



Valerie R. Edwards

Senior Partner

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Valerie Edwards, Senior Partner has over 23 years of litigation experience. She is a Board Certified Construction Law Expert by the Florida Bar. Valerie concentrates her practice in complex civil litigation matters, construction defect and contract matters, professional liability and real estate law. She is a Certified Litigation Management Professional and Certified Claims Professional for Construction through the Claims and Litigation Management Alliance (CLM). Valerie completed an arbitration training program approved by the Florida Supreme Court. She brings extensive experience in representation of developers, builders, and subcontractors in construction defect, construction accident and contract disputes. Valerie also has extensive experience in real estate matters, handling adverse possession claims, ownership and easement claims, recording act claims, contract negotiation, breach of contract/warranty claims and landlord-tenant disputes.

Valerie also handles professional liability matters involving attorneys, real estate brokers and salespersons, insurance professionals, and financial representatives. She also defends healthcare providers, including physicians, nurses, and medical facility providers. She also handles matters involving employment practices liability claims (including violations of the Florida Civil Rights Act and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964), directors and officers claims, defamation and malicious prosecution claims, and general insurance defense matters. Her experience in all practice areas includes first chair trial, arbitration, mediation, and appellate briefing and argument. Valerie also has experience in class action litigation at the state and federal levels (including multi-district litigation). This experience includes extensive discovery and motion practice on class certification, de-certification of issues, and dismissal of putative class action matters. She also serves as an expert on attorneys' fees claims in Florida.

Most recently, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, she has provided advice to companies related to compliance with the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. She has also assisted other litigators in preparation of discovery plans and protocols to accommodate pandemic-related restrictions.

Valerie is an adjunct faculty member at Everglades University where she teaches construction law. She also serves as a faculty member for the CLM Claims College in the Construction School. She is an accredited instructor for adjuster continuing education with the State of Florida. In addition to her work as an attorney, continuing education instructor, and adjunct professor, Valerie has a history of volunteerism in organizations that support the construction industry. Currently, she is the Treasurer for the Greater Fort Lauderdale Chapter of the National Association of Women in Construction, and she serves as Chair of the Women's Council for Construction Association of South Florida.

She obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in finance from Arizona State University. Valerie also earned an M.B.A. from Arizona State University and a Juris Doctor from Arizona State University, Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law.

Valerie is admitted in Arizona (1996), and to the U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona (1996). She is admitted in Florida (2013), and to the U.S. District Court, Middle (2013) and Southern (2019) Districts of Florida. Valerie is admitted to the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, 9th Circuit (2003) and the U.S. Supreme Court (2016).

In her leisure time, Valerie enjoys boating and golfing.

Practice Areas

- Appeals | Litigation Support
- Arbitration & Mediation
- Construction Defect

- Commercial Litigation
- COVID-19
- Directors & Officers
- Health, Life & Disability Law
- Excess | Wrongful Death
- First Party Property
- Federal Practice
- General Liability
- Home Owners Association and Condo Association
- Insurance Coverage
- Medical | Health Care
- Nursing Home | ALF
- Premises Liability
- Professional Liability | E&O
- Product Liability
- Sexual Misconduct Liability
- EPL Labor and Employment Law

Accreditations

- Florida Bar Board Certified Construction Law Specialist

Bar/Court Admission

- 1996, Arizona
- 1996, U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona
- 2003, U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, 9th Circuit
- 2013, Florida
- 2013, U.S. District Court, Middle District of Florida
- 2016, U.S. Supreme Court
- 2019, U.S. District Court, Southern District of Florida

Education

- Arizona State University, B.S., Finance, 1991
- Arizona State University, Masters in Business Administration, 1996
- Arizona State University, Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law, J.D., 1996
- Pedrick Scholar
- Staff Writer, Arizona State University Law Journal

Professional/Civil Memberships

- National Association of Women in Construction, Fort Lauderdale Chapter (Board Member, Treasurer)
- Construction Association of South Florida (Women's Council Chair)
- Claims and Litigation Management Alliance
- Greater Orlando Builders Association
- Central Florida Association of Women Lawyers
- Commercial Real Estate Women, Orlando
- Arizona Association of Defense Counsel (Executive Board Member)
- Sandra Day O'Connor Inn of Court
- Maricopa County Bar Association, Chair, Construction Law Section (2006-2010), Secretary/Treasurer, Construction Law Section (2010-2011), Member, Construction Law Section (2012-2013)

Industries Represented

- Construction Companies
- Contractors and Sub-contractors
- Office Product Retail Stores
- Home Improvement Retailers
- Retail Specialty Stores
- Supermarket Chains
- Suppliers

- Hotels
- Shopping Malls and Centers
- Restaurants
- Manufacturers
- Product Distributors
- Insurance Companies
- Third-Party Administrators for Claims Management and Risk
- Physicians, hospitals and healthcare providers

Verdicts

- Andrea Ambro Riis v. Jake Piekarski and Kimberly Piekarski

Presentations and Speaking Engagements

- Collaboration, Data Sharing