



# Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor headlines Presidential Speaker Series

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## Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor headlines Presidential Speaker Series



Elana Bush | Photography Editor

Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor visited campus as the first event in the Presidential Speaker Series.

Deeya Patel (<https://tulanehullabaloo.com/staff/?writer=Deeya%20Patel>), News Editor  
October 26, 2019

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Two hours before the event, eager students began filling McAlister Auditorium.

Last night, 1,334 students and faculty attended the first event in the Tulane's Presidential Speaker Series featuring Sonia Sotomayor, associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. Sotomayor has served on the Supreme Court for 10 years and is the first Latina justice to be appointed.

Ariel Campos, a Tulane Law School student and president of the Tulane Latinx Law Student Association, opened the event with an introductory address.

"As a law student and proud Latina who comes from a family of hardworking immigrants from Mexico, I see Justice Sotomayor as everything I aspire to be as an attorney," Campos said.



Elana Bush | Photography Editor

Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor visited campus as the first event in the Presidential Speaker Series.

"When I watched her nomination speech, I saw a fellow Latina being appointed to the highest court in our nation. This made me feel that anything was possible for me and others who have traditionally not had a seat at the table of positions in power."

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President Mike Fitts welcomed Sotomayor onto the stage, introducing a classmate with whom he attended Yale Law School 46 years ago.

# Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor headlines Presidential Speaker Series



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SUBSCRIBE (http://business.tulanehullabaloo.com/subscribe-preview) Justice Sotomayor discussed her book "Just Ask: Be Different, Be Brave, Be You

(https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2019/09/01/755845325/just-ask-says-sonia-sotomayor-she-knows-what-its-like-to-feel-different),” which promotes understanding others’ differences, particularly disabilities — something she said she believes drove her to pursue law.

Sotomayor shared stories about her life as a diabetic. She described being met with contempt fueled by misunderstanding throughout her life.

“Anger that’s controlled, not wild anger ... but the kind of anger that you makes you want to say, ‘That’s wrong and I want to change it. That’s controlled anger,” Sotomayor said.

When Fitts began to call on students who had pre-submitted questions for Sotomayor, the justice insisted on standing up and walking around the crowd.

“I don’t like standing on stage. I want to see your faces. And I want the people sitting in the back not to stare at me on the screen. Because you can watch TV on the internet, right? So I’m going to walk around.”

She made her way through every aisle of the auditorium, holding the hand of every person sitting in the aisle.

Tulane students posed several questions to the justice, including a question from Undergraduate Student Government President Joseph Sotile. Sotile asked what gives the justice hope.

“You do,” Sotomayor said.

When asked how she maintains her individual voice on the Supreme Court, Sotomayor spoke about her role model, Justice John Paul Stevens, who pushed her to maintain her beliefs even if they conflicted with others’, and emphasized how students too can emulate this.

“Every single one of you is charged with figuring out what steps you can take in the world to make it better,” Sotomayor said. “Not all of you can be Supreme Court justices ... If you don’t like something that’s happening out there, get up and change it. Don’t complain about it, don’t give up. If you can vote – anyone who misses an election, shame on you.”



Elana Bush | Photography Editor

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Sotomayor concluded the question and answer period addressing a question from Fitts about what she would have done if she hadn’t gone to law school.

Sotomayor joked that she would have instead pursued baseball, then answered more seriously that she had wanted to be a lawyer and a judge since was 10 years-old.

“I was lucky I found my passion early ... What you have to look for is that thing that makes you passionate. That thing that engages you in a way that makes you at the end of a night studying wanting more ... And being honest enough with yourself not to judge your passion by other people’s expectations.”

Fitts closed the talk by giving Sotomayor a Tulane baseball jersey, with “Sotomayor” written on the back along with the No. 10 to signify her 10

years on the Supreme Court.

Fitts also announced the creation of a full-tuition Tulane scholarship under Sotomayor’s name.

“We have established a four-year, full tuition scholarship for a student at Tulane who is dedicated to public service in honor of Justice Sotomayor,” Fitts said.

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- Trying to find evidence of the ghost in JL
- Partying on Frenchmen
- Staying inside to watch my favorite spooky movie

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