

# **Biography of Chief Magistrate of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas Joyann Ferguson-Pratt**



Joyann Ferguson-Pratt is the daughter of Herbert and Ellen Ferguson (both deceased). She began her early education at St. Andrew's School. In fact she vividly recalls being a part of the campus move from Shirley Street to Yamacraw Road. Joyann remained at St. Andrew's School from reception through grade 6, and she credits her foundational years, there even though she is a graduate of Queen's College, Nassau, Bahamas. She further pursued her education at the College of the Bahamas now (University of the Bahamas) where she graduated as class valedictorian in 1985 with an Associate of Arts degree in Sociology/Psychology. Her studies continued at Morgan State University (Baltimore, Maryland) where she obtained a Bachelors of Arts degree in Sociology/Criminal Justice and further studied at that University at the Post Graduate Level.

Her studies continued in England, where she sought to fulfill her childhood quest which she had from age eight of being an attorney. She was called to the bar of England and Wales and subsequently returned to the Bahamas where she was admitted to the Bahamas Bar in 1998. Upon her return to the Bahamas she worked in the Attorney General's Office as Criminal Prosecutor, and eventually became an Assistant Director of Public Prosecutions in that Department. She has had a meaningful Public Service career having served as Deputy Registrar of the Registrar General's Office, together with a period of over ten years as a part-time lecturer at the College of the Bahamas. In March, 2011, Attorney Ferguson-Pratt transitioned into the Judiciary as a Stipendiary & Circuit Magistrate. In October, 2013 she was appointed Chief Magistrate of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas. At present she presides at Magistrate Court No. 9, which is a criminal court with its greatest focus on all matters relating to firearms at the summary level.

Chief Magistrate Pratt is a highly sought after motivational speaker, who passionately addresses individuals on pertinent issues affecting their social, educational, and spiritual development at schools, prisons, professional organizations, and church conferences, both nationally and internationally.

A very civic minded individual, she multitasks her various activities and is the founder of Joy International Charitable Foundation. This is a non-profit organization which was founded in May, 2013. It was born out of a desire to see humanity empowered. It's mandate is facilitated through a number of initiatives; the most recent being in November, 2018 at an Empowerment Conference which culminated with an awareness session on breast and prostate cancers in The Bahamas. The foundation is also engaged in social outreach to the disenfranchised.

Chief Magistrate Ferguson-Pratt is the proud mother of three (3) children. Joshua a second (2<sup>nd</sup>) year business student at Dalhousie University, Halifax, Canada and Jayden and Jordyn 6<sup>th</sup> grade students at St. Francis & Joseph Primary School Nassau, The Bahamas.

Mrs. Ferguson-Pratt believes in maximizing the potential of people. She uses her platform at work not only to adjudicate, but she sees it as an opportunity to encourage, motivate and inspire persons of all walks of life.