

Feature Article

Katten Attorneys Nationwide Step Up in Wake of Travel Ban and Evolving Immigration Enforcement

Following the president's Executive Orders concerning refugee admissions, dozens of Katten attorneys, in seven of the firm's offices, spontaneously stepped forward to maintain Katten's longstanding commitment to obtaining asylum in the United States for those fleeing persecution in their home countries. Some, such as Chicago Litigation associates **Nicole Saleem** and **Kim Beis**, who was featured in a [Chicago Tribune story](#) and a [TV news clip](#), were out at the airports right away providing pro bono legal assistance. Many others subsequently came to meetings to learn about what they can do and are training to provide refugee legal assistance going forward.

Nicole also, in an effort to further serve the community that Katten serves with its Legal Clinic at the [Jose de Diego Community Academy](#) in Chicago, spearheaded a Know Your Rights (KYR) presentation on March 15 at the school in conjunction with the [National Immigrant Justice Center](#) (NIJC). The presentation was designed to equip undocumented immigrants and their families with information about their legal rights and how to best prepare for potential enforcement activities. Following the presentation, Katten attorneys provided individual legal screenings to help identify available forms of immigration relief. This was a great opportunity to provide important information at a critical time to a community looking for guidance.

In New York, Tax Planning partner **Angelo Ciavarella** attended the recent New York Legal Assistance Group Immigration Boot Camp, while White Collar, Investigations and Compliance associate **Camille Richard** attended a Catholic Charities asylum training program. She signed up to accompany the charity's attorneys to Immigration Court in April, and help interview and prepare 80+ individuals who will go before a judge in their first step to apply for either visa status or asylum.

Led by Chicago Public Finance special counsel **Chad Doobay**, who has long been active on refugee issues, the firm has begun an effort to pool the collective experience of its pro bono attorneys who work on asylum cases by creating an internal firm website with immigration law resources, as well as an internal email group that enables Katten attorneys to share their experiences, and in particular, help those new to this kind of work connect with resources that will help them advocate for their clients.

Attorneys interested in joining this group should contact [Chad](#).

Victories on Behalf of Clients

Winning Streak Continues for Katten Team Defending Gun Safety Laws

The US Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit has joined the Courts of Appeals for the Second, Seventh, Ninth and Tenth Circuits in upholding against a constitutional challenge a state law enacted in the wake of the Newtown tragedy that bans assault weapons and large capacity ammunition magazines. The Katten team, which includes director of Pro Bono Services **Jonathan Baum**, New York Litigation associate **Mark Ciani** and Chicago Litigation associate **Thomas Peabody**, has represented the [Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence](#) and associated state gun safety organizations as

amici curiae in all of these courts, defending these state laws against Second Amendment challenges. In each case, most recently a Maryland statute, the Court of Appeals has held that the Second Amendment does not prevent states from exercising their responsibility to protect their citizens from excessive gun violence by banning these particular weapons. In the most recent decision, the Fourth Circuit, sitting *en banc*, held that: “The banned assault weapons and large-capacity magazines are among those arms that are ‘like’ ‘M-16 rifles’—‘weapons that are most useful in military service’—which the [US Supreme] Court singled out as being beyond the Second Amendment’s reach.”

Katten Wins Settlement for Removal of Endangered African Lions From Iowa Roadside Zoo

Chicago Litigation partner **David Stagman**, in partnership with long-time pro bono client [Animal Legal Defense Fund](#) (ALDF), won a swift and decisive victory in the Northern District of Iowa for the permanent removal of two endangered African lions from a deplorable Iowa roadside zoo. Employing a rarely used legal theory, Katten filed a complaint on behalf of ALDF and five individual plaintiffs alleging that the zoo’s treatment of the lions constituted a “taking” under the Endangered Species Act. The individual plaintiffs—who had begun as chance zoo visitors—had documented horrific conditions at the zoo and animals in visible distress: findings confirmed by a subsequent undercover investigator. ALDF moved Chief Judge Linda Reade for a preliminary injunction seeking immediate transfer of the lions to an accredited care facility or, in the alternative, for an order compelling the zoo to allow a qualified veterinary examination of the lions to determine next steps. The court ordered the zoo to comply with a veterinary examination of the lions and, perceiving the strength of ALDF’s case, ordered trial to begin in 10 days. Katten and ALDF were readying for trial and preparing expert witnesses when the zoo capitulated and agreed to surrender the lions.



The lions were transferred to a preeminent wildlife sanctuary and one of them immediately underwent life-saving surgery to remove a bowel obstruction that had resulted from her eating her hay bedding out of starvation. Both lions have made remarkable physical recoveries and are thriving in the sanctuary with other rescued lions.

As a result of Katten’s work on this case, ALDF honored Katten—from among 400 law-firm partners nationwide—with its “Advancement in Animal Law Pro Bono Achievement Award” at the 2016 Animal Law Conference in New York City. David accepted the award on behalf of Katten.

Georgia Prisoner Given Second Chance To Amend Complaint

In a case argued by Washington, DC Litigation associate **Dan Lipton**, the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit remanded an appeal concerning the inadequate medical care of his client, a prisoner in the Georgia Department of Corrections. The district court had dismissed the case on the pleadings of the plaintiff’s Eighth Amendment claims concerning the deliberate indifference to his serious medical needs. The Eleventh Circuit reversed the district court’s decision and remanded to the district court to give the plaintiff an opportunity to amend his complaint prior to dismissing his claims.

Nonprofits and Low-Income Populations

London Office Clients Work Together To Help India's Poor

In India, more than 140,000 children under the age of five die every year from sanitation-related diarrheal conditions. One in 10 people overall can be linked to poor sanitation. [Sanitation First](#), a charity and pro bono client of London Real Estate partner **Terry Green**, decided to change all that by providing an inner-city sanitation system. The first phase of the project focused on the poverty-stricken Pondicherry area.

The results were compelling. There was a:

- 42 percent decrease in health care expenditures.
- 62 percent reduction in missed work days.
- 63 percent reduction in missed school days.
- 34 percent increase in income per household.

However, to expand the operation into the next region of focus—the city of Chennai—Sanitation First needed £300,000. Terry connected the organization with another firm client, [Southern Petrochemical Industries Corporation](#) (SPIC) Limited, one of the leading fertilizer manufacturing companies in India. The chairman of SPIC understood that this venture represented a great benefit both for the people and the country as a whole. After a few months of negotiation, SPIC donated the entire £300,000 and has promised further support for other projects throughout India. Terry will be the guest of honor at two celebration dinners next month as thanks for his work on this project.

Katten Helps Airlink Deliver Critical Aid

Washington, DC Corporate special counsel **Robyn Mandel** has assisted Airlink—a rapid-response humanitarian relief organization that connects airlines with pre-qualified nonprofits—since the organization's inception in 2013. As general counsel to [Airlink](#), she advises the organization virtually 24/7 on 501(c)(3) issues, general corporate and employment issues, and more. For example, in April 2016, Airlink responded to a 7.8 magnitude earthquake that struck Ecuador, knocking down buildings, destroying roads and creating massive infrastructural problems across the country. By procuring donated capacity from four airline partners, Airlink facilitated the transport of more than 50 relief workers and more than 200,000 pounds of cargo, with medical aid and relief materials valued at nearly \$4 million.

Airlink was again called into action when Hurricane Matthew made landfall on October 4, 2016, in Haiti and caused significant destruction. With the collapse of bridges, some areas of Haiti were completely inaccessible and aid could not be delivered to many desperate communities. In this case, Robyn led Katten in providing specific legal counsel to Airlink to enable them to send two charter flights, carrying 275,000 pounds of supplies to address food insecurity, medical aid, and cholera mitigation and care. Her advice helped Airlink mitigate its risk and comply with applicable regulations, while achieving its goal of assisting the affected people, even though commercial airlines were not flying into Haiti.

Cross-Practice Team Helps Reclaim13 End Cycle of Commercial Sexual Exploitation in Chicagoland

For nearly five years, a team of cross-practice attorneys and staff from the Chicago and New York offices has provided [Reclaim13](#) with legal support across a variety of areas. Last year, the Chicago nonprofit opened Cherish House, a safe house that provides housing, education, trauma-informed therapy, vocational training and life skills to girls rescued from sex trafficking. Reclaim13 is dedicated to reclaiming the childhood experience for children who—frequently beginning at age 13—are forced into sex trafficking. As one of the only dedicated safe houses for these victims in the nation, Reclaim13 has received multiple referrals from the FBI, the US attorneys' offices and law enforcement across the country. Since Reclaim13 opened Cherish House, 14 girls have been helped from several states, with the youngest being only 12 years old.

Litigation partner **Patrick Harrigan** has helped the organization since its founding. He serves as pro bono outside general counsel for Reclaim13 and recruited the cross-practice team. Throughout the past year, Employment Law and Litigation special counsel **Nineveh Alkhas** has handled multiple employment matters for the organization. Litigation partner **Dan Polatsek** and associate **Silke Watson** have aided in an investigation involving the Illinois Department of Children & Family Services and local law enforcement. Litigation associate **Alexandra McNicholas** has advised the client on regulatory compliance matters. Health Care partner **Ken Davis** has negotiated an agreement with Loyola University Chicago to obtain free medical care for the girls from the university’s physicians. New York Health Care associate **Rachel Adams** has advised the organization on teletherapy and licensure issues.

Cassandra Ma, executive director of Reclaim13, said of Katten: “Reclaim13 recently celebrated our five-year anniversary as a 501(c)(3) agency dedicated to the plight of sexually exploited children. Since our inception, so many Katten attorneys have been involved in many areas of our work. We are so appreciative of the professionalism and commitment of all at Katten who enable us to serve vulnerable and exploited individuals together. On behalf of those we serve—who often feel they have no one to advocate for them—you have helped dispel the notion that no one cares, and adults only do things for their own gain. Thank you!”

Washington, DC Bar Clinic Volunteers at Bread for the City

Katten team members volunteered their time on Saturday, February 11 to assist walk-in clients at the DC Bar Pro Bono Program Advice and Referral clinic at [Bread for the City](#), a shelter for vulnerable residents in the capital city. The Katten team, along with other volunteers, helped **106 clients** at the Northwest location address a wide array of legal matters. *This is the largest number of clients served at either clinic site in the history of the clinic.*

Real Estate partner **Julia Schmidt** spearheaded the effort, which included the following Katten volunteers: Structured Finance and Securitization partner **Seth Messner**, Real Estate associates **Schuyler Armstrong** and **Liz Dominguez**, Tax Planning associate **Sarah Ma**, Corporate associate **Brett Seifarth**, and Senior Business Development Manager **Melissa Borkgren**. The DC Bar clinic coordinator also specifically expressed her appreciation for the fact that several team members stayed very late in the afternoon to make sure that every client was seen. Julia would like to thank the great volunteers above, as the clinic would not be able to provide these much-needed legal services in the local community without their help.

Katten’s next volunteering session will be on Saturday, May 13, 2017, for anyone interested in volunteering.

Individual Recognitions

Chicago Associate Awarded “2016 Volunteer of the Year” by LAF

When Corporate associate **Alyse Sagalchik** joined the firm in December 2015, she sought opportunities to participate in the firm’s pro bono efforts. **Jonathan Baum**, director of Pro Bono Services, suggested that she consider participating in the [Jose de Diego Legal Clinic](#), a legal aid clinic that Katten—in partnership with the [Legal Assistance Foundation](#) (LAF)—holds at a Chicago public school on the third Wednesday of every month during the school year to address legal issues ranging from landlord-tenant disputes to family law. Alyse first assisted at the clinic in March 2016 and has continued to participate virtually every month since then. For her great dedication, Alyse was presented with the LAF 2016 Volunteer of the Year award, which was accepted on her behalf by Jonathan and Chicago Litigation paralegal supervisor **Keith Forrest**.



Pictured: Jonathan Baum, Benna Crawford, and Keith Forrest.

New Pro Bono Leadership for Texas Offices

Houston Litigation partner **Tom Kiehnhoff** now serves as the new pro bono chair for Katten’s Texas offices and as a member of the firmwide [Pro Bono Committee](#). Tom succeeds Daniella Landers, who served ably in that role. Austin Litigation associate **Katie Bennett Hobson** will continue as co-chair for the Texas offices.

DC Attorneys Honored for Helping Disadvantaged Children Take First Step in Dancing Careers

Structured Finance and Securitization partner **Seth Messner** and Real Estate partner **John Muir** accepted the 2017 Community Service Award on behalf of Katten from the [Maryland Youth Ballet](#) (MYB) at its annual gala fundraiser in Bethesda, Maryland. Throughout the last 10 years, Katten has provided real estate, corporate, litigation, tax, employment and other pro bono legal support to MYB.

Since 1971, the nonprofit mission of MYB has been to provide the highest caliber of training and performance opportunities to prepare young dancers for a career in the performing arts, as well as to provide classes to dancers of all ages and levels in the community. MYB offers therapeutic dance instruction to those with physical disabilities through its “Music and Motion” classes, and—by offering free after-school classes in several local elementary schools, as well as intensive dance training at their state-of-the-art studios—helps increase the diversity in classical ballet and gives disadvantaged children in the community access to formal ballet training. MYB’s goals are to expose children in the community to a classic artistic discipline, and to find and nurture talent in need of financial resources.



Ben Patton Selected as Board Member of Dress for Success Houston

Houston Environmental and Workplace Safety partner **Ben Patton** has been named to the board of directors of [Dress for Success Houston](#). Ben has been actively involved in the organization for several years, including as a member of the Corporate Guild. Dress for Success Houston’s mission is to empower women to achieve economic independence by providing a network of support, professional attire and developmental tools to help women thrive in work and life. Since 1998, the organization has provided business attire, a much-needed boost in confidence, and job retention and career advancement services to more than 37,000 women in the Houston community.

Chicago Work-Study Intern Takes the Stage at Christ the King Gala

Jordan Boyson, a second-year intern in Katten’s work-study program and senior at Christ the King Preparatory School in Chicago, spoke to an audience of more than 550 friends and supporters at their recent King of Hearts Gala. [In his speech](#), Jordan spoke about the people and opportunities that have formed him at Christ the King, including its Corporate Work-Study Program, which placed him at Katten for the past two years. “This is an opportunity that my friends at other schools don’t get. . . [in my time with Katten] being viewed as a peer made me proud. And for the first time I saw myself as a contributing member of the corporate world. Thank you to everyone in the room who hires CTK students.” The event raised nearly \$650,000 towards 129 student scholarships this school year.



Championing School Spirit

Katten Pride at de Diego

The students and faculty of [Jose de Diego Community Academy](#) wanted to show their school spirit at sporting events and other school-sponsored activities. They reached out to Chicago Litigation paralegal supervisor **Keith Forrest** to see if he could help—and help he did. Keith arranged for Katten to donate a t-shirt for each student and teacher with their mascot emblazoned across the front. Go Eagles!



Please send comments, suggestions and news about interesting pro bono cases and matters you've been involved with, as well as any non-legal community service work you're doing, to jonathan.baum@kattenlaw.com.

