

For Immediate Release

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Katten Partners Donate Ukrainian Art, Host Gala Fundraiser to Boost Easterseals

(CHICAGO) Katten was a top sponsor of the Easterseals DuPage and Fox Valley 45th Annual Gala Saturday, and firm partner Derek F. Ladgenski was there, contributing to the sold-out event's success.

Ladgenski, who is vice-chair of the board of Easterseals DuPage and Fox Valley, served as an emcee for the evening, titled "Limitless." Katten partner Dmitriy Lampert donated two limited-edition digital prints from the "Freedom" series by Ukrainian artist Krystyna Khmil, capturing the artist's personal reflections during the war. The artwork was sold during a silent auction, proceeds of which will help fund programming in the Elgin, Naperville and Villa Park centers of the local chapter of Easterseals. Lampert further pledged to match bids up to \$1,000 per art piece to help the "Come Back Alive" Foundation in Ukraine, providing support to service members in the country's armed forces.

"The idea came to me when I was trying to decide what I could give to benefit this wonderful organization," Lampert said of the artwork, which he purchased for and had displayed in his home before donating it. He grew up in Lviv, Ukraine, not far from the town where Khmil lived before the war forced her to flee Ukraine. "I thought what a great way to help while also sharing Ukrainian art and culture," he said.

Ladgenski added, "Katten has been a longstanding supporter of Easterseals DuPage and Fox Valley, and I am beyond proud to say my family and our firm are beyond humbled to do whatever we can to empower children with disabilities and their families through this amazingly strong organization."

Ladgenski and Lampert are both partners in Katten's industry-leading Private Credit practice and serve on the board for Easterseals DuPage & Fox Valley. Ladgenski's son, Quinn, 14, has been an Easterseals client since he was diagnosed with cerebral palsy at four months old. He and his family members were honored as gala ambassadors at the 2019 fundraiser.

Among the honorees at this year's gala, which drew about 400 guests and is expected to outpace last year's \$450,000 fundraising total, were longtime Easterseals donors Craig and Michele Boroughf and the 2023 "Changemakers," an interdisciplinary team of nine Easterseals therapists who worked with twin sisters born joined at the chest. They now are thriving independently.

The gala Saturday was the first fully in-person event the local Easterseals chapter has held since the onset of COVID-19. Since 2010, Katten has helped fund the organization's mission "to ensure that children with disabilities and their families are empowered."

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