

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN
505 THEODORE LEVIN UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE

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News Release
For immediate release

Dec. 23, 2021

Oakland County Circuit Judge Shalina Kumar Sworn In As U.S. District Judge

Shalina Kumar was sworn in this morning as the newest U.S. District Court judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

Kumar, who until last month was Chief Judge of Oakland County Circuit Court, was sworn in at 10:30 a.m. by Chief U.S. District Judge Denise Page Hood at the Theodore Levin U.S. Courthouse in Detroit.

Kumar is the first person of South Asian descent to be nominated for a federal judgeship in Michigan. She was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on Dec. 17. President Biden signed her commission on Tuesday.

“We are so happy to have you,” Hood told Kumar before administering the oath of office as Kumar’s friends, staffers and new judicial colleagues looked on. “I know you will be great.”

“I am deeply, deeply humbled by the faith and trust the president and senators have placed in me for this very important role and I am so honored to be joining this amazing bench,” Kumar said. “I look forward to this next chapter of my work as a public servant and I pledge that everyone in my court will be treated with the respect and dignity they deserve.”

Kumar was born in Royal Oak and raised in Bloomfield Hills. Her father, from India, is a physician. Her mother, from Detroit, was a homemaker. Kumar became interested in the law after Paul Dain, her government teacher at Andover High School, urged her to consider it as a career, she told the Detroit Free Press in a 2007 interview. She said she became hooked the moment she stepped into a courtroom.

After graduating from high school, she enrolled at the University of Michigan and obtained a bachelor's degree in psychology with distinction in 1993. She received her law degree from the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law in 1996.

Kumar initially worked as a substitute teacher for the Bloomfield Hills School District and was elected to the Sylvan Lake City Council.

She obtained her law license in 1997 and worked as an associate attorney at four Oakland County law firms over the next 10 years, primarily handling personal injury litigation.

In August 2007, Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm appointed her to a vacancy on the Oakland County Circuit Court. She was elected to six-year terms in 2008, 2014 and 2020. The Michigan Supreme Court appointed her chief judge in 2018 after she had served as chief judge pro tempore.

Kumar replaces U.S. District Judge Victoria Roberts, who transitioned from active to senior status in February permitting Roberts to continue working with a reduced caseload. Kumar will be based at the U.S. Courthouse in Flint, one of five federal courthouses in the Eastern District, which covers the eastern side of the state from the Ohio border to the Mackinac Bridge.

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