

Lawyers Help Nonprofits Partner with Communities to Revitalize Neighborhoods

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Nonprofits are crucial to New York City's post-pandemic economic resurgence, helping to create and maintain vital public spaces and vibrant neighborhoods. They support the local economy as employers and consumers, through programs that empower small businesses, and by activating public spaces like storefronts, plazas, and parks. Lawyers Alliance and our volunteer attorneys provide much-needed legal services to these organizations as they seek new partnerships and promote job opportunity, economic growth, and community revitalization.

Revitalizing commercial corridors

Among the economic development organizations benefitting from legal assistance are Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods. Governed by a locally-controlled nonprofit board of directors, a BID is a geographic area where stakeholders oversee and contribute to improvements in their commercial district. Many neighborhoods and businesses rely on BIDs to provide supplemental security, cleaning, and community events that support local commerce.

Case Example: Grand Street BID is leveraging the power of public art to beautify and create buzz for the East Williamsburg neighborhood surrounding Grand Street in Brooklyn. The BID works with approximately 170 retail merchants

in the area and publicizes the neighborhood to residents and visitors alike. To enhance the corridor and showcase work that honors the neighborhood's history and culture, Grand Street BID invests in public art murals by Brooklyn artists on Grand Street building facades. Grand Street BID has installed 15 murals in the past three years. Volunteer attorneys from **Frankfurt Kurnit Klein & Selz, P.C.** created an art installation template agreement that, "streamlines the contracting process and reduces risk to the BID and our stakeholders," says Executive Director Erin Piscopink.

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Photo Credit: Grand Street BID

Grand Street BID invests in public art murals by Brooklyn artists on Grand Street buildings.

inside

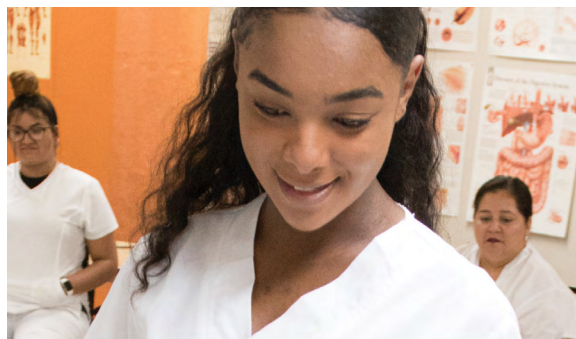


Photo Credit: Sunnyside Community Services

Advocating for Better Health Outcomes
Helping Nonprofits with Bylaws Vital to Good Governance
2023 Business Law & Leadership Gala
Law Firm Appeal

Lawyers Help Nonprofits Partner with Communities to Revitalize Neighborhoods

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Lawyers Alliance's work with BIDs and other nonprofits serving community economic corridors is supported in part by a contract with the **New York City Department of Small Business Services**. The Department's Avenue NYC program provides community revitalization grants to those carrying out programs targeting commercial districts in low- and moderate-income communities. Lawyers Alliance appreciates the partnership and support offered by the Department and its team.

Increasing access to financial services

In a City where more than one quarter of households are unbanked or underbanked, Lawyers Alliance staff and volunteers assist nonprofit loan funds, small credit unions, and other entities that provide financial services and education to individuals, families, and businesses in traditionally underserved communities. Yet, small credit unions and other community lenders often struggle to comply with the variety of regulations put in place by the Federal Reserve, National Credit Union Administration, U.S. Department of Treasury, and other regulatory bodies.

Case Example: New Covenant Dominion Credit Union, a nonprofit credit union headquartered in the South Bronx, serves 500-plus people annually. New Covenant's services allow low-income people to save money in a federally insured financial institution and avoid high-fee check cashing establishments. New Covenant also makes loans to small businesses in the community. To help navigate the complexities of the regulated environment, Lawyers Alliance connected New

Covenant to financial services attorneys at **Crowell & Moring LLP**, who provided multiple consultations about obligations necessary to establish various new account types and expand its services. Rachel Macarthy, CEO of New Covenant, says "Our relationship with Lawyers Alliance is an invaluable resource we can depend on to interpret the law in a way our leadership can understand, to guide our credit union forward."

Creating jobs in low-income neighborhoods

Nonprofits are also revitalizing neighborhoods by building the capacity of small businesses, creating social enterprises, and training and hiring local residents.

Case Example: In Brownsville, Brooklyn, where the percentage of residents living in poverty is nearly double the City-wide rate, nonprofits and social enterprises are implementing innovative economic development initiatives. One is Lawyers Alliance nonprofit client **ATD Fourth World**, which has been working in the neighborhood for many years, and recognized that green economy jobs are in great demand and can help residents. The organization undertook to spin off a new social enterprise called **Working and Learning Together Electronics Recycling (WALTER)** to create a sustainable electronics recycling facility and hire local young adults. **Dechert LLP** helped form WALTER as a corporate entity and work through its initial incorporation and governance documents. A pro bono attorney at **Holland & Knight LLP** provided a land use consultation, and volunteer attorneys from **Winston & Strawn LLP** reviewed and revised a lease for warehouse space. Jonathan Torn, CEO of WALTER says, "The land use consultation was very helpful to ensure our proposed activity, electronics recycling, was allowable based on zoning and other relevant regulations. This and the other pro bono guidance we received gave us peace of mind to sign a long-term lease on our warehouse knowing that we could operate there legally." In its first year-and-a-half of existence, WALTER hired ten local employees and diverted more than 300,000 pounds of waste from landfills.

If your nonprofit organization is working to revitalize neighborhoods, contact Staff Attorney Rafi Stern at rstern@lawyersalliance.org.



Photo Credit: WALTER

Working and Learning Together Electronics Recycling (WALTER) operates a sustainable electronics recycling facility in Brooklyn.

Helping Nonprofits with Well-Crafted Bylaws Vital to Good Governance

Bylaws provide a roadmap for Board governance that impacts every aspect of a nonprofit organization's operations. Well-crafted bylaws make it possible for an organization to make binding decisions, turn those decisions into actions, and resolve internal disputes when they arise. Lawyers Alliance recently released a new edition of *Bylaws That Work: A Manual for New York Nonprofits*, a publication for nonprofits and their attorneys. *Bylaws That Work* includes the following principles to consider when drafting or revising bylaws.

Start with the Big Picture. Any engagement to draft or update a nonprofit organization's bylaws should start with a detailed discussion about the organization's needs and preferences. An initial conversation should include, for example, whether committees are desired by the organization, and whether there will be *ex officio* Board positions.

Simplify and Clarify. Bylaws should be drafted in a manner that allows the Board to make expeditious, well-informed decisions. Discuss with the organization the minimum provisions required by law. New York nonprofit law provides Boards with a good deal of flexibility to determine how to operate, and Delaware law in some cases even more so.

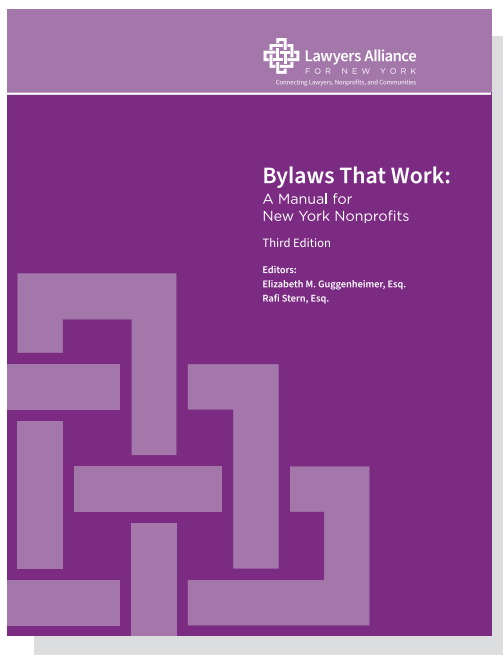
Plan for the Future. Forward-looking support should include advising the organization on the importance of periodic review of the bylaws and governance training for the Board. Corporate records should be kept in a well-known physical or virtual location. If the bylaws have been clearly drafted, they will provide instructions for amendment by future configurations of Board members.

Case Example: Bylaws should be reviewed every few years to comply with changes in nonprofit law and ensure best practices. **Workforce Professionals Training Institute** (WPTI) trains and guides those in the field of workforce development. The organization wisely thought it best to update its bylaws so that all Board members were in agreement on the content, use, and revisions of the bylaws. Chief Operating Officer Michael Grant says, "Though our Board's Governance Committee had reviewed the bylaws as specific questions arose, we had not done a comprehensive review and update of our bylaws since 2016. Volunteer attorneys

from **Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati** helped with revisions. Together, we dug into the details to understand our current structure and update the bylaws to match, and also revised our conflict of interest policies, reporting, and whistleblower policy."

Case Example: Nonprofits going through Board transitions want to move quickly to clarify their bylaws. **Solar One** works towards a more sustainable and resilient urban environment through school-based educational programs, green workforce training, and an effort to make community solar more accessible to purchasers. During a time of Board leadership transition, volunteer attorneys from **Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP** worked to revise Solar One's bylaws and address questions about the future direction of the Board. Amy Poster, Chair of the Governance Committee, says, "Solar One's work with Lawyers Alliance and Paul Weiss served as an invaluable partnership in our efforts to clarify governance structure during a time of transition."

Pro bono attorneys can help nonprofits confront evolving questions with clear, understandable bylaws. To volunteer with Lawyers Alliance, visit lawyersalliance.org/become-a-volunteer. To order a copy of *Bylaws That Work*, visit lawyersalliance.org/publications/list#bylaws.



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Business Law & Leadership Gala Celebrates Lawyers, Nonprofits, and Healthy Communities



Honorees (l to r) Mike McDonnell of New York Life Insurance Company, Susanne Clark of Centerbridge Partners, L.P., and Isabel Ching, LMSW of Hamilton-Madison House

On June 6, 2023 nearly 400 leaders from the legal, financial, and nonprofit sectors gathered at Gotham Hall for Lawyers Alliance’s Business Law & Leadership Gala. Attendees celebrated lawyers, nonprofits, and healthy communities and the spirit of pro bono service.

This year’s honorees were:

SUSANNE V. CLARK *Centerbridge Partners, L.P.*

Susanne V. Clark joined Centerbridge Partners in 2009 and is Senior Managing Director, General Counsel, and Chief Sustainability Officer, leading legal affairs and encouraging social responsibility at the private investment management firm. She also serves as a member of the firm’s Management Committee. Her distinguished legal career has extended from a major international law firm to a premier investment bank and to the private investment management sector, where she is credited with partnering with and developing many of the industry’s most talented professionals. Ms. Clark serves on the Boards of Columbia Law School and the Managed Funds Association and has a long record of civic and public service.

Ms. Clark’s volunteer activities with Lawyers Alliance highlight her dedication to pro bono services. These include engaging through Lawyers Alliance to provide advice and support to three nonprofits whose respective missions involve working to achieve gender and racial justice, to help vulnerable children, and to overcome the injustices of poverty.

Mark Gallogly, Co-Founder of Three Cairns Group, presented the Award to Ms. Clark. Upon receiving this honor, Ms. Clark extolled the virtues of pro bono work and said, “The importance of our corporate skills and our work goes way up when we extend ourselves into philanthropy and pro bono work and public service. The challenge really is how. How do we find high-impact pathways to do enduring good in our communities? Reliable pathways, that are well-organized and have longevity and that reach many. Thankfully, New York has Lawyers Alliance, which offers countless, and yet carefully curated, ways to get involved.”



Mark Gallogly and Susanne Clark

MIKE MCDONNELL *New York Life Insurance Company*

Mike McDonnell is a Senior Vice President and the General Counsel of New York Life Insurance Company, a Fortune 100 company founded in 1845 that is the largest mutual life insurance company in the United States and one of the largest life insurers in the world. Mr. McDonnell has day-to-day oversight of the Office of the General Counsel, which includes the insurance and agency, investments, corporate practice, and tax teams, as well as the Corporate Compliance Department. He joined New York Life in 2013 after ten years of practice at a premier New York law firm.

New York Life has a strong, long-term pro bono relationship with Lawyers Alliance. During the past five years, 31 New York Life attorneys have assisted 21 Lawyers Alliance clients with both full-scope and limited-scope legal matters. New York Life hosted an in-person clinic with Lawyers Alliance in May 2023 for nonprofits working to improve healthy living.



Cheryl James and Mike McDonnell

Cheryl James, Vice President and Associate General Counsel of New York Life, presented the Award to Mr. McDonnell. He spoke about the relationship between New York Life and Lawyers Alliance and said, "This collaboration truly makes me proud. It also makes our law department better. Our work with Lawyers Alliance encourages our team to expand their horizons. They take on clients that work to further the causes they believe in, they practice new skills that they may not use in their regular work. And most notably, pro bono work fosters a deep sense of pride and engagement that makes all of us at New York Life better at what we do."

ISABEL CHING, LMSW *Hamilton-Madison House*

Isabel Ching, LMSW, is the Executive Director of Hamilton-Madison House (HMH), a nonprofit settlement house established in 1898 to provide a safe home for New Yorkers citywide to thrive. The organization's main program sites are located in Manhattan's Chinatown/Lower East Side and Two Bridges neighborhoods. Ms. Ching has been with HMH for 25 years, providing both direct services and executive level leadership to welcome New York's most vulnerable populations including the elderly, children, new immigrants, refugees, and the underemployed. Ms. Ching's dedication to a thriving New York City also includes an active membership in the UNH Executive Directors Council and a role as Vice Chair of the Community Advisory Board of NYC Health & Hospitals Gouverneur Health and the New York City Department for the Aging Senior Advisory Council.

Hamilton-Madison House has been a Lawyers Alliance client since 2000, receiving pro bono assistance on a total of 17 governance, employment, contracts, and real estate matters.

Anthony Giorgio, Hamilton-Madison House's Chair, presented the Award to Ms. Ching, who said, "I'm deeply grateful for the volunteers at Lawyers Alliance, who have always been available to provide legal advice and expertise so that we can enter into transactions, handle our governance issues, and improve our facilities." She went on to thank the specific law firms, corporations, and Lawyers Alliance staff that have assisted Hamilton-Madison House over the years.

Lawyers Alliance especially thanks the Business Law & Leadership Gala Gold sponsors: Centerbridge Partners, L.P.; New York Life Insurance Company; Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP; AIG; Dentons; Kekst CNC; Kirkland & Ellis; Latham & Watkins LLP; Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP; Sidley Austin LLP; Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP; and Warner Bros. Discovery.

Sponsor greetings, a new video highlighting Lawyers Alliance clients and volunteers, and a program slideshow can all be viewed on our website at www.lawyersalliance.org/gala.



Isabel Ching with Anthony Giorgio



Lawyers Alliance Board Members (l to r) Marie L. Gibson, Sarah Harp, and Savalle Sims



Yanki Tshering of Accompany Capital was the evening's featured Lawyers Alliance client speaker

2023
BUSINESS LAW & LEADERSHIP
 — G A L A —

Advocating for Better Health Outcomes for Communities Across the Country

By tackling systemic issues and promoting equitable healthcare access, these organizations create lasting improvements in the health of residents.

Nonprofits in New York City, New York State, and across the U.S. are engaged in advocacy efforts to help communities reduce health disparities and address social determinants of health. The collective voice of community-focused nonprofits helps improve preventative care, access to healthy food, green spaces, and healthy aging. By tackling systemic issues and promoting equitable healthcare access, these organizations create lasting improvements in the health of residents.

Lawyers Alliance staff and volunteers provide legal assistance about contracts, governance, real estate, lobbying regulation and reporting, and other issues to groups engaged in health advocacy at all levels of government.

New York City

Case Example: Sunnyside Community Services, a social services agency in Western Queens, is a member of the Community-Based Home Care (CBHC) Workgroup, a coalition of 10 nonprofit home care agencies serving elderly and disabled populations throughout New York City and surrounding counties. Pro bono attorneys from **Mayer Brown LLP** drafted a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between Sunnyside and the other CBHC Workgroup members to document shared understandings of the group's membership, decision-making, confidentiality, and other issues. The attorneys also educated the members about their obligations under the Lobbying Disclosure Act. "These pro bono services enabled Sunnyside and other home healthcare providers to focus on the CBHC Workgroup's policy priorities, including funding, fair pay for home care workers, training,



Photo Credit: Sunnyside Community Services

Sunnyside Community Services is a member of the Community-Based Home Care (CBHC) Workgroup, a coalition of 10 nonprofit home care agencies.

and data collection and evaluation, to better assist the 11,000 people we collectively serve and the 14,000 people we collectively employ," says Judy Zangwill, Executive Director of Sunnyside Community Services.



Photo Credit: CHCANYS

Community Health Care Association of New York State supports Community Health Centers in a variety of ways, including policy and advocacy work.

New York State

Case Example: Community Health Care Association of New York State (CHCANYS), a membership organization for New York's 70-plus Community Health Centers (CHCs), supports CHCs through training and technical assistance, sharing of best practices, policy and advocacy work, and strengthening and focusing health center voices to ensure all New Yorkers have access to high quality, comprehensive care. CHCANYS has worked with Lawyers Alliance volunteers and staff attorneys on a range of legal matters for nine years. This past year, Lawyers Alliance's Legal Director provided an in-house corporate governance training to CHCANYS' Board and a volunteer from **Cozen O'Connor** helped amend its lease for office space while its office was being renovated. Rose Duhan, President and CEO of CHCANYS, says, "Lawyers Alliance is an indispensable partner and has been an invaluable, trusted resource for CHCANYS. We have always been extremely happy with the work that has been done by both in-house and volunteer attorneys and we are grateful for the partnership and continued support we receive from Lawyers Alliance."

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National

Case Example: National Young Farmers

Coalition (Young Farmers) mobilizes and supports urban, rural, and other farmers with advocacy and policy recommendations on affordable land access, student loan debt, healthcare, credit, and other challenges. Young Farmers' 30 chapters in 24 states are the heart of its grassroots network, providing an organizing platform for tackling barriers on the local, state, and national levels. When Young Farmers wanted to implement a new, legally binding fiscal sponsorship agreement with its chapter participants, consistent with its 501(c)(3) status and to build a brighter future for farmers, it updated its fiscal sponsorship agreement and drafted a chapter agreement with more detailed administrative direction about chapter activities. Volunteer attorneys from **Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP** reviewed and revised these agreements, allowing Young Farmers to improve its farmer-led chapter model and focus on shaping the next Farm Bill and the USDA's administrative priorities. Aviva Paley, Chief of Staff at Young Farmers, says,

"Lawyers Alliance's staff and volunteers provided thoughtful contract and strategic guidance, strengthening Young Farmers' chapter structure and framework to address the structural challenges facing a new generation of young and Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) farmers."



Photo Credit: National Young Farmers Coalition

National Young Farmers Coalition mobilizes and supports urban, rural, and other farmers with advocacy and policy recommendations.

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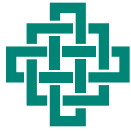
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What Distinguishes Lawyers Alliance?





Lawyers Alliance FOR NEW YORK

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Ropes & Gray Co-Chairs Lead Record-Breaking Law Firm Appeal

Lawyers Alliance applauds the Co-Chairs of its most recent Law Firm Appeal, **Julie H. Jones** and **John E. Sorkin** of **Ropes & Gray LLP**, for their outstanding leadership. The 2022-2023 appeal raised \$947,925 from 74 participating law firms, supporting

close to one-quarter of Lawyers Alliance's annual expenses. Lawyers Alliance thanks the following firms that contributed \$1,000 or more to the Law Firm Appeal running July 2022 through June 2023:

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