

Nov. 21, 2024

Rice alumna Adrogué makes history as judge on new Texas Business Court

BY DAVID MEDINA

SPECIAL TO RICE NEWS

Rice University alumna Sofia Adrogué was sworn in as judge of the 11th Division Texas Business Court Nov. 19 at the Harris County Courthouse in a room filled with 300 well-wishers, including family members, judges, public officials, attorneys, friends and Rice alumni.

“My goal has been to ‘walk the talk,’ from my commitment to the highest standards of the legal profession through hard work to connecting with all people for the greater good of our community,” Adrogué said at the ceremony. “At the end, I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work, the more I live.”



Sofia Adrogué during her swearing-in ceremony as judge of the 11th Division Texas Business Court. Photo by Jeff Fitlow.

Former Justice of the Texas Supreme Court Ruby K. Sondock administered the oath of office in a chamber that is home to the 1st Court of Appeals. After donning a black robe, Adrogué gave an impassioned speech

about her immigrant past, her family, her commitment to hard work, justice and serving the community.

“On this momentous occasion, an unwavering thank you to my parents, Dr. Horacio J. Adrogué and Sara Adrogué, as they are truly the genesis on a litany of levels,” Sofia Adrogué said. “It is through them that I learned about relentless work ethic and drive, the importance of education, intellectual curiosity, character and humanity first and always.”

Gov. Greg Abbott created the Texas Business Court last year to provide an efficient and predictable mechanism for businesses to resolve complex commercial disputes in Texas. The 11th Division Texas Business Court is composed of Brazoria, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Matagorda and Wharton counties. Abbott also appointed Houston lawyer Grant Dorfman to serve on the court.

Justice David M. Medina, who was at the ceremony, said, “It was a historic day. Sofia Adrogué — the first judge for this new court; the first female judge for this court; the first Latina judge for this court; the first immigrant judge for this court; the first American from Argentina in this court; and as far as I know, the first Adrogué judge.”

Adrogué is a former senior partner of Diamond McCarthy LLP. Her longtime partner, Allan B. Diamond, applauded Adrogué’s appointment.

“Sofia is a tireless devotee to all the best things about humanity as well as a dedicated servant to the public and the legal profession,” Diamond said. “She will unflinchingly devote her talent, skills and intellect to making the first-ever Texas Business Court a model example of how justice should be impartially applied in complex business disputes, while displaying the highest level of demeanor and appropriate grace from the bench. I am proud to have been her partner throughout the past couple of decades and look forward to her positive influence on the shape and direction of building the

best business court in the nation.”

Adrogué is the founder and editor of the Texas Business Litigation journal. She started her legal career as a clerk for the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. She has served on more than 15 boards, including most recently Houston First and the City of Houston Mayor’s Hispanic Advisory Board, and is a fellow of the American Bar Foundation, Texas Bar Foundation and Houston Bar Foundation. Adrogué also has served as president of the Houston Law Review Alumni Association Board of Directors and is a member of the Hispanic Bar Association of Houston, Mexican-American Bar Association of Houston, Texas Women Lawyers and Texas Supreme Court Advisory Committee. She has received more than 40 awards and has been recognized for her public service by the city of Houston with proclamations of “Sofia Adrogué Day.”

Adrogué received a Bachelor of Arts in English and legal studies from Rice, graduating magna cum laude Phi Beta Kappa in 1988, and she received a law degree from the University of Houston Law Center, graduating magna cum laude in 1991 — both on full academic scholarships. She is also an alumna of the Harvard Business School.