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*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

Legal Aid and Kasowitz Secure \$600,000 Settlement for Six Personal Care Aides

(NEW YORK, NY) – The Legal Aid Society and Kasowitz Benson Torres LLP have secured a \$600,000 settlement from Scharome Cares, Inc., a home health care aide services agency, on behalf of six aides who alleged that the agency had violated their rights under state and federal labor laws.

Plaintiffs' complaint alleged that, for years, the agency, in violation of applicable law, failed to pay the six aides for all of the hours they worked during multiple 24-hour shifts – even though the agency knew that their patients could not be cared for safely and properly without around-the-clock attention and monitoring, including incontinence care and cleaning throughout the night — and failed to pay them overtime.

“Unfortunately, the circumstances alleged in this lawsuit are far from unique. More than 300,000 New Yorkers are employed as personal care aides in what is the fastest growing industry in this country, and many of these workers have incomes below the federal poverty line,” said **Liz Schalet, Staff Attorney in the Employment Law Unit at The Legal Aid Society**. “This settlement delivers justice for the six home health care aides who worked night and day to care for their patients.”

“The settlement provides our clients with hard-earned and much-needed funds, reflecting their dedication to their patients,” added **Joshua D. Fulop, partner at Kasowitz Benson Torres LLP**, which represented the plaintiffs pro bono. “We are pleased to have assisted the Legal Aid Society in obtaining this relief for our clients.”

“This settlement is an important victory, as it provides the aides compensation for the 11 hours that they claim they were not paid, plus overtime, for each 24-hour shift they worked,” added **Wing Lam, Executive Director, Chinese Staff and Workers' Association**.

The settlement has been approved by Judge John P. Cronan of the U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York. Pursuant to the settlement agreement, Scharome Cares will pay the six aides \$600,000, which exceeds the amounts of their unpaid minimum wage and overtime claims.

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The Legal Aid Society exists for one simple yet powerful reason: to ensure that New Yorkers are not denied their right to equal justice because of poverty. For over 140 years, we have protected, defended, and advocated for those who have struggled in silence for far too long. Every day, in every borough, The Legal Aid Society changes the lives of our clients and helps improve our communities.

www.legalaidnyc.org

The Kasowitz team handling this pro bono matter was led by partners Mark W. Lerner and Joshua D. Fulop and associate Jonathan L. Shapiro. Kasowitz Benson Torres LLP is a leading national law firm with a core focus on commercial litigation, complemented by strong bankruptcy/restructuring and real estate transactional practices. The firm has extensive trial experience and is always trial-ready, representing both plaintiffs and defendants in every area of litigation. Headquartered in New York City, the firm also has offices in Atlanta, Denver, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, Newark, San Francisco, Silicon Valley and Washington, DC. www.kasowitz.com.