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Kamala Harris, a Caribbean-American, Accepts U.S. Vice-Presidential Nomination

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WASHINGTON, CMC – Caribbean American Senator Kamala Harris on Wednesday night accepted the US Democratic Party’s nomination for the vice presidency.

Harris, the daughter of Jamaican and Indian immigrants, accepted the nomination on the third night of the virtual Democratic National Convention (DNC).

Just over a week ago, US Democratic Presidential Candidate Joe Biden selected Harris, a senator from California, as his vice-presidential running mate in the Democratic race to defeat incumbent Republican President Donald J. Trump in November 3 US Presidential Elections.

Harris, 55, is the first Black woman and the first person of Indian heritage to be nominated for national office by a major US party.

She is also only the fourth woman in American history to be selected for a presidential ticket.

In 1972, the late Shirley Anita Chisholm, née St. Hill, the daughter of a Barbadian mother and a Guyanese father, became the first Caribbean and African American candidate to seek nomination from a major US political party for President of the United States.

In her 17-minute acceptance speech, Harris said her nomination is “testament to the dedication of generations” before her.

“Women and men who believed so fiercely in the promise of equality, liberty and justice for all,” she said, noting that this week marks the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment of the US Constitution, which guaranteed women’s right to vote.

“Yet, so many of the Black women who helped secure that victory were still prohibited from voting, long after its ratification,” she added. “But they were undeterred. Without fanfare or recognition, they organized, testified, rallied, marched and fought — not just for their vote but for a seat at the table.

“These women and the generations that followed worked to make democracy and opportunity real in the lives of all of us who followed,” Harris continued. “They paved the way for the trailblazing leadership of Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton. And these women inspired us to pick up the torch — and fight on.”

Among those women, she said, were Mary Church Terrell, Mary McCleod Bethune, Fannie Lou Hamer, Diane Nash, Constance Baker Motley and Chisholm.

“We’re not often taught their stories,” Harris said. “But, as Americans, we all stand on their shoulders.”

She also invoked another woman, “whose shoulders I stand on.

“And that’s my mother — Shyamala Gopalan Harris,” Harris said, stating that her mother came to America from India at 19 to pursue her dream of curing cancer.

She said her mother met her father, Donald Harris, at the University of California Berkeley, who had come from Jamaica to study economics.

“They fell in love in that most American way — while marching together for justice in the civil rights movement of the 1960s,” Harris disclosed.

And after spending some time delving into the importance of family and how she was raised, Harris dug into Trump’s “failed leadership” and why America must elect the Biden-Harris ticket to lead the country.

“Donald Trump’s failure of leadership has cost lives and livelihoods,” Harris said. “If you’re a parent struggling with your child’s remote learning, or you’re a teacher struggling on the other side of that screen, you know that what we’re doing right now isn’t working.

“And we are a nation that’s grieving,” she added. “Grieving the loss of life, the loss of jobs, the loss of opportunities, the loss of normalcy and, yes, the loss of certainty.

“And while this virus (COVID-19) touches us all, let’s be honest, it is not an equal opportunity offender – Black, Latino and indigenous people are suffering and dying disproportionately,” Harris continued. “This is not a coincidence. It is the effect of structural racism – of inequities in education and technology, health care and housing, job security and transportation; the injustice in reproductive and maternal health care; in the excessive use of force by police; and in our broader criminal justice system.

“And let’s be clear — there is no vaccine for racism,” she said. “We’ve gotta do the work. The constant chaos leaves us adrift; the incompetence makes us feel afraid; the callousness makes us feel alone; it’s a lot. And here’s the thing: We can do better and deserve so much more.”

Harris urged Americans to elect a president “who will bring something different, something better and do the important work; a president who will bring all of us together — Black, White, Latino, Asian, indigenous — to achieve the future we collectively want. We must elect Joe Biden.

“Make no mistake, the road ahead will not be not easy,” Harris noted. “We will stumble; we may fall short. But I pledge to you that we will act boldly and deal with our challenges honestly. We will speak truths. And we will act with the same faith in you that we ask you to place in us.”