Date: December 14, 2022
Names of Attorneys: Brian Helweil and Ross Silver
Name of Firm: Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP
Client Served: Venture House
Accomplishment: Following a review of the previous lease, Brian Helweil and Ross Silver negotiated a more advantageous lease agreement, resulting in ownership of a portion of the lease and expanded capabilities for Venture House.

**Specific Case Highlights:**

Since 1988, Venture House has provided a range of quality services to adults living with mental illness, enabling them to live and work successfully in the community with independence and dignity. The organization, which has served almost 2,000 member-residents in Queens and Staten Island, utilizes a clubhouse model in which members work alongside staff to facilitate programs and maintain the community center. Venture House offers a breadth of services tailored to members’ needs, including housing support, employment, community-based services, educational advancement, advocacy/public benefits, and social programs.

In July of 2021, Venture House requested assistance with reviewing and negotiating a new lease agreement and advising on the option to purchase a portion of the lease. The new agreement would entail a significant expansion of their space in Staten Island.

**Brian Helweil and Ross Silver of Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP** assisted Venture House by providing counsel on the best way forward with the new lease agreement. Mr. Helweil and Mr. Silver conducted due diligence and remained dedicated, offering valuable insight and responsiveness amidst numerous delays.

With this pro bono legal help, Venture House was able to secure a favorable new lease agreement that allowed for the expansion of its space into two neighboring properties. This increased space brought a heightened capacity to serve its constituency and expand programs, including a new Wellness Center that opened in Spring 2022. Juliet Douglas, Executive Director of Venture House, said, “We were able to obtain an additional 5,000 square feet of space which is being utilized as a Wellness Center where yoga, dance, and other exercise is available to our membership, as well as conference rooms and offices. The additional space is also designated for an upcoming build of our Clubhouse Media Center. We were also able to acquire several new units for our Supportive Housing program. We are now able to increase our capacity and to accommodate our ever-growing membership which has recently reached 500 Staten Islanders who are living with serious mental health conditions.”

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**Inquiries:** Please contact Marketing and Communications Director Emily Crossan at 212-219-1800 ext. 233 or ecrossan@lawyersalliance.org.
Photos of new Wellness Center and Conference Room: