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American Bar Association Honors Katten for Exceptional Pro Bono Work

(CHICAGO) Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP announced today that the American Bar Association (ABA) selected the firm for its 2016 Pro Bono Publico Award for outstanding commitment to volunteer legal services for the poor and disadvantaged.

“Since our founding, Katten’s commitment to providing pro bono service has been on par with our commitment to client service and legal innovation,” said Katten Chairman Vincent A.F. Sergi. “This award is a testament to the hard work and legal excellence of our attorneys who willingly dedicate themselves to helping the communities where we work and live.”

The ABA recognized Katten for its innovative work in establishing the Katten Legal Clinic at José de Diego Community Academy, the first legal clinic located in a Chicago Public School. The Clinic provides assistance with basic legal issues to members of the school community and surrounding neighborhood. Since its launch in 2013, the Katten Legal Clinic, with support from LAF (formerly the Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago), operating one evening each month, has provided legal assistance to nearly 200 people. Last year alone, Katten attorneys and staff provided more than 800 hours of pro bono legal services, including extended representation of many Clinic clients.

“Attorneys join Katten with a passion for volunteering their legal skills to those who need it most, and we actively nurture that commitment throughout the years those attorneys work at the firm,” said Jonathan Baum, Katten’s Director of Pro Bono Services. “We are truly honored to receive this award, but the biggest honor, and privilege, is being able to help improve the lives of so many.”

The award honors Katten for its nationwide commitment to serving those in need. The firm’s pro bono work includes a range of legal assistance nationally: in Chicago, attorneys have won asylum in the United States for families fleeing ISIS persecution in Iraq and drug cartel persecution in Mexico; in Washington, DC, attorneys regularly provide legal services at a walk-in legal clinic run by the DC Bar; in Charlotte, attorneys formed a partnership with the Safe Child Immigrant Project of Legal Services of Southern Piedmont to successfully obtain custody orders for mothers

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of unaccompanied minors; in New York, attorneys secured asylum for a Tibetan refugee who was being persecuted by the Chinese government; and in Los Angeles, attorneys secured adoptions for scores of children who were former wards of the state and saved the home of an elderly Alzheimer's victim from unscrupulous neighbors.

Katten was nominated for the award by Chicago-based LAF, but letters of support were also submitted by four other legal aid agencies, including those the firm's attorneys work with in Los Angeles and New York. The award, bestowed each year by the ABA's Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service, will be formally presented to Katten at the 2016 ABA Pro Bono Publico Awards Luncheon on Saturday, August 6 in San Francisco.

The Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service works to ensure access to justice through the expansion and enhancement of the delivery of legal and other law-related services to the underserved through volunteer efforts of legal professionals nationwide. The Committee fosters the development of pro bono programs and activities by law firms, bar associations, corporate legal departments, law schools, government attorney offices and others; analyzes the scope and function of pro bono programs; and proposes and reviews policy that affects lawyers' ability to provide pro bono legal services.

With more than 400,000 members, the ABA is one of the largest voluntary professional membership organizations in the world. As the national voice of the legal profession, the ABA works to improve the administration of justice, promotes programs that assist lawyers and judges in their work, accredits law schools, provides continuing legal education, and works to build public understanding around the world of the importance of the rule of law.

Katten is a full-service law firm with more than 600 attorneys in locations across the United States and in London and Shanghai. Clients seeking sophisticated, high-value legal services turn to Katten for counsel locally, nationally and internationally. The firm's core areas of practice are corporate, financial services, insolvency and restructuring, litigation, real estate, environmental, commercial finance, intellectual property, structured finance and securitization, and trusts and estates. Katten represents public and private companies in numerous industries, including nearly half of the Fortune 100, as well as a number of government and nonprofit organizations and individuals.

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