

# LAWYERS ALLIANCE FOR NEW YORK

## INDIVIDUAL HONOREE

**ALVIN BENJAMIN CARTER III**, *Brown Rudnick LLP*

### *Specialized legal expertise empowers arts and education clients*

Alvin Benjamin Carter III utilized his vast expertise in corporate law, intellectual property, and music to assist **Casita Maria Center for Arts & Education**, which serves mostly Latino youth and families in the South Bronx, with two important projects, a jazz album and a documentary film. Casita Maria needed counsel to negotiate a deal with a record company for its jazz ensemble, BronX Band A. Rather than accepting the contract as presented, Mr. Carter meticulously assessed its terms, empowering Casita Maria to make informed decisions about its next steps. Ultimately, Mr. Carter's invaluable advice gave Casita Maria the confidence to move forward with a different model that allowed it to retain artistic control of the music. Mr. Carter later provided assistance to Casita Maria when it sought to understand fair use licensing concerning its documentary project. He prepared a comprehensive memorandum, equipping Casita Maria with a thorough understanding of its legal rights and responsibilities.

#### **Q. How and why did you first become involved with Lawyers Alliance?**

Meredith Joseph, Brown Rudnick's Director of Pro Bono, introduced me to Lawyers Alliance by giving me the opportunity to work on arts-related matters for Casita Maria Center for Arts & Education, founded in 1934 as the first charitable organization to serve the Hispanic population in New York City. I had to take the opportunity to assist such an amazing organization that had been serving its community for so long.

#### **Q. Share a tip for making time for pro bono.**

If you decide that pro bono work is important to you, you will make the time for it. Being passionate about the subject matter also helps, but it really comes down to prioritizing pro bono as a personal matter.

#### **Q. Share a fun or unexpected moment from pro bono work through Lawyers Alliance.**

I had the best time negotiating a record contract on behalf of a pro bono client. It was fun because closing the deal allowed my client to pursue an artistic passion. Also, I am a musician and music producer (mostly in a former life), so the subject matter was familiar and interesting.

#### **Q. What's the most rewarding aspect of pro bono work?**

It is knowing that cost is not impeding my clients from trying to achieve their goals. Legal work is generally expensive, and that limits access. I just want to do my part in providing more access.

*"Alvin gave us the confidence that we could produce the project on our own. Alvin and his team were very communicative and took our matters seriously. He also stood out because of his musical expertise, in addition to his legal expertise."*

— Gail Heidel,

*Artistic Director, Casita Maria Center for Arts & Education*



#### **Employment:**

Brown Rudnick LLP  
Associate, Corporate  
Practice Group

#### **Graduate of:**

Northeastern University  
School of Law

#### **Lawyers Alliance clients:**

Casita Maria Center for  
Arts & Education  
Chalkbeat  
Entertainers 4 Education  
Alliance