



## Volunteer Attorney Accomplishment for Internal and External News



**Lawyers Alliance**  
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<b>Date:</b>	August 1, 2022
<b>Names of Attorneys:</b>	Dean Ramanathan, Peter Willsey, and Debbie Oakes
<b>Name of Firm:</b>	Brown Rudnick LLP
<b>Client Served:</b>	White Coats for Black Lives (WC4BL)
<b>Accomplishment:</b>	Trademarked White Coats for Black Lives' name and logo, resulting in its ability to effectively control the use of its organizational identity.

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### ***Specific Case Highlights:***

Founded by medical students in response to the deaths of Eric Garner and Michael Brown, White Coats for Blacks Lives (WC4BL) has been working to eliminate racial bias in the practice of medicine and recognize racism as a threat to the health of people of color for almost a decade. WC4BL functions both as a national working group (WC4BL National) and a local organization with approximately 75 chapters at medical schools throughout the United States. In addition to organizing students on campus, WC4BL is developing an online tool for medical students to rate their schools on how well the school addresses issues of race and racism in their curriculum and policies. WC4BL engages in advocacy by organizing national conferences, developing its online journal, issuing monthly newsletters, developing a racial justice report card for higher education institutions, and sharing resources for integrating racial justice topics and courses in medical school curricula. WC4BL's work is critical not only in dismantling the entrenched racism, colonialism, and exploitation in the American medical system, but in ensuring that rising generations of medical professionals are equipped to build a future where people of color have safe and inalienable access to equitable healthcare.

In February of 2021, White Coats for Black Lives requested assistance trademarking its name and logo.

**Dean Ramanathan, Peter Willsey, and Debbie Oakes of Brown Rudnick LLP** assisted White Coats for Black Lives by running preliminary searches for the name "White Coats for Black Lives" and the organization's logos, coordinating a full trademark clearance, and assisting WC4BL with trademarking the name and logo, allowing the organization to promote its unique brand with increased confidence and security.

Charlotte Austin, White Coats for Black Lives Co-Founder, commented on the impact of the team's legal work, "During the anti-racist uprisings that occurred throughout the summer of 2020, the profile of our organization grew tremendously, and it became difficult to control the use of our name. The lawyers at Brown Rudnick met with us to understand our organization and our needs and helped us apply for a trademark for our name and our logo. We're very grateful for their help!"

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**About Lawyers Alliance:** [Lawyers Alliance for New York](https://www.lawyersalliance.org/) is the leading provider of business and transactional legal services for nonprofit organizations and social enterprises that are improving the quality of life in New York City neighborhoods. By connecting lawyers, nonprofits, and communities, Lawyers Alliance for New York helps organizations to provide housing, stimulate economic opportunity, improve urban health and education, promote community arts, and operate and advocate for vital programs that benefit low-income New Yorkers of all ages. During the past year, staff attorneys at Lawyers Alliance worked with nearly 2,000 volunteer attorneys to represent approximately 700 nonprofit clients on more than 1,300 matters.

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