

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: [Audrey Fisch, Ph.D.](#)

President, More Than Bootstraps

908-397-0893

[audrey@morethanbootstraps.org](mailto:audrey@morethanbootstraps.org)



### **Melissa Reyes Selected for Sonia and Celina Sotomayor Judicial Internship Program**

WESTFIELD and PASSAIC, NEW JERSEY – July 15, 2025.

Melissa Reyes, a former Program Resource Fellow (2024-2025) in [More Than Bootstraps](#) (MTB) and recent graduate of [Dartmouth College](#), has been selected for the [Sonia and Celina Sotomayor Judicial Internship Program](#). She will serve as an intern at the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York.

The Sotomayor Program's College Division includes (1) an LSAT boot camp to focus the college students on the best law school to which they can gain entry, (2) rigorous academic, professional, and personal programming from legal research and writing to professional branding, wellness coaching, and soft skills trainings, and (3) a judicial internship experience to provide practical experience and mentorship opportunities. The goal of the program is to support diverse and underrepresented college students who are committed to bringing their unique voice to the legal field and provide students with the skills and resources necessary to successfully apply to law school and become a practicing attorney.

Melissa, a 2021 graduate of Passaic Preparatory Academy, is a QuestBridge, Gates, and Beinecke scholar at Dartmouth, where she graduated in June 2025 as a salutatorian with a major in Latin American, Latino, and Caribbean Studies and a minor in geography. She studied Latino communities and immigrant labor organizing in the United States. In 2022, Melissa served as a New Jersey Governor's Hispanic Fellow and interned at [Immigration and American Citizen Organization](#) (IACO).



At Dartmouth, she served as a co-director for the FUERZA Farmworkers' Fund, an organization working with migrant farmworkers in New Hampshire. Within MTB, she has invested her time and energy in supporting her peers and her mentees, helping others find their way to and through higher education. After completing the Sotomayor Judicial Internship Program, Melissa will launch a post-graduate public service project with Mi Casa es Puebla, supported by a \$30,000 Richard D. Lombard '53 Public Service Fellowship from Dartmouth. She will create legal education resources, conduct oral history interviews, and help build community programming for Mexican immigrants from Puebla.

“I’m excited for the opportunities to keep learning how to advocate for immigrant and working-class communities like the one I come from. As the daughter of Poblano immigrants and someone who grew up in Passaic, these experiences mean a lot. I’m especially grateful to More Than Bootstraps for always encouraging me to put myself out there.”

“Melissa is incredibly talented and hard-working, and her success reflects the potential of many first-generation college students to excel in higher education,” said **Audrey Fisch**, president of More Than Bootstraps. “We are thrilled that Melissa is able to participate in the Sotomayor Judicial Internship Program so that she has all the resources she needs to continue on her professional and academic journey.”

Grants and donations to More Than Bootstraps fund the monthly stipends that allow the high school and college students in the program some time and space to devote to their professional development and college-going activities while still meeting their financial responsibilities. Interested donors are invited to visit the MTB website: [www.morethanbootstraps.org/donate](http://www.morethanbootstraps.org/donate).

###

#### About MORE THAN BOOTSTRAPS

[More Than Bootstraps](http://www.morethanbootstraps.org) builds a community of first-generation, underrepresented students who empower each other to access and succeed in higher education. *More Than Bootstraps is a 501(c)3 organization, Tax ID 83-2245008.* For more information, visit [www.morethanbootstraps.org](http://www.morethanbootstraps.org) or call (908) 397-0893.

MTB DIGITAL PRESS KIT: [www.morethanbootstraps.org/mtb-digital-press-kit](http://www.morethanbootstraps.org/mtb-digital-press-kit)

#### About the Sonia and Celina Sotomayor Judicial Internship Program

The Sotomayor Program has helped over 400 high school, college, and law school students gain experience with the legal system and develop their professional skills. For more information, visit <https://www.scsjip.org/>.



[www.facebook.com/morethanbootstraps](http://www.facebook.com/morethanbootstraps)



[www.Twitter.com/mbootstraps](https://www.twitter.com/mbootstraps)



[www.linkedin.com/company/more-than-bootstraps/](http://www.linkedin.com/company/more-than-bootstraps/)



<https://www.instagram.com/morethanbootstraps/>