



## Crystal West Edwards

Principal

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Crystal West Edwards is a Principal in the Wealth Preservation Group and has extensive experience in the areas of elder law, special needs planning and advocacy, estate planning and estate administration, and counseling.

Crystal is highly experienced working with the legal problems of aging individuals and those with disabilities. Crystal counsels seniors, individuals with special needs and their families with issues pertaining to complex estate and tax planning, asset preservation, eligibility for means-tested government benefits, fiduciary appointments and representation and advocacy. She is also a trusted advisor to financial institutions and corporate fiduciaries with judicial and administrative accountings and counseling regarding initial or continued means-tested government benefits eligibility for its trust beneficiaries.

Crystal is a sought after speaker and has authored numerous publications on the topics of elder and disability law, estate planning, special need trusts and government agencies. She is Co-chair of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA) and a Fellow to the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel (ACTEC).

### Recognitions

*No aspect of this or any advertisement has been approved by the Supreme Court of New Jersey. For ranking methodologies, please see [here](#).*

- *The Best Lawyers in America*® - Elder Law (2025); Trusts and Estates (2025); Litigation - Trusts and Estates (2025)
- New Jersey Institute on Continuing Legal Education - Distinguished Service Award (2021)
- Profiles in Diversity Journal - Women Worth Watching (2021)
- Certified Elder Law Attorney (CELA) by the ABA Accredited National Elder Law Foundation - the only African American attorney in NJ holding this designation.
- New Jersey Super Lawyers® (2019 - 2024)
  - Top 50 Women (2024)
- New Jersey Rising Stars® (2010-2018)

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- *New Jersey Law Journal* - Women Attorneys of the Year honoree (2024)
- *New Jersey Law Journal* - Distinguished Leader Award Recipient (2017) ; Top Women in Law (2016); New Leaders of the Bar (2014)
- Garden State Bar Association - Young Lawyer Award Recipient (2014)

## Memberships

- National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA) - Co-chair, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee
- Garden State Bar Foundation, Board of Directors
- National Bar Association, Real Property Trust and Estate Section - Member
- National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA) - Former Member, Board of Directors
- American College of Trust and Estate Counsel (ACTEC) - Fellow; the only African American attorney in New Jersey elected to the College.
- National Association of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA) - Board of Directors, New Jersey Chapter
- National Association of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA) - Past President, New Jersey Chapter
- Diversity Committee, New Jersey State Bar Association
- New Jersey State Bar Association - Elder and Disability Law Section
- Dickinson School of Law of the Pennsylvania State University - Diversity and Inclusion Trusted Advisors
- Dickinson Law Alumni Society of the Pennsylvania State Alumni Association - Board of Directors
- Garden State Bar Association - Past President
- Life Member, Garden State Bar Association
- National Bar Association - Member
- New Jersey Women Lawyers Association - Member
- Rutgers Center for Adult Autism Services - Member, Advisory Board
- Certified Elder Law Attorney by ABA Accredited National Elder Law Foundation
- Cathedral International, Perth Amboy, New Jersey - Member
- Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. - Member
- Kean University, Union, New Jersey - Former Adjunct Faculty Member
- Inperium of New Jersey - Board of Directors
- Pillar Care Continuum - Board of Trustees

# Crystal West Edwards Cont.

## News

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- Principals Carmen Andrade and Crystal West Edwards Named New Jersey Law Journal's "Women Attorneys of the Year", 11/19/2024
- 26 Porzio Attorneys Recognized in *The Best Lawyers in America*® 2025 Edition; 6 Listed as *Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch*®, 8/15/2024
- Wealth Preservation Principal Crystal West Edwards Appointed to the Board of Directors of Inperium New Jersey, 6/25/2024
- Wealth Preservation Principal Crystal West Edwards Appointed to the Board of Trustees of Pillar Care Continuum, 6/17/2024
- 18 Porzio Attorneys Named to 2024 New Jersey Super Lawyers® and Rising Stars® Lists, 3/25/2024
- Twenty Porzio Attorneys Recognized in 2023 New Jersey Super Lawyers and Rising Stars Lists, 5/11/2023
- Porzio's Crystal West Edwards to Receive Distinguished Service Award by NJICLE, 9/08/2022
- Crystal West Edwards Receives the Highest Video Acclaim for "Should Your Adult Child be a Co-Signer on Your Bank Account?", 6/07/2022
- 22 Porzio Attorneys Selected for Inclusion on 2022 New Jersey Super Lawyers List, 4/06/2022
- Congratulations to Crystal West Edwards for Being Named one of 2021's "Women Worth Watching" by Profiles in Diversity Journal, 8/19/2021
- Porzio's Family of Companies Receive Community Impact Award, 11/22/2019
- Porzio Welcomes Principal Crystal West Edwards to the Firm, 9/17/2019

## Articles

- 2024 Year-End Tax Planning: It's Not Too Late, 12/19/2024
- Social Security Administration Changes ISM Rules for SSI Recipients, 4/15/2024
- Quarterly Tax Updates: January 2024, 1/16/2024
- Corporate Transparency Act Becomes Operational, 1/16/2024
- Year-End Tax Tips: 5 Smart Strategies for 2023, 3 Important Changes for 2024, 12/14/2023
- 2023 Q3 Tax Updates, 7/20/2023
- Lessons from the Lynnette Harris and Leigh Ann Conley Cases, 7/20/2023
- Tax Short Shorts, 7/20/2023

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- Net Unrealized Appreciation: Opportunities in Your Company's Retirement Plan, 7/20/2023
- More IRS Scrutiny of Hobby Losses, 7/20/2023
- Retirement Report, 7/20/2023
- Qualified Small Business Stock: More Smoke than Fire, 7/20/2023
- 2023 Q2 Tax Updates, 4/27/2023
- A Look At President Biden's Budget Tax Proposals, 4/27/2023
- Crypto Corner, 4/27/2023
- Golden Passports & Moving to Puerto Rico, 4/27/2023
- Tax Shorts, 4/27/2023
- Moratorium on Medicaid Terminations Scheduled to End on April 1, 2023, 2/08/2023
- IRS Delays \$600 Reporting Threshold, 1/24/2023
- The Far Side, 1/24/2023
- The Silver Lining of Inflation, 1/24/2023
- Understanding the Once-A-Year Rollover Rule, 1/24/2023
- 2023 Q1 Tax Updates, 1/24/2023
- 2022 Year-End Tax Planning , 12/13/2022
- The Complexity of Charitable Contributions, 12/13/2022
- Converting Traditional IRAs to Roth IRAs, 12/13/2022
- Crypto Investments, 12/13/2022
- Delaying Income and Accelerating Expenses, 12/13/2022
- Looking Ahead: Tax Rates, Gift & Estate Exemptions and Tax Legislation, 12/13/2022
- Should You Harvest Losses?, 12/13/2022
- 2022 Year-End Tax Planning Resources, 12/13/2022
- "From the Adult System to Long-Term Care: A Comparative Approach to Planning for Aging Adults With Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities," New Jersey Lawyer, 12/12/2022
- "Supportive Services for Aging Adults: A Program Comparison for Aging Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities," PLAN|NJ, Fall 2022
- Quoted in NextAvenue article "3 Estate Planning Mistakes to Avoid", 10/28/2021

## Crystal West Edwards Cont.

- The Affordable Care Act and Its Impact on Individuals with Special Needs, December 2013

### Events

- Porzio's Women's Initiative Network's Ethics & Eggs Seminar 2021, 12/09/2021

### Speaking Engagements

- "Gen X Divorce: Legal Insights and Strategies," New Jersey State Bar Association, 10/30/2024
- "Estate and Asset Protection Planning and Bankruptcy," New Jersey State Bar Association, 2024 Bankruptcy and Restructuring Forum, 9/27/2024
- "Elder Law Planning and Administration: Implementation of Elder Law Planning Through the Benefits Qualification Process," New Jersey State Bar Association, Estate Planning and Administration Institute Part 2, 9/26/2024
- "DEI: Invisible Disabilities and Practice Management," New Jersey State Bar Association, 2024 Elder and Disability Law Symposium, 9/10/2024
- "Representing Clients with Diminished Capacity," American College of Trust & Estate Counsel (ACTEC), 9/10/2024
- "Invisible Disabilities: Can You See What I See?," National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA) Online Annual Conference, 9/04/2024
- "Future Mogels Investing - Estate Planning Session," First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens, 6/25/2024
- "Special Needs Trusts: Protecting Benefits While Providing for Beneficiary Expenses," National Business Institute, New Jersey Medicaid Asset Planning: A Practical Toolkit, 6/13/2024
- "Invisible Disabilities: Can You See What I See?," National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA) Annual Conference, 5/04/2024
- "Wealth Building & Wealth Protection," Power Rising 2024, 2/10/2024
- "Practical Approaches to Guardianship Issues," Porzio Webinar in Partnership with the JCC of Central New Jersey, 11/29/2023
- "24th Annual Elder and Disability Law Symposium," NJICLE, 12/08/2022
- "An Insider's Guide to Maximizing State Disability Benefits," 40th Annual Autism Conference, 10/21/2022
- "General Taxations of SNTs," Stetson's Annual National Conference on Special Needs Planning and Special Needs Trusts, 10/12/2022
- "Ethics and Professionalism in Today's Society: How to Discuss, Address and Promote Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Your Trust and Estates Practice and with Your Clients," 56TH Annual Heckerling Institute on Estate Planning – Virtual Institute, 3/29/2022
- Co-Moderated the 23rd Annual Elder and Disability Law Symposium, New Jersey Institute of Continuing Legal Education (NJICLE), 12/17/2021

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- "Do you see what I see? Invisible Disabilities," Porzio's Ethics & Eggs 2021, 12/09/2021
- "The Ins and Outs of Law Firms: Entering and Exiting a Law Firm Partnership," National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys Annual Meeting, 3/25/2021
- "Demystifying Estate Planning and the Probate Process," Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., 1/16/2021
- "Charitable Planning and Board Governance," Infinity Financial Ministries, 1/16/2021
- Co-Moderated the 22nd Annual Elder and Disability Law Symposium, New Jersey Institute of Continuing Legal Education (NJICLE), 12/01/2020
- "LEAP Career Forum: Trust & Estates", Metropolitan Black Bar Association (NYC), 10/14/2020
- "Taxation of Grantor & Qualified Disability Trusts," Conference on Special Planning and Special Needs Trusts, Stetson Law, 10/13/2020
- "Issues at the Crossroads: Where Elder Law and Family Law Meet", New Jersey State Bar Association Annual Meeting, 5/13/2020
- "Estate Planning: Wills, Durable Power of Attorneys and Advanced Directives", Webinar, Essex County Surrogate's Court, 4/29/2020
- Co-Moderated the 21st Annual Elder and Disability Law Symposium, New Jersey Institute of Continuing Legal Education (NJICLE), 12/18/2019
- Co-Chaired the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys' 2019 Summit, Washington, D.C., November 14, 2019, 11/14/2019
- Co-Moderated the 20th Annual Elder and Disability Law Symposium, New Jersey Institute of Continuing Legal Education (NJICLE), 10/22/2019
- Co-moderated the 19th Annual Elder and Disability Law Symposium, New Jersey Institute of Continuing Legal Education (NJICLE), 2017
- Co-moderated the 18th Annual Elder and Disability Law Symposium, New Jersey Institute of Continuing Legal Education (NJICLE), 2016

## Practices

- Wealth Preservation

## Area of Focus

- Charitable Planning
- Elder Law
- Estate Planning
- Guardianship

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- Privately-owned Business Planning
- Trusts and Estates Litigation

## Media Mentions

- "Meet Crystal West Edwards, a Leader in Elder Law, Special Needs and Estate Planning, who is Meeting the Needs for a Diverse Range of Clients," *Elder Law Prof Blog*, 6/11/2024
- "Selling Your Parents' Home" How To Handle the Logistical and Emotional Challenges," *AARP Bulletin*, 5/01/2024
- "I don't want my wife to lose everything': I've been diagnosed with dementia — I suddenly could not spell or write legibly," *The Moneyist*, 2/27/2024
- "What Happens to Your Mortgage After You Die?," *Refi.com*, 1/03/2024
- "Conflicts that Arise after the Retention of a Client," *The American College of Trust and Estate Counsel (ACTEC) Trust and Estate Talk*, 11/28/2023
- "Special Needs Planning and Divorce: A Comparative Approach to Protecting Benefits," *New Jersey Law Journal*, 1/17/2023

## Bar Admissions

- New Jersey, 2008
- Pennsylvania, 2008

## Court Admissions

- United States District Court, District of New Jersey, 2008
- United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, 2009

## Education

- *Penn State Dickinson Law*  
J.D., 2008
- *University of North Carolina, Charlotte*  
B.A. in Political Science and Criminal Justice, 2005  
cum laude