

For Immediate Release

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Three Katten Associates Begin First Year Public Service Fellowship Program

Associates will spend their first year of practice working for legal services organizations as part of the firm's pro bono program

CHICAGO – Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP is pleased to announce that three of its incoming first-year associates will participate in the firm's year-long First Year Public Service Fellowship Program. **David Kerastas, Jennifer Saba** and **Sheila Simhan** have elected to spend their first year of legal practice working as staff attorneys for legal services organizations, which provide *pro bono* legal counsel to those in need. Katten was one of the first law firms in the nation to offer this type of program for first-year associates, introducing it in 2003.

"We know from our *pro bono* efforts as a firm that many legal services organizations that serve as valuable resources for underserved segments of the population, are often severely understaffed," said [Jonathan Baum](#), Katten's Director of Pro Bono Services. "Through our First Year Public Service Fellowship Program, we are able to assist these organizations with their staffing needs while at the same time offering our associates hands-on legal experience serving their community."

Mr. Kerastas, a recent University of Virginia School of Law graduate, will work with the National Immigrant Justice Center (NIJC), while Ms. Saba, who recently earned her J.D. from DePaul University College of Law, will work at the Roger Baldwin Foundation of ACLU Inc., the legal arm of the ACLU of Illinois. Ms. Simhan, a graduate of the University of Wisconsin Law School, will perform her fellowship at the Small Business Opportunity Center of Northwestern University School of Law.

Under its First Year Public Service Fellowship Program, Katten makes a donation to each agency sufficient to cover salary and benefits for the associates during their year of service. Following one year of service to their respective organizations, the three attorneys will return to Katten as second-year associates.

"We try to match associates' interests within their respective law practices to the needs of the organization," said Mr. Baum. "In return for our investment in these agencies, we get attorneys coming back to the firm with enhanced legal skills and a greater appreciation for public service."

This group of three associates is the largest in the program's history, notes Mr. Baum. "We are seeing a greater desire among law school graduates to contribute through public service."

Katten has a long-term commitment to helping the poor, the powerless and the disenfranchised obtain first-rate representation without charge. Attorneys and other legal professionals give their time, resources and talent to serve individuals and organizations in need, to engage in important national litigation, and to partner with local legal service providers to ensure access to the justice system. Katten attorneys are encouraged to become involved in *pro bono* projects with the same unwavering dedication, commitment to hard work and

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legal excellence that they bring to all matters handled by the firm. The firm arranges training for attorneys interested in specialized areas of *pro bono* law as well as credit for *pro bono* work toward billable hour requirements.

Katten's *pro bono* program has been honored with the National Public Service Award, presented by the American Bar Association Section of Business Law, and recognized by the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund in Chicago, the Lawyers Alliance for New York, the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois and numerous other organizations.

Founded in 1974, Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP is a full-service law firm with more than 650 attorneys in locations across the United States and an affiliate in London. The firm's business-savvy professionals provide clients in numerous industries with sophisticated, high-value legal services, with a focus on corporate, financial services, litigation, real estate, commercial finance, intellectual property and trusts and estates. Among our clients are a wide range of public and private companies, including nearly a third of the Fortune 100, as well as a number of government and nonprofit organizations and individuals. For additional information, visit www.kattenlaw.com.

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