

INDIVIDUAL HONOREE



CAROLYN AUSTIN, *Arent Fox LLP*

Valued Real Estate and Negotiation Skills Support Services for Children and Workers

Carolyn Austin is a partner in the Real Estate practice group at Arent Fox LLP. She received a B.A. from Fairfield University in 1990 and a J.D. from St. John's University School of Law in 1994.

In early 2012, Ms. Austin began working with **Children's Aid College Prep Charter School** (the "School"), a K-5 charter school planned for the Bronx developed in partnership with The Children's Aid Society. Ms. Austin helped the School in preparing its applications for federal, state, and local tax exemptions; reviewing and negotiating a licensing agreement for space to be provided by the NYC Department of Education; and drafting and negotiating a management agreement with Children's Aid. Because of Ms. Austin's timely assistance, the School opened in August 2012 with K and 1st grade classes and is now in its third school year, serving grades K-3. The School provides its students with a rigorous instructional experience and serves as a safe and engaging community hub.

Ms. Austin worked with **East Harlem Block Nursery** ("EHBN"), a nonprofit that provides early childhood education services, on the sale of a vacant parcel of land in East Harlem. After finalizing a purchase and sale agreement, the buyer backed out. When EHBN secured another buyer, Ms. Austin obtained the consent of the Attorney General's Office and approval of the NYS Supreme Court to the sale of property by a nonprofit. After executing the contract, the purchaser requested a closing date extension. Ms. Austin secured release of a non-refundable portion of the down payment in exchange for the extension, providing temporary monetary relief for EBHN. The sale was executed in January 2014. Gardenia White, EHBN's Board Chair, says, "Carolyn's expertise, guidance, and professionalism gave us confidence to deal with what turned out to be a long and arduous process." The proceeds of the sale went to EHBN's endowment and allowed it to hire an executive director.

Ms. Austin assisted the **National Domestic Workers Alliance** ("NDWA"), the nation's leading voice for millions of domestic workers, in negotiating a sublease for office space in Manhattan. NDWA's Finance and Operations Director Tara Ellison says, "Carolyn was incredibly helpful, even responding to e-mails while on vacation. We are happy in our new office, which provides us with a lot more space in which to do our work and collaborate with our sister organization."

Says Ms. Austin, "These pro bono experiences have allowed me to work with people I would otherwise not meet in my daily work, and it never ceases to amaze me how much good work is being done by really smart, dedicated, and talented people. I am grateful for the opportunity to give back in some small way, and I look forward to continuing to put my real estate law background to use in assisting nonprofits."