

LAWYERS ALLIANCE FOR NEW YORK

INDIVIDUAL HONOREE

MICHAEL A. CALANDRA, JR., *Alston & Bird LLP*

Go-To Corporate Specialist for a Wide Variety of Nonprofits

Michael A. Calandra, Jr. is a senior associate in Alston & Bird LLP's Finance Group. He received a B.A. from Fordham University in 2002 and his J.D. from Pace University in 2005.

Mr. Calandra, a Bronx native, is dedicated to assisting nonprofits throughout the five boroughs and has volunteered for eight Lawyers Alliance pro bono matters since 2007, helping nonprofits from formation to dissolution, and addressing multiple corporate issues in between.

Five of Mr. Calandra's matters have helped to strengthen nonprofits' infrastructure by ensuring that they have sound governance documents in place. For **Margert Community Corporation**, which provides neighborhood preservation services, housing assistance, and housing counseling to low-income tenants and homeowners, Mr. Calandra tackled 10-year-old bylaws that had become inconsistent with the organization's current policies. Executive Director Joseph Barden comments, "Michael and his team gave us more time and attention than we would have imagined. They are so knowledgeable and up-to-date. It's a breath of fresh air."

In response to the Nonprofit Revitalization Act (NPRA), many Lawyers Alliance clients, including **Urban Upbound**, sought help in updating or creating bylaws, conflicts of interest policies, and whistleblower policies. According to Chief Financial Officer David Miller, Mr. Calandra was "very responsive, proactive, and helpful" in providing an NPRA upgrade for Urban Upbound, which enriches the lives of public housing residents in Western Queens by providing multiple services, including employment and financial services, college access, and community revitalization.

Operating out of historic Flushing Town Hall, the **Flushing Council on Culture and the Arts** is a catalyst for developing and promoting the visual and performing arts in Queens, and a bridge to promote intercultural understanding through the arts in the most culturally diverse county in the United States. Mr. Calandra has been helping the organization with its corporate governance, including an NPRA upgrade and finalizing policies needed for eligibility for the New York State Grants Gateway. Sami Abu Shumays, Deputy Executive Director, states, "We've had a great experience working with him on multiple crucial institutional documents over an extended period. He has been responsive, flexible, answered all of our specific concerns, and kept several balls in the air at once."

Other Lawyers Alliance clients that Mr. Calandra has served include: **Bethex Federal Credit Union**, **Black Agency Executives**, and **Services Now for Adult Persons** (SNAP).

Says Mr. Calandra, "Lawyers Alliance provides the legal community with a unique opportunity to make meaningful contributions on behalf of pro bono clients in need of transactional assistance. A wide array of available matters, excellent and timely training materials, and the expertise of Lawyers Alliance co-counsel are but a few reasons that Lawyers Alliance is a top choice for sourcing transactional pro bono matters."

