

# HISPANIC-LATINO HERITAGE MONTH 2011

## SONIA SOTOMAYOR

**“DELEGATING WORK WORKS, PROVIDED THE ONE DELEGATING WORKS, TOO.” — ROBERT HALF**

Born in 1954 to a Puerto Rican family in the Bronx, Sotomayor faced many challenges throughout her childhood, including the death of her father when she was nine. She found that books helped her cope with the loss, especially those featuring fictional detective Nancy Drew. From there, she developed an interest in discovering the truth, which ultimately led her to pursue a career in law.



<http://bit.ly/YFkme>

- Born June 25, 1954, she is an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States and the first person of Hispanic/Latino descent to serve on the court.
- After graduating from high school as valedictorian, Sotomayor graduated Summa Cum Laude from Princeton University in 1976 with a bachelor of arts. She received her J.D. from Yale Law School in 1979.
- She served as an assistant district attorney in Manhattan from 1979 to 1984 and as a civil litigator from 1984 to 1992.
- She was appointed to the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York in 1992 and to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in 1998. She has served on the U.S. Supreme Court since 2009.
- She was elected a member of the American Philosophical Society in 2002. She was given the Outstanding Latino Professional Award in 2006 by the Latino/a Law Students Association.
- In June 2010, the Bronxdale Houses development, where Sotomayor grew up, was renamed after her. The Justice Sonia Sotomayor Houses and Justice Sonia Sotomayor Community Center comprise 28 buildings with some 3,500 residents. While many New York housing developments are named after well-known people, this was only the second to be named after a former resident.

But that goal was out of reach without an education. Her mother instilled in her an appreciation for that, which Sotomayor translated into graduating as her high school's valedictorian and receiving a full scholarship to Princeton. She earned her B.A. in 1976, and immediately went on to Yale Law School, once again on a full scholarship.

After receiving her J.D., she worked for five years as a Manhattan assistant district attorney before going into private civil practice. It wasn't until 1992, when then-President George H.W. Bush nominated her for a seat on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, that her judicial career began. She went on to serve on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in 1998, and in 2009 was nominated for the U.S. Supreme Court. She ultimately became the first Supreme Court justice of Hispanic/Latino descent.

Despite serving on the highest court, Sotomayor still finds time to support education, especially in the legal field. She is currently a lecturer at Columbia University Law School. She was an adjunct professor at New York University School of Law until 2007.



<http://bit.ly/agK3LA>

**“A GREAT LEADER'S COURAGE TO FULFILL HIS VISION COMES FROM PASSION, NOT POSITION.”**

**— JOHN MAXWELL**