

# LAWYERS ALLIANCE FOR NEW YORK

## INDIVIDUAL HONOREE

**BENET O'REILLY**, *Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP*

***Corporate lawyer leads pro bono legal team on projects that bolster Brooklyn's charitable community***

Benet O'Reilly is a partner at Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP with a practice focusing on public and private mergers and acquisitions, private equity investments, and restructuring transactions. He received an A.B. from the University of Chicago in 1995 and a J.D. from New York University School of Law in 1999.

Since 2015, Mr. O'Reilly and his colleagues at Cleary Gottlieb have been providing a wide range of legal assistance to the **Brooklyn Community Foundation**. The Foundation is the first and only public foundation solely dedicated to Brooklyn's charitable community, working in partnership with generous donors and community leaders to bolster vital nonprofits, strengthen neighbors, and increase opportunities for youth. Since its founding in 2009, the Foundation has provided more than \$30 million in grants to more than 300 organizations working in every borough neighborhood.

Cleary Gottlieb's initial advice to the Foundation addressed donor-advised funds, tax compliance, and some employment matters. Its donor-advised fund holders direct hundreds of grants each year, boosting the capacity of a diverse range of local nonprofits. At the Foundation's request, the firm agreed to also review forms to be used with grantees, provide intellectual property advice, and assist with additional employment matters. Cleary Gottlieb lawyers also have supported the Foundation's work to strengthen Brooklyn's nonprofit sector through its Brooklyn Accelerator initiative, have attended its Board Training & Matching workshops, and served on the selection committee of the Foundation's Spark Prize. The strong relationship between the Foundation and Mr. O'Reilly and his Cleary Gottlieb colleagues continues with the firm providing additional assistance to the Foundation.

Sarah Shannon, the Foundation's Chief Operating Officer, says, "It has been our distinct privilege and a genuine pleasure to work with Cleary Gottlieb over the past few years. Benet O'Reilly and his team have been invaluable in helping the Foundation staff navigate numerous important legal matters. We are sincerely grateful for their good counsel, as well as their generous support, and look forward to working with them to build this institution for Brooklyn."

Mr. O'Reilly says, "It has been a pleasure assisting the Brooklyn Community Foundation over the past several years. I thank Lawyers Alliance for their support, and am thrilled to receive this Cornerstone Award on behalf of all of my colleagues at Cleary Gottlieb who have helped provide the Foundation with expert advice covering an array of legal issues. We believe we have a duty to give back to the community, and hope our contribution has assisted the Foundation in pursuing its efforts to seek a fair and just Brooklyn."

