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Volunteer Attorney Accomplishment for Internal and External News

Date: June 28, 2013
Name of Attorneys: Robert Fagiola and Ryan Mahoney
Name of Firm: Shearman & Sterling LLP
Client Served: Clemente Soto Vélez Cultural and Educational Center (“the Clemente”)

Accomplishment: Drafted and negotiated a lease for use of the Clemente’s space by cutlog, a French company that stages art fairs. The proceeds generated through this lease help the Clemente provide subsidized space to activities in four theaters, three galleries, 43 artist studios, and 10 performing arts and educational organizations.

Specific Case Highlights: Clemente Soto Vélez Cultural and Educational Center (“the Clemente”) is a cultural institution on the Lower East Side of Manhattan that focuses on the cultivation, presentation, and preservation of Puerto Rican/Latino and multicultural artistic expression. It houses and promotes artists and performance events that reflect the cultural diversity of the neighborhood. The Clemente provides subsidized studio, office, and performance space to young and emerging multicultural visual artists, nonprofit performing arts organizations, and emerging theater companies.

In December 2012, the Clemente approached Lawyers Alliance for assistance with leasing its space to cutlog, a French arts company. Cutlog had previously staged four successful art fairs in Paris highlighting contemporary artists, but it sought to expand to the United States and identified the Clemente’s space for its fair. The Clemente sought Lawyers Alliance’s assistance with preparing and negotiating the lease agreement with cutlog.

Robert Fagiola and Ryan Mahoney of Shearman & Sterling LLP volunteered to assist the Clemente with this new endeavor. Mr. Fagiola and Mr. Mahoney drafted the agreement with cutlog to reflect certain related arrangements between the parties. In the agreement, the Shearman & Sterling attorneys outlined the level of in-kind support, marketing, and promotion that the Clemente would provide to cutlog as well as the manner in which the profits and revenue from ticket sales, admissions, and sponsorship would be shared between the groups. The lease agreement was successfully executed in May 2013 in time for the fair, which ran from May 9th through May 13th and featured art, installations, performances, talks, and films, and resulted in approximately 70 news articles in the international media.

Jan Hanvik, the Clemente’s Executive Director, has high praise for the Shearman & Sterling team. “We would have been flying blind without Bob and Ryan’s brilliant, visionary, and patient work. Thanks to their objective help, the Clemente entered into a lease that worked so well for both parties that we are moving ahead with a five-year commitment to continue to host the art fair. This creates great stability for our organization, artists, and community.”

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. By connecting lawyers, nonprofits, and communities, we help nonprofits to develop affordable housing, stimulate economic development, promote community arts, strengthen urban health, and operate and advocate for vital programs for children and young people, the elderly, and other low-income New Yorkers. Each year, staff attorneys at Lawyers Alliance and more than 1,300 volunteers serve more than 600 clients.

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