

About the Author

RICHARD A. (“Rick”) COURTNEY has practiced law since 1978 and is a founding partner of the Jackson law firm of Frascogna Courtney, PLLC, where he chairs the Courtney Elder Law Associates planning group. His primary areas of practice are elder law, public benefits law (Medicaid, Medicare, and Supplemental Security Income), personal asset protection and estate planning, trusts and trust administration, special needs planning for persons with disabilities, guardianships and conservatorships, nursing home and disability rights, and probate administration. Rick is the first attorney in Mississippi designated a Certified Elder Law Attorney by the American Bar Association–accredited National Elder Law Foundation. He is a former Assistant Dean and Adjunct Professor of Law at Mississippi College School of Law and Adjunct Professor at University of Mississippi School of Law.

Rick is a former Director of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA) where he serves on the Trusts and Special Needs Law Sections Steering Committees; the Probate and Trust Law Section of the American Bar Association; the Trusts and Estates Section of the Mississippi State Bar (former President); the Mississippi Estate Planning Council; the Mississippi Financial Planning Association; and the Special Needs Alliance, Inc., a national organization of special needs planning attorneys (former President). He has been selected as a member of the Council of Advanced Practitioners of NAELA, and is a Fellow in the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel. Rick is named in *Best Lawyers in America*® in elder law and trusts and estates, and the firm is named in *Best Law Firms in America*® in elder law. Rick has been designated a *Mid-South Super Lawyer* annually since 2006 in the field of elder law by Law & Politics, Inc., through professional review and peer recommendation.

In 2009, Rick was awarded the 15th Annual Theresa Award by the New York–based Theresa Foundation, for community service and professional advocacy on behalf of children and adults with special needs. In 2014, he was inducted as a Fellow of NAELA, that organization’s highest honor. Rick was asked to testify before Congress in September 2015 in support of the Special Needs Trust Fairness Act legislation to help adults with disabilities create special needs trusts (enacted in 2016).

Rick and his wife, Ruthie, have adult twin daughters, one of whom has a disability. Rick has been actively involved in community and charitable organizations that serve the needs of older persons and persons with disabilities,

including involvement as a Director of Mustard Seed, Inc., President and Director of the Cerebral Palsy Foundation of Mississippi, Inc., President of the Advisory Board of Hospice Ministries, Inc., a director of the Heritage School for children with learning disabilities, and member of the Occupational Therapy Council of Advisors for the Mississippi State Department of Health. He writes and speaks often to lawyers, health care professionals, churches, and community groups on elder law, special needs and estate planning subjects, and topics of interest to caregivers and families with special needs.