

# Influential Women Features Dr. Sharon Cuba Rodriguez: A Pioneer in School Social Work and Community Advocacy

NEWARK, NJ, UNITED STATES, October 23, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Celebrating Over Two Decades of Leadership, Mentorship, and Dedication to Students, Families, and Marginalized Communities

Influential Women proudly recognizes Dr. Sharon Cuba Rodriguez in its 2025 series, celebrating her as a dedicated School Social Worker and Educator with over two decades of experience in mental health, education, and community service. Holding a Ph.D. in Social Work from Walden University, Dr. Rodriguez has devoted her career to supporting students with disabilities, advancing HIV/AIDS education and prevention, and empowering marginalized communities through



advocacy and direct service. Her expertise spans crisis intervention, nonprofit leadership, anger management, and conflict resolution, positioning her as a trusted professional and a strong voice for equity in education.

Dr. Rodriguez's journey began in an urban community where she witnessed struggles she did not fully understand at the time. Proudly Puerto Rican, she was brought to the United States by her mother at the age of five. Her mother frequently emphasized the importance of a better education and brighter future, though the specifics were often unclear to Sharon.

Initially, she pursued accounting and business, driven by a desire to excel academically and professionally. However, after discovering she had dyslexia, Dr. Rodriguez realized those fields might not align with her strengths. Seeking guidance, she turned to a counselor, who encouraged her to explore social work as a practical and fulfilling career path. Taking that advice

to heart, she transitioned into social work, where she quickly found her true calling.

Over the past 15 to 18 years, Dr. Rodriguez has worked closely with adolescents and children in school settings, providing critical support to students and families. Her background in criminal justice enhances her ability to understand, relate to, and advocate for individuals navigating complex social systems. Approaching her work holistically, she recognizes not only the challenges students face but also the cultural, emotional, and systemic factors that shape their experiences.

Throughout her career, Dr. Rodriguez has been an active force in her community. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she organized food, mask, and sanitizer distribution, spearheaded neighborhood clean-up efforts, and coordinated school supply giveaways for students. In addition, as an adjunct professor, she has taught graduate-level courses on trauma, psychopathology, research, policy, human behavior, multiculturalism, and international social work.

Dr. Rodriguez is also a sought-after presenter, covering topics such as urban school social work, intimate partner violence in Puerto Rican communities, self-care, and cultural diversity. A first-generation scholar, she draws from her lived experiences to inspire and mentor others. She serves on the boards of the National Association for Social Workers, the National Organization for Human Services, and the School Social Work Association of America, advocating for systemic change and professional development.

Dr. Rodriguez attributes her success to perseverance and the joy of witnessing others succeed. One pivotal moment came when a high school counselor told her not to bother applying to college because it “wasn’t for me.” She ignored that advice, pursued higher education, and years later proudly earned her doctorate, a testament to her resilience and determination. Her guiding advice for young women entering social work is clear: “Own your voice, protect your energy, and never underestimate your power. Take care of yourself first before caring for others. Learn to say no without guilt. Burnout is not proof of commitment—balance is.”

Currently, one of the greatest challenges in her field is addressing growing inequities in education, particularly in schools serving marginalized communities. Dr. Rodriguez emphasizes that inadequate funding and resources exacerbate systemic barriers and impact educational outcomes, making advocacy and community support more important than ever.

The values guiding Dr. Rodriguez in her work and life are advocacy, resilience, and a commitment to equity. She has long stood up for those overlooked by the systems meant to support them. As a first-generation college student who earned her undergraduate, master’s, and doctoral degrees, she has transformed personal and generational challenges into purpose. A lifelong learner and mentor, Dr. Sharon Cuba Rodriguez continues to inspire her students, colleagues, and community, proving that resilience is not just survival—it is the fuel for meaningful change.

Learn More about Dr. Sharon Cuba Rodriguez:

Through her Influential Women profile, <https://influentialwomen.com/connect/sharon-cubarodriguez>

Influential Women

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