



Social Services Strengthened in Chicago Area With Merger Facilitated by Katten

October 26, 2023

To better position two mission-aligned organizations devoted to serving people with intellectual/developmental disabilities and living with mental illness, a team from Katten helped facilitate a merger between Sertoma Centre and New Star. The combined organization, Sertoma Star Services, is now able to expand programming support and provide more targeted services for people in Chicago's south suburbs.

Katten began working with Sertoma Centre on the merger in February, with Winston & Strawn representing New Star.

Gus van den Brink, executive director of Sertoma Star Services, underscored the organization's commitment to providing services through day programs, community activities, skill training, counseling, and employment services, with a particular focus on facilitating job placement in the community. He praised the work of the pro bono attorneys, who worked with the organizations through the deal closing in October.

"I felt very much we were treated like any other paying client. We were just as important. They were professional, timely, and they had a list of things to cover that we would not have covered if we didn't have them," Gus said.

Leading the team on the Corporate side were Janet Goelz Hoffman, senior counsel and pro bono counsel, Private Credit partner John Corrigan, Public Finance associate Theodore Ryan, Corporate associate Jenny Steiger, Mergers and Acquisitions associate Aaron Weiss and Corporate associate Sterling Williams. Handling employment law issues were Julie Gottshall, partner and chair of the Employment Litigation and Counseling Department, and associate Jill Settlemyer. Attorneys from other groups, including the Real Estate practice, also assisted over the course of the merger representation.

"These merger transactions are complicated but a regular occurrence in Katten's wheelhouse. Given the variety of legal backgrounds necessary for a successful merger, we assembled a team of seven lawyers to advance Sertoma Centre's goals," Janet said. "It was a pleasure for all of us to work on a project that will result in stronger services in the region."

["Sertoma Centre and New Star recently merged - Pro Bono Highlight!"](#) Chicago Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights, October 13, 2023

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