



**Regulation Matters:
a CLEAR conversation**

Episode 99: Innovation and Impact – Spotlight on CLEAR’s 2025 Award Recipients, Part 2 March 10, 2026

Line Dempsey: Welcome back to our podcast, Regulation Matters: a CLEAR conversation. Once again, I'm your host, Line Dempsey. I'm the Chief Compliance Officer with Riccobene Associates Family Dentistry, and we have practices in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia.

I've also been a board member and past president of CLEAR. As many of you are aware, the Council on Licensure Enforcement and Regulation, or CLEAR, is an association of individuals, agencies, and organizations that comprise the international community of professional and occupational regulation. This podcast is an opportunity for you to hear about current topics in our regulatory community.

Each year, CLEAR accepts nominations in several CLEAR award categories to honor contributions and highlight innovations in the regulatory field. The [2026 nomination](#) window is open now, and we invite you to consider recognizing a colleague. It's also a great time to share with you Part 2 of our conversations with the 2025 awards recipients.

The 2025 awards were presented in Chicago during our Annual Educational Conference. I had the chance to speak with some of our award recipients in person and reconnect with some virtually. I'm delighted to bring those conversations to you now.

.....
.....

Line: I'm excited to be here at the Annual Educational Conference to honor CLEAR's 2025 Investigative Excellence Award winner. This award recognizes an investigative team whose work goes above and beyond what is expected, protecting the public, and ensuring trust in professional regulation. This year's honor goes to the Division of Professions and Occupations in Colorado. Their work on the Return to Nature funeral home case not only exposed deeply troubling practices but also led to a swift regulatory action and new legislation that has strengthened oversight and consumer protection across the state. I'm pleased to be here today with Cindy Reinhardt. She is the program director of investigations. Cindy, welcome, and again, congratulations on the award.

Cindy Reinhardt: Hi, Line. Thanks for having us here today.

Line: Kevin is also here in attendance. I think you said you were going to be Cindy's hype man.

Kevin Huff: Yes, I am just the hype guy here to help Cindy out when she needs it. It's good to see you again.

Line: Yeah, absolutely. We've worked together on a lot of things over the years, and I certainly appreciate all the things that you've done with CLEAR. But let's get back to you, Cindy, here. So for those that may not be familiar, can you share a little bit about the Return to Nature funeral home case and why it was such a pivotal investigation for your team?

Cindy: Absolutely! In October of 2023, we received a complaint regarding the Return to Nature funeral home in Penrose, Colorado, which had an expired registration. The complaint was that there was a suspicious smell and insect activity coming from the building. Many unverified reports came out detailing what might be inside the building, including a large number of improperly stored human remains.

We went into the building with law enforcement. The building was found to be housing dozens of unrefrigerated, inappropriately stored bodies for an unknown amount of time. Despite these horrible conditions, the investigator provided subject matter expertise, obtained information for his investigation, as well as assisted law enforcement investigation, and stayed on scene in the ensuing couple of days to answer questions and provide any assistance.

The evidence the investigator gathered and the experience he provided were important factors leading to the criminal charges, as well as the Division's ability to file a cease and desist order against this location and a summary suspension against an additional funeral home that had the same owners.

Line: Wow! I mean, you know, the conditions that you guys encountered at the buildings, obviously, you know, I've read some of this, and obviously it was shocking and obviously unprecedented. How did the team stay focused on their investigative work while also, as we heard, you know, earlier this week in the conference, you know, we're human beings, right? That human element. How did you do that with such a difficult case?

Cindy: Yeah, it wasn't easy. As investigators, we tend to already compartmentalize the things we see in order to do our jobs without it affecting our ability to continue our work, as well as our personal lives and well-being.

Therefore, in the initial phases of the investigation, we kind of set aside the horrific nature of the case. It did become clear later on, though, that this case was like no others that we have ever had and

ended up affecting our mental health individually and as a team. I ensured my team was aware of external resources such as employee assistance programs, and Kevin and I, as well as the two other supervisors, made sure and continue to make sure to this day that we are open to anyone who needs to vent or process any issues that they find distressing.

Additionally, I had a licensed professional counselor come to speak with my team about secondary trauma and stress self-care with them, especially around stress and distressing issues and how important self-care is.

Line: That's fantastic. You know, in regulation like this, you know, things like this often lead to criminal charges and regulatory action, right? We see that. But this also sparked some significant legislative change. What was it like to see your investigation directly influence new laws and maybe even stronger protections for the public? Because that's where it really kind of—you have a different feel for that, right?

Cindy: Correct. It was a horrible situation, and we would never want the situation for the families of the deceased or the investigators or law enforcement or the community. But it did give us a lot of new legislation. We ended up getting two additional inspectors specifically for funeral homes. It allowed for a broader inspection authority and rules surrounding requirements around cleanliness, paperwork, refrigeration, and equipment requirements, which we previously couldn't do.

But it was, I think, fantastic for us to see the funeral home and crematory community provide feedback to us that the new regulations were good for them, and it gave legitimacy to their profession. So, it really felt good to us as investigators to see that happen.

Line: That's awesome. Well, you guys had to put things in motion pretty quickly, you know, after the new law was enacted. I think your team had to do, like, nearly 60 inspections across the state in, like, one month, right? So obviously hiring two new investigators is helpful in that. But this is also during the holidays and winter weather, right? What strategies did you use to kind of help pull your team together and accomplish that under such pressure and scrutiny, if you would?

Cindy: Sure. And might I say we hadn't hired the two new inspectors at that point. I think that because we were so affected as a team by the Return to Nature case, the team really felt a personal and professional responsibility to accomplish this task. I brought the team together, explained what the expectations were, and had them engage in the process of how we were going to get this done in such a short amount of time and in winter weather, and Colorado, of course, is not a nice place for winter weather.

This allowed them to take ownership of the work. And at the time this happened, we only had a couple of investigators who were trained to do these types of inspections. And my team, including Kevin and myself and the two supervisors, initially went out in twos and threes in an effort to get as many investigators trained as possible and as soon as possible so that we could spread out across the

state.

I specifically included my investigators who don't mind traveling throughout the state and don't have issues experiencing disturbing situations (because some investigators do). And as a team, we relied on each other to lend a hand where needed and support each other.

Line: So, you know, you still had your regular job to do, too, right? Like, you already have a busy caseload. How did you adapt to shifting priorities without compromising the quality of your other investigations when you're dealing with such a large case like this?

Cindy: Sure. You know, the team regularly shifts priorities as new fires develop. So they kind of handled it like they regularly do, shifting the priorities. They always have a good idea of where all of their cases lie, as well as the supervisors and myself. And if needed, they work longer on certain days to make up the difference. But we also came together as a team and helped each other out as needed, shifting cases around and tasks around to other investigators who were not involved in the inspections. And they kind of helped with the overflow, I guess.

Line: Excellent. Well, and earlier you mentioned, like, you even got feedback from some of the business owners, right, maybe even thanking you guys because of basically strengthening the trust that the public has in the profession. How important, obviously how rare is it that we get to hear that, right? But how important is that kind of feedback in reinforcing the value of that work?

Cindy: Yeah, very important. In a world where we are criticized for doing the work that we do more often than not, it was refreshing to receive positive feedback for the good work that we do on a daily basis. We do this work on a daily basis, and we do get criticized a lot. And so it was amazing to get that feedback from the community to say, like, 'hey, we're glad that this is happening. We're glad that these regulations are coming into place. We're glad that you're here inspecting our, you know, our business' because it brings legitimacy to the ones who are really passionate about the death industry versus the bad actors.

Line: Right. Excellent. Well, Cindy, thank you again and Kevin for joining us here at the CLEAR Annual Educational Conference. And again, congratulations to you and the team on receiving the 2025 Investigative Excellence Award. That work shows how careful and dedicated investigations can directly safeguard the public, along with bring about lasting improvements in regulation. We appreciate your commitment and the professionalism your team demonstrated under a very challenging circumstance. And we look forward to seeing what comes next with your team. So, thank you.

Cindy: Thank you, Line. It was nice to be here.

Line: Absolutely!

Line: At the annual conference, we recognized the Utah Department of Commerce, winners of CLEAR's 2025 Regulatory Excellence Award. This award honors individuals, teams, or agencies that demonstrate leadership, vision, and creativity in strengthening regulation and protecting the public. Our winner is the Utah Department of Commerce's collaborative team, including the Office of Professional Licensure Review, the Division of Professional Licensing and the Office of Artificial Intelligence Policy. Their work has reshaped behavioral health licensure in Utah, expanding access to care, ensuring strong safeguards and creating a forward-looking framework for AI use and behavioral health.

Joining us virtually today are Jeff Shumway, Zach Boyd and Jana Johansen, who will share how their team helped turn research into real reform and what that means for the future of regulation. So, Jeff, Zach and Jana, welcome and congratulations on the award.

Guests: Thank you.

Line: So, to start, can you describe how the team came together across multiple offices to take on the challenge of improving behavioral health regulation in Utah? And Jeff, let's start with you on that one.

Jeff Shumway: Yeah, for sure. It's good to be with you, Line. Thank you for recognizing Utah in this way. We really appreciate it. So to start off with, if you know Utah and if you know our governor at all, he's very, very focused on collaboration and sort of getting things done.

And so there's sort of this culture. It's kind of in the water from our governor and from our boss, Margaret Busse, that we work together on things. So that's kind of foundational for us.

But then in terms of how we actually came together, it sort of started with my office. My office is tasked with picking a group of occupations each year to review, to make sure that the licensure is doing what it should, keeping people safe but not putting any unnecessary barriers in place. And so we did our review and came to some conclusions.

But then, of course, we needed Jana and her team within DOPL, which is the umbrella regulator, to implement. And then that has sort of raised behavioral health with some of the legislature, and that, I think, led into the efforts of the AI office led by Zach Boyd. So in many ways, it was sort of a sequencing where the dominoes just kind of fell in that way.

Line: Awesome. Zach, do you have something to add there, too?

Zach Boyd: Well, yeah, I mean, I think it was great that OPLR and DOPL did all this foundational work first. And then just the timing worked out that the AI boom came out, and it was clear that mental health needed to be tackled from an AI angle as well. And so our office really got to benefit from the work that Jeff and Jana and others had done. And we had a bank of experts and contacts and

stakeholders all ready for what we were going to do.

Line: Right on. So, Utah chose to make behavioral health the first area of review for the Office of Professional Licensure Review. What made this field the top priority? And I guess, how did you reshape this with Senate Bill 26? And Jeff, let me start with you on that.

Jeff: Sure. This was our first review, right? And the way our office is set up, we have to do these deep dive reviews once every 10 years. And so because it was the first time we were doing it and our office was brand new, we talked to a lot of legislators, a lot of stakeholders. And we asked them, 'hey, of all the different areas that are licensed in the state, which one are you most concerned about?' And there was just a ton of concern about behavioral health at that point and still is.

And I think that's not just Utah. That's nationwide. There's workforce issues. There's kind of higher and higher prevalence of mental health issues, behavioral health issues in the nation. And Utah was particularly hard hit for a bunch of reasons, one of which I had no idea before we started the review. But there's a whole set of research about how altitude affects mental health. And there's a higher prevalence of suicide down the Rockies. So, any place that's high altitude, you tend to have slightly higher behavioral health issues. I mean, that's one of many probable reasons why.

But when we looked around, we found that there was high prevalence in Utah and we were having the same workforce issues as other states. And it became clear pretty early that licensure is this focal point between education and workforce and employers where we might be able to do something to help that issue.

So, then we moved into research and we were really lucky. We had a lot of strong champions in the Senate and the House here in Utah. They took our research really seriously. We presented several times over the interim. We had a working group of legislators. So by the time it came to draft a bill, they just said, 'Yes, draft all of OPLR's recommendations,' which I think is rare. And because of the concern about behavioral health, there was just a lot of interest in the legislature to move it quickly.

Line: Jana, would you like to speak to that, too?

Jana Johansen: I think that being a part of Jeff's process early on and him sharing some of this information as he went and some of the ideas they were thinking about allowed our team to start thinking about all the different ideas. Even if it wouldn't be implemented, it gave us that little glimpse into what they were starting to think about so that we could also start thinking about it and have at least a few ideas. Whether we went through with them in the end or not, we at least had a few ideas to start with once he was done.

Line: Sticking with you then. So once the state bill, I think it's 26 passed, the Division of Professional Licensing had to quickly translate legislation into rules and procedures. So what did that process look like? And I guess, how did you balance expanding access with at the same time ensuring public safety?

Jana: It was a rocky start for us because with SB 26, it changed how our boards were made up. We had independent mental health boards, and this bill merged them all into one collaborative board. So we had to wait a little bit to get that set up and get those people in place before we could even start. So it took us a couple of months to do that.

Once we had our board together, we were really worried because we had not had a collaborative board before. We were worried about would this group of people be able to work together and see outside of their own silo so that we could get a good rule that would help everyone? I'm very pleased with the board. They work really well together. It's been a great thing for Utah to have this collaborative board, a really good thing.

We worked with the board monthly in order to write rules, and we decided that we would split the rule up into two segments where we would get everything that was not supervision related done and then work on supervision, because a lot of the concepts in supervision were brand new. We hadn't done them before; they needed more thought and more work.

So, while we were working on the first part of the rule, we also thought about what supervision looks like and what we wanted it to look like. We talked to a lot of different groups, a lot of associations. And as we were writing rule, the board was very careful and deliberate in thinking about how this protects the public. How is this protecting the public? And we're very conscious about their role as protecting the public and not necessarily advancing the profession. They worked really hard to keep that clear in their mind. We didn't lower standards. We focused on removing administrative frictions. That ensures that with compliance and monitoring, we have better access.

Jeff: Hey, Line, can I add something?

Line: Absolutely.

Jeff: So, one of the things you have to understand is that Jana is exceptional in a couple of ways. And so part of the reason this worked was because of who she is. So, number one, she's just an incredibly good manager and very detail oriented. But a lot of people who are like that also don't like change. She also was willing to make the change. And so when we came to her and explained what we were trying to do, she said, 'Yep, I get it. That makes sense. That's better for Utah. I'm willing to do the work.'

And not only that, but we didn't make it easy. We were a brand-new office and I don't think we fully understood what it took to write rules and to make all these administrative changes. And so, she did all this under tight timelines with not always the best kind of prior direction or thinking from us in my office. So I guess the point for others is, if you're going to do this, you need someone who will lean into the change to actually make it happen within the regulatory agency or board.

Zach: That's kind of what I was going to say, too, is that, you know, the nice thing about working with DOPL compared to, you know, some of the other agency heads I've heard about in different jurisdictions and areas is that, you know, a lot of people in the regulatory space, they like things the way that they are. And they really are just so about protection of consumers and kind of standardized best practices that it's really hard to lean into novel things.

And it's hard to lean into, you know, big procedural changes and especially changes that might increase access at the expense of, you know, some of the traditions around how the professions should work. And so really DOPL's leadership in not only enacting the change, but bringing all the stakeholders that they have to bring along to enact that change has been really unique.

Line: Yeah, absolutely. Helping champion it. That's fantastic. So I know your nomination highlights extensive engagement with stakeholders, you know, from legislators to licenses to people with lived experience. What role did these diverse perspectives play in shaping these final outcomes? And if we could, let's go back to you, Jeff, on that one.

Jeff: Yeah, so again, I don't come from government. I don't come from a regulatory background. I come from a management consulting background where your job is to go out and make sure that everyone knows about what's going on. Everyone has a say. And then everyone understands the decision as it's made.

And so I sort of approach this, I think, differently than others might have. There's a downside to that, which I won't go into too much. Like there are some people who fundamentally did not understand what we were about. But I think for us, we saw the board. And of course, we have boards in Utah, but they're advisory. Utah is the umbrella agency and is the actual legal regulator. We went to the boards, but we also went to employers. We went to insurers. We went to mental health commissions outside of commerce. We went to kind of advocates and consumer groups. We tried to just hear what was going on. And I think that was a bit novel.

It made sense to me coming from where I was coming from. But it was a bit novel for a small government office to be doing that much outreach. We ran surveys to every single licensee in the state within behavioral health and used that data pretty extensively. And so I think for me, it was more just I didn't want to make a mistake. I didn't want to step in some landmine I didn't understand. And so this is my way of kind of risk management.

But once we got down to brass tacks and the recommendations, we started getting significant pushback on some of our crazier ideas. And that really helped us to shape and understand what was going to be feasible, what was going to be sort of culturally appropriate within these professions. And yet how far we could push to actually create more access without really upsetting the apple cart.

So it really helped me have some feelers out there. So people knew to call me when they heard about something crazy and they could say, what are you doing? Why does this make sense? And we could

have that conversation because I had talked to them multiple times before then.

Zach: Yeah. And on the AI side, when we started to engage after this, Jeff's approach was one that inspired ours as well. And I'll just highlight in our engagement, you know, the professional societies really came to us. They were organized. Academics tend to be very involved. But one of the things that we learned is, you know, at least in Utah, the people with lived experience don't come to you necessarily. They're not organized the same way. And anyway, so we had to go find ways to visit clinics and explore that population really intentionally.

And the other part of the community that we found really it was beneficial to have intentional outreach with on the AI side was the tech innovators themselves. You know, there's a tradition in tech of kind of not engaging on the regulatory front and assuming everything will work out and you can maybe force the government once you're at scale to accept your business ideas. And, you know, we really had to put in some effort to figure out how to engage them and to get them to understand that it was important for them to have their voice in these decisions that would affect them.

Line: Yeah, Jana.

Jana: Even with rule writing, the board is an open and public meeting. So, we had many board meetings where the members of public were there and could give their thoughts and opinions in our rule writing as well. So we were involved with them, that stakeholder group through that process.

Line: That's great. So, Zach, you mentioned AI. Let's dive into that a little bit. Utah took the bold step of kind of addressing artificial intelligence and mental health services through this House Bill 452. Why was it important to move quickly on this issue? And I guess, what do you think are the biggest benefits of this legislation for consumers?

Zach: Yeah, I mean, I think it's clear now in the AI space that mental health is one of the biggest sources of demand for use of AI. And, you know, we at the beginning of our investigation found plenty of actors in this space who were being irresponsible, who were putting out apps that were not really that well designed and could lead to harm to people.

But as we dug deeper, we also found a smaller group of really serious innovators who understood healthcare, who understood what it would take to really make a positive impact in this space. And so we realized that we couldn't take the same approach that some have suggested of just trying to shut this down, because actually, you know, we just found more and more potential use cases that some of these innovators were pursuing that could be really good for rural populations, for people reluctant to seek care through other modalities, for people who have other access issues. Anyway, there were just tons of ways that this could augment our capacity over the coming years.

So we were trying to think of how we could fit with the timing of the industry developing. You know, if you act too early, too aggressively, then you shut down a lot of possibilities you don't understand

because they've not been explored yet. But if you act too late, then the industry entrenches itself around patterns of behavior that are not good for consumers.

And so we were trying to just kind of time and have the right approach. Ultimately, we figured out that we thought there were three stakeholder groups that needed something from our action. One was the licensees, the healthcare workforce, the other was consumers, and the third was the tech innovators.

So the healthcare workforce, there was this huge demand for guidance, you know, because the professional standards and the guidance really inform what they feel they are allowed to do. And we found people on both sides. Some were not using AI because they felt it had to be against the rules, and they were then, you know, limiting themselves. And others we found that were leaning in, in potentially a reckless way that could actually hurt some of their clients.

And so we put together, with the help of DOPL, OPLR, and stakeholders, this huge 50-page guidance letter outlining kind of general principles that should be observed, what we currently knew, and going through all the main use cases we'd seen emerging to give examples of the kind of professional analysis we would expect a therapist to go through when they were trying to use these tools. You know, the risks they might see, the benefits, the accommodations they might have to make, and really to try to just get education out there in the therapy community, and to also give a sense that it was okay and expected that they would try to improve their practice with this if they saw a potential benefit.

Then for the consumers, we mostly focused on transparency. We heard of some people using AI tools that were posing as humans, which was not good. And also on data privacy, we were not sure that HIPAA would really apply to all the cases we were seeing out in the community, so we wanted to close that loophole. And targeted advertising, which we were also seeing introduced into some models that were harming people. So we put in some protections there.

And then finally, on the tech innovator side, we found that these serious people that we were talking to really had no clear pathway to compliance. There was no way to really put an app out there in this space that wasn't in danger from a regulatory perspective. And so it was kind of having this perverse effect where, you know, the good guys were not entering the space and the bad guys were entering the space. And so we felt like we needed to change the market dynamic there by defining a pathway for compliance based on what we currently knew. So we created a safe harbor in our professional licensure law. We're very far from feeling ready to license an AI in any sense. Just our capabilities and knowledge there are not adequate yet and maybe never will be. But we gave a way for people to build these apps in a way that would give them some protection against regulatory enforcement while still leaving the regulators power to enforce against the bad actors that we saw. So that was kind of what we were hoping to do to try to just lay a better foundation as this begins to develop. And I'm sure we'll have to revisit it in the coming years as the ecosystem matures more.

Line: Excellent. Well, thank you for that. You know, I'm sure that you guys have some lessons from your experience going through this. I mean, your approach here combined legislative reform, swift implementation, and proactive engagement with emerging technologies, kind of like what you were talking about, just also creating pathways for them. I think my question might be, what do you think is the most valuable for regulators in other states or professions that may be considering this. And Jeff, I'll let you start on that.

Jeff: I'm sure there are different lessons from each of us, but I think if I think back to SB26, one of the things it did was create these new extender licenses, these lower-level licenses in behavioral health. You can't do that unless you're talking with educators, and you can't do that unless you're talking with the public behavioral health system, especially, you know, in our case, the Department of Health and Human Services. You need to talk to payers and people that are going to reimburse, so we talked to the Utah Insurance Department and some of the major players here. We talked with the Utah System of Higher Ed and a lot of the public campuses to make sure they were ready to train up people who could fill those license types and roles. We talked to employers.

So I guess my point is, this award was about the three of us collaborating within the building, within the Department of Commerce, but there was actually a ton of partnership outside, both within the executive branch, you know, with the legislature, with employers, etc, and I think that is probably an underutilized lever by a lot of regulators. But when you're going to make a change, it's really useful to have that kind of coalition behind you. And I think the implementation is just that much better if everyone understands and they're all kind of pulling in the same direction. So that would be my main [lesson], look for partners everywhere, because it's not just you as a regulator. We tend to think that way, that I can sit in the tower and regulate the outside world, and actually, you need a lot of engagement to actually get it right.

Line: Jana? Anything to add on that?

Jana: I just encourage everyone to have a continuous improvement mindset. Don't ever get stuck into the rut of, 'we've always done it this way,' and just continue to do it that way. You should always be thinking of how you can improve, even at a regulatory level. Don't wait for a crisis to reform; that's too late.

Zach: Just to add a little bit to that, I think the other stakeholder that Utah did a particularly successful job of engaging was with the legislature. Right, we made sure from the beginning that we were able to get strong stakeholder buy-in, we had a sense of give and take, we wanted a consensus with the legislature. I know in some states, there can be tension between the executive and the legislative branch, and we tried to be really intentional in managing that, and I think we got lucky there.

And the other thing that I think our state did that was really remarkable was just dedicating full FTEs to the innovation side of the shop. It's very unique to have a shop like Jeff's, it's really unique to have a shop like mine, and then to combine that with strong executive-level buy-in to ensure that the

innovation side of the house and the operational side of the house were really working together and pulling in the same direction and supported.

Line: So for this little dream team, you know, you guys won the award. What's next for your team here? Are there areas within behavioral health, or maybe even other sectors where you can see opportunities to continue advancing this access and protection through regulatory reform. And I'll let any one of you jump on that one.

Jeff: Well, mine's an easy answer. You know, we have to look at a new set of occupations every year, so we've been doing healthcare, so we did nursing and allied health in 2025, and this year we're taking on the rest of healthcare, so doctors and dentists and pharmacists. So, for us, there's always a new set of occupations every year. And of course, we'll be bugging Jana and her colleagues in DOPL with all of our recommendations there, too, so that's what's next for us.

Zach: Yeah, and that dovetails with what my group is going to be doing. I mean, we've, over the last year, kind of pivoted to consumer technologies like AI companion bots and stuff like that, where we think there are some different needs. But now, for this coming year, it really seems like there's a surge of interest in healthcare accessibility using AI, kind of broadly, whether it's tools like AI doctors or dermatology-type tools or just efficiency tools for healthcare providers. And so, we're going to do a bunch of investigations and working with stakeholders to do some early pilots of how some of these might deploy within the state, and that, of course, will feed into Jeff and Jana's work in terms of taking learnings and operationalizing them and getting them into statute in a sustainable way.

Jana: And then on my side, Jeff is gonna do this - Every profession has to be reviewed every 10 years here in Utah, so 10 years from now, we'll get mental health again, and right now, we're in nursing, which is also one of my professions. Once we're done with that, I hope I get a little bit of breathing room before he starts another one that's back into my sphere. But on the other hand, I am really excited for any changes that come from this. And so while I do hope I get a small breather, I look forward to all of the rest of the changes that are going to be coming; I really do.

Line: That's awesome. Well, Jeff, Zach, and Jana, thank you for sharing your team's story, and congratulations again on receiving CLEAR's Regulatory Excellence Award. Your work demonstrates how thoughtful research, collaboration, and innovation can come together to improve both workforce access and consumer protection. So, it is an inspiring example of regulatory leadership in action, and once again, congratulations on the award.

Guests: Thank you, Line. Thank you!



Line: It was great to talk with our award recipients. We hope these conversations leave you with useful perspectives and techniques you can bring into your regulatory role. [Nominations for the 2026](#)

[CLEAR Awards](#) are open right now through April 14. You can find award details and the nomination forms on the CLEAR website, www.clearhq.org, in the About menu and click Awards. It's a great opportunity to celebrate regulatory excellence within the CLEAR membership.

I want to thank our listeners for tuning in for this podcast episode. If you're new to the CLEAR podcast, please subscribe to us. You can find us on Podbean or any of your favorite podcast services. If you've enjoyed this podcast episode, please leave a rating or comment in the app. Those reviews help us improve our ranking and make it easier for new listeners to find us. Feel free to visit our website at www.clearhq.org for additional resources and a calendar of upcoming programs and events.

Finally, I'd like to thank our CLEAR staff for all the behind-the-scenes work to bring great programming and resources to the CLEAR membership. Once again, I'm Line Dempsey, and I hope to be speaking to you again very soon.

*The audio version of this podcast episode is available at
https://podcast.clearhq.org/e/clear_awards_2025_part2.*