

# Birmingham Lawyer Cristina Rodriguez Recognized as 16,000<sup>th</sup> Member



Rodriguez

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At the October Admissions Ceremony conducted by the Alabama State Bar, Cristina Rodriguez of Birmingham became the 16,000th attorney to join the organization. “I’m thrilled to be a part of such a distinguished and talented group,” said Rodriguez.

ASB President Mark White said, “Cristina represents part of the future face of the legal profession in Alabama—a young, second-career professional from a diverse background who has rendered service to the community.”

Law is a second career for the 38-year-old Rodriguez. Her first was spent as a cancer researcher. “I enjoyed my time in cancer research, but I always felt that I could do more. From childhood, I had a strong interest in science and service to the community. Now I hope to find a way to merge law and science together, that I would really enjoy.”

Rodriguez earned her B.S. (microbiology, 1993) from Auburn University, a master’s in public health (epidemiology, 1994), a Ph.D. in nutrition sciences/chemoprevention (1999) and a post-doctoral fellowship in pathology prior to earning her J.D. from the University of Alabama (2008).

Before passing the bar, Rodriguez clerked with the Birmingham firm of Whatley Drake & Kallas, utilizing her science background in pharmaceutical litigation. She also did an externship for the U.S. Attorney’s Office and served as judicial intern for U.S. Northern District Court Judge Karon Bowdre. In 2008, she was recognized by the state bar with a law student pro bono award and her work on federal preemption of pharmaceutical-related state tort claims was published in *The John Marshall Law Review*.

Rodriguez is married to another state bar member, Steve R. Burford (Spain & Gillon, LLC), and they have a 16-month old son, Carlos. She is the daughter of Rodrigo and Dorotea Rodriguez who live in Auburn. Her father’s family was living in Cuba when he was sent to the U.S. alone at the age of 17 to escape the communist regime. Her father enrolled at LSU where he met Dorotea, who was from Columbia, and, as they say, the rest is history.

Not surprisingly, Rodriguez is bi-lingual which she believes has proven to be a great gift from her parents. Rodriguez says she is interested in learning more about the bar and hopes to put her fluency in Spanish to work in some capacity. “There is a lot the bar could do in terms of providing courtroom interpretation services and reaching the underserved Hispanic population with legal assistance.”

