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Sotomayor Pays Visit To The Bronx, Urges Kids To "Dream Big"

By: Amanda Farinacci

Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor paid a visit Saturday to her native Bronx borough.

Sotomayor spent the day at Lehman College with hundreds of children who took part in the Bronx Children's Museum's summer-long "Dream Big" initiative.

Under the five-week program, kids ages six through 10 used photography, painting, printmaking and puppetry to create artwork related to the justice's life and journey, as well as their own.

"We just worked on values like responsibility. We even go swimming and trips. We've been doing leadership lunch, you have to be a leader not a follower," said one young participant.

"To really learn who this person was, what she's accomplished is important. And to get the opportunity to see that she's a real life person, and she's very personable, very nurturing, I think is just something that is going to be a lifelong experience for them," said Hope Harley of the Bronx Children's Museum.

The kids say they particularly loved learning about how Sotomayor overcame her struggles as a child.

"When she was small it was very difficult for her to write but when she got used to it she loved to write poems and stories," said one young participant.

"I like about her... she's gonna be a justice for her life until she retires," said another.

Justice Sotomayor also attended a performance by jazz composer and musician Arturo O'Farrill and the Afro Latin Jazz Orchestra.

She was joined by Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Congressman Jose Serrano and Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Junior.

While Sotomayor did not take questions from the media, she did speak with the kids, telling them that no dream was too big if they worked hard and stayed focused.

Sonia Manzano, the actress who plays Maria on Sesame Street, was the master of ceremonies for the day's activities.

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