

Biography of Honorable Patti B. Saris



United States District Judge Patti B. Saris became Chief Judge of the United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts on January 1, 2013. She became Chair of the United States Sentencing Commission in Washington, DC in January, 2011. She is a graduate of Radcliffe College '73 (Magna Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa) and Harvard Law School '76 (Cum Laude).

After graduating from law school, she clerked for the Supreme Judicial Court, and then went into private practice. When Senator Edward M. Kennedy became chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, she moved to Washington D.C. and worked as staff counsel. She later became an Assistant United States Attorney, and eventually chief of the Civil Division. In 1986, Judge Saris became a United States Magistrate Judge, and in 1989, she was appointed as an Associate Justice of the Massachusetts Superior Court. In 1994, she was appointed to the United States District Court.

Chief Judge Saris was President of the Harvard Board of Overseers in 2006 and has served on visiting committees to Harvard College, Law School, Education School and the Kennedy School of Government. Chief Judge Saris has been active on various judicial committees, including the Budget Committee, and The Defender Services Committee (2002-2005) which she chaired in 2005. She has also served on the Board of the Federal Judges Association.

Judge Saris served on various boards, including the National Board of Bottom Line, a non-profit that helps lower income students get into and succeed in college, as well as Codman Academy, a charter school.

She has received awards for judicial excellence from the Boston Bar Association, the Federal Bar Association and the Patent Bar Association, and is a recipient of the Harvard Medal. She was elected to the American Law Institute and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

She has authored various law review articles and publications, including books with Hon. Abner Mikva, [Congress: The First Branch of Government](#), and with Justice Margot Botsford and Barbara Berenson, [Breaking Barriers, The Unfinished Story of Women Lawyers and Judges in Massachusetts](#) (2012).

The mother of four children, Judge Saris is married to Professor Arthur Segel who teaches real estate at Harvard Business School.