

Judge Michael J. Davis

Judge Michael J. Davis was appointed by President Clinton and took the oath of office on March 30, 1994. He was Chief Judge of the District of Minnesota from July 1, 2008, to June 30, 2015. He was the first African-American Federal Judge in Minnesota. Judge Davis graduated from Macalester College in 1969 and the University of Minnesota Law School in 1972. He served as a criminal defense lawyer at the Neighborhood Justice Center in St. Paul, where he is currently a board member; Legal Rights Center in Minneapolis, where he is currently a board member; and as an Assistant Public Defender in Hennepin County. From 1983 to 1994, Judge Davis was a Minnesota state court trial judge. He was an Adjunct Professor at the University of Minnesota Law School from 1982-2013. In 1999, Chief Justice Rehnquist appointed Judge Davis to the United States Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court for a seven-year term. Judge Davis received an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree in 2001 from Macalester College, and in 1989, he received the Outstanding Alumni Award. He was awarded the 2004 Judicial Professionalism Award by the Hennepin County Bar Association. In 2013, he was awarded the President's Award by the Minnesota Association of Black Lawyers. In 2014, he received the Lifetime Leadership Award from Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services, Inc. Judge Davis was awarded both the Trailblazer Award from the Minneapolis Urban League and the Criminal Justice IMPACTOR award from We IMPACT! in 2015. In January 2016, Judge Davis received the 2016 Lifetime Local Legend Award at the 26th Annual MLK Holiday Breakfast and that same day, he also received the Lifetime Achievement Award from Governor Mark Dayton's Council on the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday.

