

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Albany Law School and The Legal Project Help Victims of Domestic Violence by Launching Katheryn D. Katz Fellowship Program

ALBANY, N.Y. – Albany Law School and The Legal Project will provide increased access to civil legal representation to victims of domestic violence in the Capital Region through the Katheryn D. Katz Fellowship Program, officially launched today at a press conference and reception held at the law school.

The fellowship program, made possible by funding from the New York State Office of Court Administration and, to date, more than \$60,000 in donations from private law firms throughout the region, will employ current law students and recent graduates from Albany Law School. The Legal Project is also very grateful to be awarded \$165,000 in Senate domestic violence grant funding through the support of Senator Hugh Farley and Senator Kathleen Marchione.

Named in memory of the late Albany Law School Professor Katheryn D. Katz, who was the first in the nation to bring domestic violence education into law schools, the fellowship program is a three-part pipeline comprised of law school in-house clinical practice; law student placements; and two-year, paid post-graduate fellowships, during which the graduates will be public interest staff attorneys at The Legal Project, serving victims of abuse. Professor Katz graduated from Albany Law in 1970.

“The next step for the program will be for the fellows to staff a new public interest incubator program, providing free and reduced fee representation in matrimonial and family law cases,” said Lisa A. Frisch, executive director of The Legal Project. “This innovative initiative seeks to address both the endemic lack of civil legal access to justice and the law school graduate employment challenge.”

Lorraine Silverman, Albany Law Class of 2005, is managing attorney for the program and Gracja Nowak, Class of 2013 is the program’s first fellow. Kayla Molinaro, who graduated from Albany Law this past May, will begin her fellowship in the fall.

Founding sponsors of the Katheryn D. Katz Fellowship Program include the Katz family and the following law firms: Martin, Harding & Mazzotti, LLP; Deily & Glastetter LLP; O’Connell & Aronowitz, P.C.; LaFave, Wein & Frament, PLLC; McNamee Lochner Titus & Williams, P.C.; Hacker Murphy, LLPC; Tabner Ryan & Keniry LLP; Mack & Associates, PLLC and the Spada Law Firm.

“We see our support of this fellowship program as an investment in our community, not only providing students and new graduates with a tremendous opportunity for experiential learning, but also increasing vital legal resources to serve victims of abuse,” said Paul Harding of Martin, Harding & Mazzotti.

Albany Law and The Legal Project are seeking additional resources to continue to expand the initiative, ultimately establishing an incubator to employ and help develop early career attorneys.

Speakers at today's launch event include:

- Dean Penelope Andrews, Albany Law School
- The Hon. Kathy Sheehan, Mayor of Albany
- Lisa A. Frisch, Executive Director, The Legal Project
- Paul Harding, Partner, Martin, Harding & Mazzotti, LLP

This announcement is also available on the Albany Law School website: [LINK](#) and The Legal Project website: <http://www.legalproject.org/>

Albany Law School's award-winning **Clinic & Justice Center**, established in 1981, combines theory and practice through its in-house public interest law firm, providing free legal services to eligible clients in the Capital Region. In a typical academic year, the clinic recruits more than 200 students for clinic projects, representing hundreds of clients and assisting many more individuals and organizations through technical assistance and community education activities. Visit <http://www.albanylaw.edu/cjc>.

The Legal Project believes that all people, regardless of income, gender, disability, race, religion, age, sexual orientation or ethnicity should have access to legal services. This belief reflects a deep commitment to fairness and equal justice under the law. Based upon these beliefs, the mission of The Legal Project is to make the law more accessible to those in need, to increase the legal community's involvement in pro bono work; and to serve as a resource on legal issues. The Legal Project provides services to over 3,000 low and moderate-income members of the Capital Region community and has a special commitment to women and others who may have difficulty in obtaining legal assistance. Visit <http://www.legalproject.org/>.

Albany Law School is a small, independent private school located in the heart of New York state's capital since 1851. As the oldest law school in New York and the oldest independent law school in the nation, the institution offers students an innovative, rigorous curriculum taught by a committed faculty. Several nationally recognized programs—including the Government Law Center and the Albany Law Clinic & Justice Center—provide opportunities for students to apply classroom learning to real situations. Students have access to New York's highest court, federal courts, the executive branch and the state legislature. With approximately 10,000 alumni practicing in nearly every state in the country, and several continents, Albany Law's graduates serve as a vital community and resource for the law school and its students. Visit www.albanylaw.edu.