

Susan B. Shields

Shareholder

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Overview

Susan Shields practices in the areas of tax and family wealth focusing on wealth transfer tax planning for high net worth families and individuals, business planning for closely held family businesses, estate and trust administration, business entity formation, and the formation and administration of tax-exempt organizations. She has also previously served as the leader of the firm's Tax and Family Wealth Group.

Susan is a frequent speaker on a variety of estate planning, probate and nonprofit topics at professional and continuing legal education seminars and has served as an adjunct professor of law in estate planning and wealth transfer tax at the University of Oklahoma College of Law. Her writing credits include "Oklahoma's New Family Wealth Preservation Trust Act," published on October 2, 2004, by the *Oklahoma Bar Journal* and "What Do You Need To Know About Oklahoma's New Education Lottery?" published on January 15, 2005, by the *Oklahoma Bar Journal*. She also served as editor and coordinator of the "OBA/CLE 2001 Form Book" and the "OBA/CLE 2005 Form Book" published by the Oklahoma Bar Association.

In addition to being an elected fellow of the prestigious American College of Trust and Estate Counsel (ACTEC) and previously serving as the Oklahoma state chair of ACTEC from 2016-2021, Susan's achievements have also earned her recognition as a top-ranked private wealth lawyer in *Chambers HNW*, the guide to the world's leading high net worth advisers, where sources have described her as "a warm, caring person" who is "technically excellent" and "manages expectations well and makes document drafting consistent with the client's goals."

Susan has also been recognized in *The Best Lawyers in America* (business organizations; closely held companies and family businesses law; non-profit and charities law; tax law; tax litigation and controversy; trust and estates; trust and estate litigation) and *Oklahoma Super Lawyers*, where she has been named to its exclusive "Top 10 Lawyers," "Top 25 Women Lawyers"

Admissions

California, 1989

Oklahoma, 1992

U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma

U.S. Tax Court

Education

J.D., University of California, Los Angeles, 1989

B.A., with honors, Stanford University, 1986; National Merit Scholar

Professional Organizations and Memberships

American College of Trust and Estate Counsel ((Fellow; Oklahoma State Chair, 2016 - 2021)

Oklahoma County Bar Association (Board of Directors, 2014-2016)

Oklahoma Bar Association (President, 2020; Vice President, 2014; Board of Governors, 2010-2012; Former Chair, Estate Planning, Probate and Trust)

Oklahoma Bar Foundation (Fellow; Board of Trustees, 2007 -2015; President, 2013)

Oklahoma City Estate Planning Council

State Bar of California

American Bar Foundation (Fellow)

University of Oklahoma College of Law (Adjunct Professor)

and “Top 50 Oklahoma Lawyers” lists. She was selected by *Best Lawyers* as the “Oklahoma City Trusts and Estates Litigation Lawyer of the Year” for 2016 and 2023, “Oklahoma City Tax Litigation and Controversy Lawyer of the Year” for 2018 and 2021, “Oklahoma City Nonprofit/Charities Lawyer of the Year” for 2020, “Oklahoma City Business Organizations Lawyer of the Year” for 2017 and 2019, and “Oklahoma City Closely Held Companies and Family Businesses Lawyer of the Year” for 2015.

Active in the legal community, Susan served as president of the Oklahoma Bar Association in 2020, having previously served as vice president in 2014 and also serving a three-year term as a member of the OBA’s Board of Governors from 2010 – 2012. In 2015, she completed an eight-year term on the Oklahoma Bar Foundation’s Board of Trustees, which included a one-year term as its president in 2013.

Representative Experience

- All forms of wealth transfer tax planning and estate planning, including revocable trusts, wills, life insurance planning, dynasty trusts, GRATs, QPRTs, CRTs and IDGTs
- Business succession planning
- Asset protection planning, including family wealth preservation trusts
- Marital planning
- Family limited partnerships and family limited liability companies
- Tax-exempt organizations formation and ongoing advice on governance and transactions
- Will contest litigation and trust
- Probate and other postmortem planning
- Preparation and advice concerning estate and gift tax returns

Honors and Awards

- Elected Fellow of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel
- Listed in *Chambers HNW* as a top-ranked high net worth adviser in the category of Private Wealth Law
- Selected by peers for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America* (business organizations; closely held companies and family business law; non-profit and charities law; tax law, tax litigation and controversy; trusts and estates; trust and estate litigation)

Civic Involvement and Leadership

Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation
(Planned Giving Council)

Oklahoma Center for Nonprofits (Former Member, Board of Directors)

SpiritBank (Former Member, Board of Directors)

Leadership Oklahoma (Class XVII)

Oklahoma Cleats for Kids (Board of Directors)

- Named “Oklahoma City Trusts and Estates Litigation Lawyer of the Year” for 2016 and 2023, “Oklahoma City Tax Litigation and Controversy Lawyer of the Year” for 2018 and 2021, “Oklahoma City Nonprofit/Charities Lawyer of the Year” for 2020, “Oklahoma City Business Organizations Lawyer of the Year” for 2017 and 2019, and “Oklahoma City Closely Held Companies and Family Businesses Lawyer of the Year” for 2015 by *The Best Lawyers in America*
- Listed in *Oklahoma Super Lawyers*
- Named to *Oklahoma Super Lawyers’* lists of “Top 10 Oklahoma Lawyers,” “Top 25 Women Lawyers,” and “Top 50 Oklahoma Lawyers”
- Rated AV Preeminent by Martindale-Hubble Peer Review Ratings
- Honored with The Journal Record Award by the Oklahoma County Bar Association for outstanding service to the legal profession (2016)
- Named by *The Journal Record* as a “Fifty Making a Difference” honoree and three-time finalist for “Woman of the Year” honors (2005, 2010 and 2015)
- Honored with the Oklahoma Bar Association’s OBA President’s Award (2014)
- Honored with the Oklahoma Bar Foundation’s Roger Scott Memorial Award (2014)
- Honored with the Oklahoma Bar Foundation’s President’s Award (2008, 2012)
- Honored with *The Journal Record’s* Leadership in Law Award, recognizing legal professionals for their professional and civic contributions to the state (2011)
- Honored with the Oklahoma Bar Association’s Mona Salyer Lambird Spotlight Award (2011)
- Honored with the Oklahoma Bar Association’s Earl Sneed Award (2005)
- Honored with Legal Aid of Western Oklahoma’s Outstanding Pro Bono Lawyer Award (1993)