



Inajo Davis Chappell

PARTNER

Chair, Nonprofit Group

Chair, School Law Group

Co-Chair, Diversity Committee

CONTACT INFORMATION

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PRACTICES / INDUSTRIES

Business

Banking & Commercial Finance
Corporate Governance
Non-Profit
School Law

Government Regulations

Public Law

Real Estate

Acquisition & Development
Construction
Real Estate Finance

AREAS OF CONCENTRATION

General Corporate Law

Nonprofit Corporations
Public and Corporate Finance
Contracts and Commercial Law

Real Estate

Acquisition
Development/Construction
Financing
Community Development Projects

Public Law/School Law

Contract Preparation and Negotiation
Competitive Bidding Compliance
Special Education
General School Law Issues

EDUCATION

Yale University (B.A., 1982)
Columbia Law School (J.D., 1985)

AT A GLANCE

Inajo chairs the Firm's Nonprofit Group. She represents for-profit businesses as well as public institutions and nonprofit entities. Her legal expertise focuses on various aspects of corporate law and corporate governance, general business transactions, and commercial real estate acquisition, development, construction and financing. She has served as bond and company counsel to a variety of government and corporate clients. Inajo has particular expertise representing school districts in the provision of educational programming and services to disabled students. An active civic and community volunteer, Inajo serves on the boards of several nonprofit organizations.

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

General

Counsels clients on corporate governance and compliance matters.

Counsels clients on corporate transactions.

Handles a variety of business transactions.

Prepares and negotiates a variety of business agreements.

Counsels clients regarding competitive bidding compliance, tax and collection workouts, and general business matters.

Prepares and negotiates license and lease agreements for use, sale or other disposition of real estate, proprietary information and personal property.

Real Estate

Represents several local community development corporations in connection with real estate acquisition, development, construction and financing matters.

Experienced in various aspects of real estate, acquisition, development, construction, and finance. Substantial experience documenting and closing commercial real estate transactions.

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE (Continued)

Commercial Lending

Experienced in documenting real estate construction loans for lending institutions and borrowers, including drafting and negotiating loan agreements together with all ancillary instruments and documents required for financing the acquisition, development and construction of residential and commercial real estate projects.

Documented and closed numerous real estate transactions construction loans and credit lines for acquisition, development and construction of commercial real estate facilities (a Walgreen's drugstore and strip mall facilities with national retail and restaurant tenants) in Florida, Pennsylvania and West Virginia, as counsel to a national banking association.

Represented owners and developers in securing acquisition and development loans and financing for both new construction and extensive rehabilitation/renovation projects, including office buildings, church annex and recreational facilities.

Capital Markets/Municipal Securities

Serves as bond counsel, company counsel, trustee counsel and underwriter/placement agent counsel to governmental, corporate and bank clients, documenting a variety of bond financing transactions, including Industrial Revenue Bonds (IRBs) and Tax-Exempt Private Activity Bond issues.

Drafted all bond documents, legislation, and legal opinions, and reviewed and revised, as necessary or required, Bank and Underwriter counsel documents on letter of credit-enhanced bond financing transactions, where the proceeds from these tax-exempt 501(c)(3) bonds were used to acquire, develop and construct office buildings, warehouse and other facilities.

Middle Market Equipment Leasing

Documented and closed tax-exempt municipal lease transactions for a local community college district, involving the acquisition and installation of telecommunications equipment.

Documented and recently closed a tax-exempt municipal lease transaction for the largest school district in the State of Ohio that funded the acquisition of heating, cooling, lighting and other equipment and improvements.

Prepared and negotiated lease and equipment purchase agreements, legal opinions and drafted or reviewed all ancillary documents required.

Special Education Law

Experience representing school districts in the provision of educational programming and services to disabled students, providing counsel on a variety of legal issues related to the education of individuals with disabilities, defending placement and programming decisions of school districts, counseling clients relative to disciplinary and other issues impacting disabled students, participating in mediation, administrative hearings and judicial proceedings relative to compliance with the federal statutes governing the education of disabled children, including the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA), as amended, Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA).

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HONORS & DISTINCTIONS

Crain's Cleveland Business "Women of Note" (Recipient, 2010)
Helen K. Jones Woman of Strength Memorial Award (Recipient, 2009)
AV Rated - Martindale-Hubbell
Hathaway Brown School Alumnae Achievement Award (Recipient, 2008)
Named an "Ohio Super Lawyer" in a survey of Ohio lawyers by *Law & Politics* and *Cincinnati* magazines (January 2007)
Northern Ohio Live Rainmaker (Law) (Recipient, 2005)
YWCA Women of Achievement Award (Recipient, 2001)
Leadership Cleveland (Member, Class of 2001)

PRESENTATIONS

"Legal and Legislative Update: Change and Solutions for Nonprofits", Ohio Society of CPAs 21st Annual Non-Profit Leadership Symposium (October 28, 2008)
Not-For-Profit Leadership Symposium, Ohio Society of CPAs and United Way Annual Not-For-Profit Conference (October 2008)
"Policy Delivery: The Movers & Shakers," The Center for the Advancement of Women in Public Service (October 2008)
"Women Make Your Mark" The Voting Process", Panelist, Sponsored by the Flora Stone Mather Center for Woman and Case Western Reserve University (September 27, 2008)
"Planting the Seeds for Success: The Journey Toward Election Reform in Cuyahoga County," Yale Alumni Association of Cleveland (September 8, 2008)
"The Role of the Board," Business Volunteers Unlimited and Minority Board Member Pipeline Initiative (June 2008)
"Why Northeast Ohio is a Great Environment for Professional Growth and Development," the Cleveland Professional 20/30 Club (March 2008)
"We Object! The Successes and Struggles of Female Attorneys," The City Club of Cleveland (August 2007)
"Sister2Sister: How Powerful Women Get Their Way," YWCA Room Full of Sisters (June 2007)
"How Powerful Women Get Their Way: Secrets for Negotiating - and Getting - What You Want," CCC Corporate College Bootcamp (February 2007)
"Best Practices for Non-Profit Organizations in an Environment of Heightened Scrutiny, Distrust and Regulation," Key Note Speaker, 19th Annual Not-For-Profit Accounting and Financial Seminar (October 2006)
"Grooming Another Generation of Women Leaders... Preparing our Community for Change!" Panelist, Executive Women's Panel, 4th Annual Personal and Professional Development Retreat, Women of Color Foundation (April 2006)
"The Accountability Movement Continues-Legislative Initiatives Impacting Nonprofits," Cincinnati Nonprofit Workshop (October 2005)
"The Accountability Movement Continues for Not-For-Profit Organizations," Cohen & Company, Not-For-Profit Management Summit (September 2005)
"Individuals With Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) 2004: (Reconciling NCLB and IDEA)," Client In-Service (August 2005)
"The Accountability Movement Impacts Not-For-Profit Organizations," Ohio Society of CPA's 17th Annual Not-For-Profit Accounting and Financial Seminar (November 2004)

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PRESENTATIONS (Continued)

"Trusteeship: The Key to Nonprofit Governance," Nonprofit Practice Group Summer Workshop Series (June 2004)
"A Guide to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 in Ohio," Lorman Education Services (October 2003)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Ohio State Bar Association
Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association
National Association of Bond Lawyers (NABL)
In Counsel With Women
Society of Benchers, Case Western Reserve University Law School (*Public Member*)

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Cleveland Leadership Center (*Board Member*)
Ohio Board of Voting Machine Examiners (*Board Chair*)
Cuyahoga County Board of Elections (*Board Member*)
Medical Mutual of Ohio Charitable Foundation - MMOCF (*Board Member*)
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. – Greater Cleveland Alumnae Chapter (*Member*)
The Links, Inc. – The Cleveland Chapter (*Member*)
The Cleveland Foundation- African-American Philanthropy Committee (*Member*)
Hathaway Brown School (*Former Board Member*)
United Way of Greater Cleveland Risk Management Committee (*Member*)
Greater Cleveland Sports Commission (*Former Board Member*)
Vocational Guidance Services of Cleveland (VGS) (*Former Board Member*)
Cleveland Bar Association (*Former Board Member and Executive Committee Member*)
Barbara Byrd-Bennett Foundation for Cleveland's Children (*Former Board Member, Secretary*)
Boys & Girls Clubs of Cleveland (*Former Board Chair and Board Member Emeritus*)
Center for Community Solutions (CCS) (*Former Board Member*)
United Black Fund (*Former Board Member*)
Shoes & Clothes for Kids (*Former Board Member*)
Collaborative To Organize Mount Pleasant (COMP) (*Former Board Member*)
American Red Cross Greater Cleveland Chapter (*Former Board Member and Secretary*)
Hitchcock Center for Women, Inc. (*Former Board Member and Secretary*)
Alcoholism Services of Cleveland, Inc. (Recovery Resources, Inc.) (*Former Board Member*)

ADMISSIONS

State of Ohio
Ohio Supreme Court
U.S. District Court, Northern District of Ohio
U.S. District Court, Southern District of Ohio