

American Bar Association Recognizes Katten's Pro Bono Publico Award With Ceremony and Highlights Video

August 8, 2016

On August 6, Director of Pro Bono Services Jonathan Baum accepted the 2016 Pro Bono Publico Award on behalf of Katten at the American Bar Association (ABA) Annual Meeting in San Francisco. The ABA Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Services presents the prestigious award to individual lawyers and institutions in the legal profession that have demonstrated outstanding commitment to volunteer legal services for the poor and disadvantaged. Katten received the award principally for its work at the Katten Legal Clinic at José de Diego Community Academy, the first legal clinic located in a Chicago public school. In cooperation with LAF, Katten opened the clinic to provide basic legal assistance to members of the school community while supporting education, a cause the firm adopted and has long maintained. In 2015, Katten attorneys and staff provided more than 800 hours of pro bono legal services at the Katten Legal Clinic, addressing legal issues ranging from landlord-tenant disputes and housing matters to wills, expungements, and consumer and family law.

The ABA also filmed a video about Katten's award-winning dedication to pro bono service. The video features interviews with Jonathan, Chicago office managing partner Gil Soffer, Chicago associates Hannah Koesterer (Litigation and Dispute Resolution), David Dorman (Corporate) and Matthew Holub (Intellectual Property Litigation), and Keith Forrest, who serves as Litigation paralegal supervisor and director of the Katten Legal Clinic. "It's critical to have lawyers at all levels at a firm do pro bono work," said Gil, adding that it's also a wonderful training opportunity. Bonnie Allen, executive director of Chicago Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights Under Law noted in the video that it's clear pro bono is a core value at Katten. "Throughout the city, if you ask any public interest law organization in town, 'Who are some of the top pro bono firms?' Katten will always be in the mix," she said. Jonathan acknowledged that the firm is proud of its big pro bono cases, such as wins in appellate courts, but that the attorneys are proudest of "helping individuals with particular legal needs."

To view the video, click here.

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