



Office of the District Court Executive

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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK ANNOUNCES A SPECIAL SESSION TO COMMEMORATE THE COURT'S 225TH ANNIVERSARY

Chief Judge Loretta A. Preska has announced that the United States District Court for the Southern District Court (SDNY) will hold a special session on Tuesday, November 4, 2014 to commemorate the first session of the Court held 225 years ago. President George Washington appointed James Duane, who had been a member of the Continental Congress and first mayor of New York City following the evacuation of British forces, as the Court's first judge. Judge Duane held the first session on the first Tuesday of November, 1789, making it the first Court to convene under the new United States Constitution. For this reason, it is frequently referred to as the "Mother Court."

The anniversary celebration will continue through 2015 with re-enactments of historic trials, lectures on some of the court's most notable jurists, and exhibits featuring art and historic artifacts such as the Silver Oar of the British Vice Admiralty Court for the Province of New York, the symbol of an admiralty court's authority. A full calendar of events, under the co-chairmanship of District Judges Deborah A. Batts and P. Kevin Castel, will be published later this year.

Chief Judge Loretta A. Preska said of the anniversary commemoration: "The history of this Court reflects the history of the nation. The Court has been the venue for civil war prize cases, litigation over the sinking of the Titanic and Lusitania, and the attack on the World Trade Center. It has seen criminal prosecutions from the Tea Pot Dome scandal to Watergate. Today its docket includes white collar and terrorism prosecutions. We are honored and delighted to mark this Court's 225th year of continued service."

Currently there are 28 active and 22 senior District Judges on the Southern District bench, in addition to 15 Magistrate Judges and 9 bankruptcy judges.

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