

LAWYERS ALLIANCE FOR NEW YORK

INDIVIDUAL HONOREE

Yael R. Tzipori, *Sullivan & Cromwell LLP*

Responsive financial services attorney guides human rights organization through complex transaction

Yael R. Tzipori has played a crucial role for **Rapid Defense Network (RDN)**, which provided legal representation on a pro bono basis to noncitizens facing detention and deportation, and engaged in litigation and advocacy on behalf of those who had been detained, faced deportation, or had been deported. Ms. Tzipori provided representation to RDN as it moved to integrate its operations with RFK Human Rights. In 2022, RDN had determined that it would be ideal to find a partner to strategically combine resources and thereby amplify and further expand the impact of its work. RFK Human Rights' team of lawyers and issue experts collaborate with partners around the world to create lasting legal change, including advocating for the rights of immigrants. In RFK Human Rights, RDN found the perfect home. Ms. Tzipori's representation was both remarkable and vital to RDN.

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

I volunteered to assist a nonprofit organization seeking a strategic combination with another nonprofit. Lawyers Alliance was a fantastic partner, providing a wealth of knowledge about New York not-for-profit corporate law.

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

Just volunteer for cases and projects as they arise and figure out the time management with the rest of your work as you go. There will always be a feeling that you might have more time in the future and will take on pro bono when your schedule opens up, but in reality that rarely happens. If making time for pro bono is a priority, the only thing to do is raise your hand when an opportunity comes across your desk.

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

The project was originally expected to be a merger of two nonprofit entities, but the parties involved ultimately did not move ahead with the transaction. What followed was a very interesting engagement with our client, who was seeking a permanent home in which to provide pro bono legal services inside of another nonprofit organization. We had the opportunity to be a bit creative with the structure of the combination, putting together a framework for two parties to share their resources until our client was in a position to dissolve.

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

In my experience, pro bono clients are grateful to have the services we provide, and they give thoughtful and serious consideration to our legal advice. That is incredibly rewarding feedback and engagement to receive from the client. You get to be a partner during a critical moment for that organization, offering guidance and sometimes comfort along the way and hopefully seeing it come through successfully to the other side.

"Yael is so supportive and caring and always available. Her legal representation of RDN was exemplary and critical to ensuring that RDN's important work was able to continue in a new home with RFK Human Rights."

— Sarah Gillman
Legal Director, Rapid Defense Network



Employment:

Sullivan & Cromwell LLP
Special Counsel, Financial Services Group

Graduate of:

New York University
School of Law

Lawyers Alliance clients:

Rapid Defense Network
VOICE Charter School of
New York