

Zahid Quraishi is first Muslim judge appointed to federal court

by [Joseph Hammond](#) in the [July 14, 2021](#) issue



(Pool photo by Tom Williams)

The US Senate made history on June 10 by confirming the first presidentially appointed Muslim American judge to a federal court. Zahid Quraishi was confirmed by a vote of 81-16 and will serve the US District Court for the District of New Jersey.

Born in New York City and raised in New Jersey, Quraishi is the son of immigrants to the United States from Pakistan. He graduated from law school at Rutgers University and took a job in a law firm, only to join the army in June 2003 to serve in its Judge Advocate General's Corps. He was later assigned to the First Infantry Division, based in Germany.

Quraishi also holds the distinction of being the first person of Asian American heritage to sit on the federal bench in New Jersey.

Quraishi is one of a diverse slate of 11 names that President Biden put forward in March, calling them a “trailblazing slate of nominees.” Quraishi is the third Biden judicial nominee overall to be confirmed by the Senate.

President Barack Obama nominated Muslim attorney Abid Riaz Qureshi to the US District Court in Washington, DC, in September of 2016, but the nomination was not acted on by the Senate before the end of the congressional session.

Earlier this year, the influential Harvard Law Review appointed its first Muslim president since the journal was founded in 1887. —Religion News Service