northern District Illinois

- Judge Harjani is the second South Asian judge, and fifth AANHPI judge, to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Dale Ho, U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York

- Judge Ho is the first Filipino American man, and the fourth AANHPI judge, to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Wesley Hsu, U.S. District Court for the Central District of California

- Judge Hsu is the sixth AANHPI man to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Robert Huie, U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California

- Judge Huie is the third AANHPI judge to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Myong Joun, U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts

- Judge Joun is the first AANHPI man to serve as a lifetime judge in the state of Massachusetts and the first AANHPI man to serve as a lifetime judge on any court located in the First Circuit.

Kenly Kato, U.S. District Court for the Central District of California

- Judge Kato is the first Japanese American woman, and third AANHPI woman, to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Angel Kelley, U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts

- Judge Kelley is the first Japanese American, and second AANHPI judge, to serve as a lifetime judge in the state of Massachusetts.



Edward Kiel, U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey

- Judge Kiel is the first Korean American judge and second AANHPI judge to serve as a lifetime judge in the state of New Jersey.

Shalina Kumar, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan

- Judge Kumar is the first AANHPI lifetime judge in the state of Michigan.

Eumi Lee, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California

- Judge Lee is the second Korean American woman and third AANHPI woman to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Rita Lin, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California

- Judge Lin is the first Chinese American woman and second AANHPI woman to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Tana Lin, U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington

- Judge Lin is the first AANHPI lifetime judge in the state of Washington.

Sarala Nagala, U.S. District Court for the District of Connecticut

- Judge Nagala is the first AANHPI lifetime judge in the state of Connecticut.

Jinsook Ohta, U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California

- Judge Ohta is the first AANHPI woman, and second AANHPI judge, to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Florence Pan, U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia

- Judge Pan, before her elevation to the D.C. Circuit, was the first AANHPI woman and first Chinese American judge to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.



[Shanlyn Park](#), U.S. District Court for the District of Hawaii

- Judge Park is the first Native Hawaiian woman to serve as a lifetime judge in our nation's history.

[Mia Perez](#), U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania

- Judge Perez is the first AANHPI lifetime judge on this court.

Zahid Quraishi, U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey

- Judge Quraishi is the first AANHPI lifetime judge in the state of New Jersey and the first Muslim lifetime judge in our nation's history.

Regina Rodriguez, U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado

- Judge Rodriguez is the first AANHPI lifetime judge in the state of Colorado.

Micah Smith, U.S. District Court for the District of Hawaii

- Judge Smith is the sixth AANHPI man, and first Black judge, to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Arun Subramanian, U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York

- Judge Subramanian is the first South Asian judge, and third AANHPI judge, to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Nina Wang, U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado

- Judge Wang is the first Taiwanese American judge, and second AANHPI judge, to serve as a lifetime judge in the state of Colorado.

Jasmine Yoon, U.S. District Court for the Western District of Virginia

- Judge Yoon is the first lifetime judge of color on this court and first AANHPI lifetime judge in the state of Virginia.

Other Article III Courts

Lisa Wang, U.S. Court of International Trade

- Judge Wang is the second AANHPI judge to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.



**SPOTLIGHT: EXCEPTIONAL
JUDGES CONFIRMED DURING
THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION**

Roopali Desai, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit (Arizona)

The Leadership Conference supported Roopali Desai's confirmation because of her impressive civil rights experience, particularly in the field of voting rights. Prior to her confirmation, Desai worked at Coppersmith Brockelman PLC. Leading the firm's elections, political, and public law group, she served as an integral part of the litigation team that challenged the onslaught of baseless election fraud allegations that were brought after the 2020 presidential election. Throughout her career, Desai defended the rights of unions, pushed for accountability for the abuse and neglect of foster children, and protected public safety by successfully defending the legality of public health efforts.

Jennifer Sung, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit (Oregon)

The Leadership Conference supported Jennifer Sung's confirmation because of her steadfast commitment to protecting civil rights and her experience as an even-handed adjudicator. Sung served as a member of the Oregon Employment Relations Board, resolving labor disputes on issues impacting 250,000 workers. Previously, she served as a civil litigator on employment and labor issues, fighting for the rights of working people and against violations of union contracts and retaliatory terminations. Sung also worked for the Economic Justice Project at the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law.

Nusrat Choudhury, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York

The Leadership Conference supported Nusrat Choudhury's confirmation because she has worked tirelessly challenging discriminatory policies that target communities of color. Throughout her impressive career at the ACLU, she has challenged modern-day debtors' prisons, racially discriminatory policies, and unlawful surveillance of religious minorities.

Dale Ho, U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York

The Leadership Conference supported Dale Ho's confirmation because throughout his extensive legal career, he has advanced the rights of all people. As director of the voting rights project at the ACLU, Ho has protected civil rights by defending the freedom to vote. He has successfully challenged the Trump administration's efforts to add a citizenship question to the census and opposed its efforts to exclude unauthorized immigrants from calculations used to determine representation in Congress.

Myong Joun, U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts

The Leadership Conference supported Myong Joun's confirmation because he has spent his career in pursuit of equal justice. Before becoming an associate justice of the Boston Municipal Court, he spent many years in private practice focused on criminal defense matters, successfully representing people whose constitutional rights were violated by the government. His significant pro bono experience included representing people who were unable to afford an attorney, thus ensuring they had access to justice.

Eumi Lee, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California

The Leadership Conference supported Eumi Lee's confirmation because she is an experienced jurist who has dedicated much of her career to rooting out disparities in our criminal-legal system. Prior to her confirmation, she served since 2018 as a fair-minded judge for the Alameda County Superior Court and was the court's first Korean American judge. Before this, she held several positions at the University of California College of Law, San Francisco, including co-director of the Hastings Institute for Criminal Justice, ethics trainer, clinical professor, associate clinical professor, clinical attorney, and moot court, legal research & writing instructor.

Rita Lin, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California

The Leadership Conference supported Rita Lin's confirmation because she is a fair-minded jurist with critical experience working towards equal justice for all. During her 10 years in private practice, she took on significant pro bono work, including important LGBTQ rights cases and cases defending the rights of people living with disabilities.

Tana Lin, U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington

The Leadership Conference supported Tana Lin's confirmation due to her exceptional career and demonstrated commitment to upholding civil and human rights. For more than 15 years, she practiced law at Keller Rohrback L.L.P. in Seattle, helping to advance the rights of consumers and employees through class action litigation. Previously, she worked at the Michigan Poverty Law Program, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice. She also has experience as a public defender in the District of Columbia.

Shanlyn Park, U.S. District Court for the District of Hawaii

The Leadership Conference supported Shanlyn Park's confirmation because she has dedicated her career to fighting for equal justice for all. For 20 years, she served in the federal public defender's office for the District of Hawaii, first as an assistant federal public defender and then as a senior litigator, representing clients who could not afford an attorney to ensure they had access to justice.



Data as of May 22, 2024.

For questions, contact Patrick McNeil at mcneil@civilrights.org.