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Kate Keating Associates is now Clearstory Wayfinding and Placemaking

Women-owned design firm known for its client-centric approach to wayfinding and placemaking



San Francisco—Kate Keating Associates, Inc., a woman-owned design firm, is pleased to announce its new name, Clearstory Inc., and the firm’s 25th anniversary. The name change coincides with over two decades of work helping architects and institutions bring clarity to the places they create through trusted, client-centric partnerships and collaboration. “Our new name illustrates our commitment to clear and integrated user experiences and highlights our dedication to bringing our clients’ vision to life,” notes Julie Vogel, President of Clearstory.

The new name also serves as an opportunity to step back and recognize the transition of Julie Vogel to President and Nikki San Miguel to Principal, which occurred in 2017 when the firm’s founder, Kate Keating, retired. “We’ve been incredibly fortunate to have worked on a wide range of significant projects in the region, large and small,” notes Julie Vogel. “Continuing to push ourselves on behalf of our clients is at the core of our ethos. We love bringing clarity to challenging wayfinding problems through a collaborative design and consensus building process,” notes San Miguel.

The award-winning, 15-person firm includes a multi-disciplinary team of designers that have been responsible for designing wayfinding and placemaking projects for many notable civic, educational, commercial, and healthcare clients in the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond. Among the firm’s best known projects are the Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital Stanford in Palo Alto and the James R. Herman Cruise Terminal at Pier 27 in San Francisco. The signage and wayfinding program for the 530,000-square-foot expansion of Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital, was inspired by native California ecosystems. For the James R. Herman Cruise Terminal, the firm developed slender and luminous wayfinding totems that utilized transportation symbols to guide passengers through the embarkment process. Additionally, a seven-foot tall, kinetically illuminated rooftop “Port of San Francisco” sign was developed exclusively for boat traffic on the bay.

Other significant wayfinding and signage projects include: the new hospital at Sutter Health CPMC Van Ness Campus; San Francisco International Airport Boarding Area B; The Presidio

Tunnel Tops Park; Grand Hyatt at San Francisco International Airport; 181 Fremont Street; The Anderson Collection at Stanford. Among the firm's legacy of distinguished clients are The California Academy of Sciences, Kaiser Permanente, The Presidio Trust, Stanford Healthcare, Stanford University, the City and Port of San Francisco, and the Jay Paul Company as well as many other leading healthcare, civic, and commercial clients.

Future focused, the firm's new name reflects the practice's creativity and rigorous design approach. The renaming is accompanied by a new graphic identity and website, also launched this week.

About Clearstory

Clearstory Wayfinding and placemaking, a women-owned design firm based in San Francisco, has been successfully providing visual communications services to architects and owners for over 25 years. As a full-service design firm specializing in wayfinding and signage programs, Clearstory has substantial expertise in the design and management of highly complex projects that require close coordination between the owner, project team and contractor. Working in this collaborative manner, their work brings added value to a variety of project types, including healthcare, civic, mixed-use, transportation, and other community-based projects.
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