

Victories on Behalf of Clients

Clemency Project 2014 Winds Down With Another Katten Victory

New York Real Estate associate **Sally Winters** recently learned that President Obama has granted clemency to a 43-year-old client she represents through [Clemency Project 2014](#), a non-partisan working group of private legal professionals who assist long-imprisoned federal inmates who would have received a shorter sentence had they been charged today. Sally's client is a low-level, non-violent drug offender who has served 13 years of a 27-year sentence. He will be released in April.

Since 2014, 23 Katten attorneys have handled 35 clemency petitions on behalf of incarcerated clients for Clemency Project 2014, which is expected to end with the outgoing Obama administration. Washington, DC Litigation and Dispute Resolution associate **Bill McGonigle** joined the project when it first formed and became a national coordinator, recruiting volunteer attorneys and helping to streamline the training process. President Obama has so far commuted four sentences for Katten clients, though there are six pending petitions that may be granted before he leaves office. Along with Bill, the following attorneys have volunteered their time and effort to helping the more than 36,000 federal inmates apply for clemency.

Austin

Catherine "Katie" Hobson (*Associate, Environmental and Workplace Safety*)

Jessica Wilson* (*Associate, Environmental and Workplace Safety*)

Chicago

Martin Masar (*Associate, Intellectual Property*)

Houston

Paige Gallaspy* (*Associate, Environmental and Workplace Safety*)

Jon Reidy (*Associate, Environmental and Workplace Safety*)

Emily Rochy* (*Associate, Litigation*)

Los Angeles - Downtown

Paul Grammatico* (*Staff Attorney, Litigation*)

Los Angeles - Century City

Joanna Hall* (*Associate, Litigation*)

New York

Bonnie Chmil (*Partner, Litigation*)

Rebecca Kinburn* (*Associate, Litigation*)

John Rosans (*Partner, Litigation*)

Michael Rosensaft (*Partner, Litigation*)

Debra Sapp* (*Associate, Real Estate*)

Sally Winters* (*Associate, Real Estate*)

Washington, DC

Anne Carpenter (*Partner, Environmental and Workplace Safety*)

Jane Cavanaugh (*Partner, Aviation*)

Elizabeth Dominguez* (*Associate, Real Estate*)

Roger Furey (*Chairman*)

Brandon Hadley (*Partner, Structured Finance and Securitization*)

Michael Justus (*Associate, Intellectual Property*)

Julia Schmidt* (*Partner, Real Estate*)

Brett Seifarh (*Associate, Aviation*)

* Attorneys who worked on more than one case.

Katten Team Wins Right To Play for Children on Chicago Condominium Grounds

After almost two years of litigation, Director of Pro Bono Services **Jonathan Baum** and former Katten associate **John Kastl**, in collaboration with the [Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law](#), successfully settled housing discrimination charges they filed against a private Chicago housing complex on behalf of their client, a single mother of young twins. The charges, filed with the Illinois Department of Human Rights and the Chicago Commission on Human Relations, alleged that the condominium association's board prohibited children from playing—including playing catch, riding a tricycle and even blowing bubbles—on any of the common areas of the complex, including its ample lawns and wide pathways. Violations of this prohibition were enforced by fines on the parents, including our client. The Katten team argued that this constituted “familial status” discrimination under the state law and municipal ordinance, because it discriminated against families with children and made it impossible for children to do what children do. After much back and forth, including a nine-hour long mediation session, the association ultimately agreed to revise its rules to permit play in most common areas, including grassy areas, with supervision required for younger children. The association also agreed to remit the client's fines for previous offenses.



The client wrote to Katten: “I want to express my deepest appreciation for your many hours of work on my family's Fair Housing complaint. Your extensive knowledge and experience were truly awe-inspiring and resulted in an agreement that allows my children stress-free outdoor play at home. There is not enough I can say to explain my gratitude in having such amazing legal counsel.”

Charlotte Team Defeats Judgement Against Employee Falsely Accused of Embezzlement

A team comprised of Charlotte Litigation practice head **Richard Farley**, associates **Daniel Trimmer** and **Allison Hite Popp**, and paralegal **Sara Brown** represented a clerical employee for a South Carolina construction firm who was sued in a New York federal court in 2013 for allegedly participating in an embezzlement scheme whereby her employers submitted fraudulent invoices to a factory in New York. The client had no knowledge of the scheme and, when served with the complaint, her employer assured her that she didn't need to do anything as the company was handling it. Her employer and its principals then responded only on their own behalf, and later settled without including her. In May 2015, she received notice that \$735,000 in default judgment had been entered against her in 2014 in South Carolina and that she had 30 days to challenge it. Unfortunately, she again relied on her (now former) employer's assurance that it would handle it, and the judgment automatically became enforceable in South Carolina.

Katten got involved when the judgment creditor began steps to enforce and collect the judgment. The court struck the judgment on the grounds that the notice served to her in May 2015 was defective, but allowed the judgment creditor to start the process over with a new notice. This time, Katten filed an objection to the notice and the New York judgment on the grounds that it was void because the New York court did not have personal jurisdiction over the client, and on the alternate grounds that her failure to originally respond to the New York complaint was due to reliance on her employer and was therefore excusable neglect. The court entered, word for word, the proposed order Katten tendered after briefing and argument, finding that the New York court did not have personal jurisdiction, and that the judgment also should be set aside based on excusable neglect even if there had been personal jurisdiction.

Ginger Rolfes Represents Teenage Boys in Custody Dispute

Charlotte Real Estate special counsel **Ginger Rolfes** recently wrapped up a successful representation through the [Counsel for Children's Rights](#) (CFCR) Custody Advocacy Program. She was appointed by the court to represent two teenage boys (ages 14 and 16) in a custody dispute between their mother and father. The eldest had not spoken to or seen his mother in nearly six years. After nearly a year of getting to know the boys, document/record review, investigations, interviews of friends and family, and working with the parents and their two attorneys, Ginger secured agreement by all parties to a custody agreement. The consent order included a recommendation of reunification therapy for the mother and son, which is something Katten and the CFCR find to be essential in any custody resolution.

Nonprofits and Low-Income Populations

Washington, DC Attorneys Volunteer at the D.C. Bar Pro Bono Program's Advice and Referral Clinic

On December 10, nine Washington, DC attorneys helped 84 walk-in clients at the [D.C. Bar Pro Bono Program's Advice and Referral Clinic](#) at [Bread for the City's Northwest Center](#), a local nonprofit community service organization. The attorneys provided much-needed legal services, addressing issues ranging from housing concerns to bankruptcy to drafting motions for ongoing litigation. The attorneys who participated include Environmental and Workplace Safety partner David Hoffmann, Structured Finance and Securitization partner **Seth Messner**, Real Estate partners and **Julia Schmidt** and **Bruce Kosub**, Consumer Finance Litigation partner **Claudia Callaway**, Environmental and Workplace Safety associate **Katie Barajas**, Litigation associate **John Kozak**, Real Estate associate **Schuyler Armstrong** and Tax Planning associate **Sarah Ma**.



Chicago Team Advises Inner-City Computer Stars Foundation (I.C. Stars) on IP Needs

Chicago Intellectual Property partner **Floyd Mandell**, associate **Matthew Holub** and staff attorney **Bari Nathan** recently began assisting [Inner-City Computer Stars Foundation \(I.C. Stars\)](#) with its intellectual property needs. I.C. Stars is a nonprofit that provides a technology-based workforce development and leadership training program for low-income adults in Chicago. Floyd, Matthew and Bari will obtain copyright registrations for the business, technology and leadership curriculum I.C. Stars uses in its workforce training program in addition to an animated character created as part of a game developed by a former intern of the program.

Los Angeles Team Assists Nonprofit That Educates Underprivileged Girls

Los Angeles - Century City Corporate associate **Rachel Fisher**, with assistance from partner **Daniel Peters** and Trusts and Estates partner **Carol Johnston**, is helping nonprofit [Ainiti](#) become incorporated and attain 501(c)(3) status. With operations beginning in India, Ainiti's mission is to promote the education of underprivileged girls through exposure to computer technology.



Sophia Popovic Assists Public Housing Client in Purchasing First Home

Chicago Real Estate associate **Sophia Popovic** completed a residential real estate closing for a client who is part of the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) [Choose To Own](#) (CTO) homeownership program. The CTO provides qualified public housing and Housing Choice Voucher families with the opportunity to own a home through a process that is similar

to the conventional home buying process. Families can purchase a single family home, townhome, condominium or cooperative anywhere in Chicago. The closing took place in November and was CHA's 512th Choose To Own closing. Sophia received the assignment through [The Law Project](#) in Chicago and Real Estate partner **Mark Simon** supervised.

David Sherman Gives Presentation to Small Business Owners

New York Intellectual special counsel **David Sherman** gave two presentations for [Start Small Think Big](#) on "Legal Essentials for Doing Business Online." The first was held in July at the YWCA in Brooklyn, New York, and the second was in September at the [Made In QNS](#) pop-up store in Long Island City, New York. The workshops focused on: (1) website terms and conditions and privacy policies, including whether and when to use them, what should be included, and what they mean; (2) how to avoid copyright infringement issues when adding textual and photographic content to a business website and how to protect content from infringement, and (3) mass e-mail regulations (CAN-SPAM Act).

Katten Legal Clinic Serves Record Number of Clients

The Katten Legal Clinic at José de Diego Community Academy served a record 23 indigent clients at its November 2016 session. Five Katten attorneys, two Katten paralegals, three Northwestern law students, and an [LAF](#) attorney assisted clients with a variety of housing, family law and other pressing legal problems. Perhaps most immediately gratifying, through the efforts of Katten attorneys, two clients facing eviction hearings Thanksgiving week were spared eviction and secured affordable repayment plans to pay back past due rent.

The Legal Clinic always needs more volunteers! Please contact **Jonathan Baum** or **Keith Forrest** to sign up.

Allison Freedman Named to National Immigration Justice Center's Junior Board

Chicago Litigation associate **Allison Freedman** recently joined the junior board at Heartland Alliance's [National Immigration Justice Center](#) (NIJC). The NIJC provides access to justice for all immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers through direct legal services to and advocates for these populations through policy reform, impact litigation and public education.

Support for the Community

Jessica Katz Serves as Founding Executive Directive for Nonprofit That Provides Shelter for Pets of Domestic Violence Survivors

Chicago Conflicts attorney **Jessica Katz** founded [The Safe Haven Network](#) and continues to operate as its executive director. The Safe Haven Network facilitates temporary emergency boarding for the pets of domestic violence survivors. Roughly 70 percent of domestic violence survivors entering shelters report that their abusers have also targeted their pets. Almost half of all domestic violence survivors who have pets refuse to leave their abusers if it means leaving their pets behind. Those who do leave are often plagued with feelings of anxiety and guilt, and end up returning to their abusers to protect their pets. Since so few domestic violence shelters accept pets (only one in Illinois; none in Chicago), survivors who leave and take their pets with them face so many obstacles that some have been known to live in their cars with their pets for up to four months.



The Safe Haven Network works to find solutions for domestic violence survivors and their pets by connecting domestic violence advocates to temporary emergency boarding programs around the city that will care for survivors' pets while

they stay in a domestic violence shelter. When the shelter stay is completed, the survivors can reclaim their pets and be there for each other as they rebuild their lives in safety.

The Safe Haven Network is currently raising funds to upgrade and maintain the secure online portal that makes referral connections. It also is recruiting volunteers to go to domestic violence shelters and boarding providers to walk them through the registration process for the portal and teach them how to use it.

Chicago Work-Study Intern Participates in Advocacy for Justice Program in Washington, DC

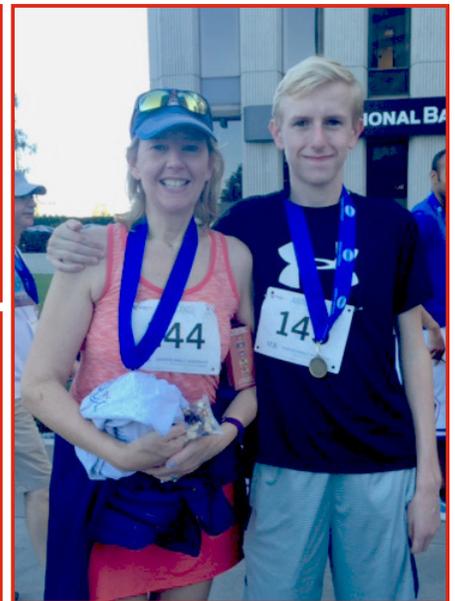
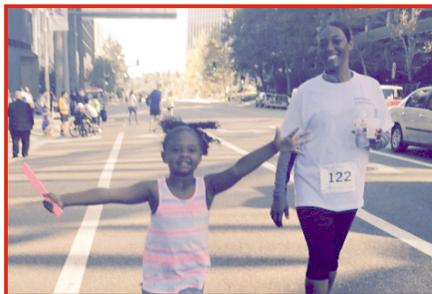
Jordan Boyson, a second-year intern in Katten’s work-study program and senior at Christ The King Jesuit College Preparatory School in Chicago, visited Washington, DC, in November as part of the [Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice 2016](#) (IFTJ). Inspired by the Jesuits and their companions who were martyred in El Salvador in 1989, the IFTJ is an annual assembly for members of Jesuit institutions to gather in the context of social justice and solidarity to learn, reflect, pray, network and advocate together. During the gathering, Jordan’s team met with one of Congressman Danny Davis’ staffers to advocate for more impartial criminal justice policies as well as for greater access to services and resources in Chicago’s West Side communities.

Katten Hosts National Jeans Day To Benefit Legal Aid Charities

On November 4, seven Katten offices participated in a charity jeans day, raising \$1,530.80 to benefit a legal aid organization with which we work. Each office nominated a specific organization to receive the total award and the firm held a lottery, selecting [Houston Volunteer Lawyers](#) as the winning recipient. The offices plan to regularly repeat the national charity jeans day and continue honoring different organizations for their dedication to equal justice in the communities they serve.

Los Angeles Offices Run and Walk in Annual Justice Jog To Raise Funds for CASA of Los Angeles

On Sunday September 25, the Los Angeles - Century City and Downtown offices participated in the Greater Los Angeles Association of Legal Administrators’ [9th Annual Justice Jog 5K Run/Walk](#) to benefit [CASA of Los Angeles](#). The Katten team, headed by California director of office administration **Tanya Russell** and administrative services manager **Shelley Wissot**, ran, jogged and walked in Century City to raise much needed funds for CASA Los Angeles. Founded in 1978, CASA is a nonprofit organization that activates community volunteers to serve as advocates for abused and neglected children. A CASA (court appointed special advocate) is a voice in court and in the community for these children—and often the most constant person in their lives—focused on their best interest. Through Katten’s sponsorship and participation in the annual Justice Jog in Century City, Katten once again was instrumental in raising funds for this valuable organization.



Chicago Office Sponsors Sixth Annual Holiday Book Drive for José de Diego Community Academy

The Chicago office surpassed its goal of donating 900 books to José de Diego Community Academy, which hosts the Katten Legal Clinic. In total, Katten purchased nearly 1,000 books in 13 business days. Each of the 650 students at the school received a book and Katten donated an additional 350 books to replenish De Diego's limited library. Litigation paralegal supervisor **Keith Forrest** worked with the school and Barnes & Noble to ensure each child received his/her requested book. Volunteers, including **Jacqueline Alvarez** (Records Management intern), **Bailey Creasy** (Litigation paralegal), **Donna Demilio** (legal executive assistant), **Lukas Grossi** (Intellectual Property project assistant), **LaTasha McGee** (Litigation project assistant), **Barbara Phelan** (Financial Services legal executive assistant), **Charlie Sprayregen** (Litigation project assistant), **Debbi Perry-McCullum** (Word Processing) and **Betty Allen** (Word Processing), designed gift tags, wrapped books and distributed the books to the school before the students departed for winter break.



Charlotte Office Raises Funds for Families Living in Domestic Violence Shelter

The Charlotte office held a jeans day and item drive for the [Safe Alliance Holiday Store](#), a program where families living in the domestic violence shelter can “shop” for donated items to give to their family members as holiday gifts. The store event is followed by a holiday party for the shelter families.

Year-Round Efforts

Katten Distributes Its First Annual Pro Bono Review

In November, Katten distributed its first [Annual Pro Bono Review](#) to more than 60,000 clients and contacts. The magazine-style publication discussed the firm's efforts to help secure asylum for refugees and victims of persecution, reform criminal justice, advise nonprofits and small business, support victims of domestic violence, serve a local community through the Katten Legal Clinic, bring families together through adoption, and prevent gun violence. The review also highlighted Katten's receipt of the prestigious ABA Pro Bono Publico Award.



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.

