

Balancing Supply and Demand: New Collaborations for Workforce Development

Jobs: Which ones? How many? Who gets them? What training is needed? Looking at the issue of employment through the lens of “supply and demand” reveals that there are generally more entry-level workers than there are suitable jobs for them. Consequently, creating connections with employers and preparing low-income workers for placement in sectors with existing jobs and growth potential has become a priority for nonprofits.

Community-based nonprofit organizations have always been well-suited to provide skills and training to low-income, unemployed New Yorkers because they have neighborhood roots and experience in helping under-trained and difficult-to-employ individuals. Their work,

however, has been dramatically affected by both federal legislation and several New York City initiatives. The Federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), for example, resulted in the creation of Workforce1 Career Centers (One-Stop Centers) to link jobseekers with training and employment opportunities. Recently, New York City transferred responsibility for service sites for adult jobseekers from the Department of Employment to the Department of Small Business Services (SBS). SBS, a city agency already charged with other economic development activities, is theoretically better equipped to coordinate both the supply and demand sides of workforce development.

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Anniversary Campaign Exceeds Ambitious Goal

The Anniversary Campaign, launched in conjunction with Lawyers Alliance’s 35th Anniversary to help us sustain and expand services to nonprofit groups across the city, has reached a successful conclusion.

The scope of the campaign, quietly begun in the summer of 2003 and publicly announced at the 35th Anniversary Gala in June 2004, was ambitious from the outset. The Board of Directors, after a thorough analysis of the ever-growing need for the legal services offered by Lawyers Alliance staff and volunteers, decided to secure \$2.5 million in new support within a two-year solicitation period, in addition to raising \$7.5 million for core programs over five-years, for a total of \$10 million.

This effort has been led by Campaign Co-Chairs **Lillian E. Kramer** (Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP, retired) and **George J. Wade** (Shearman & Sterling LLP), both of whom were active with the Council of New York Law Associates, our predecessor organization. The Co-Chairs were assisted by an 11-member Steering Committee, which included: **Mark E. Brossman** (Schulte Roth & Zabel LLP); **Ira Friedman** (MetLife Inc.); **Steven L. Kirshenbaum** (Proskauer Rose LLP); **Phyllis G. Korff** (Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP); **Robert W. Reeder III** (Sullivan & Cromwell LLP); **Christine D. Rogers** (Arnold & Porter LLP); **William T. Russell, Jr.** (Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP); **Bart Schwartz** (Marsh & McLennan Companies, Inc.); **Rebecca J. Simmons** (Sullivan & Cromwell LLP); **Albert Togut** (Togut, Segal & Segal, LLP); and **Marissa Wesely** (Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP).

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Anniversary Campaign Co-Chairs Lillian E. Kramer and George J. Wade.

Anniversary Campaign Exceeds Ambitious Goal

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The \$2.5 million in new funds is being used to build an endowment for Lawyers Alliance to sustain its work during periods of economic downturns, while also supporting expanded programs for clients and enhanced services to law firms and pro bono volunteers. Through the generosity of members of the Board of Directors and the Campaign

Steering Committee, and other generous individuals, **The Frances L. and Edwin L. Cummings Memorial Fund**, the **Booth Ferris Foundation**, and **The Rhodebeck Charitable Trust**, as well as many of the City's leading law firms, Lawyers Alliance has raised more than \$2.5 million in gifts and pledges. This vital support will help Lawyers Alliance continue to flourish for years to come. ■

An Anniversary Campaign *Thank You!*

Lawyers Alliance gratefully acknowledges the following leaders for their generous support of the Anniversary Campaign. *(as of June 10, 2005)*

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Lawyers Alliance also thanks our Board of Directors, the Anniversary Campaign Steering Committee, and many other individuals for their generous personal support.

* *Special support for the Immigrant Services Initiative*

** *Special support for the Children and Youth Services Initiative*

New Collaborations for Workforce Development

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Now, seven years since WIA was first introduced, the New York City Workforce Investment Board's Strategic Plan for 2005 proposes an "affiliate strategy" to focus on rebuilding the New York City workforce investment system through the One Stop Centers. Partnerships may involve community-based organizations and "workforce intermediaries," which include chambers of commerce, trade associations, and labor-management consortia. These intermediaries have a wide spectrum of functions such as sector or geographic coordination, fiscal management, and "best practices" development. One such intermediary, SEEDCO, has been a pioneer in creating partnerships with community-based nonprofits, such as the Citizens Advice Bureau in the Bronx, to provide funding and support for programs that train and place workers drawn from the neighborhoods where the nonprofits have strong local identities.

Collaborations are also developing with specialized or advanced training programs such as those offered by community colleges. Three-way collaborations among employers or intermediaries, community-based organizations, and educational institutions draw upon the strengths of each partner to produce programs that connect workers with advanced training and job opportunities.

While merging organizational resources has the potential to positively affect workforce development, it also carries some inherent legal and practical risks for the nonprofit participants. The success of these partnerships, therefore, requires a clear understanding of the "deliverables" that each organization will supply in training workers and in moving them from unemployment or under-employment to place-

ment in a suitable job. A recent study by the Workforce Strategy Center notes that affiliate relationships are more likely to be effective if the understandings of the partners are memorialized and documented. Many nonprofits, however, are unfamiliar with the agreements used to reflect the roles of the participants.

Fortunately, staff and volunteer attorneys at Lawyers Alliance have the skills, experience, and desire to help. Currently, Lawyers Alliance is providing counsel to community-based nonprofits in the Bronx and Queens that choose to enter into collaborative arrangements. We welcome further opportunities to assist nonprofits with workforce development agreements. Staff and volunteer attorneys can refine the agreements to clarify the roles and obligations of the partners and to protect the nonprofit from undue risk. Additionally, we are creating models and protocols for workforce development collaborations to help smaller nonprofits preserve their important roles while ensuring that they derive the expected revenues from these efforts.

Finally, counseling nonprofits on collaborations is just one aspect of Lawyers Alliance's workforce development practice. Staff and volunteer attorneys also provide a complete range of corporate, tax, employment, and other business legal service to nonprofits engaged in all types of workforce development, from basic literacy and GED programs to specialized programs for individuals with barriers to employment, such as immigrants, ex-offenders, the disabled, and the drug and alcohol dependent.

For more information about Lawyers Alliance's services in this area, please contact Senior Staff Attorney **Neil Stevenson** at (212) 219-1800, ext. 273, or nstevenson@lany.org. ■

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Photo: Erin Dey

Adults enrolled in a program run by The Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDCO), a Lawyers Alliance client since 1998, benefit from a comprehensive approach to job training that provides them with valuable workplace skills and experience.

New York State Bar Honors Lawyers Alliance Volunteers

Throughout the state, attorneys are volunteering to use their legal skills to improve the lives of New Yorkers. This year, the New York State Bar Association (NYSBA) presented Lawyers Alliance volunteers with the NYSBA President's 2005 Pro Bono Service Award, based in significant part on their work benefiting Lawyers Alliance clients. NYSBA presented these awards on May 2, 2005, at the State Bar Center in Albany.

Proskauer Rose LLP received the Large Law Firm Award. Lawyers Alliance, The Legal Aid Society and New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (NYLPI) jointly nominated Proskauer Rose LLP because of the firm's long-standing commitment to pro bono and its deep and diverse pro bono program. The firm's attorneys and paralegals devoted close to 30,000 hours to pro bono work last year. This included a wealth of transactional and community development projects for dozens of nonprofits, involving three important categories of legal work: employment law and human resources; nonprofit law and regulatory compliance; and loan and financing documents.

The two individual honorees from the First Judicial District, representing Manhattan, also are Lawyers Alliance volunteers. **Ronald J. Tabak**, from Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, LLP, received the Individual Attorney Award for his more than 20 years of pro bono

legal services. NYSBA recognized his work against capital punishment and for prisoners' rights, as well as his efforts to help Skadden Arps become a successful leader in law firm pro bono service. Thanks to Mr. Tabak's commitment, last year Skadden Arps attorneys assisted more than 50 Lawyers Alliance clients. In jointly nominating Mr. Tabak, Lawyers Alliance, The Legal Aid Society and NYLPI cited his innovation and creativity and efforts to raise the profile of pro bono work in the greater legal community.

Jeffrey A. Simes of Goodwin Procter LLP received the Individual Attorney Award for his pro bono representation of homeless children and his expansion of the firm's New York pro bono program. In supporting Mr. Simes' nomination, Lawyers Alliance recognized the positive example set by the hundreds of hours of pro bono service by Mr. Simes. Last year, Goodwin Procter represented nine Lawyers Alliance clients. Work included preparing an affiliation agreement for a community-based organization serving immigrants and updating personnel policies for a tenant advocacy organization.

Congratulations to this year's winners! To volunteer through Lawyers Alliance, contact Pro Bono Coordinator **Jolynda Burton** at (212) 219-1800 ext. 242. ■

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Sean Delany Named to IRS Advisory Committee



The Internal Revenue Service has selected Lawyers Alliance Executive Director **Sean Delany** for its 18-member Advisory Committee on Tax Exempt and Government Entities (ACT), effective June 2005. The ACT is a formal body of external stakeholders in the specialized areas of tax-exempt organizations and other matters that advises the IRS on tax policy. Mr. Delany's appointment signals the IRS's interest in receiving input that reflects the perspective of smaller tax-exempt organizations, and it is an opportunity to give voice at the highest regulatory level to the concerns of Lawyers Alliance's clients and other community-based and nonprofit groups. ■

Externship Program Draws Talented Attorneys

“I see how my legal work makes a difference for these organizations... and the people they serve.”

Throughout the year at Lawyers Alliance’s offices, it is not uncommon to find new faces peering from behind stacks of case documents, studying contracts in the conference room, or smiling up from the telephone receiver as they deftly dispense legal information to callers on the Resource Call Hotline. Bright, energetic, and talented, these individuals are the law firm externs, and they are an integral part of the legal staff during their four-month rotations at Lawyers Alliance.

Pioneering the concept of externships, Lawyers Alliance established its program in 1989 with one attorney from **Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP**. Since then, more than 80 externs have participated from: Cleary; **Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP**; **Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP**; and **White & Case LLP**. They work directly with Lawyers Alliance staff and nonprofit clients on all aspects of the legal program, helping nonprofits to build affordable housing, stimulate economic development, and provide vital services to children and youth, the elderly, and new immigrants. The externship program thrives because it affords corporate, real estate, and other business and transactional attorneys a meaningful and productive experience and simultaneously enables Lawyers Alliance to leverage its limited resources multifold.

While the experience differs for each individual, current and past externs agree that the personal and professional benefits are many. Until joining Lawyers Alliance as an extern, **Bryan Mignone**, an associate at Weil, spent most of his days working on corporate mergers and acquisitions. Today, he is helping the Mid-Bronx Senior Citizens Council to lease a building that it owns to the New York City Board of Education for use as a New York

City public school. According to Bryan, the work has helped him to become more confident and acquire much legal knowledge about nonprofits, while also giving him a greater appreciation of the many ways that business law can directly affect people: “Managers of community-based nonprofits are so dedicated, and busy trying to assist others on limited budgets, that they might not obtain quality and timely legal help if it were not for Lawyers Alliance. Because I am so closely involved with all aspects of my cases at Lawyers Alliance, I see how my legal work makes a difference for these organizations, their operations, and the people they serve.”

Intellectual property attorney and current Skadden extern **Seth Sheldon** expresses a similar sentiment based on his experience working on complicated legal questions surrounding economic development, including contract and strategic alliance issues faced by nonprofits engaged in job training: “Everyone should do an externship if possible. In addition to having the satisfaction of supporting worthy endeavors by impressive clients, you also get a broad experience and learn about general corporate law questions that you might not otherwise have an opportunity to deal with as a junior or mid-level associate in a private law firm. But the clients are definitely the primary inspiration.”

Likewise, **Bernadette Atuahene**, the current Cleary extern, has found her experience professionally rewarding. At Lawyers Alliance, Bernadette has worked extensively in the area of affordable housing, enabling her to broaden her skills as a real estate attorney. Bernadette has assisted in the representation of Bridge Street Development Corporation in connection with eight units in the Stuyvesant Heights Condominium in Brooklyn. Bernadette believes: “The key to being a great lawyer is versatility, and my work as an extern has given me a whole new set of experiences.”

Fostering positive externship experiences is of paramount importance to Lawyers Alliance. We continually consider ways to improve the program through training and development. Former externs also serve as pro bono ambassadors and mentors when they return to their respective law firms – inspiring more people to get involved in pro bono. The more legal talent, energy, and human resources available at the institutions that work with Lawyers Alliance, the easier it is to build a better New York. ■

(left to right)
Externs Seth Sheldon,
Bernadette Atuahene,
and Bryan Mignone.



New Staff Members at Lawyers Alliance

Lawyers Alliance welcomes **Chitra Arunasalam** as Director of Finance and Administration. Ms. Arunasalam comes to Lawyers Alliance from the San Francisco area where she worked in nonprofit finance, including with the Philharmonic Baroque Orchestra, the Stern Grove Festival Association, and Lyon-Martin Health Services. Ms. Arunasalam's interest in nonprofits and knowledge of fiscal planning and management will make her a wonderful addition to the staff.

Lawyers Alliance is pleased to introduce **Jolynda Burton**, who recently joined the staff as Pro Bono Coordinator. Ms. Burton has worked for several years in legal recruiting, most recently at Jones Day's New York office, and prior to that with Kasowitz, Benson, Torres & Friedman. Her familiarity with the New York legal market and fluency in law firm life are sure to enhance our relationships with pro bono attorneys.

Rose Cryan joins the Lawyers Alliance staff as Marketing Manager. For more than a decade she was employed as a Senior Writer at the Girl Scouts national organization, and

afterward she worked as a freelance writer for a number of nonprofit and corporate clients. Ms. Cryan looks forward to enhancing Lawyers Alliance's position as a brand that immediately connotes the best in pro bono business law for nonprofits. ■



New Lawyers Alliance staff members (left to right) Chitra Arunasalam, Rose Cryan, and Jolynda Burton.

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