



SNAP protestors at St. Louis University

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## **Former St. Louis University President named in sex suit**

Kevin Killeen Reporting  
[kakilleen@cbs.com](mailto:kakilleen@cbs.com)

ST. LOUIS UNIVERSITY (KMOX Radio) -- The former President of St. Louis University is accused in a lawsuit of breaking an agreement to stay away from ministry involving women, after his alleged sexual misconduct with a female college student in 1983.

The suit filed in St. Louis Circuit court names Father Daniel O'Connell and the Jesuits of the Missouri Province. It seeks a jury trial and unspecified damages.

The plaintiff, identified in the suit as "Jane Doe" of New York State, claims that O'Connell and the Jesuits violated an agreement reached after he "sexually exploited and assaulted her," while she was a Loyola College student, studying in Rome.

According to the suit, O'Connell agreed to no longer have ministry assignments that involve one-on-one contact with women.

After the suit was filed, the Survivor's Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) held a sidewalk news conference outside St. Louis University, where O'Connell was president during the mid-1970s.

SNAP's David Clohessy commented on the suit.

"The Jesuits claim that Fr. O'Connell's recent activities, working at a parish in Berlin, teaching at Jesuit universities across the country, don't officially violate their agreement. This woman and her lawyer obviously disagree," Clohessy said.

The Jesuits of Missouri Province released a statement saying they have not yet seen the lawsuit, and cannot comment on the specific claims in it. The statement goes on to say:

*"We understand that the woman, who is bringing the lawsuit, is identified in the suit as Jane Doe M.B. She entered into a settlement and signed a full release with the Missouri Province in 2003. It is the opinion of the Jesuits of the Missouri Province that they have honored the terms and conditions of the agreement."*

Clohessy says there are no allegations involving O'Connell while he served at St. Louis University, but he has his concerns.

"This is where O'Connell worked and we suspect he may have hurt others here," Clohessy said, "We suspect that there are current and former staff members and students who know information and they should come forward, if they do."

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