

WOMEN  
OWNED  
LAW

**December 2019 Member Spotlight**



**Helene Pangalos**

**Owner**

**The Law Office of Helene Pangalos, P.C.**

**Tell us about your firm or business including history, specialization, and years in business**

I have been practicing for over 25 years but started my firm about 15 years ago. I focus on commercial leasing in NYC, as I represent landlords and tenants in transactions ranging from offices to bars to warehouses and in commercial and residential sales from mixed use investor owned buildings to single family co-ops, condos and new developments.

**What's an interesting fact about you or your firm that most people don't know?**

My largest deal was a portfolio purchase of office buildings for \$300Million, covering 20 states and 50 properties. It took 7 business days to close and more than a year to put together.

**What's a favorite moment of your career so far?**

I represented 2 celebrity tennis players in various real estate transactions and was lucky enough to go to Wimbledon as part of their "thank you" for my hard work on their behalf!

**What challenge are you most proud of overcoming?**

In 2007, I evacuated my office via emergency stairs as police dressed in full riot gear (so as to shield them from the cement debris that was flying) held the one door open and everyone filed out single file in the Grand Central area following a steam blast explosion that resulted in 1 death and 189 windows being blown out of our office building alone. We could not return for 40 days, and overnight, I was challenged to set up a new office, handle existing clients, and especially a large commercial lease that I was in the midst of, all without an office phone or a cell phone (I left it in the office along with my wallet) or a computer, as those were days before "emergency plans" were all

the norm. I remained organized as I was determined to set up an alternate office within hours, not days, and I did it. While everything was logistically difficult (including theft by emergency workers at the site), I remember bringing ice cream cones (it was July) to the building's personnel that were going into the building with hazmat suits in the heat and without elevators or working lights to bring out our belongings (including my cell phone and wallet), and they all said "no one thought of us, except you - thank you". Whatever doesn't kill you makes you stronger and after that experience, there was nothing that I couldn't face head on.

### **Tell us about a recent professional accomplishment of yours?**

I recently completed a commercial lease on behalf of the tenant that was 20% of the building, including terrace rights, multiple floors and a large tenant improvement allowance with a nationally known landlord. I worked with their in-house counsel and was able to give the client "big firm experience" at "cost effective rates".

### **Tell us about a recent personal accomplishment of yours?**

The coordination of a personal project that has been on my "bucket list" - having my mom's life story during WWII videotaped and organized into a legacy video that I plan to give to other family members over the holidays as a gift for us all

### **What advice would you offer new business owners?**

Be genuinely interested in the success of others and give as much as you can, as it will come back to you tenfold. Even after being in business for as long as I have been, I find that the more I meet people and refer them out to others or help them in some other way, the more comes back to me, personally and professionally.

### **How can you help other Women Owned Law members improve their businesses?**

I truly enjoy meeting and connecting people, and I have built a vast network of friends and colleagues, as I always make business colleagues and referral sources my friends. My best referral was a referral to my computer company of a woman owned computer business. He didn't want to meet her, as she was his competition, but I encouraged him as "you never know". Within 6 months, she sold her very lucrative computer franchise business to him and he is still reaping the benefits. I'm sure similar introductions through WOL will occur.

### **How has Women Owned Law been of value to you and your career?**

The quality of professional women that I see every month and their announcements of their successes make me want to be a better attorney, stronger businessperson and more active entrepreneur. I have also enjoyed making a few connections for others that I believe will enhance their respective businesses and take pride in those referrals as well. It's great to see women succeed in law and the business of law!



## **About Women Owned Law**

Women Owned Law is a ground-breaking group created to connect and advance women legal entrepreneurs. WOL supports its members and other women entrepreneurs in the law in their business endeavors at every point in the business life cycle. We advocate on behalf of women legal entrepreneurs and have been instrumental in raising the profile of women entrepreneurs in the law. For additional information about Women Owned Law visit [www.womenownedlaw.org](http://www.womenownedlaw.org)