

November 4, 2013

**Ezra Borut of Debevoise & Plimpton LLP
High-Quality Pro Bono Relationship Addresses Evolving Legal Needs
of Organization Serving Microentrepreneurs**

Accomplishment: Recipient of Lawyers Alliance for New York's **2013 Cornerstone Award** honoring outstanding pro bono legal services to nonprofits, to be presented on November 6.

Highlights: Ezra Borut is a corporate partner at Debevoise & Plimpton LLP, where he serves as Deputy Chair of the Corporate Department, Co-Chair of the Diversity Committee, and a member of the Management and Pro Bono Committees. He received his B.A. from Yale University in 1991 and a J.D. from The University of Chicago Law School in 1996.

Mr. Borut has led a team of Debevoise lawyers representing the **Center for Community Development for New Americans d/b/a Business Center for New Americans** ("BCNA") for more than ten years. BCNA works in microenterprise lending and provides technical assistance for businesses started by recent immigrants.

BCNA relied on Mr. Borut and the Debevoise team before it was an independent 501(c)(3) entity; guidance began in 2002 when BCNA was a department of the New York Association of New Americans ("NYANA"). In 2009 NYANA dissolved and Debevoise attorneys handled BCNA's spin-out. This included drafting and negotiating agreements relating to (i) the creation of an interim fiscal sponsorship relationship with The Fund for the City of New York, (ii) the transfer of multiple U.S. Small Business Administration ("SBA") loan awards and Office of Refugee Resettlement ("ORR") grants, and (iii) transition services agreements with NYANA. Debevoise attorneys obtained required bankruptcy trustee, creditor, and court approval for the spin-out. Debevoise also helped BCNA establish its own physical location by reviewing a lease agreement.

In 2012, the Debevoise team guided BCNA in becoming independent from the Fund, which required careful structuring and documentation of the transition period to preserve the funding awards from SBA and ORR.

Yanki Tshering, BCNA's Executive Director, says, "It was critical for us to have NYANA's federal grants approved for BCNA's services. Since 2009, BCNA has disbursed more than \$4.7 million in microloans to low- to moderate-income entrepreneurs in New York City. BCNA would have closed down without Debevoise's pro bono legal services."

Current and past Debevoise lawyers have worked with BCNA, including partners Peter Irwin and Mike Wiles, associates Ruben Almaraz, Adam Hankiss, Steven Keslowitz, and Brita Siepker and alumni of the firm: Yaroslav Alekseyev, Yossi Almani, Josephine Coakley, Catherine Doll, Shirley Emehelu, Jason Navarino, Karen Yumi Paik, Kelly Rezny, and Binish Suleman.

Says Mr. Borut, "Working with Lawyers Alliance to assist BCNA, a long-time client of our firm, has been one of the great pleasures of my career. The Lawyers Alliance staff brought to the table

a deep knowledge of the law and the dynamics of the funding environment for not-for-profits and a fierce commitment to client service. As a former board member I was always impressed by the professionalism of the Lawyers Alliance team; as co-counsel I came to appreciate this at an entirely new level.”

About Lawyers Alliance for New York: Lawyers Alliance for New York is the leading provider of business and transactional legal services for nonprofit organizations that are improving the quality of life in New York City neighborhoods. Our network of pro bono lawyers from law firms and corporations and staff of experienced attorneys collaborate to deliver expert corporate, tax, real estate, employment, intellectual property, and other legal services to community organizations. By connecting lawyers, nonprofits, and communities, we help nonprofits to develop affordable housing, stimulate economic development, promote community arts, strengthen urban health, and operate and advocate for vital programs for children and young people, the elderly, and other low-income New Yorkers. During the past year, 13 staff attorneys and more than 1,300 volunteer attorneys served more than 625 nonprofit clients on more than 1,000 different legal matters.

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