



225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
1789-2014



## Laura Taylor Swain

**Born:**  
Brooklyn, NY

**Received Commission:**  
July 11, 2000

Laura Taylor Swain was appointed to the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York on July 11, 2000 and entered on duty on August 31, 2000.

Judge Swain was graduated from Harvard-Radcliffe College cum laude with a B.A. in Government and from the Harvard Law School. She served as a law clerk to the Honorable Constance Baker Motley, then the Chief Judge of the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, from 1982 to 1983. She practiced law as an associate and as Counsel with the New York-based firm of Debevoise & Plimpton, concentrating in employee benefits, ERISA, employment law and related litigation, until 1996.

She was appointed as a United States Bankruptcy Judge for the Eastern District of New York in November 1996 and served in that capacity until her elevation to District Court. Judge Swain also served as one of the five members of the New York State Board of Law Examiners for ten years prior to her first judicial appointment. She was the first woman, and the first person of color, to serve as a member of that Board.

Judge Swain chaired the Advisory Committee of the Judicial Conference of the United States on the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure from 2007 to 2010, having been a member of their committee since 2002, and also served for several years on the Electronic Public Access Working Group of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts. She was a member of the board of directors of the Federal Judges Association from 2005 to 2013, and continues to chair a board committee. She received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Suffolk University (Boston, Massachusetts) in 2008.

Her community volunteer work has included service as a board member of Episcopal Charities, Inc., and as a founding member of the board of directors of the Coalition for Consumer Bankruptcy Debtor Education (now known as the Coalition for Debtor Education). She was also a founder, and served as the first board chair, of the Community Partnership Charter School, located in Brooklyn, New York. Judge Swain is currently a member of the board of managers of the Havens Relief Fund Society. In 2008, she received the Servant of Justice award from the Guild of St. Ives of the Episcopal Diocese of New York.