

Young Lawyers Section

Pro Bono Spotlight: Ali D. Seals

by Craig Foster
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New lawyers may think they need extensive experience before tackling a pro bono matter. Maybe not. Ali D. Seals, a transactional real estate attorney at Schwabe, Williamson & Wyatt, took on his first pro bono matter early in his legal career. Through the YLS Nonprofit Project, Ali found an opportunity to negotiate a ground lease for a nonprofit corporation that sought to build a library in Jefferson, Oregon. After a year and well over 100 hours of time, the project has continued and Ali's role has expanded to help the client with other aspects of the project.

While Ali certainly hit the ground running, his life before the law provided valuable insights into the commercial real estate industry. After completing his B.A. at the University of California at Berkeley, Ali worked as a commercial real estate broker in California's East Bay area assisting clients like Children's Hospital Oakland, Metrovation and The American Lung Association. As a broker, he became more and more interested in the structure of the deals he encountered, and he noticed that many of the developers he worked with were lawyers. Ali then knew he wanted to help clients on a deeper level by assisting in the negotiation and structuring of those deals. And he knew had to be a lawyer to do that.

So, he headed to law school at the University of Oregon and became a transactional real estate



attorney. Since early 2010, Ali has been practicing in Schwabe's real estate department, representing major clients in their real estate decisions including investment, development and leasing.

In addition to his pro bono work with the YLS Nonprofit Project, Ali has taken on the role of President of the Oregon Chapter of the National Bar Association, an association of legal professionals dedicated to assisting and uplifting the African-American community in Oregon.

When he's not practicing law, you can find Ali enjoying all the spoils of the Pacific Northwest, including our outstanding breweries, snow sports and numerous live music venues.

For more information about how to find a business transactional pro bono case through the YLS Nonprofit Project, contact Jovita Wang, Miller Nash, at 503.205.2456.