

AICPA 2012 Sidney Kess Award Winner Takes Volunteerism to the Road

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By Deanna C. White

The American Institute of CPAs (AICPA) honored Martin Shenkman, principal at Martin Shenkman P.C., in Paramus, New Jersey, with the 2012 Sidney Kess Award for Excellence in Continuing Education at its Conference on Tax Strategies for the High-Income Individual in Las Vegas, Nevada, on May 1, 2012.

The award, created in 2010 in honor of Kess, a nationally renowned tax expert, recognizes individual CPAs who have made significant and outstanding contributions in tax and financial planning, and whose public service exemplifies the CPA profession's values and ethics.

"Through his work with [RV4The Cause](#), Marty is a pioneer who has volunteered countless hours traveling the country with his wife to educate CPAs about the importance of estate planning for people with chronic illness," said Kess, who served as chair of the conference. "A practitioner's practitioner, he has shown the uncanny ability to help others in the profession understand and apply complex topics. He exemplifies everything that I have strived for in my career."

The mission of RV4TheCause is to help those living with chronic illness, their caregivers, and loved ones by educating professional advisers (CPAs, attorneys, and financial planners) and consumers about estate, insurance, tax, and financial planning. RV4TheCause creates articles, checklists, and other materials that it disseminates through its [website](#) and at lectures they offer as they travel around the country.

"Our travels themselves have become somewhat newsworthy and that, too, has become important to build awareness of the 120 million Americans living with chronic illness for whom specialized planning is so helpful," Shenkman said.

Shenkman, a CPA for twenty-two years who holds the Personal Financial Specialist (PFS) credential as well as a JD, worked for a number of accounting and law firms before starting his own practice in 1988.

He has served as an adjunct professor of law for Seton Hall and an adjunct professor at Columbia Business School (Columbia University). Shenkman frequently lectures on legal and personal financial planning and, in particular, estate planning.

In addition, Shenkman has authored dozens of books on estate planning and related topics. Kess noted that he was particularly impressed with Shenkman's *Estate Planning after the Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2010: Tools, Tips, and Tactics*.

"No sooner had the law passed, Marty came out with a phenomenal book published by the AICPA providing guidance on the tremendous opportunities in this area, and he is still pointing out what to do before the bell tolls on 2012," said Kess.

Shenkman has authored hundreds of articles on personal financial planning, tax law, and charitable giving. He also publishes "Practical Planner," a bimonthly newsletter.

Shenkman was named by *CPA Magazine* as a Top 50 IRS Tax Practitioner and was included as one of *Worth* magazine's Top 100 Attorneys in 2008.

"Brilliant and modest, Marty is an outstanding family man as well as an exemplary professional," Kess added. "I am honored to be in the same class with Marty and Joseph Walloch, last year's recipient of the award."

Only one individual may receive the award in any given year, and the individual must be a CPA. Nominations are solicited by the Tax Strategies for the High-Income Individual Conference Steering Committee and accepted from May 31 through January 31. The Committee determines the recipient of the Award.

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