

For Immediate Release

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Katten's Women's Leadership Forum Honors New York First Lady Silda Wall Spitzer and Katten Partner Nina Matis with Inaugural Sophia Award *Annual award honors individuals instrumental in the success and empowerment of women*

NEW YORK - Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP's [Women's Leadership Forum](#) is pleased to announce that it has selected First Lady of New York Silda Wall Spitzer and Katten partner [Nina B. Matis](#) as the recipients of its inaugural Sophia Award. The Sophia Award will be given annually in recognition of the achievements and contributions of individuals who are instrumental in the success and empowerment of women. The awards were presented during a May 17 reception at the St. Regis Hotel in New York.

The Sophia Award was presented to Ms. Wall Spitzer in recognition of her extensive philanthropic efforts, including founding and chairing the not-for-profit organization, Children for Children, which provides opportunities for young people to participate in community service activities. Ms. Matis was honored for her continuing success in the real estate law arena and her work toward advancing the role of women in the legal profession and in business.

"We are very pleased to honor Silda and Nina as the first-ever recipients of the Sophia Award," said [Tara Kamradt](#), co-chair of Katten's Women's Leadership Forum and a partner in the Firm's [Corporate Practice](#). "These two exceptional women possess all of the qualities that the Sophia Award is meant to embody. They are strong, incredibly intelligent women who are deeply committed to sharing their experiences and wisdom in order to help others achieve their goals. They are ideal role models for all women and very deserving of this recognition."

Ms. Wall Spitzer is the current First Lady of New York State, wife of Governor Eliot Spitzer who took office in January 2007. She is also the founding chair of Children for Children, a not-for-profit organization which creates opportunities for young people from all backgrounds to volunteer their time and resources to benefit children and others, particularly by providing books and other materials to schools in under-resourced areas of New York City. She received her law degree from Harvard Law School and her B.A., summa cum laude, from Meredith College. Ms. Wall Spitzer began her legal career with Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP, specializing in mergers, acquisitions and corporate finance. She later joined Chase Manhattan Bank as a member of its International Legal Group.

Ms. Wall Spitzer is also a founding co-chair of Project Cicero, the annual New York City book drive building classroom libraries in under-resourced schools. She has served on the New York Blue Ribbon Commission on Youth Leadership, as well as on the board of The Children's Museum of Manhattan from 1995 until January 1999, where she was a member of its Executive Committee and chaired its Program Committee.

Recognized by the National Law Journal as one of the 100 Most Influential Lawyers in America in 2006, and as the World's Leading Real Estate Attorney by the International Who's Who of Business Lawyers in both 2006 and 2007, Ms. Matis is co-chair of Katten's National [Real Estate Practice](#) and is involved in its Women's Leadership Forum. Her practice is concentrated in all areas of commercial real estate development and acquisition, including residential, office, retail, hotel and mixed use developments; financing, including rated and structured financing; and partnership law. Ms. Matis has extensive experience in the organization and investment activities of debt and equity funds comprised of pension funds and of domestic and foreign investors and in investment and organizational matters relating to REITS.

Her clients include iStar Financial Inc., where she also serves as General Counsel and Executive Vice President; Blackacre Capital Partners LP and The Related Companies. Ms. Matis is also a member of Katten's Executive Committee and Board of Directors. She is a member of the American College of Real Estate Lawyers, Ely Chapter of Lambda Alpha International, Chicago Finance Exchange, Urban Land Institute, REFF, Chicago Real Estate Executive Women, The Chicago Network, WX (New York Women in Real Estate) and The Economic Club of Chicago.

“We are excited to begin a new tradition at Katten with the creation of the Sophia Award,” said [Ronni G. Davidowitz](#), a Katten partner and New York co-chair of the Women's Leadership Forum. “We look forward to highlighting individuals who pave the way for the success of women in business and their communities for years to come.”

Katten's Women's Leadership Forum was established to further the Firm's commitment to the development, retention and advancement of women and to provide a forum for its women attorneys to discuss issues and share information. A driving force for its creation was the recognition that as a national law Firm, Katten has significant wisdom, experience and vision, which, when collected and shared internally and externally, can empower women at all levels in their careers to achieve success and satisfaction.

Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP (www.kattenlaw.com) is a full-service law firm with offices in the nation's largest centers of business, government, finance and technology and an affiliated entity in London. With over 650 attorneys in more than 40 areas of practice, Katten provides timely and cost-effective counsel to clients in numerous industries. Katten provides advice for a wide range of public and private companies – from entrepreneurial, emerging-growth, and middle market firms to global Fortune 100 corporations – as well as government entities, institutions of higher learning, museums and a host of other charitable and cultural organizations.