



THE HONORABLE BERNICE B. DONALD was nominated to the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit by President Barack Hussein Obama on December 1, 2010, and re-nominated in January 2011. She was confirmed by the Senate on September 6, 2011. Prior to joining the Court of Appeals, Judge Donald served on the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Tennessee, where she was appointed by President William Jefferson Clinton in December 1995. Judge Donald served as Judge of U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Tennessee from June 1988 to January 1996. She was the first African American woman in the history of the United States to serve as a bankruptcy judge. When she was elected to the General Sessions Criminal Court in 1982, she became the first African American woman to serve as a judge in the history of the State of Tennessee.

Judge Donald received her law degree from the University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law where she has served as an adjunct faculty member. She frequently serves as faculty for the Federal Judicial Center and the National Judicial College.

An internationally recognized legal scholar, Judge Donald has lectured and trained judges around the world for many years. Judge Donald has served as faculty for numerous international programs, including Romania, Mexico, Turkey, Brazil, Bosnia, Botswana, South Africa, Namibia, Senegal, Rwanda, Tanzania, Russia, Egypt, Morocco, Thailand, Armenia, Jamaica, and Manila. In 2003, Judge Donald led a People to People delegation to Johannesburg and Capetown, South Africa and traveled to Zimbabwe to monitor the trial of a judge accused of judicial misconduct.

Judge Donald has served as President of the American Bar Foundation, the National Association of Women Judges, and the Association of Women Attorneys. In June 2005, Judge Donald co-founded 4-Life, a skills training and enrichment program for students ages 6 to 15 designed to teach children to become positive productive citizens. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Stax Museum of American Soul and the Stax Academy Charter School.

Judge Donald has been the recipient of over 100 awards for professional, civic, and community activities, including the Distinguished Alumni Award from the University of Memphis, the Martin Luther King Community Service Award, and the Benjamin Hooks Award presented in 2002 by the Memphis Bar Foundation. In 2013, Judge Donald was elected to the Board of Directors of the American Judicature Society, and in August of 2013 she was featured in the Federal Lawyer Magazine. During the 2013 annual meeting of the National Bar Association, Judge Donald received the William H. Hastie Award. The Hastie Award is the Judicial Council's highest award and is presented to recognize excellence in legal and judicial scholarship and demonstrated commitment to justice under the law. In 2013, Judge Donald also received the Difference Makers Award from the Solo, Small Firm & General Practice Division of the American Bar Association (ABA), and the Pioneer Award from her fellow classmates at East Side High. Most recently, Judge Donald received the Justice William Brennan Award by the University of Virginia in January of 2014, and the Pickering Award from the Senior Lawyers Division of the ABA in August of 2014.