

## INSTITUTIONAL HONOREE

### *Leading global law firm with strong community commitment*

Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP, a firm with a longstanding commitment to pro bono legal services, has partnered closely with Lawyers Alliance for more than 30 years, serving nonprofit clients with the determination and legal excellence that define the firm's broader culture. Davis Polk received one of the first Cornerstone Awards in 1997, and is the rare recipient of a second Institutional Cornerstone because of the continued breadth of its corporate law and transactional pro bono work, especially as nonprofits have needed timely legal help during the pandemic.

# Davis Polk

### **Responding with Speed and Agility to a Global Pandemic**

The firm's legal assistance during the pandemic has been particularly notable, beginning with spring and summer 2020 virtual consultations on legal issues related to financial management and CARES Act loans and continuing with new and ongoing corporate governance and intellectual property legal matters.

Through a virtual clinic focused on financial reporting requirements, Davis Polk attorneys served nonprofits providing services that proved to be vital during the pandemic: creating open spaces, providing child welfare and mental health services, and supporting community economic development. Davis Polk's clients included the **North Brooklyn Parks Alliance**, which works to create an equitable, accessible, and vibrant parks and open space system in North Brooklyn; **JCCA** (formerly known as Jewish Child Care Association of New York), providing child welfare and mental health services to New York's neediest and most vulnerable children and families through foster and residential care, and educational assistance and remediation; and the **Flatbush Development Corporation**, meeting the needs of a diverse and vibrant Brooklyn by building partnerships and developing a combination of housing, economic development, and youth-centered initiatives that promote enhanced quality of life, safety, equity, and preservation of the local community.

In addition, Davis Polk attorneys guided Lawyers Alliance clients through the complexities of applications for SBA loans created in response to the pandemic. One such client was **Refoundry**, which trains the formerly incarcerated to transform discarded furnishings and other materials into beautiful one-of-a-kind pieces, combining ongoing career development and life skills and social service support as a way to combat high rate of recidivism and job attrition.

### **Simplifying Complex Relationships**

**New York Disaster Interfaith Services** (NYDIS) provides readiness, response, and recovery services during disasters and public health emergencies impacting New York City's most vulnerable communities, borne from the efforts of New York City faith-based agencies to establish programs to assist following the events of September 11, 2001. NYDIS sought assistance navigating a strategic alliance with a related organization, both determining what form the alliance should take and implementing it once established. NYDIS notes, "We couldn't be happier with the assistance our attorney provided our organizations. We could not have navigated the complexities of this relationship without the guidance and remain grateful for her counsel, expertise, and work ethic."

## **Corporate Governance Review for Nonprofits Elevating Students**

Regular review of corporate governance materials is essential to the organizational health of nonprofits, and Davis Polk attorneys have reviewed the crucial governance documents that ensure organizations are able to continue providing vital services. Davis Polk attorneys have been working with **Braven** to review the organization's bylaws and conflict of interest policies, to draft a whistleblower policy, and to advise on a series of board resolutions. Braven empowers promising, underrepresented young people—first-generation college students, students from low-income backgrounds, and students of color—with the skills, confidence, experiences, and networks necessary to transition from college to strong first jobs, which lead to meaningful careers and lives of impact. Braven reports, “Our attorneys were great. It was a relief to get our corporate documents reviewed and updated and brought to a much better place.”

**American Dream Charter School** (ADS) serves middle school and high school students in the Mott Haven neighborhood of the Bronx, preparing students to excel in college and become leaders in their communities while following a dual language program. Davis Polk attorneys reviewed and revised the school's bylaws, conflict of interest policy, related annual disclosure questionnaire, and whistleblower policy for compliance with the New York Not-for-Profit Corporation Law. A representative from ADS expresses appreciation for the legal work, “Our lawyer was on the ball, helped revise our bylaws, was very responsive and totally wonderful and cordial. He got the job done!”

A Davis Polk representative says, “At Davis Polk, pro bono work is a core responsibility of *all* of our lawyers, whether they be corporate lawyers or litigators. Our corporate lawyers have expressed a strong desire to participate in pro bono activities that correspond to their skill sets, which we enthusiastically support. We offer and support pro bono opportunities where teams of corporate lawyers can contribute their expertise to the public good.”

Davis Polk attorneys have also represented the following Lawyers Alliance clients in the last five years: **BlocPower Community Corporation, Center For Frontline Retail, Downtown Flushing Transit Hub District Management Association, En Foco, Esonge, Futures and Options, Giving Friends, Groundswell Community Mural Project, In Our Backyards, La Alfombra Teatro, Marquis Studios, Mid-Bronx Senior Citizens Council, Natural Areas Conservancy, New York City Police Foundation, Re-Entry Rocks, Settlement Housing Fund, St. Nicks Alliance, The Hip Hop Re:Education Project (HHREP), and Wingspan Arts.**

Current and former firm lawyers who worked with these clients include: Ron M. Aizen, John Amorosi, John Atchley, Frank J. Azzopardi, Miles Babin, Michele Babkine, Matthew Bacal, John Banes, Marisa Elena Bannon, David R. Bauer, Daniel Brass, Jessica Brodman, Anthony Cerceo, Bonnie Chen, Chiu-Lai Cheung, Hilary Coleman, Michael Comstock, Brendan Costello, Jeffrey P. Crandall, William A. Curran, Luigi De Ghenghi, Marie-Christine Eldridge, Melissa Esposito, Charlotte Fabiani, Christie Falco, Samuel Feldman, Rachel Feldstein, Michael Flynn, John Fouhey, Andres V. Gil, Drew Glover, Victoria Ha, Jesse Hallock, Benjamin Helfgott, Brian Hirsch, Lee Hochbaum, Hayden Hutto, Jennifer Kalmanides, Petros Kareklas, Justin Kasprisin, Sharon Katz,

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## 2021 CORNERSTONE AWARDS