

SHANLON WU

COHEN SEGLIAS PALLAS GREENHALL & FURMAN

What was the genesis of the idea/path that has made you a trailblazer?

One of the first referrals I got in private practice was a college student case at a major university where the parents had been unable to find a lawyer with the right skill set. They had tried criminal defense lawyers and even employment lawyers, but all were unfamiliar with these university systems. As I learned more about university discipline systems, I came to realize that they are really a *sui generis* class of cases with unique challenges.

What sort of change has resulted from the concept?

Parents and students of college, university and even middle-schoolers and high-schoolers are now better able to both further the educational process as well as better protect their educational and professional futures. Too often in the past, parents and students simply passively followed the lead of the schools believing that the same school that sought their admission and made them feel welcome would never take any negative action against them. Sadly, those assumptions were frequently wrong and devastating consequences would follow from blemishes on transcripts, suspension and expulsion.

What bearing will this have on the future?

Surprisingly, students and their parents are an under-served population. As an understanding of how student defense lawyers can aid them in facing threats to their education and career so too is an understanding growing among schools and universities that accountability runs both ways.

