

PRESS RELEASE
January 10, 2022

The United States District Court, Southern District of Florida, announced today that Melissa Damian has been selected by the Court's District Judges to be appointed United States Magistrate Judge. Ms. Damian will fill the magistrate judgeship position vacated upon the retirement of Chief United States Magistrate Judge John J. O'Sullivan.

Ms. Damian earned her undergraduate degree from Princeton University in 1990 and her law degree from the University of Miami School of Law in 1995. Ms. Damian is a South Florida native and grew up in Coral Gables.

From 2010 until the present, Ms. Damian has been practicing law in private practice, specializing in civil appeals and complex federal litigation, most recently as Of Counsel to the law firm Damian & Valori, Culmo Trial Partners in Miami. From 1999 to 2010, Ms. Damian was an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Florida, serving in the National Security Section where she earned the Attorney General's Award for her work on matters of national security. Before joining the U.S. Attorney's Office, Ms. Damian was an associate with the law firm Kenny Nachwalter in Miami, where she specialized in securities litigation. From 1995 to 1997, Ms. Damian served as a law clerk to the Honorable Ursula Ungaro, U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of Florida.

The announcement of Ms. Damian's selection culminates a broad search process that began in March 2021. The Court appointed a selection panel, comprised of leaders in the legal community as well as non-lawyers in the community, to assist with the selection process. Forty-nine well-qualified individuals applied. The selection panel reviewed all 49 submissions and elected to interview eight candidates in person. Following these interviews, the selection panel recommended five finalists to the Court. The District Judges interviewed the five finalists in May of last year. The Court selected Ms. Damian to fill the vacant magistrate judgeship. Ms. Damian's selection was not previously announced pending completion of an FBI and IRS background investigation report, as is standard to the appointment process. The procedures followed by the Court in this process are consistent with those approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States and documented in the Administrative Office of the United States Courts' publication entitled The Selection, Appointment, and Reappointment of United States Magistrate Judges, *Judges Information Series No. 2*.

After an informal swearing in, the Court anticipates that Magistrate Judge Damian will assume her duties at the C. Clyde Atkins United States Courthouse in Miami, Florida effective January 10, 2022. A formal investiture ceremony will be scheduled at a later date.

Please contact Angela E. Noble, Court Administrator • Clerk of Court, at (305) 523-5001 if you have any questions.