



Lathrop GPM Welcomes Pro Bono Attorney to Kansas City Office

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Accomplished litigation attorney joins Am Law 200 firm to offer high-quality representation to the families of Jackson County

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (May 2021) — Sara Hofeditz Christensen has joined Lathrop GPM as Pro Bono Counsel and will serve as the firm's designated attorney for all Jackson County, Missouri indigent family court appointments. Jackson County has a unique rule requiring that every licensed attorney practicing or living in the county must represent parents and children in juvenile court proceedings, even if that is not the attorney's area of focus. With Christensen's experience, the firm is providing high-quality representation to the families of Jackson County.

The firm's previous Pro Bono Counsel, Katie Rooney, recently was appointed Family Court Commissioner of Division 41 within the 16th Circuit Court. Rooney now hears family court cases regarding juveniles — including delinquency, child dependency and adoptions/guardianships — and makes findings and recommendations.

"Lathrop GPM had a reputation for providing dedicated juvenile court representation to families, and we are pleased that Sara is joining us to continue this tradition," said Kate Nolen, the firm's Pro Bono Counsel. "As an excellent litigator with a collaborative approach, Sara's experience will strengthen the firm's commitment to providing high-quality pro bono services to families in need."

Christensen is a former public defender who has spent the last several years in private practice focusing on criminal defense. She also serves as an adjunct professor at the University of Missouri, Kansas City School of Law where she teaches trial advocacy.

"Since I was in law school, it has been my goal to support the community as pro bono counsel," said Christensen. "Advocating for families during what may be one of the lowest points of their lives is deeply rewarding, and I am honored to fight for them. I always aim to make clients feel that someone is truly listening and that their individual experience is valid and valuable."

Lathrop GPM considers pro bono legal service a professional responsibility and a community obligation of the entire firm. The lawyers are proud to use their legal skills to help people in need, and they are honored



to work with legal service organizations in each of the firm's office locations to represent the most vulnerable people.

"As a firm, Lathrop GPM is dedicated to devoting a minimum of three percent of our billable hours to pro bono matters," said Dean Eyer, Pro Bono Partner. "We are committed to this goal because it is an important part of a lawyer's role in the community and to the practice of law."

Lathrop GPM's pro bono matters vary. The firm works closely with The Midwest Innocence Project, including partnering with the organization to help facilitate the release of Laquanda "Faye" Jacobs, who spent 26 years in prison after being wrongfully convicted of capital murder in 1993. The firm also works often with The Advocates for Human Rights, based in Minneapolis. Lathrop GPM handles asylum and immigration cases for clients who are fleeing persecution in their home countries based on their race, religion, gender, political opinion, sexual orientation, or other protected classes.

Learn more about Lathrop GPM's pro bono program on its website.