Madam Vice President Kamala Harris

Kamala Devi Harris was born in Oakland, California on October 20, 1964 to Shyamala Gopalan who was a biologist from India and Donald J. Harris who was a Stanford University professor emeritus of economics from British Jamaica. Vice President Harris and her sister, Maya Harris were primarily raised and inspired by their mother who received her doctorate the same year VP Harris was born. Her parents were activists, instilling Vice President Harris with a strong sense of justice. They brought her to civil rights demonstrations and introduced role models—ranging from Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall to civil rights leader Constance Baker Motley—whose work motivated her to become a prosecutor. Harris graduated from Howard University and the University of California, Hastings College of the Law. While she was at Howard she interned as a mailroom clerk for California senator [Alan Cranston](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alan_Cranston), chaired the economics society, led the debate team, and joined [Alpha Kappa Alpha](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alpha_Kappa_Alpha) sorority. She began her career in the Alameda County District Attorney’s Office before being recruited to the San Francisco District Attorney’s Office and later the City Attorney of San Francisco’s office. In 2003, she was elected district attorney of San Francisco. She was elected and reelected in the years 2010 and 2014 as the Attorney General of California. In 2014, she married Doug Emhoff. They have a large, blended family that includes their children, Ella and Cole. Harris served as the junior United States senator of California from 2017 to 2021.She defeated Loretta Sanchez in the 2016 Senate election to become the second African American woman and the first South Asian American to serve in the United Sates Senate. As a senator, she advocated for healthcare reform, federal descheduling of cannabis, a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, the DREAM Act, a ban on assault weapons, and progressive tax reform. She gained a national profile for her pointed questioning of Trump administration officials during Senate hearings, including Trump’s second Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh, who was accused of sexual assault. As a member of the Democratic Party, she served as a United States Senator of California from 2017 to 2021 and as the attorney general of California from 2011 to 2017. Harris sought the 2020 Democratic presidential nomination, but dropped out of the race prior to the primaries. Biden selected Harris as his running mate in August 2020, and their ticket went on to win the general election in November defeating incumbent president Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence. Harris assumed office as vice president of the United States of January 2021.