

**ITEM 1. COVER PAGE**

**PART 2A OF FORM ADV:  
FIRM BROCHURE  
MARCH 2023**



**SCHMITZ CAPITAL PARTNERS, LLC**

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**FIRM CONTACT: STEVEN J. SCHMITZ, CHIEF COMPLIANCE OFFICER**

This brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of Schmitz Capital Partners, LLC. If you have any questions about the contents of this brochure, please contact Steven J. Schmitz by telephone at (415) 381-9075 or email at [steve@schmitzcapital.com](mailto:steve@schmitzcapital.com). The information in this brochure has not been approved or verified by the United States Securities and Exchange Commission or by any State Securities Authority.

Additional information about Schmitz Capital Partners, LLC is also available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov).

Please note that the use of the term "registered investment adviser" and description of Schmitz Capital Partners, LLC and/or our associates as "registered" does not imply a certain level of skill or training. You are encouraged to review this Brochure and Brochure Supplements for our firm's associates who advise you for more information on the qualifications of our firm and its employees.

## ITEM 2. MATERIAL CHANGES

**Schmitz Capital Partners, LLC** is required to advise you of any material changes to our Firm Brochure ("Brochure") from our last annual update, identify those changes on the cover page of our Brochure or on the page immediately following the cover page, or in a separate communication accompanying our Brochure. We must state clearly that we are discussing only material changes since the last annual update of our Brochure, and we must provide the date of the last annual update of our Brochure.

Please note that we do not have to provide this information to a client or prospective client who has not received a previous version of our brochure. At this time, there are no material changes to report about our Brochure.

**Last Annual Amendment Filed:** March 31, 2022

We have no material changes to disclose at this time.

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**ITEM 4: ADVISORY BUSINESS**

Schmitz Capital Partners, LLC ("SCP") takes a proactive, holistic approach to managing financial affairs which enable our clients to make intelligent decisions regarding their life goals. We strive to provide our clients with a clear direction and expert advice within a broad spectrum of financial advisory services including: asset management, financial planning and consulting, and pension consulting. Our assets under management are \$106,129,683 as of 12/31/2022.

**A. Description of our advisory firm, including how long we have been in business and our principal owner(s).**

We are an independent, employee-owned, SEC registered investment advisory firm founded in 1988 with the core belief that clients deserve a more active, personalized approach. We are dedicated to providing individuals and other types of clients with a range of customized asset management and financial advisory services to help meet the unique needs of our clients. We are deeply committed to providing exceptional service and to forging genuine relationships established through mutual respect, compassion, trust and understanding. As a provider of comprehensive financial advice, our firm's objective is to build lasting, long-term relationships based on expert counsel, trust and quality service that exceeds expectations and helps our clients achieve their life goals. In April 2015 SCP became a limited liability company formed in California and is now owned by Steven J. Schmitz.

**B. Description of the types of advisory services we offer.**

**(i) Vision2020 Wealth Management Platform – Advisor Managed Portfolios:**

The Wealth Management Platform – Advisor Managed Portfolios Program ("Advisor Managed Portfolios") provides comprehensive investment management of your assets through the application of asset allocation planning software as well as the provision of execution, clearing and custodial services through Pershing, LLC ("Pershing").

Advisor Managed Portfolios provides risk tolerance assessment, efficient frontier plotting, fund profiling and performance data, and portfolio optimization and re-balancing tools. Utilizing these tools, and based on your responses to a risk tolerance questionnaire ("Questionnaire"), and discussions that we have together regarding, among other things, investment objective, risk tolerance, investment time horizon, account restrictions, and overall financial situation, we construct a portfolio of investments for you.

**(ii) RASA 044 Accounts:**

We offer RASA 044 Accounts ("RASA") as a non-commissionable advisory account where we can purchase load waived and no-load mutual funds and other equity, debt and option securities for you. Our Advisory Representative will obtain the relevant financial data from you and assist you in the selection of suitable investments. We will base our investment strategy on your specific goals and situation. In addition, you have the opportunity to place reasonable restrictions on investments held within your RASA account

**(iii) Pension Consulting**

We provide pension consulting services to employer plan sponsors on an ongoing basis. Generally, such pension consulting services consist of assisting employer plan sponsors in establishing, monitoring and reviewing their company's participant-directed retirement plan. As the needs of the plan sponsor dictate, areas of advising could include: investment options, plan structure and participant education.

All pension consulting services shall be in compliance with the applicable state law(s) regulating pension consulting services. This applies to client accounts that are pension or other employee benefit plans ("Plan") governed by the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, as amended ("ERISA"). If the client accounts are part of a Plan, and we accept appointments to provide our services to such accounts, we acknowledge that we are a fiduciary within the meaning of Section 3(21) of ERISA (but only with respect to the provision of services described in section 1 of the Pension Consulting Agreement).

Our written financial plans or financial consultations rendered to clients usually include general recommendations for a course of activity or specific actions to be taken by the clients. For example, recommendations may be made that the clients begin or revise investment programs, create or revise wills or trusts, obtain or revise insurance coverage, commence or alter retirement savings, or establish education or charitable giving programs. It should also be noted that we refer clients to an accountant, attorney or other specialist, as necessary for non-advisory related services. For written financial planning engagements, we provide our clients with a written summary of their financial situation, observations, and recommendations. For financial consulting engagements, we usually do not provide our clients with a written summary of our observations and recommendations as the process is less formal than our planning service. Plans or consultations are typically completed within six (6) months of the client signing a contract with us, assuming that all the information and documents we request from the client are provided to us promptly. Implementation of the recommendations will be at the discretion of the client.

(iv) **Financial Planning and Consulting:**

We provide a variety of financial planning and consulting services to individuals, families and other clients regarding the management of their financial resources based upon an analysis of client's current situation, goals, and objectives. Generally, such financial planning services will involve preparing a financial plan or rendering a financial consultation for clients based on the client's financial goals and objectives. This planning or consulting may encompass one or more of the following areas: Investment Planning, Retirement Planning, Estate Planning, Charitable Planning, Education Planning, Corporate and Personal Tax Planning, Cost Segregation Study, Corporate Structure, Real Estate Analysis, Mortgage/Debt Analysis, Insurance Analysis, Lines of Credit Evaluation, Business and Personal Financial Planning.

C. Explanation of whether (and, if so, how) we tailor our advisory services to the individual needs of clients, whether clients may impose restrictions on investing in certain securities or types of securities.

(i) Individual Tailoring of Advice to Clients:

We offer individualized investment advice to clients utilizing our Asset Management service. Additionally, we offer general investment advice to clients utilizing the following services offered by our firm: Financial Planning and Consulting and Pension Consulting.

(ii) Ability of Clients to Impose Restrictions on Investing in Certain Securities or Types of Securities:

We usually do not allow clients to impose restrictions on investing in certain securities or types of securities due to the level of difficulty this would entail in managing their account. In the rare instance that we would allow restrictions, it would be limited to our Asset Management service.

D. Participation in wrap fee programs.

We **do not** offer wrap fee programs.

E. Disclosure of the amount of client assets we manage on a discretionary basis and the amount of client assets we manage on a non-discretionary basis as of (12/31/2021).

We manage<sup>1</sup> \$145,439,033 on a discretionary basis and \$0 on a non-discretionary basis as of 12/31/2021.

**ITEM 5: FEES & COMPENSATION**

<sup>1</sup> Please note that our method for computing the amount of "client assets we manage" can be different from the method for computing "assets under management" required for Item 5.F in Part 1A of Form ADV. However, we have chosen to follow the method outlined for Item 5.F in Part 1A of Form ADV. If we decide to use a different method at a later date to compute "client assets we manage," we must keep documentation describing the method we use and inform you of the change. The amount of assets we manage may be disclosed by rounding to the nearest \$100,000. Our "as of" date must not be more than three months before the date we last updated our Brochure in response to Item 4.E of Form ADV Part 2A.

We are required to describe our brokerage, custody, fees and fund expenses so you will know how much you are charged and by whom for our advisory services provided to you. Our fees are generally not negotiable.

(i) Vision 2020 Wealth Management Program – Advisor Managed Portfolios & RASA 044 Accounts:

| Assets Under Management | Annualized Fee as a Percentage of Incremental Portfolio Value* |
|-------------------------|--|
| Up to \$500K            | 1.50%  |
| \$500K - \$1M           | 1.15%  |
| \$1M - \$2M             | 1.00%  |
| \$2M - \$5M             | 0.80%  |
| Above \$5M              | 0.65%  |

Our firm's fees are billed on a pro-rata annualized basis quarterly in arrears based on the value of the account on the average daily balance. Fees will be adjusted for deposits and withdrawals made during the quarter. Fees will generally be automatically deducted from your managed account. We do not offer direct billing as option to our asset management clients. As part of this process, you understand and acknowledge the following:

- Your independent custodian sends statements at least quarterly to you showing all disbursements for your account, including the amount of the advisory fees paid to us;
- You provide authorization permitting us to be directly paid by these terms;
- If we send a copy of our invoice to you, we send a copy of our invoice to the independent custodian at the same time we send the invoice to you;
- If we send a copy of our invoice to you, our invoice includes a legend as required by paragraph (a) (2) of Rule 206(4)-2 under The Investment Advisers Act of 1940, urging you to compare the information provided in our statement with those from the qualified custodian.

(ii) Pension Consulting:

We charge on a flat fee basis for pension consulting services. The total estimated fee, as well as the ultimate fee that we charge you, is based on the scope and complexity of our engagement with you. Our flat fees generally range from \$1,500 to \$10,000. Flat fees will be charged annually for ongoing pension consulting services.

The fee-paying arrangements for pension consulting service will be determined on a case-by-case basis and will be detailed in the signed Pension Consulting Agreement. The client will be invoiced directly for the fees.

(iii) Financial Planning and Consulting:

We charge on an hourly or flat fee basis for financial planning and consulting services. The total estimated fee, as well as the ultimate fee that we charge you, is based on the scope and complexity of our engagement with you. Our hourly fees are \$525 for financial advisors. Flat fees generally range from \$1,500 to \$10,000.

We require a retainer of fifty-percent (50%) of the ultimate financial planning or consulting fee with the remainder of the fee directly billed to you and due to us within thirty (30) days of your financial plan being delivered or consultation rendered to you. In all cases, we will not require a retainer exceeding \$1,200 when services cannot be rendered within 6 (six) months.

Description of any other types of fees or expenses clients may pay in connection with our advisory services, such as custodian fees or mutual fund expenses.

Our clients will incur transaction charges for trades executed in their accounts. These transaction fees are separate from our fees and will be disclosed by the firm that the trades are executed through. Also, clients will pay the following separately incurred expenses, which we do not receive any part of: charges imposed directly by a mutual fund, index fund, or exchange

traded fund which shall be disclosed in the fund's prospectus (i.e., fund management fees and other fund expenses). For a complete list of transaction charges please see your client agreement.

Mutual fund investments in the programs that we offer are no-load or load at NAV. Your mutual fund investments may be subject to early redemption fees, 12b-1 fees and mutual fund management fees as well as other mutual fund expenses. These fees are in addition to the fees and expenses referenced above. Please review the mutual fund prospectus for full details. SCP enhanced its policies and procedures to eliminate the payment of all mutual fund 12b-1 fees. Effective February 1, 2016, all mutual fund 12b-1 fees will now be credited back to both qualified and non-qualified accounts. In addition to the per-trade transaction charges referenced above, you will also be subject to per-trade confirmation fees as disclosed on your trade confirmation (typically \$4.00 per trade) and an additional fee of \$1.50 for each trade confirmation that you do not elect to receive electronically. You may also be subject to an additional, per-trade transaction charge on the selling of certain securities as disclosed on your trade confirmation (generally less than \$1.00 on trades of \$50,000 or less). These fees are not shared with us but are transaction charges paid to Royal Alliance and our custodian. Please see Item 10 which explains our relationship with Royal Alliance.

There are additional fees relating to IRA and Qualified Retirement Plan accounts that you may incur such as maintenance and termination fees. You will find these fees disclosed in the account application paperwork provided to you associated with these accounts.

Client's advisory fees are due quarterly in arrears.

We charge our advisory fees quarterly in arrears. If you wish to terminate our services, you need to contact us in writing and state that you wish to cancel this Agreement. Upon receipt of your letter of termination, we will proceed to close out your account and charge you a pro-rata advisory fee(s) for services rendered up to the point of termination.

Commissionable securities sales.

In addition to providing advisory services, our Advisory Representatives will likely also sell you securities products and other investment and insurance products in their capacity as registered representatives of Royal Alliance and as licensed insurance agents. We will receive additional compensation in connection with this activity and the amount of compensation will depend on the type of product purchased. We will have a greater financial incentive to sell certain products as opposed to others (for example, in the case of mutual funds those that have a higher 12b-1 fee than others). While our security sales are reviewed for suitability by an appointed supervisor, you should be aware of the incentives we have to sell certain securities products and are encouraged to ask us about any conflict presented.

Please be aware that you are under no obligation to purchase products or services recommended by us or members of our Firm in connection with providing you with any advisory service that we offer.

## **ITEM 6: PERFORMANCE-BASED FEES & SIDE-BY-SIDE MANAGEMENT**

We do not charge performance fees to our clients.

## **ITEM 7: TYPES OF CLIENTS & ACCOUNT REQUIREMENTS**

We have the following types of clients:

- Individuals and High Net-Worth Individuals;
- Trusts, Estates or Charitable Organizations;
- Pension and Profit-Sharing Plans;
- Corporations and/or other business types.



Our requirements for opening and maintaining accounts or otherwise engaging us:

- We do not require a minimum account balance for our asset management services, although we generally request that clients invest \$50,000, or accumulate \$50,000 in investable assets within a reasonable time period for Advisor Managed Portfolios.
- We generally charge a minimum fee of \$1,500 for written financial plans.

#### **ITEM 8: METHODS OF ANALYSIS, INVESTMENT STRATEGIES & RISK OF LOSS**

Description of the methods of analysis and investment strategies we use in formulating investment advice or managing assets.

1) Methods of Analysis:

- Fundamental;
- Cyclical;
- Other: Analysis and due diligence on limited partnerships may include visits to sponsor's company and interviewing and checking qualifications of sponsor's personnel, reading/analyzing prospectuses or offering memorandum, reviewing prior programs, visiting investment site(s) and review of project accounting and other records. Outside legal, accounting and economic consulting assistance is used as required.

2) Investment Strategies we use:

- Long term purchases (securities held at least one year);
- Short term purchases (securities sold within one year).

**PLEASE NOTE:** Investing in securities involves risk of loss that *clients* should be prepared to bear. While the stock market may increase and your account(s) could enjoy a gain, it is also possible that the stock market may decrease and your account(s) could suffer a loss. It is important that you understand the risks associated with investing in the stock market, are appropriately diversified in your investments, and ask us any questions you may have.

Our practices regarding cash balances in *client* accounts, including whether we invest cash balances for temporary purposes and, if so, how.

We generally invest client's cash balances in money market funds, FDIC Insured Certificates of Deposit, high-grade commercial paper and/or government backed debt instruments. Ultimately, we try to achieve the highest return on our client's cash balances through relatively low-risk conservative investments. In most cases, at least a partial cash balance will be maintained in a money market account so that our firm may debit advisory fees for our services related to asset management service.

#### **ITEM 9: DISCIPLINARY INFORMATION**

There are no legal or disciplinary events that are material to the evaluation of our advisory business or the integrity of our management.

#### **ITEM 10: OTHER FINANCIAL INDUSTRY ACTIVITIES & AFFILIATIONS**

Our firm's management persons are registered representatives of RAA, member FINRA/SIPC. Management persons may offer securities and receive normal and customary commissions as a result of securities transactions. This presents a conflict of interest to the extent that the management persons recommend that a client invest in a security which results in a commission being paid to him/her.



Representatives of our firm are licensed insurance agents. As a result of these transactions, they receive normal and customary commissions. A conflict of interest exists as these commissionable sales create an incentive to recommend products based on the compensation earned. To mitigate this potential conflict, our firm will act in the client's best interest.

#### **ITEM 11: CODE OF ETHICS, PARTICIPATION OF INTEREST IN CLIENT TRANSACTIONS & PERSONAL TRADING**

We recognize that the personal investment transactions of members and employees of our firm demand the application of a high Code of Ethics and require that all such transactions be carried out in a way that does not endanger the interest of any client. At the same time, we believe that if investment goals are similar for clients and for members and employees of our firm, it is logical and even desirable that there be common ownership of some securities.

Therefore, in order to prevent conflicts of interest, we have in place a set of procedures (including a pre-clearing procedure) with respect to transactions effected by our members, officers and employees for their personal accounts<sup>2</sup>. In order to monitor compliance with our personal trading policy, we have a daily securities transaction reporting system for all of our associates.

Furthermore, our firm has established a Code of Ethics which applies to all of our associated persons. An investment adviser is considered a fiduciary. As a fiduciary, it is an investment adviser's responsibility to provide fair and full disclosure of all material facts and to act solely in the best interest of each of our clients at all times. We have a fiduciary duty to all clients. Our fiduciary duty is considered the core underlying principle for our Code of Ethics which also includes Insider Trading and Personal Securities Transactions Policies and Procedures. We require all of our supervised persons to conduct business with the highest level of ethical standards and to comply with all federal and state securities laws at all times. Upon employment or affiliation and at least annually thereafter, all supervised persons will sign an acknowledgement that they have read, understand, and agree to comply with our Code of Ethics. Our firm and supervised persons must conduct business in an honest, ethical, and fair manner and avoid all circumstances that might negatively affect or appear to affect our duty of complete loyalty to all clients. This disclosure is provided to give all clients a summary of our Code of Ethics. However, if a client or a potential client wishes to review our Code of Ethics in its entirety, a copy will be provided promptly upon request.

#### **ITEM 12: BROKERAGE PRACTICES**

A. Description of the factors that we consider in selecting or recommending broker-dealers for *client* transactions and determining the reasonableness of their compensation (e.g., commissions).

- 1) Research and Other Soft Dollar Benefits. If we receive research or other products or services other than execution from a broker-dealer or a third party in connection with *client* securities transactions ("soft dollar benefits"), we are required to disclose our practices and discuss the conflicts of interest they create. Please note that we must disclose all soft dollar benefits we receive, including, in the case of research, both proprietary research (created or developed by the broker-dealer) and research created or developed by a third party.

Our firm has an arrangement with RAA. Under the arrangement with RAA we receive services which include, among others, brokerage, custodial, administrative support, record keeping and related services that are intended to support our firm in conducting business and in serving the best interests of our clients but that may benefit our firm.

- a) Explanation of when we use *client* brokerage commissions (or markups or markdowns) to obtain research or other products or services, and how we receive a benefit because our firm does not have to produce or pay for the research, products or services.

As part of the arrangement described in Item 12 A (1), RAA also makes certain research and brokerage services available at no additional cost to our firm. These services include certain research and brokerage services, including research services obtained by RAA directly from independent research companies, as selected by our firm (within specific parameters). Research products and services provided by RAA to our firm may include research reports on recommendations or other information about, particular companies or industries; economic

<sup>2</sup> For purposes of the policy, our associate's personal account generally includes any account (a) in the name of our associate, his/her spouse, his/her minor children or other dependents residing in the same household, (b) for which our associate is a trustee or executor, or (c) which our associate controls, including our client accounts which our associate controls and/or a member of his/her household has a direct or indirect beneficial interest in.

surveys, data and analyses; financial publications; portfolio evaluation services; financial database software and services; computerized news and pricing services; quotation equipment for use in running software used in investment decision-making; and other products or services that provide lawful and appropriate assistance by RAA to our firm in the performance of our investment decision-making responsibilities. The aforementioned research and brokerage services are used by our firm to manage accounts for which we have investment discretion. Without this arrangement, our firm might be compelled to purchase the same or similar services at our own expense.

- b. Incentive to select or recommend a broker-dealer based on our interest in receiving the research or other products or services, rather than on our *clients'* interest in receiving best execution.

As a result of receiving the services discussed in Item 12 A (1) of this Firm Brochure for no additional cost, we may have an incentive to continue to use or expand the use of RAA's services. Our firm examined this potential conflict of interest when we chose to enter into the relationship with RAA and we have determined that the relationship is in the best interest of our firm's clients and satisfies our client obligations, including our duty to seek best execution.

RAA charges brokerage commissions and transaction fees for effecting certain securities transactions (i.e., transaction fees are charged for certain no-load mutual funds, commissions are charged for individual equity and debt securities transactions). RAA enables us to obtain many no-load mutual funds without transaction charges and other no-load funds at nominal transaction charges. RAA's commission rates are generally discounted from customary retail commission rates. However, the commission and transaction fees charged by RAA may be higher or lower than those charged by other custodians and broker-dealers.

- c) Causing *clients* to pay commissions (or markups or markdowns) higher than those charged by other broker-dealers in return for soft dollar benefits (known as paying-up).

Our clients may pay a commission to RAA that is higher than another qualified broker dealer might charge to effect the same transaction where we determine in good faith that the commission is reasonable in relation to the value of the brokerage and research services received. In seeking best execution, the determinative factor is not the lowest possible cost, but whether the transaction represents the best qualitative execution, taking into consideration the full range of a broker-dealer's services, including the value of research provided, execution capability, commission rates, and responsiveness. Accordingly, although we will seek competitive rates, to the benefit of all clients, we may not necessarily obtain the lowest possible commission rates for specific client account transactions.

- d) Disclosure of whether we use soft dollar benefits to service all of our *clients'* accounts or only those that paid for the benefits, as well as whether we seek to allocate soft dollar benefits to *client* accounts proportionately to the soft dollar credits the accounts generate.

Although the investment research products and services that may be obtained by our firm will generally be used to service all of our clients, a brokerage commission paid by a specific client may be used to pay for research that is not used in managing that specific client's account.

- e) Description of the types of products and services our firm or any of our *related persons* acquired with *client* brokerage commissions (or markups or markdowns) within our last fiscal year.

We are required to specifically describe to our clients the types of products or services that we are acquiring and to permit them to evaluate possible conflicts of interest. Our description must be more detailed for products or services that do not qualify for the safe harbor in Section 28(e) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, such as those services that do not aid in investment decision-making or trade execution. Merely disclosing that we obtain various research reports and products is not specific enough.

We do not acquire client brokerage commissions (or markups or markdowns).

- f) Explanation of the procedures we used during our last fiscal year to direct *client* transactions to a particular broker-dealer in return for soft dollar benefits we received.

All soft dollar arrangements must be approved in writing by our Chief Compliance Officer. A brief description of the purpose of the soft dollar arrangement outlining the benefits received by our firm and clients along with any noted concerns about increased costs to our clients and how such concerns were alleviated will be maintained on file. Our Chief Compliance Officer undertakes a review of parties which propose to pay our firm in soft dollars and analyzes a number of criteria. When deciding whether to approve or disapprove of a soft dollar relationship, the following criteria is reviewed: the broker-dealer's business reputation and financial position and our ability to consistently execute orders professionally and on a cost effective basis, provide prompt and accurate execution reports, prepare timely and accurate confirms, deliver securities or cash proceeds promptly and provide meaningful research services that are useful to us in investment decision-making or other desired and appropriate services. Our Chief Compliance Officer also annually reviews all our soft dollar relationships for appropriateness, benefits to our clients, etc.

At times, a product or service we would like to purchase with soft dollars may have a "mixed use", meaning that a portion of the product is used to provide bona fide research as part of the investment decision-making process and part of it may be used for a non-research purpose. In these situations, our Chief Compliance Officer will make a pro-rata allocation of the cost of such service based on our evaluation of the research and non-research uses of the product. The cost of the product must be paid using both hard and soft dollars, the hard dollars being paid by our firm for the non-research portion and soft dollars for the research portion. For services that have a "mixed use", our Chief Compliance Officer will make a fair and reasonable determination as to how much of the cost may be paid with soft dollars. The basis for such determination shall be documented and will include an explanation as to how the computation of such percentage was reached. Our Chief Compliance Officer's computation shall be retained in our firm's files along with any records used to determine the "mixed use" percentages. Whenever there is a substantial change in the use of "mixed use" services, our Chief Compliance Officer will reevaluate such services. Providers of services that have a "mixed use" will be directed to either bill the paying broker for such service and the broker will be directed to bill us for the non-research portion, or to send separate bills to us and the paying broker for the appropriate amounts.

As a fiduciary, we have an obligation to obtain "best execution" of clients' transactions under the circumstances of the particular transaction. Consequently, notwithstanding the safe harbor provided under Section 28(e), no allocation for soft dollar payments shall be made unless best execution of the transaction is reasonably expected to be obtained.

- 2) Brokerage for Client Referrals. If we use client brokerage to compensate or otherwise reward brokers for client referrals, we must disclose this practice, the conflicts of interest it creates, and any procedures we used to direct client brokerage to referring brokers during the last fiscal year (i.e., the system of controls used by us when allocating brokerage).

Our firm does not receive brokerage for client referrals.

- 3) Directed Brokerage.
- a) If we routinely recommend, request or require that a client directs us to execute transactions through a specified broker-dealer, we are required to describe our practice or policy. Further, we must explain that not all advisers require their clients to direct brokerage. If our firm and the broker-dealer are affiliates or have another economic relationship that creates a material conflict of interest, we are further required to describe the relationship and discuss the conflicts of interest it presents by explaining that through the direction of brokerage we may be unable to achieve best execution of client transactions, and that this practice may cost our clients more money.

We or any of our firm's related person do not have discretionary authority in making the determination of the brokers with whom orders for the purchase or sale of securities are placed for execution, and the commission rates at which such securities transactions are effected.

#### **Special Considerations for ERISA Clients**

A retirement or ERISA plan client may direct all or part of portfolio transactions for its account through a specific broker or dealer in order to obtain goods or services on behalf of the plan. Such direction is permitted provided that the goods and services provided are reasonable expenses of the plan incurred in the ordinary course of its business for which it otherwise would be obligated and empowered to pay. ERISA prohibits directed

brokerage arrangements when the goods or services purchased are not for the exclusive benefit of the plan. Consequently, we will request that plan sponsors who direct plan brokerage provide us with a letter documenting that this arrangement will be for the exclusive benefit of the plan.

- b) If we permit a *client* to direct brokerage, we are required to describe our practice. If applicable, we must also explain that we may be unable to achieve best execution of your transactions. Directed brokerage may cost *clients* more money. For example, in a directed brokerage account, you may pay higher brokerage commissions because we may not be able to aggregate orders to reduce transaction costs, or you may receive less favorable prices on transactions.

See Item 12 A (3) of this Brochure.

- B. Discussion of whether, and under what conditions, we aggregate the purchase or sale of securities for various *client* accounts in quantities sufficient to obtain reduced transaction costs (known as bunching). If we do not bunch orders when we have the opportunity to do so, we are required to explain our practice and describe the costs to *clients* of not bunching.

We perform investment management services for various clients. There are occasions on which portfolio transactions may be executed as part of concurrent authorizations to purchase or sell the same security for numerous accounts served by our firm, which involve accounts with similar investment objectives. Although such concurrent authorizations potentially could be either advantageous or disadvantageous to any one or more particular accounts, they are affected only when we believe that to do so will be in the best interest of the effected accounts. When such concurrent authorizations occur, the objective is to allocate the executions in a manner which is deemed equitable to the accounts involved. In any given situation, we attempt to allocate trade executions in the most equitable manner possible, taking into consideration client objectives, current asset allocation and availability of funds using price averaging, proration and consistently non-arbitrary methods of allocation.

### **ITEM 13. REVIEW OF ACCOUNTS OR FINANCIAL PLANS**

We review accounts on at least an annual basis for our clients subscribing to our Wealth Management Program and RASA 044 service. The nature of these reviews is to learn whether clients' accounts are in line with their investment objectives, appropriately positioned based on market conditions, and investment policies, if applicable. We do not provide written reports to clients, unless asked to do so. Verbal reports to clients take place on at least an annual basis when we contact clients who subscribe to our Wealth Management Program and RASA 044 service. Mr. Steven Schmitz, Owner, Advisor, Employee, President and Chief Compliance Officer, and Mr. Michael Schmitz, Advisor, Employee, VP - Investments and Chief Operating Officer, conduct reviews of all client accounts.

We may review client accounts more frequently than described above. Among the factors which may trigger an off-cycle review are major market or economic events, the client's life events, requests by the client, etc.

Pension Consulting clients receive reviews of their pension plans for the duration of the pension consulting service. We also provide ongoing services to Pension Consulting clients where we meet with such clients upon their request to discuss updates to their plans, changes in their circumstances, etc. Pension Consulting clients do not receive written or verbal updated reports regarding their pension plans unless they choose to contract with us for ongoing Pension Consulting services.

Financial Planning clients do not receive reviews of their written plans unless they take action to schedule a financial consultation with us. We do not provide ongoing services to financial planning clients, but are willing to meet with such clients upon their request to discuss updates to their plans, changes in their circumstances, etc. Financial Planning clients do not receive written or verbal updated reports regarding their financial plans unless they separately contract with us for a post-financial plan meeting or update to their initial written financial plan.

### **ITEM 14: CLIENT REFERRALS & OTHER COMPENSATION**

As discussed previously, all our Advisory Representatives are Registered Representatives of Royal Alliance. This arrangement requires us to offer you advisory services and programs sponsored or approved by Royal Alliance. Royal Alliance sets limits on how much we can charge you for these advisory services. Some advisory programs have higher fee limits than others. As such, there may be an incentive for us to recommend to you advisory services or programs with higher limits. In

addition, Royal Alliance may charge us certain usage fees and expenses to use their advisory programs which may decrease the amount of money we make when offering investment advice to you. Therefore, there may be an incentive to provide you with advisory programs and services that may be cheaper for us to use but not as suitable to your needs as other advisory programs that Royal Alliance sponsors which may be more expensive for us to use.

In addition, Royal Alliance offers our Advisory Representatives educational, training and incentive programs for those Advisory Representatives that meet certain sales production goals. There may be an incentive for us to manage your account in ways that assist us in meeting these production goals even if such strategies may not always be suitable for your account.

We do not pay referral fees (non-commission based) to independent solicitors (non-registered representatives) for the referral of their clients to our firm in accordance with Rule 206 (4)-3 of the Investment Advisers Act of 1940.

#### **ITEM 15: CUSTODY**

All of our clients receive at least quarterly account statements directly from their custodians. Upon opening an account with a qualified custodian on a client's behalf, we promptly notify the client in writing of the qualified custodian's contact information. If we decide to also send account statements to clients, such notice and account statements include a legend that recommends that the client compare the account statements received from the qualified custodian with those received from our firm.

We encourage our clients to raise any questions with us about the custody, safety or security of their assets. The custodians we do business with will send you independent account statements listing your account balance(s), transaction history and any fee debits or other fees taken out of your account.

#### **ITEM 16: INVESTMENT DISCRETION**

Our clients need to sign a discretionary investment advisory agreement with our firm for the management of their account. This type of agreement only applies to our Asset Management clients. We do not take or exercise discretion with respect to our other clients.

#### **ITEM 17: VOTING CLIENT SECURITIES**

We do not and will not accept the proxy authority to vote client securities. Clients will receive proxies or other solicitations directly from their custodian or a transfer agent. In the event that proxies are sent to our firm, we will forward them on to you and ask the party who sent them to mail them directly to you in the future. Clients may call, write or email us to discuss questions they may have about particular proxy votes or other solicitations.

#### **ITEM 18: FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

We are not required to provide financial information in this Brochure because:

- We do not require the prepayment of more than \$1,200 in fees and six or more months in advance.
- We do not take custody of client funds or securities.
- We do not have a financial condition or commitment that impairs our ability to meet contractual and fiduciary obligations to clients.

We have never been the subject of a bankruptcy proceeding.