

LAWYERS ALLIANCE FOR NEW YORK

INDIVIDUAL HONOREE

JOANN B. BIRLE, *Herrick, Feinstein LLP*

Leasing lawyer assists nonprofits dedicated to economic development, urban health, and children and youth services

Joann B. Birle is counsel in the Real Estate Department of Herrick, Feinstein LLP, based in the firm's Newark office. She received a B.A. from Fordham University in 1987 and a J.D. from New York Law School in 1990.

Since 2012, Ms. Birle has been assisting **Iris House**, which provides comprehensive support for women and families affected by HIV/AIDS and other health issues, with a particular emphasis on supporting women of color. The nonprofit organization has operated its center in East Harlem since 1992 and sought to expand into New Jersey. With Ms. Birle's guidance, Iris House entered into a lease in 2012 to rent space in Plainfield, NJ. She assisted Iris House in 2013 and 2015 to negotiate amendments to the lease, allowing the growing organization to occupy additional space. As a result of its expansion, Iris House serves an additional 1,300 people each year. Ingrid Floyd, Executive Director of Iris House, says, "Each time Joann helped us, she was extremely thorough and dedicated, making sure we would be able to use the space as needed to best serve our clients."

Ms. Birle assisted **Workforce Professionals Training Institute (WPTI)** in negotiating a license agreement with its landlord to access approximately 1,000 square feet of additional space. The organization uses its space to deliver training, leadership institutes, and customized technical assistance to more than 350 workforce development organizations in New York City. Markus Ward, Director of Operations and Strategic Initiatives at WPTI, says, "Joann was very diligent and results-oriented. In negotiating the agreement, she always looked out for WPTI and ensured that we were both legally protected and that we retained the flexibility to make decisions as an organization about the future use of our leased space." Since entering into the new licensing agreement, WPTI has used the additional space for office and program functions.

Ms. Birle has helped several other nonprofit organizations with their real estate needs, including **Heights and Hills** with a lease extension for space used to house its senior services center; the **Committee for Early Childhood Development** with a lease negotiation for space in Jamaica, Queens for a Head Start center; and **Hospital Clinic Home Center Instructional Corp. Ace Integration Head Start** with a leasing matter for an early childhood Head Start program located in Bedford Stuyvesant/Bushwick, Brooklyn.

Ms. Birle says, "I always jump at the chance to work with Lawyers Alliance to assist nonprofits with their leasing issues. Whether it's securing new space to start a vital program, or negotiating other types of occupancy arrangements to meet a nonprofit's changing needs, the work is both personally and professionally rewarding. The clients are always appreciative, and I'm grateful that I can support the wonderful work they do in their communities."

