



***Volunteer Attorney Accomplishment for Internal and External News***

**Date:** May 3, 2011  
**Name of Attorney:** Alexander Bogdan  
**Name of Firm:** Hughes Hubbard & Reed LLP  
**Client Served:** Girls Educational and Mentoring Services ('GEMS')

***Accomplishment:*** Assisted GEMS in updating its personnel policies and counseled it on a variety of employment law issues allowing GEMS to expand its workforce and continue to grow.

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***Specific Case Highlights:*** Founded in 1998, GEMS is New York's only organization designed to serve girls and young women who have experienced commercial sexual exploitation and domestic trafficking. GEMS provides a variety of comprehensive services including prevention, youth development, educational initiatives and transitional housing to help girls and young women exit the commercial sex industry and develop to their full potential. GEMS achieved local and national recognition for its work in education and consciousness-raising on the issue of sexual exploitation.

GEMS approached Lawyers Alliance in 2007 for assistance with updating its employment policies. At the time, the organization had 13 full-time and nine part-time employees, but was rapidly growing in budget and staff size due to the organization's success. As a result, the organization sought to enhance its personnel policies so as to properly reflect current employment practices and address employment law issues most relevant to the growing organization.

**Alexander Bogdan** of **Hughes Hubbard & Reed LLP** enthusiastically volunteered to assist **GEMS** in updating its employment policies. Alex reviewed and revised GEM's worker compensation, disability insurance, and personnel policies. He then went beyond the scope of the original project and continued to assist GEMS on a number of employment-related legal questions.

GEMS' Fiscal and Administrative Director Yvette Velez notes that the organization turns to Alex for advice on legal issues pertaining to proper personal management and human resources. Yvette reports that GEMS has "learned so much from working with Alex and that his assistance has helped the organization to grow professionally." As a result, according to Yvette, GEMS has a firm foundation that safeguards it from unnecessary liabilities. Yvette notes that GEMS' has been fortunate and is very grateful for the services it has and continues to receive through Lawyers Alliance and Hughes Hubbard.

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***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 work together, delivering expert corporate, tax, real estate, employment, and other legal services to community organizations. By connecting lawyers, nonprofits, and communities, we help nonprofits to develop affordable housing, stimulate economic development, and operate vital programs for children and young people, the elderly, recent immigrants, and other low-income New Yorkers. Each year, the staff attorneys at Lawyers Alliance and more than 1,400 volunteers serve more than 600 clients.

***Inquiries:*** Please contact Marketing and Communications Coordinator Emily Crossan at 212-219-1800 ext. 233 with questions or requests for additional information.