



**Eileen Connor** is Director of Litigation for the Project on Predatory Student Lending at the Legal Services Center of Harvard Law School. The Project is the first legal services practice in the country focused solely on representing former students of the for-profit college industry. The goal is to prevent and undo the transfer of taxpayer funds to large corporations that exploit the promise of higher education and provide vulnerable populations with useless degrees and illegitimate debt.

Eileen won the Rising Star award in 2017 for her invaluable work in *Salazar v. King*. In this case, Eileen sued the U.S. Department of Education on behalf of a group of former beauty school students whose school was closed in the 1990's due to pervasive fraud. Although the school had been closed for over 20 years, loan collections were never suspended nor did the Department of Education notify past students that they were eligible for discharge of those loans. Eileen requested that the Department of Education dismiss collections, and upon being denied that dismissal, sued, resulting in The Second Circuit ruling that the law "did not leave the fate of students who had been 'victimized by unscrupulous profiteers and their fraudulent schools' to the discretion of the DOE whose 'oversight systems ha[d] failed.'" This was an incredible victory for people who seek relief from powerful and fraudulent systems. This result was not possible without Eileen's brilliant strategy and application of the Administrative Procedures Act and the Higher Education Act.

Previously, Eileen was a Senior Staff Attorney in the Special Litigation Unit of the New York Legal Assistance Group, where she was counsel on multiple consumer class-action lawsuits concerning student loan debt, and a founder of NYLAG's For-Profit School Project. She was also a John J. Gibbons Fellow in Constitutional and Public Interest Law at Gibbons P.C.

Eileen was nominated alongside Legal Director Susan Shin of the New Economy Project.