

Trump's judge nominee
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federal judges in the state.

Experience in Congress and the classroom
Clarke, a native of Lynchburg, Virginia, earned her bachelor's degree from Liberty University, a private Christian college in Lynchburg, and her law degree from the University of North Carolina.

The 44-year-old became partner this year at Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough, one of South Carolina's biggest law firms. She was a prosecutor with the U.S. Attorney's Office in Greenville from 2021 to 2024, when she rejoined Nelson Mullin's Greenville office.

Prior to January 2019, when she first joined the law firm, she worked for 10 years on several committees at the U.S. House of Representatives, according to information she submitted to the committee.

Her roles included staff director with the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and legal counsel for the committee investigating the 2012 terrorist attack in Benghazi, Libya, that killed four Americans. Both were chaired by U.S. Rep. Trey Gowdy of Spartanburg, who didn't seek re-election in 2018.

This high-level congressional experience is relatively rare among judicial nominees, Holmes said, and "will give her an edge in handling the wide array of issues that come before federal district judges."

She worked with Gowdy again at Wofford College from 2020 to 2023, when they co-taught classes titled "Criminal Justice and Due Process" and "Congress and Political Parties."



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Sheria Clarke answers questions from members of the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee during her confirmation hearing on Wednesday, March 25, in Washington DC. (Screenshot from committee webcast)

"They taught together and kind of would go back and forth, each of them with a different area of expertise," said David Alvis, chair of Wofford's government and international affairs department.

Clarke's colleagues at the private college in Spartanburg had no idea she was interested in becoming a judge, Alvis said, but he thinks her temperament and work ethic are ideal for the role.

"In class, she was really well known for being very, very balanced," he told the SC Daily Gazette. "She was very detail oriented in class and was really good at organizing the class."

She also has TV and radio experience.

Her list of media appearances submitted to the Judiciary Committee includes getting interviewed by Gowdy on his weekly Fox News show "Sunday Night in America" and on his Fox News podcast for episodes in June 2020 titled "A Walk Towards Unity" and "Difficult Yet Simple Steps to Heal the Racial Divide."

The Constitution makes a federal judgeship a lifetime appointment. U.S. District Court judges are paid about \$250,000, federal court data shows.



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