



Lawyers Alliance  
for New York

Connecting lawyers, nonprofits, and communities

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November 9, 2011

## VOLUNTEER ACCOMPLISHMENT

**Christine L. Roch of Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP**

*Dedicated Real Estate Lawyer Furthers Economic Development and Supportive Housing*

**Accomplishment:** Recipient of Lawyers Alliance for New York's **2011 Cornerstone Award** honoring outstanding pro bono legal services to nonprofits, to be presented on Tuesday, November 15, 2011.

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**Highlights:** Among other projects, Ms. Roch negotiated a funding agreement between the **YM and YWHA of Washington Heights and Inwood** (the Y) and the New York City Economic Development Corporation for a capital improvements grant to the Y's facility, and drafted agreements with an architect and general contractor. Says Michael Fermaglich, the Y's Chief Operating Officer, "Chris has done more for the Y than we ever could have imagined. She has given us the ability to effectively review and negotiate contracts at a high level, a critical element of due diligence and compliance that we otherwise lack the resources to conduct as a community-based nonprofit."

Ms. Roch served as co-counsel in the acquisition of three supportive housing facilities for **Community Access, Inc.**, an organization that assists people with psychiatric disabilities as they make the transition from shelters and hospitals to independent living. Says Maggi Knox, Project Manager, "Chris not only drafted all the legal documents for the transactions, she took the time to learn all the ins and outs of the state contracts and everything else about the project. She was an active and spirited advocate on our behalf, returned all phone calls and emails seemingly within minutes, and made us feel as if we were her most important client. She was a pleasure to work with in every way and we are forever in her debt."

While she performed the majority of her pro bono work to date while working at Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP, she continues to be a Lawyers Alliance volunteer at Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP.

Says Ms. Roch of her pro bono experiences, "I consider pro bono legal representation a critical part of my transactional practice. The regulatory scheme facing New York not-for-profits can be so complex as to overwhelm organizations doing important work and providing necessary services to their communities. Working with and through Lawyers Alliance, I have had the opportunity to learn about and support these organizations, as well as to gain important skills for an associate attorney, including managing clients, negotiating with government agencies, and gaining familiarity with documents to which I might not otherwise be exposed."

**About Lawyers Alliance for New York:** Lawyers Alliance for New York is the leading provider of business and transactional legal services for nonprofit organizations that are improving the quality of life in New York City neighborhoods. Our network of pro bono lawyers from law firms and corporations and staff of experienced attorneys collaborate to deliver expert corporate, tax, real estate, employment, intellectual property, and other legal services to community organizations. By connecting lawyers, nonprofits, and communities, we help nonprofits to develop affordable housing, stimulate economic development, promote community arts, and operate and advocate for vital programs for children and young people, the elderly, and other low-income New Yorkers. During the past year, 14 staff attorneys and 1,484 volunteer attorneys represented 625 clients on 1,014 matters.

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