

Muftiah McCartin
Staff Director, House Committee on Rules

Special Exhibit: Women in Congress

"Find My Voice"

Muftiah McCartin describes the transition from office clerk to Assistant Parliamentarian.

Interview recorded January 29, 2016

It took a couple of years for me. And, and I think to the great credit of the Parliamentarian's Office, they—you know, they really invested in me. And they were very, very supportive, and as I—and it took a while. And frankly, I think the most difficult thing—and, and I think this really speaks to gender—kind of issues with our gender generally. But I think with me, it was really exaggerated. It took me a long time to find my voice. I mean, I was a kid when I got in the office, "Who am I?" I was making coffee and filing. "Who am I?" And then, and then because of the way that it—there wasn't, like, a more of a gradual movement, it was like all of a sudden, I'm in meetings. And I— like, you know, like where—you know like, where's my voice? And, and I think that was the most, most difficult thing. Because remember, I was also working with intellectual giants. You know, Bill Brown and Charlie Johnson were really—they knew this stuff inside and out. And, you know, who am I to question anything they say, or enter into any kind of debate about, you know, the decisions? And things were done in the office by consensus, and—that was hard.