

For Immediate Release

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Katten Receives the 2014 Beacon of Justice Award From the National Legal Aid & Defender Association

Firm Honored for Creating First Legal Aid Clinic in a Chicago Public School

(CHICAGO) Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP today was awarded the 2014 Beacon of Justice award by the National Legal Aid & Defender Association (NLADA) which is given to law firms that have created and implemented innovative strategies to improve life outcomes for those in need. Katten was recognized for establishing a first-of-its-kind legal aid clinic in a public school, the Katten Legal Clinic at Jose de Diego Community Academy.

“Katten has always been committed to putting our knowledge and resources to work to ensure that those who cannot afford legal services are given the fair representation they deserve,” said Vincent A.F. Sergi, Katten Chairman. “This award is a testament to the work our attorneys do to give back to the community and we are especially proud to have established the Katten Legal Clinic which brings those services directly into the community.”

The Katten Legal Clinic at Jose de Diego Community Academy is the first regular, periodic legal aid clinic in a Chicago public school. Katten partnered with LAF, Illinois’ largest provider of legal services to the poor, and The Law Project to develop this clinic which provides on-site legal services to families of students enrolled at the school and includes support from the school’s counseling staff. In addition to providing traditional legal services such as landlord/tenant and housing issues, wills, expungement, consumer law, family law and SSI/public benefits, the clinic also offers assistance to low-income individuals looking to start nonprofits and small businesses. The clinic is staffed by attorneys from Katten, LAF and The Law Project who volunteer their time.

“We wanted to eliminate barriers and create a convenient, safe place for people seeking legal services that was directly in the community. We thought a school would be the ideal place for that because we can not only meet legal needs but solidify the tie between family members of de Diego students and their school. Research shows that strengthening this connection boosts student

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academic performance,” said Jonathan Baum, Katten’s director of Pro Bono Services who conceived the idea for the clinic. “We’re seeing a real impact already and have been able to provide help to a number of families.” Baum oversees the clinic and regularly represents clients there.

Katten was presented with the Beacon of Justice Award at a dinner hosted by NLADA in Washington, DC. The firm has a long history of dedication to pro bono services and was the first law firm to create a full-time dedicated attorney position for pro bono. Hundreds of Katten attorneys volunteer their time and skills to help others who are less fortunate in the communities in which they practice.

Katten is a full-service law firm with more than 650 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 and trusts and estates. Katten represents public and private companies in numerous industries, including a third of the Fortune 100, as well as a number of government and nonprofit organizations and individuals.

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