



My Drift

Title: Kamala Harris

Written by: Jerry D. Petersen

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I don't normally write about Vice Presidents. But, in this case I'm making an exception for the following reasons:

- + Kamala Harris is America's first female, Black and Asian vice president. What exactly is her racial makeup?**
- + She is one heartbeat away from being the President. Joe Biden (age 78) is almost as old as me. He could go completely senile or drop dead anytime.**
- + Those crazy "so-called" Trump supporters or domestic/foreign terrorists might try to kill Biden.**
- + Harris has been called a ruthless authoritarian. What does this mean?**
- + Tulsi Gabbard and others have ripped Kamala Harris over her controversial record on criminal justice.**
- + She has been called a cheater and a schemer. Is there any truth to these claims?**
- + Lastly, she is quite attractive. I want to learn more about her personal life and her politics.**

Racial Identity - A look at Kamala Harris' multi-ethnic background

Over the years, Kamala Harris has described her racial identity as Black, South Asian, Indian-American, African-American, Jamaican-American and just American. What is her racial identity? You be the JUDGE.

Kamala Devi Harris was born in Oakland, California, on October 20, 1964 which makes her 56 years old as of this writing.

Her mother, Shyamala Gopalan, a biologist who immigrated to the United States from India in 1958 as a 19-year-old graduate student in nutrition and endocrinology at the University of California, Berkeley. Gopalan received her PhD in 1964. Shyamala died of colon cancer in Oakland on February 11, 2009 at age 69.

Her father, Donald J. Harris, was a Stanford University professor emeritus of economics, who immigrated to the United States from British Jamaica in 1961 for graduate study at the University of California, Berkeley, receiving a PhD in 1966. He is still alive at this writing at age 82.



**Shyamala and Donald
Harris**

When Kamala Harris began kindergarten, she was bused as part of Berkeley's comprehensive desegregation program to Thousand Oaks Elementary School, a public school in a more prosperous neighborhood in northern Berkeley which previously had been 95 percent white, and after the desegregation plan went into effect became 40 percent Black. A neighbor regularly took the Harris (Kamala and Maya) girls to an African American church in Oakland where they sang in the children's choir, and the girls and their mother also frequently visited a nearby African American cultural center. Their mother introduced them to Hinduism and took them to a nearby Hindu temple, where she occasionally sang. As children, she and her sister visited their mother's family in Madras (now Chennai) India several times. She says she has been strongly influenced by her maternal grandfather P. V. Gopalan, a retired Indian civil servant whose progressive views on democracy and women's rights impressed her. Harris has remained in touch with her Indian aunts and uncles throughout her adult life. Harris has also visited her father's family in Jamaica.



Kamala and Maya with mother Shyamala

Along with her parents and younger sister, Maya, Kamala Harris lived in a duplex on Bancroft Way in West Berkeley, an area often called the "flatlands" with a significant black population.



House Kamala lived in as a child



Young Kamala Harris

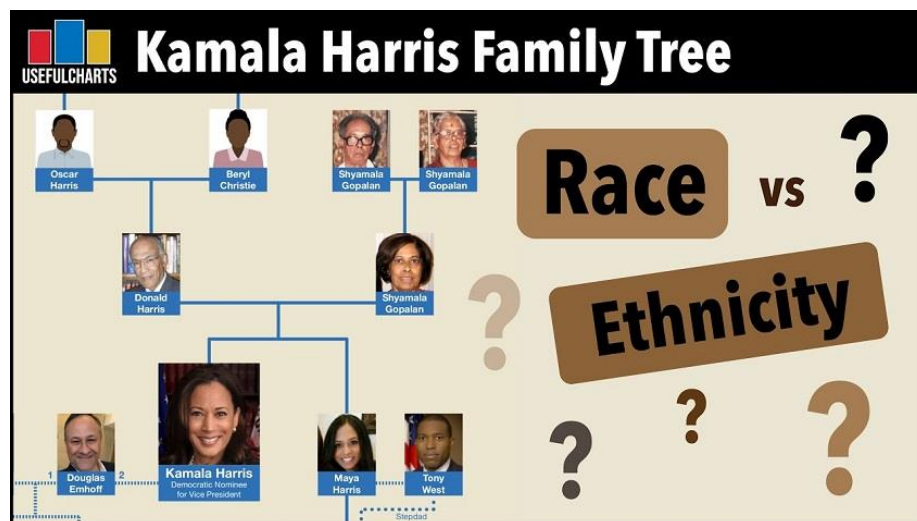
Her parents separated when Kamala Harris was five and divorced when she was seven. Harris has said that when she and her sister visited their father in Palo Alto on weekends, other children in the neighborhood were not allowed to play with them because they were black. When she was twelve, Harris and her sister moved with their mother to Montreal, Quebec, where Shyamala had accepted a research and teaching position at the McGill University that was affiliated with Jewish General Hospital. Harris attended a French-speaking primary school, Notre-Dame-des-Neiges and finally Westmount High School in Westmount, Quebec, graduating in 1981.

After high school, in 1982, Harris attended Howard University, a historically black university in Washington, D.C. While at Howard, she interned as a mailroom clerk for California senator Alan Cranston, chaired the economics society, led the debate team, and joined Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority. Harris graduated from Howard in 1986 with a degree in political science and economics.



Harris at Howard University

Harris then returned to California to attend law school at the University of California, Hastings College of the Law through its Legal Education Opportunity Program (LEOP). While at UC Hastings, she served as president of its chapter of the Black Law Students Association. She graduated with a Juris Doctor in 1989 and was admitted to the California Bar in June 1990.



Okay, that pretty much covers Kamala Harris' early life. What is her racial identity? Here is what I think. Harris grew up in a mostly black neighborhood, attend mostly black Howard University and joined an all-black Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority. It is clear that she considers herself to be mostly black. But it is clear to me that she is 50% Black and 50% Asian Indian. Her mother was from India. I said "Black" not "African American" since her father is from Jamaica and most but not all black people there came from Africa.

Do you agree? Well, please explain this to me. Kamala Harris' birth certificate says that her mother is "Caucasian", and her father is "Jamaican". Maybe back then a person from India was considered "White". I don't know.

OFFICE OF CLERK-RECORDER
COUNTY OF ALAMEDA
OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

STATE FILE #4-295984 CERTIFICATE OF LIVE BIRTH LOCAL REGISTRATION DISTRICT AND COUNTY OF RECORDS 601545318

THIS CHILD		MOTHER		FATHER	
1. NAME OF CHILD-Last, first, middle	KAMALA	1. NAME OF MOTHER-Last, first, middle	ANNE	1. NAME OF FATHER-Last, first, middle	HARRIS
2. SEX	Female	2. SEX	Female	2. SEX	Male
3. DATE OF BIRTH	October 20, 1964	3. DATE OF BIRTH	October 20, 1964	3. DATE OF BIRTH	October 20, 1964
4. PLACE OF BIRTH	Kaiser Foundation Hospital	4. PLACE OF BIRTH	Kaiser Foundation Hospital	4. PLACE OF BIRTH	Kaiser Foundation Hospital
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6. COUNTY	Alameda	6. COUNTY	Alameda	6. COUNTY	Alameda
7. RACE OR COLOR OF CHILD	Caucasian	7. RACE OR COLOR OF MOTHER	Caucasian	7. RACE OR COLOR OF FATHER	Jamaican
8. PLACE OF BIRTH OF MOTHER	India	8. PLACE OF BIRTH OF FATHER	Jamaica	8. PLACE OF BIRTH OF CHILD	Alameda
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Kamala Harris' Current Family



With stepson Cole Emhoff, husband Douglas Emhoff and stepdaughter Ella Emhoff



Sister Maya

Kamala Harris married Douglas Emhoff (who is white and a lawyer) in 2014. Harris has never had any children of her own. Emhoff and Harris have an estimated net worth of \$14 million. Harris owns three houses—two in California, one in D.C.—which are worth about \$8 million. Plus, take a look at her new vice-presidential digs at the Naval Observatory.

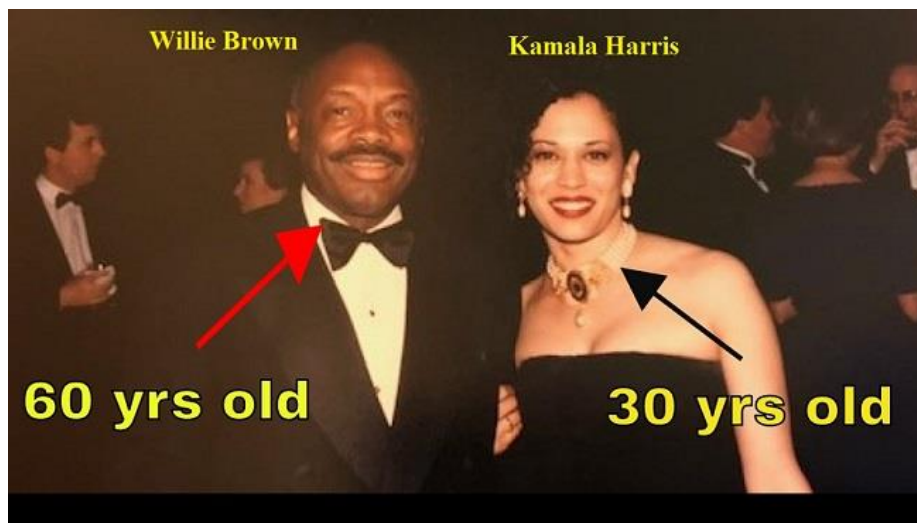
Blair House, Washington D.C.



Blair House, also known as the President's Guest House, is where Vice President Kamala Harris and Second Gentleman Doug Emhoff are currently residing while their official residence undergoes maintenance.

Kamala Harris' Career Highlights

In 1990, Harris was hired as a deputy district attorney in Alameda County, California, where she was described as "an able prosecutor on the way up". In 1994, Speaker of the California Assembly (and future San Francisco Mayor) Willie Brown, who was then dating Harris, appointed her to the California Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board and then to the Medical Assistance Commission – positions that paid her more than \$400,000 over five years, according to SF Weekly. He also gave her a BMW car among other things.



Did Kamala Harris sleep her way to the top? You decide. She was a girlfriend of former San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown. She was 29 and he was 60 and married.

In February 1998, San Francisco district attorney Terence Hallinan recruited Harris as an assistant district attorney. There, she became the chief of the Career Criminal Division, supervising five other attorneys, where she prosecuted homicide, burglary, robbery, and sexual assault cases – particularly three-strikes cases. In 2000, Harris reportedly clashed with Hallinan's assistant, Darrell Salomon, over Proposition 21, which granted prosecutors the option of trying juvenile defendants in Superior Court rather than juvenile courts. Harris campaigned against the measure, which passed. Salomon opposed directing media inquiries about Prop 21 to Harris and reassigned her, a de facto demotion. Harris filed a complaint against Salomon and quit.

In August 2000, Harris took a job at San Francisco City Hall, working for city attorney Louise Renne. Harris ran the Family and Children's Services Division representing child abuse and neglect cases. Renne endorsed Harris during her D.A. campaign.

In 2002, Harris prepared to run for District Attorney of San Francisco against Hallinan (the incumbent) and Bill Fazio. Harris was the least known of the three candidates. Harris and Hallinan advanced to the general election runoff with 33 and 37 percent of the vote, respectively.



An ambitious young prosecutor. A mayor with a machine and a political crucible for a future presidential candidate.

In the runoff, Harris pledged never to seek the death penalty and to prosecute three-strike offenders only in cases of violent felonies. Harris ran a "forceful" campaign, assisted by former mayor Willie Brown and Senator Dianne Feinstein. Harris charged that Hallinan's office was not doing enough to stem

the city's gun violence, particularly in poor neighborhoods like Bayview and the Tenderloin, and attacked his willingness to accept plea bargains in cases of domestic violence. Harris won with 56 percent of the vote, becoming the first person of color elected as district attorney of San Francisco. Harris ran unopposed for a second term in 2007.

Although Mayor Brown supported Harris in her successful 2003 run for San Francisco district attorney, she tried to distance herself from him in that race, telling the SF Weekly that Brown – whose career was dogged by corruption allegations – was an “albatross hanging around my neck.”

“I certainly helped with her first race for district attorney in San Francisco,” Brown said in his Chronicle letter. “The difference is that Harris is the only one who, after I helped her, sent word that I would be indicted if I ‘so much as jaywalked’ while she was D.A.,” Brown wrote. “That’s politics for ya!”



Kamala Harris
District Attorney of San
Francisco (2004-2011)

Attorney General of California (2011–2017).

Nearly two years before the 2010 election, Harris announced she planned to run. She also stated she would only run if then-Attorney General Jerry Brown did not seek re-election for that position. Brown chose to run for governor and Harris consolidated support from prominent California Democrats. Both of California's senators, Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, United Farm Workers cofounder Dolores Huerta, and mayor of Los Angeles Antonio Villaraigosa all endorsed her during the Democratic primary. In the June 8, 2010 primary, she was nominated with 33.6 percent of the vote, defeating Alberto Torrico and Chris Kelly.



Attorney General of
California (2011–2017)

Some interesting facts while Harris was District Attorney of San Francisco and Attorney General of California.

- ✚ During her first three years as district attorney, San Francisco's conviction rate jumped from 52 to 67 percent.
- ✚ One of Harris' most controversial decisions came in 2004 when she declined to pursue the death penalty against the man who murdered San Francisco police officer Isaac Espinoza. At the funeral, Senator Dianne Feinstein delivered a eulogy in which she criticized Harris, who was in the audience, prompting a standing ovation from the hundreds of officers in attendance. Harris would be shunned by police unions for the next decade.
- ✚ Later, Harris declined to support two ballot initiatives that would've banned the death penalty—raising accusations of political opportunism and inconsistency on the controversial issue.
- ✚ She was under scrutiny during her tenure as San Francisco district attorney when a technician stole cocaine from the DA's crime lab and mishandled evidence. Harris, trying to keep things under wraps, failed to inform defense attorneys. As a result, about a thousand drug-related cases had to be thrown out.
- ✚ Harris and Barack Obama are good friends. Her friendship with Barack Obama dates back to his run for Senate in 2004. She was the first notable California officeholder to endorse him during his 2008 presidential bid.
- ✚ In San Francisco, she vocally supported a controversial 2010 law that made truancy a misdemeanor and punished parents who failed to send their children to school. The truancy rate ultimately dropped, but some critics saw the rule as too punitive.
- ✚ In 2013, President Barack Obama was recorded referring to Harris as the "best-looking attorney general in the country." He later apologized after critics labeled the comment as sexist. **Obama was right!**
- ✚ As attorney general, when California was offered \$4 billion in a national mortgage settlement over the foreclosure crisis, Harris fought for a larger amount by refusing to sign the deal. Although she was accused of grandstanding, she managed to secure \$20 billion for California homeowners.



Harris and Barack Obama

- ✚ One of her signature accomplishments as attorney general was creating Open Justice, an online platform to make criminal justice data available to the public. The database helped improve police accountability by collecting information on the number of deaths and injuries of those in police custody.
- ✚ Harris was rumored to be a potential Supreme Court nominee under the Obama administration, although she later said she wasn't interested.

U.S. Senate (2017–2021)

Election –

After more than 20 years as a U.S. Senator from California, Senator Barbara Boxer announced in January 2015 that she would not run for reelection in 2016. Harris announced her candidacy for the Senate seat the following week. Harris was a top contender from the beginning of her campaign. **Harris won 78% of the California Democratic Party vote in the primary election.**

Harris faced congresswoman and fellow Democrat Loretta Sanchez in the general election. It was the first time a Republican did not appear in a general election for the Senate since California began directly electing senators in 1914. **President Barack Obama and Vice President Joe Biden endorsed Harris. In the November 2016 election, Harris defeated Sanchez, capturing over 60% of the vote, carrying all but four counties.** Following her victory, she promised to protect immigrants from the policies of President-elect Donald Trump.



Harris Campaigning for Senator



Kamala Harris becomes a U.S. Senator from California

2017

After Trump signed Executive Order 13769, barring citizens from several Muslim-majority countries from entering the U.S. for ninety days, Harris condemned the order and called it a "Muslim ban".

Harris spoke in opposition to Trump's cabinet picks Betsy DeVos, for Secretary of Education and Jeff Sessions for United States Attorney General. She called on Sessions to resign, after it was reported that Sessions spoke twice with Russian Ambassador to the United States Sergey Kislyak.

Harris voted against the confirmation of Neil Gorsuch to the U.S. Supreme Court. Later that month, Harris took her first foreign trip to the Middle East, visiting California troops stationed in Iraq and the Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan, the largest camp for Syrian refugees.

Harris called for the resignation of Senator Al Franken, asserting on Twitter, "Sexual harassment and misconduct should not be allowed by anyone and should not occur anywhere."

2018

Harris was appointed to the Senate Judiciary Committee after the resignation of Al Franken.

Harris questioned Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen for favoring Norwegian immigrants over others and claiming to be unaware that Norway is a predominantly white country. **I prefer Norwegians to Mideast Muslims.**

Harris heatedly questioned Secretary Nielsen about the Trump administration family separation policy, under which children were separated from their families when the parents were taken into custody for illegally entering the U.S. In June, after visiting one of the detention facilities near the border in San Diego, Harris became the first senator to demand Nielsen's resignation.

During Brett Kavanaugh Supreme Court confirmation hearings, Harris questioned Brett Kavanaugh about the FBI director's limited scope of the investigation on Kavanaugh regarding allegations of sexual assault. She voted against his confirmation. **Harris and Mazie Hirono were the most vocal democrats against Kavanaugh.**

Harris was a target of the October 2018 United States mail bombing attempts.

In December, the Senate passed the Justice for Victims of Lynching Act (S. 3178), sponsored by Harris. The bill, which died in the House, would have made lynching a federal hate crime.

2019

After Special Counsel Robert Mueller submitted his report on Russian interference in the 2016 election, Harris called for U.S. Attorney General William Barr to testify before Congress in the interests of transparency. Harris later called for Barr to resign and accused him of refusing to answer her questions because he could open himself up to perjury, and stating his responses disqualified him from serving as U.S. attorney general.

Harris teamed with Kirsten Gillibrand to urge the Trump administration to investigate the allegations of Uyghur genocide by the Chicom party in China.



**Harris at
SF Gay Pride Parade**

Harris called for an investigation into the death of Roxsana Hernández, a transgender woman and immigrant who died in ICE custody.

In December, Harris led a group of Democratic senators and civil rights organizations in demanding the removal of White House senior adviser Stephen

Miller after emails published by the Southern Poverty Law Center revealed frequent promotion of white nationalist literature to Breitbart website editors.

2020

Before the opening of the impeachment trial of Donald Trump on January 16, 2020, Harris delivered remarks on the floor of the Senate, stating her views on the integrity of the American justice system and the principle that nobody, including an incumbent president, is above the law. Harris voted to convict the president on charges of abuse of power and obstruction of Congress.

Harris has worked on bipartisan bills with Republican co-sponsors, including a bail reform bill with Senator Rand Paul, an election security bill with Senator James Lankford and a workplace harassment bill with Senator Lisa Murkowski.

2020 presidential election (2019–2020)

The 2020 presidential campaign of Kamala Harris, the junior senator from California, officially began on January 21, 2019, with an announcement on Good Morning America. Harris had widely been considered a "high profile" candidate for the 2020 Democratic Party presidential primaries since 2016.

Citing a lack of funds, Harris officially withdrew her candidacy on December 3, 2019.

On March 8, 2020, Harris endorsed former vice president Joe Biden. Harris was chosen by Biden to be his running mate on August 11, 2020. Biden and Harris would go on to win the general election and she would become the vice president of the United States.



President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris

Following her election as Vice President of the United States, Harris resigned from her seat on January 18, 2021, prior to taking office on January 20, 2021, and was replaced by California Secretary of State Alex Padilla.

**Kamala Harris
Vice President of the United States**



What I learned about Kamala Harris during her career

Poor ole Willie Brown give Kamala a BMW and helped get her elected to the District Attorney of San Francisco. For thanks, Harris said Willie was an albatross hanging around her neck and if he even jaywalked, she would have him arrested. That's gratitude for you! One of my favorite sayings says, “No good deed goes unpunished!”

I also learned that Kamala Harris demanded that anybody in government who disagreed with her resign immediately.

Was Harris tough on crime? A generation after Democrats embraced “tough on crime” policies that swelled prison populations, progressive activists are pushing to make the criminal justice system less punitive and racist — and polls show a majority of current Democrats support such efforts. Harris has argued that her views align with the new progressive movement. But her record in California, where she was a prosecutor, district attorney, and state attorney general before representing the state in the US Senate, has come under harsh scrutiny and debate since she launched her own presidential campaign in 2019 and become the Vice President of the United States.

Harris argues that she’s fought to reverse incarceration, scale back the war on drugs, and address racial disparities in the criminal justice system. But I have learned that Harris could be tough on crime but over the years, she could best

be described as “inconsistent on crime”. A close examination of Harris’s record shows it’s filled with contradictions. She pushed for programs that helped people find jobs instead of putting them in prison, but also fought to keep people in prison even after they were proved innocent. She refused to pursue the death penalty against a man who killed a police officer, but also defended California’s death penalty system in court. She implemented training programs to address police officers’ racial biases, but also resisted calls to get her office to investigate certain police shootings.

In her more recent memoir, *The Truths We Hold*, Harris described how she saw her role: “The job of a progressive prosecutor is to look out for the overlooked, to speak up for those whose voices aren’t being heard, to see and address the causes of crime, not just their consequences, and to shine a light on the inequality and unfairness that lead to injustice. It is to recognize that not everyone needs punishment, that what many need, quite plainly, is help.”

More than 90 percent of elected prosecutors are white, and more than 80 percent are male. As a Black and Indian American woman, Harris stood out — inviting scrutiny and skepticism, especially by people who may hold racist stereotypes about how Black people view law enforcement or sexist views about whether women are “tough” enough for the job.

I learned that Kamala Harris is a smart, highly driven to succeed and get whatever she wants. Yes, Kamala is tough enough for the job.

A few interest facts about Kamala Harris

She has a long history of activism. A favorite family story that began with Harris joining in protest chants from her stroller while her parents marched for civil rights in Oakland and Berkeley, California. Following one march, Gopalan innocuously asked the toddler, “What do you want, Kamala?” Her response: “FEE-DOM!” Later, when she was 13, Harris and her sister, Maya, led a demonstration in front of their Montreal apartment building in protest of the policy that banned children from playing on the lawn. The owners eventually reversed the policy.

She loves to cook. “As a child, I remember hearing the pots and smelling the food, and kind of like someone in a trance, I would walk into the kitchen to see all this incredible stuff happening,” Harris recalled in a May 2020 *Glamour* interview. “My mother used to tell me, ‘Kamala, you clearly like to eat good food. You better learn how to cook.’” That’s exactly what she did, and now, the

politician regularly shares her culinary skills, recipes, and love for Sunday dinners on social media.

She's an avid reader. While running as a Democratic candidate for president in 2019, Harris was the first to respond to Book Riot's request for her favorite books and/or those that have been most influential in her life. She listed five: *Native Son* by Richard Wright, *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini, *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan, *Song of Solomon* by Toni Morrison and *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis.

Kamala Harris is a person of faith. The God I have always believed in is a loving God, a God who asks us to serve others and speak up for others, especially those who are not wealthy or powerful and cannot speak up for themselves. I can trace my belief in the importance of public service back to learning the parable of the good Samaritan and other biblical teachings about looking out for our neighbors — and understanding that our neighbors aren't just those who live in our ZIP code, but include the stranger, too.

What religion is Harris? Harris was raised on Hinduism and Black Baptist faith.

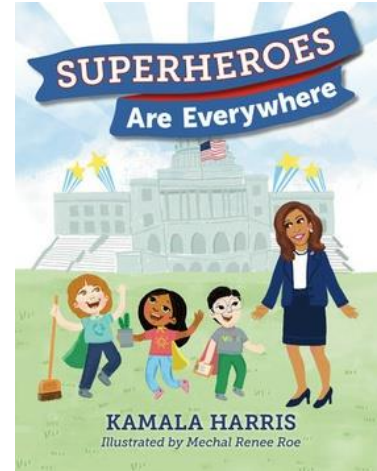


Kamala Harris went to a church service alongside her husband Doug Emhoff, Dr. Jill and President Joe Biden

How tall is Kamala Harris? Harris stands 5 feet 2 inches tall.

Where did her first name come from? Her name, Kamala, comes from the India Sanskrit word for the lotus flower.

“Superheroes Are Everywhere”. Children's book written by Kamala Harris. It was published on January 8, 2019. The book teaches that superheroes can be found everywhere in real life, from family members, to friends, to teachers at school and college, based upon the author's life.



Harris has written two non-fiction books.

- ✚ **The Truths We Hold: An American Journey. Diversified Publishing. 2019.**
- ✚ **Smart on Crime: A Career Prosecutor's Plan to Make Us Safer. Chronicle Books. 2009.**

In conclusion

- ✚ **I think we know a lot more about Kamala Harris. Some is good and some is bad.**
- ✚ **I hope President Joe Biden can stay alive for the next four years.**

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