In 1998 Sotomayor was appointed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. On May 26, 2009, President Barack Obama announced his nomination of Sotomayor to the Supreme Court. The nomination was confirmed by the U.S. Senate in August 2009 by a vote of 68 to 31, making Sotomayor the first Latina Supreme Court Justice in U.S. history.

“I made the quantum leap: If that was the prosecutor’s job, then the guy who made the decision to dismiss the case was the judge. That was what I was going to be.”

“No, my job as a prosecutor is to do justice, and justice is served when a guilty man is convicted and an innocent man is not. That’s what I’m going to do. I’m going to be a judge!”

“I don’t believe we should bend the Constitution under any circumstance. It says what it says. We should do honor to it. As a Supreme Court Justice, Sotomayor and the other Justices study the Constitution to solve arguments by giving his or her opinion.”

Visitors to the National Portrait Gallery can see Sonia Sotomayor’s likeness in Nelson Shanks’s portrait, a tribute to the four female justices who have served on the Supreme Court.