

# NTSA ELITE ADVISOR AWARDS (EAA)

## 2023 Awards Terms and Conditions

Amended and Effective May 1, 2022

### EAA AWARDS OVERVIEW

#### NTSA EAA Awards Purpose

- The NTSA Elite Advisor Awards are significant lifetime achievement awards that honor NTSA financial advisor members who are role models, and whose presence and innovative works have helped shape the best practices in serving clients in the 403(b), 457(b) and ERISA non-profit retirement industry. The Awards acknowledge their *specific outstanding, unique* accomplishments and/or contributions.
- Promoting the NTSA values of open access, professional advice, universal standard of care, collaboration and ethical behavior are the key reasons for the EAA process.
- The NTSA Elite Advisor Awards demonstrate to the retirement industry, to the federal, state and local legislatures, and to the public that NTSA and its Advisors are critical to this marketplace. Elite Advisors are *educated, experienced, community-involved* professionals. Such professionals are critical for the process of achieving individual retirement security for those Americans in the tax-exempt non-profit, public and private sectors.

#### About the Awards

The National Tax-Deferred Savings Association (NTSA) EAA were established by Advisors, for Advisors. The Awards' focus is on the Financial Advisor's *innovative, unique, profound and successful best practices for advocacy, leadership, practice management and legacy* within the 403(b), 457(b) and ERISA non-profit retirement industry, directly impacting the ability for Americans to build a successful retirement, especially through employer-based retirement plans.

The Award's goal is to recognize the very *'best of the best'* Financial Advisor members of NTSA who have done the most to help individual plan participants accumulate assets for a meaningful retirement, to *advocate proactively* for this industry and its beneficiaries, to *lead in profound ways*, to *creatively operate an ever-improving practice*, and to *mentor responsibly* for the future.

#### NTSA EAA Awards Oversight

The EAA Awards Judging Committee (AJC) represents various NTSA Advisor sectors and acts collaboratively, anonymously and with utmost confidentiality, pursuant to the ARA Data Confidentiality Agreement. In the third quarter of each year, there is a three-phase process: (1) Nomination, (2) Application, Affirmation and Selection, and (3) Announcement and Presentation.

#### Timetable for the NTSA 2023 EAA Process.

- |           |                             |                                    |
|-----------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| • Phase 1 | Nomination Period           | July 11 – August 8, 2022           |
| • Phase 2 | Application Period          | July 18 – August 15, 2022          |
|           | Affirmation Period          | July 25 – August 22, 2022          |
|           | Selection Period            | September 7 – 30, 2022             |
| • Phase 3 | Announcement & Presentation | Early October 2022 & February 2023 |

#### **About NTSA Elite Advisors**

The NTSA 2023 Elite Advisor Awards represent the tenth year of such honors. Since the Awards 2014 inception, there have been 39 NTSA financial advisors recognized.

Elite Advisors serve NTSA, its members and their communities through the NTSA Elite Advisor Council (EAC), characterized by professionalism, integrity and innovation, and committed to giving back to the industry.

# EAA PROCESS DETAILS

## EAA AWARDS LOGISTICS PERIOD: Annual Post-Awards Review April - June

### Process Overview.

**Phase 1: Public Branding and Outreach** Nomination Period.

**Phase 2: Internal Data Gathering and Decisions** Application, Affirmations and Selection Periods.

**Phase 3: Public Information** Announcement and Presentation Periods.

### Administration.

Chair and Senior Advisor review external and internal processes and deliverables, together with industry volunteer teams. With agreed-to business plan at least one month in advance of implementation, NTSA and ARA staff receive the deliverables about two weeks in advance of execution needs.

### Promotion.

- **Target Sectors.** NTSA Strategic Partners, Elite Advisor Council (EAC) and CRES (Certified Retirement Education Specialist) advisors.
- **Outreach Formats for Nomination Solicitation.** Email series, FAQs, Flyers, NTSA Advisor, Virtual meetings and powerpoint presentations, social media.
- **Activities.** Phase 1: Member Survey, Awardee Stories, Nominations Solicitation; Phase 3: Announcement, Awards Brochure or like format, Presentation.

## PHASE 1: NOMINATION PERIOD July

### EAA Nominators.

#### Eligible Nominators.

- General: ARA Divisions of Membership: ASEA, ASPPA, NAPA, NTSA, PSCA members.
- Specific: NTSA Strategic Partner (SP) Ambassadors, Advocacy Representatives, Designated Points of Contact; NTSA Elite Advisor Council (EAC); NTSA CRES (Certified Retirement Education Specialist) advisors; NTSA Leadership Council (LC)

#### Ineligible Nominators.

- AJC members in the Nomination Year; self-nomination; NTSA Executive Director

### EAA Nominees.

#### Eligible Nominees.

- NTSA Member in good standing, and in compliance with the ARA Code of Conduct and the CRES Code of Conduct
- Active as a Financial Advisor to 403(b), 457(b) and/or ERISA non-profit plans and their participants, in any of the NTSA Target Markets.

#### Ineligible Nominees.

 NTSA EAA AJC in Nomination Year

### Definition of Terms.

**EAA Nomination Year.** Year during which the Nomination Process happens.

**EAA Service Year.** Generally, the year before the Nomination Process.

**EAA Awards Year.** Year of Awards being honored, generally, the next NTSA Summit at a plenary session or Awards Luncheon, if any.

**Nomination Criteria.** To be eligible for award consideration, nominees must meet the following criteria:

- **MEMBERSHIP:** NTSA Individual, Associate or Affiliate Membership for three (3) or more years, including the Awards Year, e.g., for the 2023 Awards, member as of 2021 or before.
- **LENGTH OF SERVICE.** Have acted for five (5) or more Awards Years as a Financial Advisor serving the 403(b), 457(b) and ERISA non-profit retirement plans and their participants, e.g., for the 2023 Awards Year, at least beginning in 2019;
- **ASSETS UNDER MANAGEMENT and/or ADVISEMENT**
  - ~ assets in 403(b), 457(b) plans and ERISA non-profit, plus IRAs;
  - ~ as of the calendar year end immediately preceding the Nomination Period, e.g., December 31, 2021 preceding the 2022 Nomination Period for the 2023 Award;
  - ~ \$25,000,000 (indexed 2017 & following) or more in retirement plan assets under management and/or advisement, personally; this is not a team statistic;
  - ~ with automatic rounded-off 3% escalation annually, e.g., \$29,758,608, rounded to \$30,000,000 for the 2023 Awards.

- FINANCIAL INDUSTRY LICENSING, OVERSIGHT & CONTINUING EDUCATION. Be licensed for Securities and Insurance; and
- FINANCIAL INDUSTRY OVERSIGHT & STANDING. Be in good standing with FINRA and SEC, as well as with state insurance regulators where the advisor is registered and doing business.

**EAA Nomination Process.** July and August

**Nomination Solicitations.** ARA scope of influence, NTSA, NTSA SPs, Member Survey respondents, NTSA certified and credentialed members.

**Nomination Timing.** Generally, four (4) to six (6) weeks, at the discretion of the EAA AJC, as published in the annual Timetable.

**Nominator Forms.** Nominations can be made singly or in a group, using the Nomination Form developed and approved by the NTSA EAA AJC.

**Nomination Form Content.**

- **Nominator Name and Contact Information.**
- **Nominee Name, Email and Phone.**
- **Nominator Story.** 50 – 100 words from Nominator perspective about Nominee’s unique, innovative excellence as a ‘best of the best’ financial advisor, with public use approval.
- **Thank You.** With next steps and dates.

**Nominee Acceptance.**

- **NTSA Member Nominees.** Notified within one week of nomination receipt, together with the Application Form, cc to Nominator, with report to AJC weekly.
- **Non-NTSA member Nominees.** Notified of ineligibility within two weeks of receipt, with copy to the A anecdote about the Nominee’s assessment of their advisor status.

**PHASE 2: APPLICATION, AFFIRMATIONS AND SELECTION PERIODS** July & August

**EAA Nominee Application Period** July and August

Within one week of Nomination receipt, Nominee is informed of their nomination and provided with the Application form, cc’d to Nominator. Applications are due generally within one week of Nomination notification.

**EAA Application Content.** Assertion of compliance with ARA Code of Conduct and CRES Code of Conduct, as well as industry good standing, with approval for public use.

- **Nominee Name and Contact Information.** Nominee’s distinctive financial advisor practice information, such as, but not limited to retirement industry credentials, plan sponsors and plan participants served, years in the financial service industry.
- **Nominee Reflections on four key items, distinguishing financial advisor characteristics.** As a critical part of the Applications, reflections separate the distinctive applicants’ works with their differentiating responses on Leadership, Advocacy, Practice Management and Legacy.
- **Nominee Story or Anecdote.** As part of NTSA Awards process, a Story or anecdote about the Nominee’s assessment of their advisor status.
- **Nominee Affirmations’ Contact Information**
- **Biography & Photos.** Professional vitae, resume and/or biography of 100 – 300 words, plus electronic format professional head shot and casual business client photo.
- **Thank You.** With next steps and dates.

**Sole Responsibility.** Lies with the individual Nominee for completing the Application process, with assertions, and their full completion of the Application before the deadline. However, NTSA staff engages in email and phone follow-up, copied to Nominator and informed to AJC weekly.

**EAA Applicant Affirmation Period** July and August

Within one week of Application receipt, Affirmations are informed and provided with the Affirmation form, cc’d to Applicant and Nominator. Affirmations are due generally within one week of Affirmation notification.

**Single Affirmation Form.** Used by the two (2) Affirming individuals provided by Applicant, neither of which can be the Nominator, NTSA 2023 EAA AJC, nor the NTSA Executive Director.

**EAA Affirmation Content.** Assertion of approval for public use.

- **Affirmation Name and Contact Information.**
- **Affirmation Story and/or Anecdote.** 50 – 100 words about the impact of the Applicant’s unique and innovative financial advisory practice from their particular viewpoint.

- **Thank You.** With next steps and dates.

**Sole Responsibility.** Lies with the Affirmation supervisor or colleague for completing the Affirmation process, with assertions, and their full completion of the Affirmation before the deadline. However, NTSA staff engages in email and phone follow-up, copied to the Applicant and Nominator, and informed to AJC weekly.

**EAA Awardee Selection Period** September  
**Award Judging Committee (AJC).**

**AJC Composition.** The EAA AJC consists generally of up to five (5) voting members, representative of financial advisor leadership

- \* NTSA Elite Advisors. At least two, but, could be up to five (5) NTSA Elite Advisor Awardees from previous years.
- \* NTSA Advisor Strategic Partner Representation. At least one, but, generally not more than three NTSA Strategic Partner Advisor representatives, on a rotating basis, for a broad representation of Strategic Partners over a period of five (5) years, and without duplication of a single Strategic Partner, if possible, in any one year.

**AJC Member Selection.** Upon the recommendation of the NTSA Awards Committee, the EAA is confirmed by NTSA Management Council (MC) and informed to the NTSA Leadership Council (LC) and NTSA Executive Director (ED).

**EAA Leadership.** The Chair and Senior Advisor collaborate and lead. For continuity, the Senior Advisor is generally the NTSA Awards Chair. They are not members of the AJC, and, as such, do not vote and abstain themselves from collaborations as necessary.

**AJC Term.** Generally, the term of EAA AJC service is for up to three (3) years, with generally no more than three (3) new AJC members each year, as practical.

**AJC Responsibilities.**

- Updates Terms and Conditions, forms, communications, and processes, based on Awards experience.
- Promotes Awards and their call to excellence in their spheres of influence.
- Participates in the Awards selection, announcement and presentation.

**Anonymity.** The EAA AJC has no knowledge of the identities or specifics regarding the Nominator, Nominee and Affirmations, until such information is available in the public sector. Thus, all their conversations, deliberations and decisions are conducted anonymously and fairly. If there is any reason whatsoever to believe that an AJC member knows specifically of the Applicant, such AJC member must recuse themselves from discussions and voting on that Applicant.

**Confidentiality.** All EAA AJC deliberations, paperwork, communications, etc., are strictly confidential to the EAA AJC. All EAA AJC members must sign ARA Data Confidentiality Agreement, as do all ARA volunteers to whom member information may be available via survey, nomination, application or affirmation.

**EAA AJC Support for Nominators and Nominee Advisors.**

The EAA AJC is directed to create means by which interested Nominators and Advisors can be coached or mentored in the nomination and application processes. Those receiving support could include Nominators whose nominees did not participate or did participate and were not chosen, as well as prior Nominees who did or did not complete the Application process. The goal is to offer appropriate support, without prejudice, while preserving appropriate anonymity. Thus only non-voting members, i.e., the Senior Advisor and the Chair, can work one-on-one with neutral process explanations.

**Timeline for NTSA 2023 EAA AJC.**

- |                   |                         |   |
|-------------------|-------------------------|---|
| • 2023 Call Dates | June 9, 2022            | Onboarding                                    |
|                   | July 28, 2022           | Review Nominations                            |
|                   | August 31, 2022         | FINRA/SEC Review                              |
|                   | September 30, 2022      | Select Awardees                               |
| • 2023 Activities | July 11 – 25, 2022      | Zoom Call for Nominators & Nominees           |
|                   | August 30, 2022         | Review FINRA/SEC data                         |
|                   | September 7 – 14, 2022  | Individually Review & Evaluate Redacted Files |
|                   | September 21 – 30, 2022 | Review & Evaluate Group Assessments           |

**Consolidated Information Review.** AJC Chair and Senior Advisor review all Nominator, Applicant and Affirmations submissions for any missing, conflicting or questionable information. In such cases, clarification is sought, prior to AJC data review.

**Redacted Version.** All identifying information (geography, names, entities, state insurance licensing, etc.) is redacted by ARA staff from all Nomination, Application and Affirmations, before submission to the AJC.

**AJC Awards Applicants Review: Honored Nominees.** The AJC reviews the completed Nominations, Applications and Affirmations and selects the Honored Nominees, from whom the Awardees will be chosen.

**AJC Awards Honored Nominees Review.**

- The Elite Advisor Awards are lifetime achievement awards for the ‘best of the best’ financial advisors in the NTSA universe. The focus is on those who *excel, advocate proactively, lead in profound ways, creatively operate an ever-improving practice and mentor responsibly. Awardees’ presence and innovative works shape best practices with outstanding, unique accomplishments.* Elite Advisors are *educated, experienced and community-involved professionals.*
- Each EAA AJC member individually and without consultation or collaboration, rates each Applicant on the Nominator, Applicant, and Affirmations Stories and/or anecdotes, plus Applicant Reflections as key distinguishing aspects.
- EAA AJC should review each class of stories or reflections first before rating each individual Applicant, e.g., review all Nominator stories, then go back to rate each Applicant.
- Ratings for the five Stories and/or anecdotes are from 1 – 10 points each for the Nominator, Applicant and Affirmations. Ratings for the four Applicant Reflections are from 1 – 15 points each.
- The numerical score is only a guide for the EAA AJC deliberations.
- Finally each Applicant is reviewed on their own merits.
- The collaborative AJC consensus decision on naming Elite Advisors has far-reaching consequences and thus must be made carefully and conscientiously.

#### **Awards Selection Basics.**

- **No Requirement.** Awards need not be given in any particular Nomination Year, depending on the quality of the Nominations, Applications and Affirmations.
- **Not a Single Award.** NTSA Awards philosophy precludes having just one Awardee named in any Award Year, but rather that multiple, diverse individual Awardees be honored.
- **EAA AJC Phone Interviews.** The need for Nominator, Nominee and/or Affirmation Interviews may be considered and, if so, conducted by the Chair, Senior Advisor and/or AJC, on a consistent basis, holding fast to anonymity.

#### **PHASE 3: EAA AWARDEE ANNOUNCEMENT AND PRESENTATION** Early October and following February

##### **Announcements to Applicants.**

- **Honored Nominees.** Contacted by the EAA Chair and/or Senior advisor via phone and advised of the continuing process.
- **Awardees.** Contacted by EAA Chair and/or Senior Advisor via phone and follow-up with USPS letter from the NTSA Executive Director, NTSA Awards Chair, NTSA EAA Chair with copy to Nominator, Affirmations, and any appropriate Awardee supervisors.
- **Applicants not selected.** Notified by AJC via phone with email of gratitude, copied to Nominator.

##### **NTSA EAA Awards Presentation.**

The NTSA EAA, if any, are presented generally at a plenary session or Awards Luncheon, if any, during the NTSA Annual Summit.

##### **EAA Awardees’ Recognition.**

**Publicity.** Generally within two weeks of Announcements to Applicants.

- Press Release nationally and provided for Awardees’ local press, sensitive to national and/or local volunteer recognition initiatives, enabled by ARA Content staff (Nevin Adams, JD).
- Electronic signature logo with dated EAA logo, enabled by ARA Marketing staff (Renato Macedo).
- Press interview, as available, enabled by ARA Conferences and Marketing, as possible onsite at the Annual Summit.
- NTSA Advisor articles, written by AJC, enabled by ARA Content Staff (John Iekel).

**Onsite Recognition** Generally at the NTSA Summit Awards luncheon or plenary session; individual introduction on stage; presented with personalized trophy and EAA lapel pin, together with framed, personalized Certificate of EAA recognition.

**Listed Further.** In annual NTSA Awards Stories publication.

**Receive.** Registration discount for the next NTSA Summit.

**Be recognized.** By the NTSA Elite Advisor Council, an ongoing NTSA collaborative development and delivery function featuring NTSA financial advisor leaders.

##### **EAA Awardees’ Responsibilities.**

**Be Present and Accept.** NTSA Annual Summit, with short acceptance speech highlighting some aspect of their focus: advocacy, practice management, leadership and/or legacy.

**Participate.** Interviews to complete feature articles for NTSA Advisor, including WOWcast interviews and potentially other audio and visual venues, webinars, Summit.

**Attend and Participate.** Next year's NTSA Annual Summit projects, as needed, including, possible 2 – 3 conference calls planning same.

**Collaborate Actively.** If chosen, on the EAA AJC in subsequent years and other NTSA-related works.

**ELITE ADVISOR AWARD JUDGING COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION**

<b>I.</b>	<b>Representing ...</b>	<b>Elite Advisors</b>	<b>Awards Year(s) of Service</b>	<b>from Strategic Partner</b>
		Allen, Bruce 2014 EA	2016, 2017	PlanMember
		Aranowitz, Randy 2014 EA	2017, 2018	Kades Margolis / GWN
		Arinaga, Martin 2016 EA	2018, 2019, 2020	PlanMember
		Cawley, Kathryn 2015 EA	2017	Lincoln Investment
		Cayen, Michael 2016 EA	2018, 2019	Lincoln Investment (Legend)
		Decker, Joshua R. 2017 EA	2018, 2019	EFS Advisors
		Detillier, Jody 2015 EA	2014 / 2020, 2021, 2022	Lincoln Investment
		Goedtke, Carla-Ann 2022 EA	2023	(Investors Choice)
		Goldberg, Michael 2021 EA	2023, 2024, 2025	Equitable
		Keys, Wat 2019 EA	2020, 2021, 2022	(CAPTRUST)
		Lupi, Randal 2019 EA	2020, 2021, 2022	Equitable
		Schutte, Kent 2018 EA	2020, 2021, 2022	EFS Advisors
		Smith, Bruce 2014 EA	2015	PlanMember
		Snyder, Jill 2014 EA	2016, 2017	GWN
		Tursi, Lisa, 2021 EA	2023, 2024, 2025	Lincoln Investment
		Williams, Richard E. 2015 EA	2018, 2019	PlanMember
		Wolfe, David 2020 EA	2023, 2024	EFS Advisors
		Young, Robert 2019 EA	2014 / 2021, 2022	PlanMember
<b>II.</b>	<b>Also Representing ...</b>	<b>Strategic Partners' Advisors, who are not Elite Advisors at time of service</b>		
Equitable		Schaefer, Michael	2015, 2016	
		Striever, Christopher	2014	
GWN		Adzima, Jerry	2014, 2015	
		Pollakowski, Michael	2019	
Legend Group '17 join Lincoln		Pessendorfer, Michael	2016	
		Rudnick, Regina	2017	
		Wade, Donald	2014, 2015	
Lincoln Investment		Detillier, Jody	2014 (later an EA – see above), 2020, 2021, 2022	
		Jacobson, Stewart	2015, 2016 (later an EA)	
PlanMember		Young, Robert	2014 (later an EA – see above), 2021, 2022	
		Janeway, Chris	2023, 2024	

**LEADERSHIP**

Representing:

Chair	NTSA Members	Kristine J. Coffey	2014-2018
	US Kades-Margolis	Randy E. Aranowitz	2019
	GWN	Mike Pollakowski	2020, 2021, 2022
	National Associates, Inc.	John Adzema	2023, 2024, 2025
Vice Chair	EFS	Joshua R. Decker	2019
	EFS	Kent M. Schutte	2020, 2021, 2022
Senior Advisor	NTSA Members	Kristine J. Coffey	2019-2023

**ROTATION Options**

2024: Add One – for Goedtke (non-SP)

2025: Add Two – for Janeway/PlanMember and Wolfe/EFS

2026: Add Three – for Tursi/Lincoln Investment and Goldberg/Equitable; Add Chair – for Adzema (non-SP)