



**REALTY ADVISORY BOARD  
ON LABOR RELATIONS**

Collective Bargaining for  
the Collective Good





## I OUR MISSION

We advise and represent our members in the administration of their collective bargaining agreements and in matters concerning personnel and human resources. We negotiate labor agreements and represent our members in grievances and arbitrations.



## OUR HISTORY

From its inception, the Realty Advisory Board on Labor Relations has believed that the representation of employers is best accomplished by working cooperatively with building workers and their legal representatives.

RAB was established in 1934 as a result of a building service employees strike and, through the years, has been concerned with labor-management relations and the numerous issues in the industry affecting wages, hours, and working conditions of the various groups of employees who service, maintain, and operate residential, office, and loft buildings.

In the ensuing years, RAB pioneered the implementation of benefit funds for building service employees and, in 1951, it helped establish the first joint employer-union welfare fund providing hospitalization, surgical, and group life benefits to approximately 25,000 workers. In 1957, agreements reached with commercial building owners created the industry's first pension plan and three years later over 1,000 employees were provided retirement benefits.

1934

RAB established

1951

Helped establish the first joint  
employer-union welfare fund

1957

Industry's first pension plan



In 1978, the Board became a multi-employer association which bound its members to the terms and conditions of negotiated agreements provided that the unions involved have full authority to negotiate a collective bargaining agreement without the need for subsequent ratification. That same year RAB, along with other partners, established the Office of the Contract Arbitrator where future arbitrations between the parties would be held.

In 1996 we were instrumental in resolving the longest strike in 50 years of industry history. Lasting 31 days in the depths of winter, we helped our members maintain most of their essential building operations and kept service disruptions to a minimum while negotiating a fair and acceptable contract settlement.

When disasters strike, RAB has worked to allay their devastating effects, including the attacks of September 11, 2001 when 28 union members lost their lives and 1,740 were left jobless, and the major losses related to Hurricane Sandy. In the former instance the parties agreed on the suspension of "bumping rights" until February of 2002, created a preferential hiring list for employees displaced as a result of the attacks, provided for the continuation of health benefits for families of the deceased as well as displaced workers, and supplemental unemployment benefits to those awaiting new positions. In the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy we again worked to extend benefits to affected employees, and avoided bumping issues in commercial buildings.

1978

1996

2001-Present

Became multi-employer  
association

Resolved longest strike in 50 years

Allay effects of disasters

## I OUR SERVICES

We negotiate collective bargaining agreements on behalf of owners and operators of real property with unions that represent their maintenance and operating employees.

The major unions representing employees in the building service industry are SEIU; Local 32BJ, who represents porters, cleaners, elevator operators, handypersons, doormen, window cleaners, security guards, and superintendents in both residential and commercial buildings; Local 94, Local 30, and Local 68, who represent operating engineers; and Local 670, and a Craft Group, who represent painters, plumbers, electricians, and carpenters.

Our agreements, although generally similar to the direct agreement between independent owners and unions, are preferable to direct agreements which contain some more onerous conditions, particularly in the area of force reductions, discrimination, venue, ever-green provisions, and management rights.

Membership in RAB entitles each member to come under the umbrella of our agreement with any cost for appearance before various arbitration forums being paid for by the Board rather than by the individual member. We will also represent members at these proceedings without additional charge.

We also sit on multiple committees where we serve as a representative of the building service industry and continue to negotiate collective bargaining agreements on behalf of our members who employ the major unions in the building service industry.







## I MEMBERSHIP

Currently membership totals more than 1,000 commercial buildings, 3,000 residential buildings, and 1,200 new schools throughout New York City in addition to many building maintenance contractors who employ more than 20,000 members of Local 32BJ.

Since 2008 RAB has acted in an advisory capacity in negotiations held in Washington D.C., Virginia, Maryland, and site agreements in other states.



## I BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

The interests of the real estate industry are best served by this Board representing as many of the buildings and contractors employing unions as possible. With larger membership the ultimate agreements negotiated by the Board will inure to the benefit of all our members.

Membership in RAB entitles each member to come under the umbrella of our agreement with any cost for appearance before various arbitration forums being paid for by the Board rather than by the individual member. We will also represent members at these proceedings without additional charge.

Unions which negotiate with RAB agree to a "most favored nations" clause which means that if any employer negotiates a more favorable contract with the union, the more favorable contract applies to all RAB members. Our by-laws also provide that we notify all members prior to the commencement of collective bargaining so that they may withdraw from the negotiating group without discontinuing their membership.

Currently the multi-employer provision applies only to agreements negotiated with the SEIU, Local 32BJ in the commercial sector of the industry. All agreements negotiated on an industry wide basis must be approved by the Board of Directors as well as by the affected division of the Board.

## I OUR TEAM

**HOWARD ROTHSCILD** serves as President of the Realty Advisory Board on Labor Relations, Inc. For more than three decades he has represented the real estate industry in labor negotiations and has participated in thousands of arbitrations in addition to representing employers in matters before the State and Federal Courts. Howard has also represented employers before numerous federal, state, and local administrative agencies regarding a variety of employment and labor issues, including unfair labor practice cases and discrimination claims. Notably, he also was counsel of record for one of the employers in *Pyett v. 14 Penn Plaza* before the Supreme Court of the United States, a seminal labor case that cemented arbitration's place as a foundation of organized labor relations.

Howard also serves as an officer and trustee on the SEIU, Local 32BJ Funds, Local 94, IUOE Funds and Committees, and is active in the funds' governance. In 2010, the International Foundation awarded Howard the designation of Master Trustee.

A regular speaker to industry and legal professional groups, Howard volunteers extensively to further the interests of the community. He was appointed to the Board of Directors of The Outreach Project in 2013, which provides treatment for adolescents struggling with alcohol and drug abuse; The Bridge in 2012 and its Executive Committee in 2017, which provides services for adults with mental illness and Children-At-Play in 2010, a pre-school program for children with disabilities. He previously served on the Board of Trustees of the Solomon Schechter Day School of Raritan Valley (SSDSRV) for ten years and its Executive Committee for five years. Howard has been honored by Project Outreach, The Bridge, and SSDSRV for his commitment and devotion to these organizations.

A graduate of Hofstra Law School, he is admitted to practice law in New York State, as well as the Southern and Eastern Districts of New York, the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit and the Supreme Court of the United States. Howard is also member of the New York State Bar Association, the American Bar Association and the Real Estate Board of New York.




**MICHAEL BADOWSKI**, a graduate of St. John's University School of Law, is admitted to practice in New York. An RAB staff attorney a quarter century, he counsels its members on labor relations and employment matters as well as representing them in grievances and arbitration proceedings.

**STEPHEN HALOUVAS**, admitted to practice in New York and New Jersey, began his career working in labor relations in the entertainment industry where he spent eight years handling grievances and negotiating contracts. As a union stagehand he worked on the 2008 presidential debates, TV shows such as Pan Am, and movies including The Bourne Legacy.

Stephen received his Bachelor of Fine Arts, with Honors from Adelphi University and graduated St. John's University School of Law with Honors. While attending law school he served as Vice President of the Labor Relations and Employment Law Society and a Junior Fellow of our Center for Labor and Employment Law. While at St. John's, he received the ABA/BNA Award for Excellence in Labor and Employment Law, as well as the Dean's awards for Excellence in Labor Law and Labor and Employment Arbitration for obtaining the highest grades in those areas. His other educational credentials include the AFL-CIO Organizing Institute, and classes in Contract Administration and Collective Bargaining at Cornell University ILR.





**MICHAEL RIVITUSO** is an attorney with the Realty Advisory Board on Labor Relations who is admitted to practice in New York. He is a 1980 graduate of Cornell University, School of Industrial and Labor Relations and a 1989 graduate of Fordham Law School. Michael has been employed by the Realty Advisory Board since 1983. Michael represents employers in labor arbitrations and collective bargaining with Local 32BJ, Local 94, Local 30, and various other unions in the tri-state area.


For the past 25 years, Michael has been a committee member of Swim Across America - Long Island Sound Organization that consistently raises over \$1 million a year for research and family support. In 2010, Michael was awarded the Wald-Lee Vision Award by the Cancer Support Team.

**ROBERT S. SCHWARTZ**, admitted to practice in New York and New Jersey, focuses on the representation of employers and management in all areas of labor and employment relations. He has represented employers in state and federal court employment litigation, arbitrations, and administrative proceedings, including claims of unlawful discrimination, harassment, breach of contract, wage and hour violations, and tort claims. Robert also has experience representing clients in disputes arising from collective bargaining relationships and in advising clients on compliance with applicable labor laws. In addition, Robert has represented clients in matters involving violations of the securities laws, derivative actions, and fiduciary responsibilities.

Robert has lectured to attorneys and human resources personnel and written on issues employers face in complying with various labor and employment law topics, such as wage and hour issues under the Fair Labor Standards Act.

He received a BA with Honors from The Ohio State University and a law degree from Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law where he served as an Articles Editor for the Cardozo Journal of International and Comparative Law. Robert was selected to Super Lawyers' 2014 and 2015 New Jersey Rising Star list. Prior to RAB, he was an associate in the Labor and Employment Law Department of Proskauer Rose.





**HARRY WEINBERG**, admitted to practice in New York, New Jersey and California, has represented employers in the building service industry since 1985 and handles grievances and arbitrations as well as administrative matters and defense of employment discrimination claims. He served as President of the Service Employers Association and the Window Cleaning Employers Association, multi-employer bargaining associations consisting of building service and window cleaning employers until those groups were dissolved and merged into the RAB in 1999.

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