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Katten Selects Mentoring Awards Recipients

(CHICAGO) Katten announced today that the firm recognized New York-based Financial Markets and Funds Partner Susan Light and Shelley Wissot, Director of Administration for its California offices, with the 2024 John P. Sieger Excellence in Mentoring Awards.

The annual awards were established to honor the firm’s late Insolvency and Restructuring practice Chair and longtime Partner John P. Sieger, who championed mentoring as a means of ensuring ongoing professional development and continually improving client service.

“The John P. Sieger Excellence in Mentoring Awards are a testament to the power of mentorship at Katten. We celebrate John’s legacy by recognizing our attorneys and business professionals for making a meaningful difference in a colleague’s career,” said Chair Gil Soffer. “Mentors who generously invest their time and offer invaluable support to the next generation of leaders play a key role in shaping our firm’s culture and long-term success.”

Internal selection committees reviewed the nominations. The committee that evaluated the attorney nominations included members of firm leadership and drew from the firm’s affinity groups, Associates Committee and Income Partner Liaison Committee. The business professional selection committee included members of firm administration and other business professionals.

Light co-chairs the firm’s Broker-Dealer Regulation practice and serves as chair of its Jewish Cultural Affinity Group. She joined Katten in 2018 after spending more than 30 years as a senior leader and regulatory officer in the New York Stock Exchange and the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority.

“Sue truly cares about junior attorneys’ development both professionally and personally. She is constantly checking in to see how we are doing. She is a wonderful mentor,” according to one mentee. “Sue is unbelievably generous with her time and spirit. When I speak to her, she listens without judgment. When I make mistakes, she never chastises or castigates ... [T]here are no words to describe how grateful I am to have started my career under her direction.”

In accepting her award, Light said she was humbled and appreciated the time she spent with her mentees in developing trusted and honest relationships and challenging them to take on more responsibility and become their best selves.

“After providing excellent service to our clients, this is the most important contribution I can make towards both Katten’s future and the associate’s future,” Light said. “To have an associate feel that they’re valued, heard, respected and appreciated is so important, and to provide them an open opportunity where they can ask questions in a safe area of, ‘how do you navigate law firm life at a big firm?’ is really important to me.”

In her role, Wissot supports firm attorneys in the Los Angeles and Orange County offices in California and manages administrative services, overseeing legal executive and administrative assistants, office events, facilities and special projects, including the recent office move.

“Shelley deserves this award because she is and has been for several years the key person in our office that keeps everything running,” according to one nominator’s testimony. “Shelley’s door is always open to discuss and resolve any issues or problems that arise. She is an asset to Katten and demonstrates an exemplary standard for all of us to follow.”

Wissot said she was honored to be recognized for doing what she enjoys: listening, offering advice and encouraging others to make the best of their talents.

“I consider myself very fortunate to be surrounded by some of the best talent in the legal industry — many who have been part of my professional journey, and I am proud to be part of theirs. This is why being recognized for coaching others and cheering them on feels so special to me,” Wissot said.

More than 60 Katten attorneys and business professionals were nominated for this year’s awards.

Katten is a full-service law firm with approximately 700 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 include corporate, financial markets and funds, insolvency and restructuring, intellectual property, litigation, real estate, structured finance and securitization, transactional tax planning, private credit and private wealth. Katten represents public and private companies in numerous industries, as well as a number of government and nonprofit organizations and individuals. For more information, visit katten.com.