Newsroom: NYT: Mancheno '13 Meets Sotomayor

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NYT: Mancheno '13 Meets Sotomayor

The New York Times covered the inaugural class of the Immigrant Justice Corps, and a surprise visit from U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor.

NEW YORK CITY, Sept. 4, 2014: The fresh-faced lawyers included refugees from violence and persecution in Central America, as well as the grandchildren of refugees from Eastern Europe. They arrived at the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, in Manhattan, on Thursday in similar shades of gray and black suits, poised to continue their training in a new program to help represent immigrants.

Then a familiar face appeared unannounced in the courtroom, as adored by this group for her seat on the United States Supreme Court as for her upbringing by Puerto Rican parents in the Bronx. Justice Sonia Sotomayor ambled to the podium and said, “Well, I guess you know who I am.”

Hands covered open mouths, and gasps rose from the 25 lawyers, who make up the inaugural class of the Immigrant Justice Corps, whose goal is to address a growing problem: the dearth of qualified lawyers to represent immigrants facing deportation and other legal problems. […]

The lawyers each rose and told her of their own winding journeys. Luis Mancheno [RWU '13] said he fled from Ecuador in 2008 and sought asylum in the United States because he was persecuted for being gay. […]

After everyone had spoken, the lawyers, advocates and Judge Katzmann surrounded Justice Sotomayor at the front of the courtroom for a ceremonial photo, a sea of monochrome suits that belied a spectrum of diverse origins.