



Maya L. Harris

Maya Harris has been an influential voice at the intersection of politics, public policy and civil rights for over two decades. A lawyer, policy advocate, speaker and writer, Maya has helped shape the national dialogue about some of the most defining issues of our time. Her work has emphasized racial and gender justice, promoting policies that strengthen the U.S. economy and democracy through greater inclusion of women and people of color, particularly women of color.

A senior advisor to two historic U.S. presidential candidates, Maya served as Senior Policy Advisor to Hillary Clinton during her 2016 presidential campaign, where she led a team of policy experts to help develop Clinton's domestic policy agenda. Maya was also Clinton's representative for the development of the 2016 Democratic Party Platform, considered the most progressive party platform in the Democratic Party's history. Most recently, Maya served as Campaign Chairperson for her sister, Sen. Kamala Harris, during her 2020 presidential primary campaign and, during the general election, served as a national surrogate for the Biden-Harris ticket.

While a Visiting Scholar at Harvard Law School and a Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress, Maya authored the groundbreaking report, *Women of Color: A Growing Force in the American Electorate*, documenting the prominence of women of color, especially Black women, in influencing political outcomes.

Maya previously served as the Vice President of Democracy, Rights & Justice and an Officer of the Ford Foundation, one of the largest philanthropies in the world. Managing a global team, Maya directed over \$750 million in investments aimed at promoting effective governance, increasing democratic participation, and advancing civil and human rights around the world. These investments included launching Ford's first LGBT rights initiative, fueling nationwide efforts to protect voting rights, and working to expand economic and political opportunities for women.

Before joining the Ford Foundation, Maya was the Executive Director of the ACLU of Northern California, the nation's largest ACLU affiliate, where she led a multidisciplinary team of lawyers, advocates, organizers, communications, development and operations professionals to safeguard civil rights and civil liberties in the most diverse and populous state. Among her legal and advocacy work, Maya served as lead counsel in *League of Women Voters v. McPherson* restoring voting rights of over 100,000 Californians, authored *Making Every Vote Count: Reforming Felony Disenfranchisement Policies and Practices in California*, and helped lead five statewide ballot initiative campaigns on issues ranging from racial and criminal justice to LGBT and reproductive rights.

Maya joined the ACLU from PolicyLink, a national research and action institute advancing racial and economic equity. There, she conducted research and policy advocacy on policing issues and authored *Community-Centered Policing: A Force for Change* and *Organized for Change: The Activist's Guide to Police Reform*.

An advocate for criminal justice reform throughout her career, Maya was a contributing author to the #1 New York Times bestseller, *The Covenant with Black America*. Her 2006 essay warned that “the mass incarceration of Black people in America is a real and present danger” and argued “any solution to the growing crisis of mass Black incarceration must begin with focusing on how our communities, especially our youth, are policed.”

After graduating from the University of California at Berkeley and receiving her law degree with honors from Stanford Law School, Maya practiced law as a civil litigator. While in private practice, she also taught law school as an adjunct professor at U.C. Hastings College of the Law and Lincoln Law School of San Jose. When faced with an academic crisis, Lincoln's Board of Trustees recruited Maya to serve as Dean and Chief Executive Officer, making her one of the nation's youngest law school deans at age 29. As Dean, Maya recruited new faculty, revamped the core curriculum, and successfully renewed the school's state bar accreditation.

Maya was an on-air political and legal analyst for MSNBC, and has published commentary on race, gender and politics in numerous media outlets including *The Atlantic*, *Women's Health Magazine*, and CNN.com. She has been profiled in *The New Yorker*, *Washington Post*, and *O The Oprah Magazine*, among other publications, and has served on the board of directors for numerous non-profit organizations.

Maya lives between California and New York with her husband, has a phenomenal daughter, and spends every free minute with her two perfect granddaughters.