

Bio for Symone Sanders Townsend

Symone Sanders Townsend has never been one to wait her turn. A powerhouse in politics and media, she has spent her career breaking barriers, shaping national conversations, and using her voice to advocate for change. From campaign war rooms to the White House to the anchor desk, Symone has made her mark as a strategist, communicator, and trusted political analyst.

Her meteoric rise began in 2016 when, at just 25 years old, she became the youngest presidential press secretary in history while working on Senator Bernie Sanders's campaign. Her sharp political instincts and commanding presence earned her a spot on Rolling Stone's list of 16 Young Americans shaping the 2016 election. But that was just the beginning.

By 29, she had published her first book, *No, You Shut Up: Speaking Truth to Power and Reclaiming America*, and played a pivotal role as a senior advisor in President Joe Biden's 2020 campaign. Shortly after, she made history once again, joining the Biden-Harris administration as Deputy Assistant to President Biden and Senior Advisor and Chief Spokesperson for Vice President Kamala Harris—the first Black woman to ever hold that position.

Beyond the political arena, Symone has always been passionate about problem-solving and social justice. Before stepping onto the national stage, she was a fierce advocate for juvenile justice reform, serving as the national chair of the Coalition of Juvenile Justice Emerging Leaders Committee. She later launched her own consulting firm, helping clients navigate the complex intersection of politics, policy, and public messaging.

Her voice has also resonated across major media platforms. A former CNN political commentator, Symone brought her signature blend of insight and straight talk to television before making the leap to MS NOW (formerly MSNBC), where she launched her own show, *SYMONE*, before moving to co-host *The Weekend*. Today, as co-host of the primetime show *The Weeknight*, she continues to provide essential analysis on the most pressing issues facing the country.

In addition to her work in politics and media, Symone has been deeply involved in academia, serving as a resident fellow at Georgetown University's Institute for Politics and Public Service, Harvard's Institute of Politics at the Kennedy School and the University of Southern California's Center for the Political Future. Through these roles, she has mentored the next generation of political leaders, sharing insights from her career at the highest levels of government and media.

A North Omaha, Nebraska native, Symone has been recognized for her contributions with numerous honors, including an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from Spelman College and American University as well as Black Enterprise's Luminary Award. She is a proud member of the Cherry Blossom (DC) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated and when she's not on-air or in the halls of power, she enjoys life in Washington, D.C., with her husband, Shawn Townsend.

Through every chapter of her career, Symone Sanders Townsend has remained a force—challenging conventions, shaping discourse, and ensuring that the voices of everyday people are heard at the highest levels.