

Join Us in Being Part of the Solution

As our City and nation face major public health, income inequality, racial justice, and human services challenges, we each can be part of the solution.

At Lawyers Alliance, this means doing what we do best: strengthening the nonprofit sector through quality pro bono legal assistance.

Several elements are critical to the success of nonprofits, especially now: mission, people, funds, facilities and equipment, and relationships. Thanks to Lawyers Alliance's staff, Board, volunteers, and donors, nonprofits can receive guidance on legal strategies in each of these areas.

Our COVID-19 Relief and Recovery Initiative is serving the evolving legal needs of organizations that are: (a) working with low-income and disadvantaged populations hard hit by the pandemic; and/or (b) struggling to preserve and retool their programs because of the pandemic's far-reaching effects. With virtual programming, social distancing, and remote work, nonprofits are paying greater attention to technology and the legal issues associated with new communication channels.

You can help us by sharing your ideas, concerns, and best methods to reach you. Please contact Executive Director **Liz Guggenheimer** at eguggenheimer@lawyersalliance.org or 212-219-1800 ext. 231 with your thoughts.

Mission-Driven Nonprofits Provide Pandemic Relief

Lawyers Alliance staff and our pro bono partners are helping nonprofits to respond quickly to COVID-19 and its far-reaching effects. Many of these nonprofits work with the low-income communities most affected by the pandemic.

Supporting Hard-Hit Restaurant Workers

Case Example: According to *Business Insider*, by April 2020 a stunning 8 million restaurant workers had been furloughed or laid off due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Approximately 40 percent earned under twice the federal poverty line and had little to no savings. Lawyers Alliance client **Restaurant Workers' Community Foundation** (RWCF) leapt into action. Incorporated and declared tax-exempt two years ago with the help of pro bono attorneys from **Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP**, RWCF set up its COVID relief fund and raised \$7 million, 50 percent of which is being distributed to individual restaurant workers by the Southern Smoke Foundation. As of September, Southern Smoke distributed more than \$3 million in relief funds to more than 1,600 individuals.

RWCF was formed to advocate for, and support other nonprofits working toward, gender equity, racial justice, fair wages, and healthy work environments in the industry. This spring, pro bono attorneys from **Anderson Kill P.C.** produced a

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Photo Credit: Music & Memory

Music & Memory's programs enable those living with **Alzheimer's, dementia, and other cognitive and physical limitations** to reconnect with the world.

inside

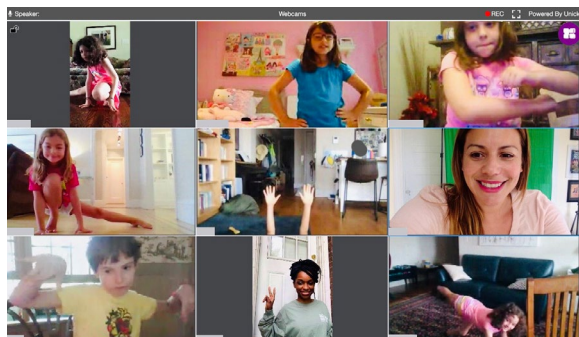


Photo Credit: YM & YWHA of Washington Heights & Inwood

*Contracts Help Provide Stability
Amidst Uncertainty*

2020 Business Law & Leadership Gala

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Mission-Driven Nonprofits Provide Relief

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template agreement that RWCF can use to fiscally sponsor restaurant worker advocates who have not yet formed tax-exempt organizations and are promoting better working conditions beyond the pandemic. Says John deBary, RWCF's Founder and Board President, "Having solid legal frameworks allowed us to respond rapidly to the COVID-19 crisis in the restaurant industry and raise more than \$7 million to date to support restaurant workers."

Combating Isolation and Memory Loss

Case Example: Music & Memory trains nursing home staff and other elder care professionals, as well as family caregivers, to create and provide personalized music playlists using digital audio systems. These programs enable those living with Alzheimer's, dementia, and other cognitive and physical limitations to reconnect with the world through music-triggered memories. The COVID-19 crisis hit nursing home residents particularly hard, both in fatalities and isolation from family and loved ones. A volunteer attorney from **BNY Mellon** assisted in addressing intellectual property questions regarding Music & Memory Tablet Engagement, a new training designed specifically



Photo Credit: Music & Memory

Music & Memory introduced a new training for nursing home staff to help address residents' feelings of isolation.

to address isolation and promote the benefits of music to inspire a renewed sense of self for participants. Justin Russo, Program Director, Music & Memory, says, "We're so grateful to our volunteer attorney for assisting us with the transition into broader services that address isolation in long-term care. With this guidance, we were able to launch our new program with no issues."

Sudden economic disruption
has left many families and
individuals struggling to pay bills
and obtain groceries.

Fighting Food Insecurity

Case Example: Sudden economic disruption has left many families and individuals struggling to pay bills and obtain groceries. Lawyers Alliance helped **Credit Do**, which provides middle-schoolers with community-based financial empowerment opportunities, to negotiate a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with two women that led the "On Being Human – COVID-19 Food Drive." The campaign continues to raise more than \$125,000 online to provide cash grants and vouchers for groceries for those in need. Credit Do helped screen applicants, manage volunteers and consultants, and facilitate digital payments, grocery gift and e-cards to more than 1,000 underserved Americans across 15 states. Chris Avila Hübschmann, Credit Do's Founder and CEO, says, "Despite the pandemic changing the way our world works, Lawyers Alliance responded so quickly and provided not only a solid foundation and trusted counsel, but also a sense of understanding and humanity that instilled confidence amongst the Credit Do leadership team."

If your nonprofit needs assistance with COVID-related legal issues, please visit [the Nonprofits section of our website](#). Also visit our [Coronavirus Information page](#) for resources.

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