



Jacqueline A. Berrien

Chair

Jacqueline A. Berrien was sworn in as Chair of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) on April 7, 2010. President Barack Obama nominated Berrien on July 16, 2009, to a term ending July 1, 2014. In announcing her nomination, the President said that Berrien “has spent her entire career fighting to give voice to underrepresented communities and protect our most basic rights.” She received a recess appointment to the position on March, 27, 2010, and was confirmed by the Senate for her full term on December 22, 2010.

Chair Berrien came to the EEOC from the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LDF), where she served as Associate Director-Counsel for five and a half years. In that position, she reported directly to the organization’s President and Director-Counsel and assisted with the direction and implementation of LDF’s national legal advocacy and scholarship programs.

From 2001 to 2004, Berrien was a Program Officer in the Governance and Civil Society Unit of the Ford Foundation’s Peace and Social Justice Program, where she administered more than \$13 million in grants to promote greater political participation by underrepresented groups and remove barriers to civic engagement. During her tenure with the Ford Foundation, Berrien also co-chaired the Funders’ Committee for Civic Participation, a philanthropic affinity group affiliated with the Council on Foundations.

Before joining the Ford Foundation, Berrien practiced civil rights law for more than 15 years. Between 1994 and 2001, she was an Assistant Counsel with LDF, where she coordinated all of LDF’s work in the area of voting rights and political participation and represented voters in proceedings before the U.S. Supreme Court and federal and state appellate and trial courts. Between 1987 and 1994, Berrien worked as an attorney with the Voting Rights Project of the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights in Washington, D.C., and with the National Legal Department and Women’s Rights Project of the American Civil Liberties Union in New York.

She began her legal career in 1986, working as a law clerk to the Honorable U.W. Clemon, the first African-American U.S. District Court Judge in Birmingham, Ala. She has published several articles on race and gender discrimination issues and was appointed to the adjunct faculty of New York Law School in 1995. Berrien also taught trial advocacy at Harvard and Fordham law schools.

Chair Berrien is a graduate of Harvard Law School, where she served as a General Editor of the Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree with High Honors in Government from Oberlin College and also completed a major in English. In her junior year at Oberlin she received the Harry S. Truman Scholarship in recognition of her leadership potential and commitment to a career in public service. She is a native of Washington, D.C. and has lived in Brooklyn, NY, with her husband, Peter M. Williams since 1987.