

February 13, 2012

D.C. Appeals Court Judge Catharine Easterly Sworn In



District of Columbia Court of Appeals Judge Catharine Easterly was sworn in to the city's highest local court on Friday.

Easterly has been serving on the bench since November, when she was [confirmed by the Senate](#). Friday's ceremony marked her formal entry to the court.

A career public defender, Easterly served in the special litigation division of D.C. Public Defender Service from 2003 until her appointment. She joined another recent Public Defender Service alumna on the bench, Judge Corinne Beckwith, [who was sworn in](#) on Feb. 3.

Easterly did not speak during the ceremony. A former Public Defender Service colleague, Timothy O'Toole, said in his remarks that Easterly's work in the special litigation division tackling systemic justice issues made her a good fit for the bench. He noted that she led training programs around the country on issues including faulty eyewitness testimony, and worked with The Innocence Project.

"She understands how tireless effort and attention to important details make a difference ... to the system as a whole and how it provides justice to everyone," said O'Toole, who led the division and is now an attorney at Miller & Chevalier in Washington.

Gabrielle Tenzer, a longtime friend and associate at Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison in New York, praised Easterly's "unwavering dedication" to justice.

Easterly earned her J.D. in 1996 from the University of Virginia School of Law. She began her career as an appellate public defender for the Legal Aid Society of Nassau County, New York, and later in the Office of the Appellate Defender in New York City. Before joining the public defender office in Washington, she worked for about a year as an associate at Stillman & Friedman, formerly Stillman, Friedman & Schechtman, in New York.

President Barack Obama [nominated Easterly](#) to the appeals court in August. [She testified](#) before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, which vets judicial appointees to Washington's local courts, in September.

National Law Journal photo by Diego M. Radzinski.

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