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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR NONPROFITS

Strengthening nonprofits to achieve greater impact.

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Pro Bono Legal Services for Long Island Nonprofits

Pro bono, the shortened version of the Latin phrase pro bono publico, means “for the public good.”

Like other corporations, the approximately 6,000 nonprofits on Long Island regularly need legal advice to understand the complex web of overlapping state and federal regulations that govern them. They need help establishing governance and management policies, and navigating contracts, real estate transactions, employment policies, lobbying, fundraising regulations, and mergers. Nonprofits often are unaware of relatively recent laws such as the New York State Nonprofit Revitalization Act, which require compliance with a host of issues.

With $55,000 in grants from the Long Island Community Foundation, the Pro Bono Partnership opened an office at Touro Law Center’s Public Advocacy Center. It then recruited 77 volunteer attorneys, who have assisted Long Island nonprofits with legal matters, including compliance and governance issues; media, website, and intellectual property questions; personnel issues; and Legal Resource Helpline queries. They provided approximately $480,000 in free legal services. Pro Bono also hosts workshops to educate nonprofit executives and board members on legal obligations and requirements, compliance with the 2013 Nonprofit Revitalization Act, and best legal practices for a healthy nonprofit.

“\textit{We saw a growing need to help nonprofits on Long Island increase capacity and reduce their risk},” says \textit{Nancy Eberhardt, Executive Director of the Pro Bono Partnership}. “\textit{We look forward to continuing to empower Long Island nonprofits and make all of our neighborhoods better places to live and work.}”

Fran Karliner of Long Island Crisis Center (a Pro Bono client), said, “\textit{We couldn’t have hoped for a more communicative, responsive, and wonderful mentor}” in the process.