

Victories on Behalf of Clients

Carrie Stickel Negotiates Settlement for Client Facing Improper Eviction

In November 2018, Chicago Litigation associate **Carrie Stickel** entered into a limited retainer with a client facing an improper eviction. The client was living in a homeless shelter and had been evicted for clutter. He had applied for new housing but was denied because of debt owed to his former landlord. The client had paid his current rent when he was evicted, but the landlord was seeking an inordinate amount of fees for cleaning and an additional month of rent for a period during which the client would not be living there. After trying to contact and failing to get a hold of his landlord to discuss the debt directly, the client contacted Katten's Legal Clinic at Jose de Diego Community Academy.

In collaboration with [Legal Aid Chicago](#), Carrie took up the case and worked for several months, eventually filing a Motion to Seal the improper eviction against the client so that it would no longer be public and would not appear in a background check when he sought new housing. In February, Carrie's motion was granted. That same month, she also helped negotiate a settlement with the landlord that involved sending a demand letter to confirm that the client's debt was extinguished. After the landlord signed the letter and agreed to forgive the fees in return for a waiver of any claims, it was sent to the credit bureaus with the request that the debt be taken off the client's credit report.

Erin Grotheer of Legal Aid Chicago wrote to Carrie: "I cannot thank you enough for all of your help on this case! We were able to correct these colossal injustices on Mr. Woods' behalf and now he is on the way to securing stable housing."

Raj Srinivasan Wins Resentencing and Release in Fourth Circuit Appeal

In his first federal appellate argument, Washington, DC Litigation associate **Raj Srinivasan** won an appeal on behalf of an indigent criminal defendant before the US Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. In a unanimous decision handed down just a month after Raj's oral argument, the Fourth Circuit resentenced the client to 96 months in prison, and as the client had already served that amount of time, he was released the following day.

The client, who had originally been convicted on possession of cocaine with the intent to distribute, appealed on the ground that his former legal counsel failed to challenge a prior conviction he had received at his trial that labeled him as a "career offender" and, as such, increased the length of his sentence to 151 months in prison. The district court had found that the client was a career offender based on two prior convictions.

Raj was appointed to the client's case in July 2018. He devoted more than 150 hours to the appeal, which included filing a motion to the Fourth Circuit to identify the appropriate issues involved, writing an opening and reply brief, and preparing an oral argument on the client's behalf. Raj also assembled the joint appendix for appeal and wrote multiple letters to the Fourth Circuit regarding new case law that was relevant to the client's appeal.

Thanks to Raj, the Fourth Circuit reversed the district court's ruling and held that the government was not allowed to identify a new crime as a predicate for a career offender enhancement for the first time on collateral review. The Fourth Circuit ruled that the government must identify all predicate offenses that serve as a basis for a career offender enhancement at the sentencing itself, extending a 2018 Supreme Court Decision, *United States v. Hodge*, which had reached the same result for statutory mandatory minimums under the Armed Career Criminal Act.

Raj credits much of the success of his client’s appeal to the assistance and guidance he received from several other Katten attorneys, including Washington, DC Litigation partners **Howard Rubin** and **Robert Smith**, and Washington, DC Litigation associates **Daniel Lipton**, **Eric Werlinger** and **Mary Fleming**. “Their efforts were integral to winning the appeal,” Raj said.

Brian Antweil Assists Military Family With Real Estate Dispute

In April 2019, Katten was contacted by a military family to help with a real estate dispute. **Brian Antweil**, a Litigation partner in Katten’s Houston office, assisted the family, headed by an army officer (wife) and an active duty Marine (husband), with the matter. The husband had received orders to return to Quantico, Virginia, to attend a Terrorism Warfare School. In preparation for the move, his wife worked with a real estate broker to sell the house, but soon learned that she had chosen the wrong person for the job. This led to a dispute between the family and the broker. Brian assisted the family and was able to dissolve their relationship with the broker without any need for judicial intervention.

While assisting the family, Brian learned about their important recruitment work for the Marine Corp, which included traveling on the road every week, being responsible for all Marine recruiting in a 31,000-square-mile area in Texas and having a significant number of direct reports from cities all over southeastern Texas. The family invited Brian to a “Change of Command” ceremony on June 14. The ceremony was held at Minute Maid Park in Houston, home to the Houston Astros baseball team, with 100 people in attendance, along with all of the Marines who currently work at Recruiting Station Houston, where the individual had been most recently stationed as a commanding officer.

Brian described the ceremony as a moving and patriotic experience in which the former army officer he assisted not only acknowledged the team of people who contributed to his success, such as a number of Marines who reported to him and his family, but also proudly recognized Brian for “helping his family.” The wife wrote to Brian: “We can’t thank you enough for handling our case. We are very grateful for your time and effort, and quick response and sound advice. Many blessings to you and your family, and thank you again.”

“The mutual respect and pride in the Corp that these men and women exude is extraordinary. They clearly love what they do and are very good at it,” Brian said. “What I did doesn’t begin to repay them for what they do for us.”

Charlotte Wasserstein and Melissa Velez Secure Asylum for Ugandan Refugee

After years of work on the part of many current and former Katten associates, Los Angeles Litigation associates **Charlotte Wasserstein** and **Melissa Velez** secured asylum in April 2019 for a Ugandan refugee who was persecuted and forced to flee his native country. The client was accused of being gay after he refused to report and incriminate gay members of the soccer team he coached in Uganda, where homosexuality is illegal and homophobia is vicious and pervasive. At the hands of both the Ugandan police and villagers in his hometown, he endured torture and threats against both his life and his family members’ lives. He initially fled to South Sudan to seek (relative) safety but ultimately sought refuge in the United States after civil war erupted in South Sudan.

Charlotte and Melissa spent months gathering supporting evidence for their case, including declarations from witnesses in South Sudan and Uganda. The immigration court conducted two days of trial last year, but in a rare move the Department of Homeland Security conceded the case and filed a notice of non-opposition to a grant of asylum in April.

Human Rights First, Katten’s pro bono partner organization, awarded Charlotte, Melissa and their supervising partner — Los Angeles Litigation partner Ryan Larsen — the Pro Bono Star Award for their extraordinary efforts on behalf of their client throughout the asylum proceedings. The Pro Bono Star Award recognizes attorneys who go above and beyond in their commitment to pro bono representation.

Jeffrey Grady Helps Woman and Daughter to Safe Haven from Abusive Ex-Husband

[The Legal Resource Center on Violence Against Women](#) contacted director of Pro Bono Services Jonathan Baum on May 1 regarding a jurisdictional issue between the North Carolina and New York courts involving a custody dispute. The background of the dispute involved a woman who, in August 2018, fled North Carolina with her 21-month-old daughter to escape her abusive husband. The client had suffered from the debilitating effects of a traumatic brain injury caused by her husband and filed for custody in New York. The client's husband then filed for custody in North Carolina. Under the Uniform Child-Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act, North Carolina had exclusive jurisdiction, and the matter would proceed in North Carolina unless the North Carolina court agreed to decline jurisdiction.

The client was afraid to return to North Carolina and contacted Katten for legal assistance in asking the North Carolina court to decline jurisdiction. Charlotte special counsel **Jeffrey Grady** stepped up to handle the matter, with assistance from paralegal **Sara Brown**, who performed background research on the client's husband and uncovered a felony conviction. Jeffrey and Sara then filed a motion and a supporting brief asking the court to stay proceedings and transfer the case to New York. On May 9, the motion was granted by the North Carolina court. The client's custody proceedings will now proceed in New York, where she feels safe and is surrounded by her extended family.

The client wrote to **Jeffrey**:

"I just wanted to tell you how grateful my family and I are with the outstanding work that you performed to help us with our case. We went to court and the judge agreed to keep the case here in New York, where my baby and I are safer. My lawyer, Wendy, was also telling me what an amazing and detailed job you did in a short amount of time. Now I am able to continue with the process to obtain custody of my daughter without worry. We are indebted to you, and we will always remember your charitable help, and you will be in our prayers. God bless you and thank you very much for everything."

Chicago Team Wins Favorable Divorce Decree for Mother of Two

Chicago Litigation associate **Kristin Coveney** and paralegal **Matthew Doran** assisted a mother of two, whom they met at the Katten Legal Clinic at [Jose de Diego Community Academy](#), in securing a favorable divorce decree. Among other things, the court ordered the woman's ex-husband to:

1. Cover two outstanding car loans totaling approximately \$30,000.
2. Pay more than \$12,000 in back child support and more than \$700 per month in child support going forward.
3. Cover 60 percent of the parental portion of the costs associated with their older child's post-secondary education.
4. Provide health insurance for both children until they reach the age of 26.
5. Obtain a life insurance policy for the benefit of the children until the children reach the age of 23.

Charlotte Office Wins First Jail Credit Case

Pursuing the partnership Katten's Charlotte office had established with [North Carolina Prisoner Legal Services](#) (NCPLS) to investigate jail credit due to inmates in North Carolina state prisons, Real Estate partner **Amanda Christie** won her first case, obtaining an additional 49 days of jail credit for a client. The client had been convicted in February 2017 on several charges that included felony breaking and entering and sentenced to a minimum of six and a half years, and a maximum of eight years and ten months, in prison. He was then awarded 388 days of jail credit for the time he served while awaiting his trial and sentence.

As coordinator of Katten's partnership with NCPLS, Amanda first started working on the case in December 2018. She reviewed the client's court records, obtained various jail records and made several calls to both the county jail record office and the North Carolina Combined Records Office to confirm the number of days the client had actually been in jail and for which offenses. After gathering all this information, Amanda determined that the state of North Carolina miscalculated the client's jail credit, and that he was, in fact, due the additional 49 days of credit. Amanda submitted her findings and the court ultimately agreed, signing an order awarding the client the additional credit.

"It's truly a great feeling to be able to help someone who doesn't have the means to do so," Amanda said. "While 49 days may not seem like a lot, I know it means a great deal to our client and his family."

In London, Katten Supports Microfinance Hedging

Carolyn Jackson, London Financial Services partner, has been providing pro bono advice to [MFX Currency Risk Solutions](#) for many years, but with the advent of new European legislation this year, its entire business model was in jeopardy. Founded in 2009, MFX Currency Risk Solutions gives social impact investors in developing countries the ability to protect themselves against the risk of currency movements by helping them access currency hedging that otherwise would not be available to them. Without such hedging, impact investing can be more expensive, reducing funds that could otherwise be used for social good.

An amendment to a piece of existing European regulation, known as EMIR REFIT, threatened to make MFX's hedging support activities unsustainably expensive for its clients, to the point where MFX would have had to shut down the European side of its business. With the help of **Christopher Collins**, London Financial Services associate, Carolyn was able to devise a novel solution that allowed MFX to continue doing business in its current form. Carolyn's solution saved both MFX and its clients from the prohibitive compliance costs of the regulation. It took many weeks of calls and back-and-forth with MFX's board of directors and counterparties before the breakthrough could be achieved.

Timothy Knudsen Obtains Asylum for LGBT Palestinian Man

Chicago Corporate associate **Timothy Knudsen** obtained asylum for an LGBT Palestinian man who faced persecution for his feminine characteristics. He was frequently called names in public and ostracized. On one occasion while walking his dog, he was followed by a man in a vehicle who threw a rock at his head and shouted a derogatory slur. Following these incidents, he started to seclude himself from society and only left his house at night to avoid seeing other people. In June 2017, he traveled to the US on a tourist visa obtained under the reason of attending a family wedding, but overstayed his visa with the intention of applying for asylum. He applied in August 2017.

Timothy felt this was an important case to take on, having lived for three months in Palestine in 2012 working in non-violence and peacekeeping, and having assisted other LGBT applicants for asylum. He met the client in September 2018 and worked quickly, reviewing Human Rights Country Reports and other academic papers, to prepare an affidavit on behalf of the client before he was called for an asylum interview by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services in January. The client was granted asylum on March 22, only a short time later.

In May, the client, who endured a great deal and does not openly express his emotions, invited Timothy for dinner and discussed how a massive weight had been lifted off his shoulders. He further expressed the realization that he could envision a life of freedom in the US, where he could be himself.

Law360 Spotlights Eric Brin for Helping Abandoned Toddler Find New Family

Law360's Access to Justice newsletter spotlighted Los Angeles Litigation associate **Eric Brin** for his extraordinary work representing a woman pro bono in finalizing the adoption of a toddler, who had been abandoned as a newborn by her birth mother three years ago on a roadway in Compton, California and rescued by police.

The child, named Aspen, had been found wrapped in a hospital blanket in a hole on an asphalt bike path. At four months old, Aspen was placed in the care of her adoptive mother Cassandra Frazier, an extended family member, and through [Public Counsel](#), Eric helped her during the adoption finalization process, which included securing adoption benefits and services for the family. Aspen's adoption was finalized on National Adoption Day on November 17, 2018 at a ceremony including 200 kids and family members at Children's Court in Monterey Park, California. Eric continues to work with the family to review and apply for benefits and services.

"I think from her perspective, the adoption was a daunting legal process, a lot of red tape, and having an advocate was just a big relief," Eric said. Aspen's adoption was Eric's second pro bono matter since joining Katten in 2016. Katten attorneys were involved in 10 such pro bono cases in 2018 and have since taken more. As a firm, Katten contributed 25,222 volunteer hours in the US in 2017 and an additional 828 hours in London toward pro bono matters.

To learn more about Eric's work in the case, click here to read Law360's article: <https://www.law360.com/access-to-justice/articles/1116041/katten-helps-abandoned-girl-reach-new-family>

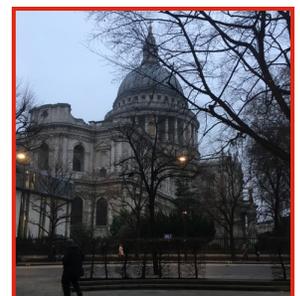
Support for the Community

In London, Katten Partners With Historic St. Paul's Cathedral

Over the past few years, Katten's London affiliate has developed a strong relationship with the iconic [St. Paul's Cathedral](#) in London, an Anglican cathedral dating back to the seventeenth century that is the seat of the Bishop of London and the mother church of the Diocese of London. The Cathedral has a fascinating history, including being protected from bombing during World War II by Winston Churchill, who devoted huge resources to preserving it as the symbol of England's strength as a nation.

Led by deputy managing partner **Terry Green**, our London affiliate has supported St. Paul's Cathedral since 2015. Katten attorneys have helped maintain St. Paul's choir, sound system and organ, held events at the cathedral and provided pro bono services related to film contracts, construction issues and intellectual property rights. In return, St. Paul's has invited Katten to exclusive events and tours of places that the public rarely has the opportunity to see. Many Katten partners and senior executive team members have visited the cathedral's historic buildings and experienced its musical celebrations.

Emphasizing Katten's strong relationship with members of St. Paul's team, including the dean, chief executive officer (CEO), director of music and choir, world celebrated organist, and headmaster, Terry stated, "It is a close and very special relationship. It has helped push our own brand forward as a caring and supportive partner to one of the most iconic and important buildings in the world."



Katten Assists Clients at DC Bar Advice and Referral Clinic

As they do periodically throughout the year, on a Saturday in May a team of Katten attorneys and staff volunteered to assist walk-in clients at the [District of Columbia Bar Advice and Referral Clinic](#), which provides individuals who do not have access to a lawyer with the opportunity to discuss their civil legal problems with volunteer attorneys, address a wide array of legal matters. The attorneys served 72 clients at the clinic's Northwest location.

Participating attorneys and staff included Structural and Finance Securitization partner **Claudine Chen-Young**, Litigation staff attorney **Maria Aguilar-Rocha**, Real Estate associate **Schuyler Armstrong**, Real Estate staff attorney **Ryan Gofus**, Corporate associate **Miran Vila**, accounting manager **Marcia Williamson** and administrative coordinator **Lisle Bruns**.

Chicago Office Partners With Center on Wrongful Convictions

Chicago Litigation partner **David Luger** and associate **Charles DeVore** have launched a partnership with the [Center on Wrongful Convictions](#) (CWC), which is part of Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law's Bluhm Legal Clinic, to evaluate and represent potential CWC clients. Founded in April 1999, the CWC is dedicated to identifying and rectifying wrongful convictions and other injustices through representation, education and reform.

David and Charles have been on the board of the CWC's Justice Council for two years and currently serve as president and vice president of the council. They decided to initiate a partnership with the CWC in which attorneys from Katten's Chicago office will help the center determine which clients, among the thousands of requests the center receives from those who believe they have been wrongly convicted, are appropriate for representation. In June, five Katten attorneys began reviewing client files provided by the CWC and in the near future will also have the opportunity to represent specific clients. In May, the CWC contacted Katten regarding representation of a client who claims to have been wrongly convicted of a double homicide. Katten will assist with representing the client going forward.

David and Charles first became involved with the CWC when they were both law students at Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law and worked on a case at the Bluhm Legal Clinic involving a client who had been wrongly convicted of murder and served 15 years in prison. In 2015, while attorneys at Katten, David and Charles learned that the client they had worked for while in law school was exonerated. They walked him out of prison and continue to maintain a relationship with him to this day. Their meaningful experience with the CWC sparked their interest in becoming more involved in that kind of pro bono work.

In London, Katten Assists UK Charity for Gifted Children and Young Adults

Led by Corporate of counsel **Michael Speranza**, Katten's London affiliate has provided periodic legal advice related to employment, real estate, tax and other matters to [Potential Plus UK](#), a charity that provides support to high learning children and young adults in England and Wales. Katten recently assisted Potential Plus UK with a new lease as it acquired a new headquarters and with Value Added Tax issues after it had been discovered that the charity had been undercharging for certain services.

Michael has been a trustee of Potential Plus UK for many years and is chair of its board of trustees, where he provides strategic direction to the organization. He also regularly attends and volunteers at the charity's events.

Speaking about the organization, Michael said, "The charity does important work. There's an assumption, particularly prevalent in the UK, that those with a higher ability tend not to need professional help. 'They're clever, they'll be fine,' is a constant refrain in the UK educational system, but these are children who often have learning difficulties or even disabilities which go unnoticed as a result of the child's higher abilities, or their special educational needs mask their high learning potential. Either way, the result is children who appear to be 'OK' but who face years of (at best) boredom or (at worst) a lack of support. The charity works with children and their families, as well as with schools, to provide that missing support."

Katten Hosts Mentoring Event for Chicago Public School Students

For the second year in a row, 20 attorneys and paralegals from Katten's Chicago office, led by Government and Public Finance partner **Chad Doobay**, hosted Chicago Public School students for a two-hour "speed-mentoring" session as part of a program developed by [Embarc](#), a Chicago-based nonprofit educational organization that collaborates with more than 250 community partners to provide experiential learning opportunities for at-risk high school students. The students that came to Katten were from Wendell Phillips Academy in Chicago's Bronzeville neighborhood and Bogan High School from Chicago's southwest side. Held in March, the mentoring sessions were designed to give both students and attorneys the opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogue. At each "station," both the attorneys and the students were given a list of questions to pose to one another, with the end goal of having students walk away inspired and further prepared for college and career success. The effectiveness of the Embarc program is impressive, with an average 97 percent high school graduation rate, 77 percent college enrollment rate and 94 percent overall postsecondary success.

"It is a real joy to work with the students of Embarc," said Chad. "We are thrilled to play a part in mentoring these talented young students and supporting the great work of Embarc."



Dallas Team Cleans Up Local Parks With Dallas Bar Association

On May 4, Dallas Corporate partner **Joseph Hoffman**, his wife and Real Estate paralegal **Naomi Lopez** volunteered to participate in DBA Gives Back, an annual spring community service event held by the [Dallas Bar Association](#) (DBA) Community Involvement Committee (CIC). The mission of the CIC is to organize, support and provide attorneys in North Texas with volunteer opportunities for community projects in order to improve their reputation and community involvement.

With a different initiative each year, the 2019 DBA Gives Back focused on the environment and provided attorneys with the opportunity to clean up three community parks: Oak Cliff Nature Preserve/Kiest Park in Dallas, Spring Creek Nature Preserve near Richardson, Texas, and Cedar Hill State Park in Cedar Hill, Texas. Joseph and his wife volunteered at the Spring Creek Nature Preserve, while Naomi volunteered at Oak Cliff Nature Preserve/Kiest Park, helping to pull weeds, replant flowers and plants and pick up trash.



Jonathan Baum Participates on Panel at Illinois Youth Summit

Director of Pro Bono Services **Jonathan Baum** participated on a panel of policy experts evaluating high school students' arguments on banning assault weapons at the April 26 Illinois Youth Summit held at the federal courthouse in Chicago. The Illinois Youth Summit is an annual program of the [Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago](#) designed to give high school students an informed voice in discussions about current events that affect them in our democratic society. Hundreds of students from throughout Illinois took part in the summit, some as advocates for one position or the other, and the rest as a "jury" deciding which arguments they found most persuasive.

Honors

New York Office Attorneys Qualify for Empire State Counsel Pro Bono Recognition

Thirteen Katten attorneys qualified for the [New York State Bar Association's \(NYSBA\) Empire State Counsel Program](#) in 2018. The Empire State Counsel Program recognizes NYSBA members who performed 50 hours or more of pro bono work through direct legal representation of a low-income or vulnerable individual in the previous year. They also donated free legal services to an organization that addresses the legal and other basic needs of people with limited financial means, or provided free legal services to an organization dedicated to increasing the availability of legal services to vulnerable or low-income populations.

As Empire State Counsel honorees, the following Katten attorneys received an honorary certificate and their names were published on the NYSBA website and in the NYSBA pro bono newsletter: Intellectual Property partner **Karen Ash**, Real Estate partner **Andrew Jagoda**, Corporate partner **Marc Tract**, Intellectual Property associate **Jessica Kraver**, Intellectual Property staff attorney **Jerry Jakubovic**, Litigation associate **Sean Akchin**, Structured Finance and Securitization associate **Matthew Jennings**, Trusts and Estates associates **Rebecca Lomazow** and **Cynthia Reed**, Real Estate associate **Christy Tirtatunggal**, Corporate associate **Jacqueline Wolpoe**, Government and Public Finance associate **Natalie Youkel** and Insolvency and Restructuring partner **Karen Dine**.

Eighteen Katten Attorneys Named to DC Courts Capital Pro Bono Honor Roll

Eighteen Katten attorneys were named to the 2018 [District of Columbia Courts](#) Pro Bono Honor Roll. The DC Courts honor attorneys who have provided 50 hours or more of pro bono work to individuals unable to afford legal representation in the previous year. The Capital Pro Bono Honor Roll reached a new record in 2018, with 5,095 attorneys registered and 3,047 providing 100 hours or more of pro bono service. The attorneys named contribute pro bono services spanning across different practice areas and represent diverse sectors of the legal community, working in law firms or as individual practitioners, federal and local government agencies, corporations, law schools and public interest organizations.

In an open letter to the 2018 honor roll registrants, Chief Judge Anna Blackburne-Rigsby and Chief Judge Robert Morin of the DC Courts write: “We salute you for using your talents and expertise to help those unable to afford an attorney, to ensure that they too have equal access to justice. Your compassion and dedication, as evidenced by your pro bono service, have helped to level the playing field.”

Please congratulate those Katten attorneys listed on the [2018 Capital Pro Bono Honor Roll](#).

2019 Katten De Diego Legal Clinic Pro Bono Honor Roll

In late May, Katten's Legal Clinic at [Jose De Diego Community Academy](#), the first-of-its-kind legal aid clinic in a public school, concluded for the academic year. Director of Pro Bono Services **Jonathan Baum** saluted 32 Katten attorneys, paralegals and project assistants who volunteered this year to provide pro bono legal counsel to address issues ranging from landlord-tenant and other housing disputes to wills and consumer and family law. In 2019, the clinic served 134 clients, raising the total number of clients served since it first opened to 618.

Jonathan wrote: “These are hundreds of lives that you have touched. Even if you could not “fix” the problem that brought them to the clinic, I know how grateful they are that someone takes the time to listen to them. And you actually were able to fix the problems of many of them!”

Please congratulate the following attorneys listed on the 2019 Katten De Diego Legal Clinic Pro Bono Honor Roll: Commercial Finance partner **Elizabeth Hermann Smith**, Litigation services counsel **Gregory Goldberg** and Litigation partners **Jared Heck** and **Timothy Patenode**, Intellectual Property associates **Jeffrey Wakolbinger** and **Julia Mazur**,

Corporate associates **Alyse Sagalchik**, **Karolen Younan**, **Lisa Wiznitzer**, **Paige Greene** and **Samya Abdela**, Litigation associates **Anna Mikulski**, **Kristin Coveney**, **Nicola Bunick**, **Nicole Saleem** and **Zachary Schmitz**, Financial Services associate **Laura Krcmaric**, Real Estate associate **Timothy Cross**, Litigation paralegal supervisor **Keith Forrest**, paralegals **David Lopez**, **Eileen Downes**, **Maranda Mitchell**, **Matthew Doran**, **Donncha O'Tuama** and **Nellie Stoeckel**, S.A.S. legal administrative assistant **Gabriel Evelyn**, and litigation project assistants **LaTasha McGee**, **Taniesa Garza-Akers**, **Alexandro Pina**, **Benjamin Foster** and **Theodossios Athanassiades**.

Yashas Honasoge Recognized as Rising Star by National Immigrant Justice Center

Chicago Intellectual Property associate **Yashas Honasoge** was recognized as a 2019 Rising Star by the [National Immigrant Justice Center](#) (NIJC), whose mission is to ensure human rights protections and access to justice for all immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers through legal services, policy reform and public education. NIJC's 2019 Rising Star awards were presented during its 20th Annual Human Rights Awards luncheon on June 4, honoring associate or junior-level attorneys for their extraordinary commitment to ensuring access to justice for immigrants.

This year, Yashas was one of 10 attorneys awarded for his devotion to NIJC pro bono work and representing clients with complex immigration cases. In particular, Yashas worked with the NIJC in representing two individuals in asylum proceedings before the Immigration Court. Both clients were Eritrean citizens fleeing persecution—one on account of his religious beliefs, the other on account of his political opinion—who would have faced grave hardships if forced to return to Eritrea. With Yashas's help, they were both granted asylum and are now free to start their lives here in the United States.

Reflecting on his experience with the NIJC, Yashas stated, "Through the NIJC, I have had the opportunity to perform some of the most fulfilling work of my career. Being able to advocate for those in need and impact their lives in such a direct and meaningful way has been a truly rewarding experience."

Derek Ladgenski Receives Easterseals Crystal Heart Award

Chicago Commercial Finance partner **Derek Ladgenski** received the Carol and Jack Sanicki Crystal Heart Award from [Easterseals' DuPage and Fox Valley](#) chapter during its 41st Annual Benefit Gala at the Four Seasons Hotel in Chicago in April. Easterseals is a nonprofit serving 1.5 million people with disabilities, military veterans, seniors and their families through programs ranging from autism services and early intervention to workforce development, adult day care and more.

The Carol and Jack Sanicki Crystal Heart Award is given to individuals who have demonstrated a unique and longstanding commitment to Easterseals' mission. Derek serves on the board of directors of the Easterseals DuPage and Fox Valley chapter and is working to deepen the organization's relationship with Katten through fundraising or volunteer opportunities. Next year, Derek's family will serve as ambassadors to Easterseals' DuPage and Fox Valley chapter's 42nd Annual Benefit Gala in March 2020.

Shana Ramirez Elected to Public Counsel's Board of Directors

On April 23, Los Angeles Commercial Finance partner **Shana Ramirez** was elected to the 2019 board of directors of [Public Counsel](#), the nation's largest not-for-profit law firm specializing in pro bono legal services. Before being elected to the board of directors, Shana served on the Associate Leadership Board for Public Counsel and was involved in the organization's steering committee for three years. She spearheaded Public Counsel's first Associate Leadership Board annual fundraising event: a drag queen bingo and live auction that is now held annually at Hamburger Mary's restaurant in West Hollywood.

David Halberstadter Elected to Special Olympics Southern California Board of Directors

Los Angeles Litigation partner **David Halberstadter** was elected to the board of directors for the [Special Olympics Southern California](#) on May 30. Special Olympics Southern California is the largest sports organization globally for people with intellectual disabilities. Serving 4.4 million athletes in 170 countries, the organization offers year-round sports training and athletic competition in various Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities to help them discover new strengths, skills, joy and fulfillment. Through sports, Special Olympics Southern California aims to promote acceptance, inclusion and well-being for people with intellectual disabilities.

Several of Katten's clients are major sponsors of the organization, including Bank of America, Walmart and Wells Fargo.

Fundraising for the Public Good

DC Access to Justice Commission Honors Katten's Donations to Pro Bono Organizations in 2018

Katten qualified for the [District of Columbia Access to Justice Commission's](#) Raising the Bar Campaign in 2018, which recognizes the firm for donating .11 percent of its office revenue last year to local legal service providers assisting low-income residents in Washington, DC, with urgent legal issues. The DC Access to Justice Commission works to help improve access to justice for low and moderate income residents and in December 2010 launched the Raising the Bar in DC Campaign, which is endorsed by the District of Columbia Bar and District of Columbia Bar Foundation. The campaign's goal is to increase financial support for the legal services community in Washington, DC, by establishing donation benchmarks and annually recognizing law firms for donating at those benchmark levels.

Forty-three firms were honored for their donations in 2018 at three levels: Platinum (.11 percent), Gold (.09 percent) and Silver (.075 percent). Katten was one of 29 firms to achieve the Platinum level and was also recognized as one of five firms that increased its commitment to donating from the Gold level to the Platinum level in 2018. Firm donations totaled nearly \$6 million last year, the highest level of giving in the campaign's history.

A number of Katten attorneys and staff helped gather and organize information related to the firm's overall pro bono contributions and process in 2018 to submit to the campaign. They include: Washington, DC Aviation practice and managing partner **Timothy Lynes**, Chief Marketing and Business Development officer **Jennifer Dolan**, Financial Analysis manager **Miguel Martinez**, Accounting manager **Marcia Williamson**, accountant **Lorissa Garcia** and legal executive assistant **Dolly LaFuente**.

In London, Katten Participates in London Legal Walk

A team of 22 attorneys from Katten's London affiliate volunteered their time to participate in the London Legal Walk on June 17, raising £1,000 (around \$1,273). The London Legal Walk is an annual 10K walk across central London that raises funds for the [London Legal Support Trust](#), which provides grants to support law centers and pro bono agencies throughout London.

A highly supported event, our London affiliate has participated in the popular walk since 2015 and had the largest number of participants this year across all levels of the firm. Led by Transactional Tax Planning partner **Charlotte Sallabank** and Legal Support manager **Wai Cheung**, the team of participating attorneys included Litigation partners **Christopher Hitchins** and



Polly Sprenger, Financial Services partners **Carolyn Jackson** and **Nathaniel Lalone**, Commercial Finance partner **Peter Englund**, Commercial Finance associate **Victoria Sinton**, Real Estate associates **Rhodri Preece** and **Laura Meehan**, and Litigation associate **James Burke**.

In addition to the above attorneys, Katten’s team also included trainee solicitors **Laura Sevenoaks**, **Maddy Pryde**, **James Gledhill**, **Emma Phillipot** and **Sara Arano-Thomas**, and administrative staff **Shashi Gami**, **Jim Barker**, **Grace Roostan**, **Paula Lehane** and **Raili Silov**.

Charlotte Office Participates in Walk to Defeat ALS

Intellectual Property associate **Alissa Pacchioli** and IP administrator **Alisa D. Eiven** from Katten’s Charlotte office participated in the [ALS Association North Carolina Chapter’s](#) Walk to Defeat ALS on Saturday, April 20. The ALS Association North Carolina Chapter provides help to people living with ALS and their families on a local level through education, support groups, access to care and advocacy. The Walk to Defeat ALS raises funds for the association to support treatment and a cure for ALS. Alissa and Alisa, who have participated in the walk for the past three years, raised \$3,800 on behalf of a former co-worker, Kathryn Manginelli, who was diagnosed with ALS and passed away last year. This was the first time that Katten participated in the walk.

“We look forward to the Walk to Defeat ALS every year. Last year was a hard year losing our friend and previous coworker Kathryn Manginelli to ALS. We walk with Team Kathryn to honor Kathryn, help raise funds for ALS research and to continue Kathryn’s advocating for a cure!” Alisa said.



From a Grateful Client

From Danielle Reyes, board member, [Rock Creek Conservancy](#) to Katten Chairman **Roger Furey**’s daughter:

“Your father’s law firm has been incredibly generous and our executive director loves working with them and is so grateful for the support. Pro bono legal counsel is essential for an organization like the RCC and, though we have many lawyers on our board of directors (at least four), support from a firm is invaluable.”

In response to the praise issued by Danielle, Roger wrote to Environmental and Workplace Safety partners **Steven Solow** and **Karl Heisler** and Structured Finance and Securitization partner **Seth Messner**: “This is the kind of community word of mouth I love. Nice job team!”

Please send comments, suggestions and news about interesting pro bono cases and matters you’ve been involved with, as well as any non-legal community service work you’re doing, to jonathan.baum@kattenlaw.com.

