

M.C. Sungaila in Stanford Magazine: Advocate for Immigrants Honored

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Mary-Christine “M.C.” Sungaila, ’88, received the 2017 Ellis Island Medal of Honor. The award recognizes the achievements of outstanding U.S. citizens, either naturalized or native-born, who embody American values of tolerance, compassion and service. An appellate lawyer and partner at the law firm Haynes Boone, Sungaila was honored for her deep commitment to advocating for the rights of women and girls, immigrants and the underprivileged. For Sungaila, who is of Lithuanian and Spanish heritage, the award is more than an accolade. “I’m really proud of the recognition it gives to our parents and grandparents,” she says. “It’s really much bigger than the individual person.”

Her recent accomplishments include successfully appealing to the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals the denial of a transgender woman’s asylum request; the decision in the case was one of the first by a federal appellate court to distinguish sexual orientation from gender identity in applications for asylum.

Excerpted from *Stanford Magazine*. To read the full article, click [here](#).