**2007 WOY ELITE**

**Sofía Adrogue**  
Attorney and entrepreneur  
*Company:* Looper Reed & McGraw  
Currently: “My story is one of intense work, passion, and, truly, a little luck,” says Sofía Adrogue, a Houston-based attorney. “I have sought to return in multiples all the opportunities the United States has provided me – whether through my professional or my community endeavors. As an immigrant, I feel an obligation to give back.” Ms. Adrogue, who emigrated from Buenos Aires with her family at age 9, practices law in Texas [she is also licensed in the District of Columbia] as one of fewer than 5,000 Hispanic attorneys. She handles business, health care, international litigation, and is a prolific author and speaker of more than 50 publications and 90 speeches. She graduated from Rice University and received her J.D. from the University of Houston Law Center. In 2006, Ms. Adrogue was accepted to the Harvard Business School Owner/President Management Program. She’s scheduled to graduate in 2008.

**Alba Colon**  
Manager for NASCAR Nextel Cup program  
*Company:* General Motors Racing  
Currently: Ms. Colon is leading a crew of engineers who design cars for the GM Racing team, and she’s still beaming after her squad’s victory at the NASCAR Daytona 500. Ms. Colon was born in Spain and received a mechanical engineering degree from the University of Puerto Rico. GM hired her in 1994 as a data acquisition engineer for GM’s Oval Track Group, which was then composed of NASCAR Winston Cup, Craftsman Truck, ASA, and Busch Grand National programs. Ms. Colon was named to her current position in 2001. She said she manages to juggle her hectic work schedule with her private life.” When I was younger, I was thinking about work 24 hours a day,” she says. “But, as you get older, you learn to disconnect yourself from work and make time for your private life. I’m married, but it takes a very understanding person because my weekends are very busy.”

**Nina Garcia**  
Director of Fashion  
*Company:* Elle Magazine  
Currently: Landing her first job in the highly competitive fashion industry was as tough as moving up the ranks of the business, Ms. Garcia recalls. “I couldn’t apply to certain companies because they weren’t looking to hire people in a very junior capacity and who didn’t have papers,” says the Columbia-born fashion editor. “I did get sponsored, but I really had to prove myself.” Her perseverance paid off when she arrived at Elle magazine, where she was named fashion director in 2000. Being bicultural, once her biggest obstacle, has turned out to be her biggest asset in an industry that thrives on individuality. “I really think it gives you a way of looking at things that is not in the expected way,” Ms Garcia explains. “That’s what’s so wonderful about America, that you have all these inputs from other nationalities, especially in a creative business.” Ms. Garcia can be seen weekly as a judge on the TV series “Project Runway.”

**Marisa Lago**  
Global Head of Compliance  
*Company:* Citigroup  
Currently: Ms. Lago, a physician-turned-lawyer, serves as a quasi-corporate detective making sure that the multinational firm and its clients don’t get into any legal trouble. Ms. Lago says she’s led a “charmed career backed up by incredibly hard work, perseverance and intelligence.” Before joining Citigroup in 2001 to help create and head the company’s global workforce development office, Ms. Lago worked in both the private and public sector. She previously worked at the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission as director of the Office of International Affairs. A self-described workaholic, she says the keys to climbing the corporate success ladder are finding the right company and people to work with, loving what you do, and “being passionate about it.” And, of course, “hard work, that’s an indispensable ingredient of climbing the corporate ladder, no one should ever try and sugar coat it.”

**Jenny Martinez**  
Associate Professor of Law  
*Workplace:* Stanford Law School  
Currently: Before she argued her first case before the U.S. Supreme Court, concern arose that she didn’t have the necessary gravitas. “As a young woman, it’s harder to be taken seriously,” she explains. “I don’t have the same authority as a white-haired guy.” But what she lacks in old-boy clout, she makes up for in toughness, intelligence, and passion. After graduating from Yale University, she studied at Harvard Law School, specializing in international criminal law, terrorism, and human rights. Today she balances motherhood and her professorship at Stanford. Her advice for those studying law is to, “Find what your are passionate about and work within that realm of the law and to seek out mentors who can help you along the way.”