

Friends Profile: Katherine Hughes

Katherine Hughes, Pro Bono Attorney at Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP, maintains an active slate of pro bono work for nonprofits and social enterprises. She served as a Cleary extern at Lawyers Alliance for four months in 2012-2013.

Q. What motivated you to become involved with Lawyers Alliance?

I first became significantly involved with Lawyers Alliance through an externship program Cleary offers to associates. The externship provides an opportunity for complete immersion in the world of nonprofit law, develops associates' legal skills, and builds their confidence as lawyers. I worked primarily with Judith Moldover, a Lawyers Alliance senior staff attorney, but also assisted Neil Stevenson and others on a range of projects. It was a turning point for me. I realized that I love working with nonprofits and have gone on to serve as general counsel at a nonprofit organization and now as a nonprofit specialist in my role at Cleary.

Q. How did your pro bono experiences at Lawyers Alliance influence your current work?

I've been involved in the representation of so many Lawyers Alliance clients over the years and truly love this work. With the backstop of the attorneys at Cleary and Lawyers Alliance, I regularly explore nonprofit issues that stretch the boundaries of my legal experience, both in my own practice and as an advisor to Cleary associates.

My externship also coincided with Hurricane Sandy, and much of my time was spent conducting triage for nonprofits that had been affected. Seeing firsthand how New York City came together to support communities made me a more compassionate lawyer. As a result of this experience, I've taken the lead on our firm-wide disaster relief legal projects in the wake of recent storms.

Q. How do you see the role of a law firm pro bono counsel in today's legal market?

Cleary is deeply committed to its pro bono practice, and the creation of my position reflects a significant effort to provide necessary support. I am fortunate in my job to have both a lengthy list of pro bono matters on which I am actively working and the ability to provide attorneys with connections to practice area specialists, resource materials, and new opportunities. My goal is to continue finding ways to leverage my nonprofit experience to enable more attorneys to become involved in these matters.

Q. Why do you provide support, including pro bono services and donations, to Lawyers Alliance?

Lawyers Alliance's commitment to New York City nonprofits and the communities they serve is legendary. I really can't imagine our vibrant nonprofit community thriving and succeeding in the way it has without the deep experience and support of Lawyers Alliance and its attorneys.



Katherine Hughes

About

Employment:

Pro Bono Attorney,
Cleary Gottlieb

Other activities include:

Member of Association
of Pro Bono Counsel

Member of Pro Bono &
Legal Services Committee
of the New York City
Bar Association

Adjunct Faculty,
Fordham Law School
(Community Economic
Development Clinic)

Graduate of:

J.D., Fordham Law School

M.A., Fordham University

M.Sc., University of London

B.F.A., Emerson College

This profile is one in a series about people who have helped to build or been impacted by Lawyers Alliance for New York since 1969.