

INDIVIDUAL HONOREE



ALNISA BELL, *Seyfarth Shaw LLP*

Dedicated partner guides nonprofits through delicate employment issues

Alnisa Bell is a partner in the Labor & Employment department at Seyfarth Shaw LLP. She received an A.B. from Bryn Mawr College in 2006 and her J.D. from Rutgers Law School – Newark in 2009.

Ms. Bell has volunteered with Lawyers Alliance on five employment matters since 2016. She has become a trusted advisor to her nonprofit clients, helping them navigate complex, sensitive employment issues.

Alnisa Bell delivered excellent legal advice and counseling to an organization that provides health and social services to children. The organization faced difficulties with an employee's performance. A representative says, "Alnisa evaluated the legal risks of disciplinary action, including termination. As part of this process, she reviewed all relevant employee performance documents. When the decision was ultimately made to separate the employee, Alnisa developed a separation and release agreement and provided termination talking points for our meeting with the employee. She also provided legal advice regarding providing references for this employee. Alnisa was very thorough and prompt in responding to our many questions."

Another organization, **Hester Street Collaborative**, benefitted from Ms. Bell's expert guidance during a New York State Department of Labor audit. She helped the client articulate why its teaching artists were engaged as independent contractors, resulting in the audit coming to a satisfactory resolution.

Ms. Bell assisted community arts organization **ESS Community Projects** by drafting template agreements for both its full-time employees and part-time teaching artists. Properly drafted agreements lay the foundation for good employee relations and legally compliant practices.

Ms. Bell has also handled other sensitive employment projects, including determining whether the incoming translator for an immigrant assistance organization should be engaged as an independent contractor or hired as an employee; and the investigation of a board member of another organization who was accused of unwelcome fraternization with staff.

Says Ms. Bell, "I view pro bono work as a critical part of the legal profession. The profession has developed me into the lawyer I am today and it is important for me to use my talents to help others. Nonprofits play a vital role in community building and oftentimes provide services to marginalized communities. By providing legal services to nonprofits, I am furthering their mission to build better communities."