

# **Blue Water Asset Management, LLC d/b/a: Blue Water Asset Management**

4120 E. Beltline Ave.  
Suite 100  
Grand Rapids, MI 49525

**Telephone: 616-447-1600**  
**Facsimile: 616-447-1616**

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## **FORM ADV PART 2A BROCHURE**

This brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of Blue Water Asset Management. If you have any questions about the contents of this brochure, contact us at 616-447-1600. 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 Blue Water Asset Management is available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov). The firm's searchable CRD number is 175362.

Blue Water Asset Management is a registered investment adviser. Registration with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission or any state securities authority does not imply a certain level of skill or training.

## **Item 2 Summary of Material Changes**

Form ADV Part 2 requires registered investment advisers to amend their brochure when information becomes materially inaccurate. If there are any material changes to an adviser's disclosure brochure, the adviser is required to notify you and provide you with a description of the material changes.

Since our last updating amendment dated November 21, 2023, we have the following material changes:

- Item 4 has been amended to reflect our AUM as of 12/31/23.
- Item 8 has been amended to reflect risks associated with our current investment strategies.

- [Item 3 Table of Contents](#)

Item 2 Summary of Material Changes .....	2
Item 4 Advisory Business .....	4
Item 5 Fees and Compensation .....	7
Item 6 Performance-Based Fees and Side-By-Side Management .....	10
Item 7 Types of Clients .....	10
Item 8 Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies and Risk of Loss .....	11
Item 9 Disciplinary Information .....	19
Item 10 Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations .....	19
Item 11 Code of Ethics, Participation or Interest in Client Transactions and Personal Trading .....	19
Item 12 Brokerage Practices .....	20
Item 13 Review of Accounts .....	24
Item 14 Client Referrals and Other Compensation .....	24
Item 15 Custody .....	25
Item 16 Investment Discretion .....	26
Item 17 Voting Client Securities .....	26
Item 18 Financial Information .....	27
Item 19 Requirements for State-Registered Advisers [Not- Applicable] .....	27
Item 20 Additional Information .....	27

## Item 4 Advisory Business

### Description of Firm

Blue Water Asset Management, LLC d/b/a Blue Water Asset Management is a registered investment adviser primarily based in Grand Rapids, MI. Our advisory firm was organized as a Limited Liability Company under the laws of the State of Michigan in 2015. Mark S. Redfield is our Managing Member and Jay W. Greer is our Chief Compliance Officer.

Investment Adviser Representatives of Blue Water Asset Management, LLC may offer our services along with other financial services under the marketing/business names of Capitol Income Consultants, Jay Greer & Co., and Redfield Financial Group.

The following paragraphs describe our services and fees. Refer to the description of each investment advisory service listed below for information on how we tailor our advisory services to your individual needs. As used in this brochure, the words "BWAM", "we", "our" and "us" refer to Blue Water Asset Management and the words "you", "your" and "client" refer to you as either a client or prospective client of our firm.

### Portfolio Management Services

We offer discretionary portfolio management services. Our investment advice is tailored to meet our clients' needs and investment objectives.

If you participate in our discretionary portfolio management services, we require you to grant us discretionary authority to manage your account. Subject to a grant of discretionary authorization, we have the authority and responsibility to formulate investment strategies on your behalf. Discretionary authorization will allow us to determine the specific securities, and the amount of securities, to be purchased or sold for your account without obtaining your approval prior to each transaction. Discretionary authority is typically granted by the investment advisory agreement you sign with our firm, a power of attorney, or trading authorization forms.

In limited circumstances, we may consider accommodating client restrictions (for example, limiting the types of securities or specific securities that can be purchased or sold for your account). However, we are unable to accommodate client restrictions in accounts that utilize model portfolios or program strategies.

As part of our portfolio management services, we may use one or more sub-advisers to manage a portion of your account on a discretionary basis. The sub-adviser(s) may use one or more of their model portfolios to manage your account. We will regularly monitor the performance of your accounts managed by sub-adviser(s), and may hire and fire any sub-adviser without your prior approval.

In providing account management services, we generally do not accept client restrictions on the specific securities or the types of securities that may be held in your account.

### Financial Planning Services

We offer financial planning services which typically involve providing a variety of advisory services to clients regarding the management of their financial resources based upon an analysis of their individual needs. These services can range from broad-based financial planning to consultative or single subject planning. If you retain our firm for financial planning services, we will meet with you to

gather information about your financial circumstances and objectives. We may also use financial planning software to determine your current financial position and to define and quantify your long-term goals and objectives. Once we specify those long-term objectives (both financial and non-financial), we will develop shorter-term, targeted objectives. Once we review and analyze the information you provide to our firm and the data derived from our financial planning software, we will deliver a written plan to you, designed to help you achieve your stated financial goals and objectives.

Financial plans are based on your financial situation at the time we present the plan to you, and on the financial information you provide to us. You must promptly notify our firm if your financial situation, goals, objectives, or needs change.

You are under no obligation to act on our financial planning recommendations. Should you choose to act on any of our recommendations, you are not obligated to implement the financial plan through any of our other investment advisory services. Moreover, you may act on our recommendations by placing securities transactions with any brokerage firm.

### **Advisory Consulting Services**

We offer consulting services that primarily involves advising clients on specific financial-related topics. The topics we address may include, but are not limited to, risk assessment/management, investment planning, financial organization, or financial decision making/negotiation.

### **Selection of Other Advisers**

We may recommend that you use the services of a third party money manager ("MM") to manage all, or a portion of, your investment portfolio. After gathering information about your financial situation and objectives, we may recommend that you engage a specific MM or investment program. Factors that we take into consideration when making our recommendation(s) include, but are not limited to, the following: the MM's performance, methods of analysis, fees, your financial needs, investment goals, risk tolerance, and investment objectives. We will monitor the MM(s)' performance to ensure its management and investment style remains aligned with your investment goals and objectives.

The MM(s) will actively manage your portfolio and will assume discretionary investment authority over your account. We will assume discretionary authority to hire and fire MM(s) and/or reallocate your assets to other MM(s) where we deem such action appropriate.

### **Pension Consulting Services**

We offer pension consulting services to employee benefit plans and their fiduciaries based upon the needs of the plan and the services requested by the plan sponsor or named fiduciary. In general, these services may include an existing plan review and analysis, plan-level advice regarding fund selection and investment options, education services to plan participants, investment performance monitoring, and/or ongoing consulting. These pension consulting services will generally be non-discretionary and advisory in nature. The ultimate decision to act on behalf of the plan shall remain with the plan sponsor or other named fiduciary.

We may also assist with participant enrollment meetings and provide investment-related education to plan participants on such topics as:

- Diversification
- Asset allocation
- Risk tolerance
- Time horizon

We may also provide additional types of pension consulting services to plans on an individually negotiated basis. All services, whether discussed above or customized for the plan based upon requirements from the plan fiduciaries (which may include additional plan-level or participant-level services) shall be detailed in a written agreement and be consistent with the parameters set forth in the plan documents.

Either party to the pension consulting agreement may terminate the agreement upon written notice to the other party in accordance with the terms of the agreement for services. The pension consulting fees will be prorated for the quarter in which the termination notice is given and any unearned fees will be refunded to the client.

### **Wrap Fee Programs**

We do not participate in any wrap fee program.

### **Types of Investments**

We primarily offer advice on equity securities, ETFs, warrants, corporate debt securities (other than commercial paper), commercial paper, certificates of deposit, municipal securities, variable annuities, structured notes, mutual fund shares, United States government securities, options contracts on securities, options contracts on commodities, futures contracts on tangibles, futures contracts on intangibles, interests in partnerships investing in real estate and interests in partnerships investing in oil and gas interests.

Additionally, we may advise you on various types of investments based on your stated goals and objectives. We may also provide advice on any type of investment held in your portfolio at the inception of our advisory relationship.

### **IRA Rollover Recommendations**

Effective December 20, 2021 (or such later date as the US Department of Labor (“DOL”) Field Assistance Bulletin 2018-02 ceases to be in effect), for purposes of complying with the DOL’s Prohibited Transaction Exemption 2020-02 (“PTE 2020-02”) where applicable, we are providing the following acknowledgment to you. When we provide investment advice to you regarding your retirement plan account or individual retirement account, we are fiduciaries within the meaning of Title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act and/or the Internal Revenue Code, as applicable, which are laws governing retirement accounts. The way we make money creates some conflicts with your interests, so we operate under a special rule that requires us to act in your best interest and not put our interest ahead of yours. Under this special rule’s provisions, we must:

- Meet a professional standard of care when making investment recommendations (give prudent advice);
- Never put our financial interests ahead of yours when making recommendations (give loyal advice);
- Avoid misleading statements about conflicts of interest, fees, and investments;
- Follow policies and procedures designed to ensure that we give advice that is in your best interest;
- Charge no more than is reasonable for our services; and
- Give you basic information about conflicts of interest.

We benefit financially from the rollover of your assets from a retirement account to an account that we manage or provide investment advice, because the assets increase our assets under management and, in turn, our advisory fees. As a fiduciary, we only recommend a rollover when we believe it is in your best interest.

## **Assets Under Management**

As of December 31, 2023, we provide continuous management services for \$334,730,589 in client assets on a discretionary basis.

## **Item 5 Fees and Compensation**

### **Wealth Management Services**

Our fee for wealth management services is based on a percentage of your assets we manage. You will pay an annual management fee of up to 1.50%. This fee does not include transaction fees, or other fees/expenses charged by brokers, custodians, or mutual funds. Mutual fund purchases will be made at NAV (net asset value). Pre-existing client relationships may be subject to fee that differs from the current fee disclosed in this brochure. In limited circumstances, we may charge a flat fee. Our advisory fee is negotiable, depending on individual client circumstances.

At our discretion, we may combine the account values of family members living in the same household to determine the applicable advisory fee. For example, we may combine account values for you and your minor children, joint accounts with your spouse, and other types of related accounts.

The annual fee is billed quarterly, in advance, based on the asset value on the last day of the previous calendar quarter as reported by the custodian. Fees will be assessed pro rata in the event the advisory agreement is executed at any time other than the first day of a billing period. For any deposits or withdrawals in excess of \$25,000, the client will receive a prorated fee.

We will either send you an invoice for the payment of our advisory fee, or we will deduct our fee directly from your account through the qualified custodian holding your funds and securities. We will deduct our advisory fee only when you have given our firm written authorization permitting the fees to be paid directly from your account. Further, the qualified custodian will deliver an account statement to you at least quarterly. These account statements will show all disbursements from your account. You should review all statements for accuracy.

You may terminate the wealth management agreement upon written notice to our firm. You will incur a pro rata charge for services rendered prior to the termination of the wealth management agreement, which means you will incur advisory fees only in proportion to the number of days in the quarter for which you are a client. If you have pre-paid advisory fees that we have not yet earned, you will receive a prorated refund of those fees.

### **Financial Planning and Consulting Services**

We generally charge a fixed fee for financial planning services, which ranges between \$500 - \$5,000. The fee is negotiable depending upon the complexity and scope of the plan or project, your financial situation, and your objectives. Payment terms will be set forth in the agreement for services.

Should the engagement last longer than six months between acceptance of financial planning agreement and delivery of the financial plan, any prepaid unearned fees will be promptly returned to you less a pro rata charge for bona fide financial planning services rendered to date.

In certain situations, we may enter into an hourly engagement. Our hourly fees range from \$165 - \$275 per hour for planning and consulting services, which is negotiable depending on the scope and complexity of the project, your situation, and other factors. An estimate of the total time/cost will be determined at the start of the advisory relationship. In limited circumstances, the cost/time could potentially exceed the initial estimate. In such cases, we will notify you and request that you approve the additional fee.

We will not require prepayment of a fee more than six months in advance and in excess of \$1,200. At our discretion, we may offset our financial planning fees to the extent you implement the financial plan through our Portfolio Management Service.

### **Selection of Other Advisers**

We will charge you a separate fee (not to exceed 1.50%) on top of the fee charged by the third party money manager.

The advisory fee you pay to the MM is established and payable in accordance with the brochure provided by each MM to whom you are referred. These fees may or may not be negotiable. Our compensation may differ depending upon the individual agreement we have with each MM. As such, a conflict of interest exists where our firm or persons associated with our firm has an incentive to recommend one MM over another MM with whom we have more favorable compensation arrangements or other advisory programs offered by MMs with whom we have less or no compensation arrangements.

You may be required to sign an agreement directly with the recommended MM(s). You may terminate your advisory relationship with the MM according to the terms of your agreement with the MM. You should review each MM's brochure for specific information on how you may terminate your advisory relationship with the MM and how you may receive a refund, if applicable. You should contact the MM directly for questions regarding your advisory agreement with the MM.

### **Pension Consulting Services**

Our advisory fees for these customized services will be negotiated with the plan sponsor or named fiduciary on a case-by-case basis.

You may terminate the pension consulting services agreement upon 7 days written notice to our firm. You will incur a pro rata charge for services rendered prior to the termination of the agreement, which means you will incur advisory fees only in proportion to the number of days in the quarter for which you are a client. If you have pre-paid advisory fees that we have not yet earned, you will receive a prorated refund of those fees.

### **Additional Fees and Expenses**

As part of our investment advisory services to you, we may invest, or recommend that you invest, in mutual funds and exchange traded funds. The fees that you pay to our firm for investment advisory services are separate and distinct from the fees and expenses charged by mutual funds or exchange traded funds (described in each fund's prospectus) to their shareholders. These fees will generally include a management fee and other fund expenses. You will also incur transaction charges and/or brokerage fees when purchasing or selling securities. These charges and fees are typically imposed by the broker-dealer or custodian through whom your account transactions are executed. We do not share in any portion of the brokerage fees/transaction charges imposed by the broker-dealer or custodian. To fully understand the total cost you will incur, you should review all the fees charged by mutual funds, exchange traded funds, our firm, and others. For information on our brokerage practices, refer to the *Brokerage Practices* section of this brochure.

### **Compensation for the Sale of Securities or Other Investment Products**

Certain investment adviser representatives of our firm are also associated with Silver Oak Securities, Inc. ("Silver Oak") as broker-dealer registered representatives ("Dually Registered Persons"). In their capacity as registered representatives of Silver Oak, certain Dually Registered Persons may earn commissions for the sale of securities or investment products that they recommend for brokerage clients. They do not earn commissions on the sale of securities or investment products recommended or purchased in advisory accounts through BWAM. Clients have the option of



purchasing many of the securities and investment products we make available to you through another broker-dealer or investment adviser. However, when purchasing these securities and investment products away from BWAM, you may not receive the benefit of the advice and other services we provide.

Similarly, certain investment adviser representatives of BWAM are licensed as independent insurance agents. These persons will earn commission-based compensation for selling insurance products, including insurance products they sell to you. Insurance commissions earned by these persons are separate and in addition to our advisory fees.

These arrangements described above present a conflict of interest because such persons have an incentive to recommend securities or insurance products to you for the purpose of generating commissions rather than solely based on your needs. You are under no obligation, contractually or otherwise, to purchase insurance products through any person affiliated with our firm.

### **IRA Rollover Considerations**

As part of our investment advisory services to you, we may recommend that you withdraw the assets from your employer's retirement plan and roll the assets over to an individual retirement account ("IRA") that we will manage on your behalf. If you elect to roll the assets to an IRA that is subject to our management, we will charge you an asset based fee as set forth in the agreement you executed with our firm. This practice presents a conflict of interest because persons providing investment advice on our behalf have an incentive to recommend a rollover to you for the purpose of generating fee based compensation rather than solely based on your needs. You are under no obligation, contractually or otherwise, to complete the rollover. Moreover, if you do complete the rollover, you are under no obligation to have the assets in an IRA managed by our firm.

Many employers permit former employees to keep their retirement assets in their company plan. Also, current employees can sometimes move assets out of their company plan before they retire or change jobs. In determining whether to complete the rollover to an IRA, and to the extent the following options are available, you should consider the costs and benefits of:

An employee will typically have four options:

1. Leaving the funds in your employer's (former employer's) plan.
2. Moving the funds to a new employer's retirement plan.
3. Cashing out and taking a taxable distribution from the plan.
4. Rolling the funds into an IRA rollover account.

Each of these options has advantages and disadvantages and before making a change we encourage you to speak with your CPA and/or tax attorney.

If you are considering rolling over your retirement funds to an IRA for us to manage here are a few points to consider before you do so:

1. Determine whether the investment options in your employer's retirement plan address your needs or whether you might want to consider other types of investments.
  - a. Employer retirement plans generally have a more limited investment menu than IRAs.
  - b. Employer retirement plans may have unique investment options not available to the public such as employer securities, or previously closed funds.
2. Your current plan may have lower fees than our fees.
  - a. If you are interested in investing only in mutual funds, you should understand the cost structure of the share classes available in your employer's retirement plan and how the

- costs of those share classes compare with those available in an IRA.
- b. You should understand the various products and services you might take advantage of at an IRA provider and the potential costs of those products and services.
  3. Our strategy may have higher risk than the option(s) provided to you in your plan.
  4. Your current plan may also offer financial advice.
  5. If you keep your assets titled in a 401k or retirement account, you could potentially delay your required minimum distribution beyond age 73.
  6. Your 401k may offer more liability protection than a rollover IRA; each state may vary.
    - a. Generally, federal law protects assets in qualified plans from creditors. Since 2005, IRA assets have been generally protected from creditors in bankruptcies. However, there can be some exceptions to the general rules so you should consult with an attorney if you are concerned about protecting your retirement plan assets from creditors.
  7. You may be able to take out a loan on your 401k, but not from an IRA.
  8. IRA assets can be accessed any time; however, distributions are subject to ordinary income tax and may also be subject to a 10% early distribution penalty unless they qualify for an exception such as disability, higher education expenses or the purchase of a home.
  9. If you own company stock in your plan, you may be able to liquidate those shares at a lower capital gains tax rate.
  10. Your plan may allow you to hire us as the manager and keep the assets titled in the plan name.

It is important that you understand the differences between these types of accounts and to decide whether a rollover is best for you. Prior to proceeding, if you have questions contact your investment adviser representative, or call our main number as listed on the cover page of this brochure.

## **Item 6 Performance-Based Fees and Side-By-Side Management**

We do not accept performance-based fees or participate in side-by-side management. Performance-based fees are fees that are based on a share of a capital gains or capital appreciation of a client's account. Side-by-side management refers to the practice of managing accounts that are charged performance-based fees while at the same time managing accounts that are not charged performance-based fees. Our fees are calculated as described in the *Fees and Compensation* section above, and are not charged on the basis of a share of capital gains upon, or capital appreciation of, the funds in your advisory account.

## **Item 7 Types of Clients**

We offer investment advisory services to individuals (other than high net worth individuals), high net worth individuals, banking or thrift institutions, investment companies, business development companies, pooled investment vehicles (other than investment companies), pension and profit sharing plans (but not the plan participants), charitable organizations, corporations or other businesses not listed above, state or municipal government entities, other investment advisers and insurance companies.

In general, we do not require a minimum dollar amount to open and maintain an advisory account; however, we have the right to terminate your Account if it falls below a minimum size which, in our sole opinion, is too small to manage effectively.

We may also combine account values for you and your minor children, joint accounts with your spouse, and other types of related accounts to meet the stated minimum.

## Item 8 Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies and Risk of Loss

### Our Methods of Analysis and Investment Strategies

We will use one or more of the following methods of analysis or investment strategies when providing investment advice to you:

**Modern Portfolio Theory (MPT)** - a theory of investment which attempts to maximize portfolio expected return for a given amount of portfolio risk, or equivalently minimize risk for a given level of expected return, by carefully diversifying the proportions of various assets.

**Risk:** Market risk is that part of a security's risk that is common to all securities of the same general class (stocks and bonds) and thus cannot be eliminated by diversification.

**Long-Term Purchases** - securities purchased with the expectation that the value of those securities will grow over a relatively long period of time, generally greater than one year.

**Risk:** Using a long-term purchase strategy generally assumes the financial markets will go up in the long-term which may not be the case. There is also the risk that the segment of the market that you are invested in or perhaps just your particular investment will go down over time even if the overall financial markets advance. Purchasing investments long-term may create an opportunity cost - "locking-up" assets that may be better utilized in the short-term in other investments.

**Short-Term Purchases** - securities purchased with the expectation that they will be sold within a relatively short period of time, generally less than one year, to take advantage of the securities' short-term price fluctuations.

**Risk:** Using a short-term purchase strategy generally assumes that we can predict how financial markets will perform in the short-term which may be very difficult and will incur a disproportionately higher amount of transaction costs compared to long-term trading. There are many factors that can affect financial market performance in the short-term (such as short-term interest rate changes, cyclical earnings announcements, etc.) but may have a smaller impact over longer periods of times.

**Short Sales** - securities transaction in which an investor sells securities that were borrowed in anticipation of a price decline. The investor is then required to return an equal number of shares at some point in the future.

**Risk:** A short seller will profit if the stock goes down in price, but if the price of the shares increase, the potential losses are unlimited.

**Option Writing** - a securities transaction that involves selling an option. An option is the right, but not the obligation, to buy or sell a particular security at a specified price before the expiration date of the option. When an investor sells an option, he or she must deliver to the buyer a specified number of shares if the buyer exercises the option.

**Risk:** Options are complex investments and can be very risky, especially if the investor does not own the underlying stock. In certain situations, an investor's risk can be unlimited.

We may use short-term trading (in general, selling securities within 30 days of purchasing the same securities) as an investment strategy when managing your account(s). Short-term trading is not a fundamental part of our overall investment strategy, but we may use this strategy occasionally when we determine that it is suitable given your stated investment objectives and tolerance for risk. This may include buying and selling securities frequently in an effort to capture significant market gains and

avoid significant losses. However, there is a risk that frequent trading can negatively affect investment performance, particularly through increased brokerage and other transactional costs and taxes.

Our investment strategies and advice may vary depending upon each client's specific financial situation. As such, we determine investments and allocations based upon your predefined objectives, risk tolerance, time horizon, financial information, liquidity needs and other various suitability factors. Your restrictions and guidelines may affect the composition of your portfolio.

We will not perform quantitative or qualitative analysis of individual securities. Instead, we will advise you on how to allocate your assets among various classes of securities or third party money managers. We primarily rely on investment model portfolios and strategies developed by the third party money managers and their portfolio managers. We may replace/recommend replacing a third party money manager if there is a significant deviation in characteristics or performance from the stated strategy and/or benchmark.

### **Tax Considerations**

Our strategies and investments may have unique and significant tax implications. However, unless we specifically agree otherwise, and in writing, tax efficiency is not our primary consideration in the management of your assets. Regardless of your account size or any other factors, we strongly recommend that you consult with a tax professional regarding the investing of your assets.

Moreover, custodians and broker-dealers must report the cost basis of equities acquired in client accounts on or after January 1, 2011. Your custodian will default to the FIFO (First-In First-Out) accounting method for calculating the cost basis of your investments. You are responsible for contacting your tax advisor to determine if this accounting method is the right choice for you. If your tax advisor believes another accounting method is more advantageous, provide written notice to our firm immediately and we will alert your account custodian of your individually selected accounting method. Decisions about cost basis accounting methods will need to be made before trades settle, as the cost basis method cannot be changed after settlement.

### **Risk of Loss**

Investing in securities involves risk of loss that you should be prepared to bear. We do not represent or guarantee that our services or methods of analysis can or will predict future results, successfully identify market tops or bottoms, or insulate clients from losses due to market corrections or declines. We cannot offer any guarantees or promises that your financial goals and objectives will be met. Past performance is in no way an indication of future performance.

### **Recommendation of Particular Types of Securities**

We primarily recommend mutual funds and exchange traded funds ("ETFs"). However, we may advise on other types of investments as appropriate for you since each client has different needs and different tolerance for risk. Each type of security has its own unique set of risks associated with it and it would not be possible to list here all of the specific risks of every type of investment. Even within the same type of investment, risks can vary widely. However, in very general terms, the higher the anticipated return of an investment, the higher the risk of loss associated with the investment.

**Money Market Funds:** A money market fund is technically a security. The fund managers attempt to keep the share price constant at \$1/share. However, there is no guarantee that the share price will stay at \$1/share. If the share price goes down, you can lose some of your principal. The US Securities and Exchange Commission notes that "While investor losses in money market funds have been rare, they are possible." In return for this risk, you should earn a greater return on your cash than you would expect from an FDIC insured savings account (money market funds are not FDIC insured). Next, money market fund rates are variable. In other words, you do not know how much you will earn on

your investment next month. The rate could go up or go down. If it goes up, that may be a good thing. However, if it goes down and you earn less than you expected to earn, you can end up needing more cash. A final risk you are taking with money market funds has to do with inflation. Because money market funds are considered to be safer than other investments like stocks, long-term average returns on money market funds tends to be less than long term average returns on riskier investments. Over long periods of time, inflation can eat away at your returns.

**Certificates of Deposit:** Certificates of deposit are generally the safest type of investment since they are insured by the federal government up to a certain amount. However, because the returns are generally very low, it is possible for inflation to outpace the return. Likewise, US Government securities are backed by the full faith and credit of the United States government but it is also possible for the rate of inflation to exceed the returns.

**Municipal Securities:** Municipal securities, while generally thought of as safe, can have significant risks associated with them including, but not limited to: the credit worthiness of the governmental entity that issues the bond; the stability of the revenue stream that is used to pay the interest to the bondholders; when the bond is due to mature; and, whether or not the bond can be "called" prior to maturity. When a bond is called, it may not be possible to replace it with a bond of equal character paying the same amount of interest or yield to maturity.

**Bonds:** Corporate debt securities (or "bonds") are typically safer investments than equity securities, but their risk can also vary widely based on: the financial health of the issuer; the risk that the issuer might default; when the bond is set to mature; and, whether or not the bond can be "called" prior to maturity. When a bond is called, it may not be possible to replace it with a bond of equal character paying the same rate of return.

**Structured Products:** In very general terms, structured products are securities whose value is derived from, or based on, a reference asset, market measure or investment strategy. Reference assets and market measures may include single equity or debt securities, indexes, commodities, interest rates and/or foreign currencies, as well as baskets of these reference assets or market measures. Like other well-known market instruments such as convertible bonds, many structured products are hybrid securities. Structured products typically have two components — a note and a derivative, which is often an option. The note, in some instances, may pay interest at a specified rate and interval. The derivative component establishes payment at maturity, which may give the issuer the right to buy from you, or sell you, the referenced security or securities at a predetermined price. For example, structured products may combine characteristics of debt and equity or of debt and commodities. Most structured products have a fixed maturity and may pay an interest rate or a coupon rate. Structured products also frequently cap or limit the upside participation in the referenced asset, particularly if the security offers principal protection or an enhanced rate of interest. Structured products are usually created to meet specific needs that cannot be met from the standardized financial instruments available in the markets. They can be used as:

- an alternative to a direct investment
- a part of the overall asset allocation
- a risk-reduction strategy in a portfolio

Structured products can be issued in various forms, including publicly offered and privately placed debt securities, publicly offered and privately placed pooled investments (such as closed end-funds and trusts), and certificates of deposit. Some structured products are listed on securities exchanges, while others trade in over-the-counter secondary markets.

Investors need to be aware of the risks of an investment in structured products. You should evaluate

your individual financial condition and your ability to tolerate risk before investing in structured products. Set out below are some of the most significant risks associated with investing in structured products. The list is not exhaustive. Particular structured products may involve other risks, which will be disclosed in the offering documents for those products.

**Potential Loss of Principal.** An investor may lose money investing in structured products. Structured products are typically medium-term investments (terms ranging from 1 to 10 years) and, with limited exceptions, are suitable only for clients who are able to hold the investment until maturity. Some structured products are principal protected at maturity; others are not. For fully principal-protected structured products, an investor will be entitled to the return of the full principal amount only if the investor holds the structured product to maturity (or the call date if the structured product is callable at par or higher). Between purchase date and maturity, the market value (that is, the amount an investor would receive if he or she sold or redeemed the investment) of a structured product may fluctuate substantially. If an investor sells a structured product before maturity, the price may be less than the original invested amount, regardless of whether the structured product is principal protected or not.

**Market Prices May Fluctuate Based on Unpredictable Factors.** The market value of structured products will be affected by unpredictable factors that interrelate in complex ways. These factors may include, but are not limited to, the price or level of the underlying asset, the volatility of the underlying asset, interest rates, dividend rates, the issuer's creditworthiness, time remaining to maturity and geopolitical conditions. Apart from these, there are many other factors that may affect the market value of structured products. The past performance of any of these factors is not indicative of future results.

**Credit Risk.** Many structured products are issued in the form of unsecured debt. Therefore, investors are subject to the credit risk and default risk of the issuer. If the issuer of a structured product defaults on its obligation, investors will receive significantly less than the principal amount of the structured product, even if the product is principal-protected.

**Appreciation Potential May Be Limited.** The appreciation potential of certain structured products may be limited by an issuer's call right, a pre-defined maximum payment or a capped value at maturity.

**Call Rights May Affect Value.** Some structured products allow the issuer to redeem or "call" the structured product at its sole discretion. These structured products are referred to as being "callable." On predetermined dates, the issuer can choose to redeem the structured product prior to maturity and pay a stated call price. The call price may be above, below or equal to the par amount of the structured product, and may or may not include accrued but unpaid interest, if any. Typically, the issuer will call a structured product when it is economically advantageous — for example, because the issuer can borrow at a lower rate or because an underlying asset has appreciated sufficiently. If a structured product is called, investors may not be able to reinvest their money at the same rate as the rate of return provided by the structured product that was called. This risk is referred to as "reinvestment risk." Non-callable structured products may not be called by the issuer prior to maturity.

**Value at Maturity/Call Date.** In many structured products, the value paid to the investor at maturity or the specified call date is based on the market value of the underlying asset or market measure as of the valuation date, as detailed in the offering documentation. There may be significant fluctuations of the market value between the trade date and the specified valuation date; however, it is the value as of the valuation date that will determine the payout to the investor at maturity/call date.

**Buffer ETFs:** A type of structured product investment seeks to provide investors with the upside of the underlying index, market benchmark or assets returns (generally up to a capped percentage stated in the ETFs prospectus and prospectus supplement) while also providing downside protection on the first predetermined percentage of losses. Similar to other ETFs, a buffer ETF will be designed to track a stated index, market

benchmark, or asset. However, the buffer ETF will also use a portfolio of options and derivatives in order to achieve the stated capped return (“cap”) and limitation of losses (“buffer”).

Most buffer ETFs have a stated outcome or holding period (typically a 3 month or 12-month period), in order to realize the benefits of the hedge or limitation on losses. These limited outcome periods or holding periods mean that only those investors who purchase at the beginning of the outcome period (e.g., on the first date of rebalancing) and hold the ETF throughout the entire outcome period will be provided with the level of return/protection stated by the prospectus. Investors who invest in these ETFs at any time after the beginning of the outcome or holding period or who liquidate their investments in these ETFs before the end of the holding or outcome period, will receive different caps and buffers on gains and losses than those stated in the ETF prospectus or prospectus supplement. Fund sponsors often post the anticipated cap on returns, buffers, and days remaining in the outcome period on the funds’ websites. The updated caps, buffers, and days remaining should be considered and analyzed by an investor before investing in the buffer ETF at any time other than the beginning of the outcome period and should further be reviewed prior to liquidating any investment in such ETFs prior to the conclusion of the applicable holding or outcome period. At the end of an outcome period, the buffer ETF will roll into a new set of option contracts with the same buffer level and term length, but a new upside cap. This upside cap may be higher or lower than the preceding period and will depend on market conditions at the time. Additionally, the expenses associated with the new options contracts may impact the expenses of the ETF, which could impact returns to investors who hold these ETFs through multiple outcome periods.

Investors should understand that buffer ETFs are complex products with complicated and layered strategies. There are unique risks and considerations that investors must understand and accept before purchasing a buffer ETF. Investors should consider the following implications before purchasing a buffer ETF:

1. Exposure to the index is likely limited to price returns. Dividends and income are not included.
2. Downside protection is not eliminated and is only “buffered”. Accordingly, if a given buffer ETF has a stated buffer of 10% and the underlying reference index falls 25% during the outcome period, that investor will experience a roughly 15% loss. This loss will be further increased once management fees are subtracted from the portfolio.
3. The buffer ETFs upside return is capped. Investors will not be compensated if the underlying reference index experiences a higher return than the stated cap. This cap is established to offset the costs of purchasing options to create the downside buffer, therefore the cap and buffer are inversely related. Thus, if investors require more downside protection, the trade-off is a lower upside cap (meaning a lower upside return). Conversely, if an investor requires a higher upside return it will result in less downside protection.
4. Due to the strategies employed these funds will generally exhibit a greater potential for loss than the potential for gain. In other words, by capping the upside, investors miss out on gains that exceed the upside cap, but they still participate in all downside losses beyond the stated buffer.
5. Because these buffered ETFs trade in options that are volatile in price, investors who invest in these ETFs should expect to hold these securities for the full duration of the holding period to receive the defined return dynamics established at the beginning of the holding period, and be aware they may suffer higher losses, or receive less than the defined outcome return than owning the underlying index outright if sold prior to the end of the holding period.

Investors should also be aware that in addition to these risks unique to buffer ETFs, these products also face the same general risks associated with any ETF product. Please see the “ETF Risks, including Net Asset

Valuations and Tracking Error” paragraph in this section above for more information regarding risks associated with ETFs.

**Stocks:** There are numerous ways of measuring the risk of equity securities (also known simply as "equities" or "stock"). In very broad terms, the value of a stock depends on the financial health of the company issuing it. However, stock prices can be affected by many other factors including, but not limited to the class of stock (for example, preferred or common); the health of the market sector of the issuing company; and, the overall health of the economy. In general, larger, better established companies ("large cap") tend to be safer than smaller start-up companies ("small cap") are but the mere size of an issuer is not, by itself, an indicator of the safety of the investment.

**Mutual Funds and ETFs:** Mutual funds and exchange traded funds (ETFs) are professionally managed collective investment systems that pool money from many investors and invest in stocks, bonds, short-term money market instruments, other mutual funds, other securities, or any combination thereof. The fund will have a manager that trades the fund's investments in accordance with the fund's investment objective. While mutual funds and ETFs generally provide diversification, risks can be significantly increased if the fund is concentrated in a particular sector of the market, primarily invests in small cap or speculative companies, uses leverage (i.e., borrows money) to a significant degree, or concentrates in a particular type of security (i.e., equities) rather than balancing the fund with different types of securities. Exchange traded funds differ from mutual funds since they can be bought and sold throughout the day like stock and their price can fluctuate throughout the day. The returns on mutual funds and ETFs can be reduced by the costs to manage the funds. Also, while some mutual funds are "no load" and charge no fee to buy into, or sell out of, the fund, other types of mutual funds do charge such fees which can also reduce returns. Mutual funds can also be "closed end" or "open end". So-called "open end" mutual funds continue to allow in new investors indefinitely whereas "closed end" funds have a fixed number of shares to sell which can limit their availability to new investors.

**Variable Annuities:** A variable annuity is a form of insurance where the seller or issuer (typically an insurance company) makes a series of future payments to a buyer (annuitant) in exchange for the immediate payment of a lump sum ( single-payment annuity ) or a series of regular payments (regular-payment annuity). The payment stream from the issuer to the annuitant has an unknown duration based principally upon the date of death of the annuitant. At this point, the contract will terminate and the remainder of the funds accumulated forfeited unless there are other annuitants or beneficiaries in the contract. Annuities can be purchased to provide an income during retirement. Unlike fixed annuities that make payments in fixed amounts or in amounts that increase by a fixed percentage, variable annuities, pay amounts that vary according to the performance of a specified set of investments, typically bond and equity mutual funds. Many variable annuities typically impose asset-based sales charges or surrender charges for withdrawals within a specified period. Variable annuities may impose a variety of fees and expenses, in addition to sales and surrender charges, such as mortality and expense risk charges; administrative fees; underlying fund expenses; and charges for special features, all of which can reduce the return. Earnings in a variable annuity do not provide all the tax advantages of 401(k)s and other before-tax retirement plans. Once the investor starts withdrawing money from their variable annuity, earnings are taxed at the ordinary income rate, rather than at the lower capital gains rates applied to other non-tax-deferred vehicles which are held for more than one year. Proceeds of most variable annuities do not receive a "step-up" in cost basis when the owner dies like stocks, bonds and mutual funds do. Some variable annuities offer "bonus credits." These are usually not free. In order to fund them, insurance companies typically impose mortality and expense charges and surrender charge periods. In an exchange of an existing annuity for a new annuity (so-called 1035 exchanges), the new variable annuity may have a lower contract value and a smaller death benefit; may impose new surrender charges or increase the period of time for which the surrender charge applies; may have higher annual fees; and provide another commission for the broker.



**Real Estate:** Real estate is increasingly being used as part of a long-term core strategy due to increased market efficiency and increasing concerns about the future long-term variability of stock and bond returns. In fact, real estate is known for its ability to serve as a portfolio diversifier and inflation hedge. However, the asset class still bears a considerable amount of market risk. Real estate has shown itself to be very cyclical, somewhat mirroring the ups and downs of the overall economy. In addition to employment and demographic changes, real estate is also influenced by changes in interest rates and the credit markets, which affect the demand and supply of capital and thus real estate values. Along with changes in market fundamentals, investors wishing to add real estate as part of their core investment portfolios need to look for property concentrations by area or by property type. Because property returns are directly affected by local market basics, real estate portfolios that are too heavily concentrated in one area or property type can lose their risk mitigation attributes and bear additional risk by being too influenced by local or sector market changes.

**REITs:** A real estate investment trust or REIT is a corporate entity which invests in real estate and/or engages in real estate financing. A REIT reduces or eliminates corporate income taxes. REITs can be publicly or privately held. Public REITs may be listed on public stock exchanges. REITs are required to declare 90% of their taxable income as dividends, but they actually pay dividends out of funds from operations, so cash flow has to be strong or the REIT must either dip into reserves, borrow to pay dividends, or distribute them in stock (which causes dilution). After 2012, the IRS stopped permitting stock dividends. Most REITs must refinance or erase large balloon debts this year and next. The credit markets are no longer frozen, but banks are demanding, and getting, harsher terms to re-extend REIT debt. Some REITs may be forced to make secondary stock offerings to repay debt, which will lead to additional dilution of the stockholders. Fluctuations in the real estate market can affect the REIT's value and dividends.

**Limited Partnerships:** A limited partnership is a financial affiliation that includes at least one general partner and a number of limited partners. The partnership invests in a venture, such as real estate development or oil exploration, for financial gain. The general partner does not usually invest any capital, but has management authority and unlimited liability. That is, the general partner runs the business and, in the event of bankruptcy, is responsible for all debts not paid or discharged. The limited partners have no management authority and confine their participation to their capital investment. That is, limited partners invest a certain amount of money and have nothing else to do with the business. However, their liability is limited to the amount of the investment. In the worst-case scenario for a limited partner, he/she loses what he/she invested. Profits are divided between general and limited partners according to an arrangement formed at the creation of the partnership.

**Options and Warrants:** Options are complex securities that involve risks and are not suitable for everyone. Option trading can be speculative in nature and carry substantial risk of loss. It is generally recommended that you only invest in options with risk capital. An option is a contract that gives the buyer the right, but not the obligation, to buy or sell an underlying asset at a specific price on or before a certain date (the "expiration date"). The main difference between warrants and call options is that warrants are issued and guaranteed by the issuing company, whereas options are traded on an exchange and are not issued by the company. Also, the lifetime of a warrant is often measured in years, while the lifetime of a typical option is measured in months. The two types of options are calls and puts:

A call gives the holder the right to buy an asset at a certain price within a specific period of time. Calls are similar to having a long position on a stock. Buyers of calls hope that the stock will increase substantially before the option expires.

A put gives the holder the right to sell an asset at a certain price within a specific period of time. Puts

are very similar to having a short position on a stock. Buyers of puts hope that the price of the stock will fall before the option expires.

Selling options is more complicated and can be even riskier.

The option trading risks pertaining to options buyers are:

- Risk of losing your entire investment in a relatively short period of time.
- The risk of losing your entire investment increases if, as expiration nears, the stock is below the strike price of the call (for a call option) or if the stock is higher than the strike price of the put (for a put option).
- European style options which do not have secondary markets on which to sell the options prior to expiration can only realize its value upon expiration.
- Specific exercise provisions of a specific option contract may create risks.
- Regulatory agencies may impose exercise restrictions, which stops you from realizing value.

The option trading risks pertaining to options sellers are:

- Options sold may be exercised at any time before expiration.
- Covered Call traders forgo the right to profit when the underlying stock rises above the strike price of the call options sold and continues to risk a loss due to a decline in the underlying stock.
- Writers of Naked Calls risk substantial loss if the underlying stock rises.
- Writers of Naked Puts risk substantial loss if the underlying stock drops.
- Writers of naked positions run margin risks if the position goes into significant losses. Such risks may include liquidation by the broker.
- Writers of call options could lose more money than a short seller of that stock could on the same rise on that underlying stock. This is an example of how the leverage in options can work against the option trader.
- Writers of Naked Calls are obligated to deliver shares of the underlying stock if those call options are exercised.
- Call options can be exercised outside of market hours such that effective remedy actions cannot be performed by the writer of those options.
- Writers of stock options are obligated under the options that they sold even if a trading market is not available or that they are unable to perform a closing transaction.
- The value of the underlying stock may surge or drop substantially unexpectedly, leading to automatic exercises.

Other option trading risks are:

- The complexity of some option strategies is a significant risk on its own.
- Option trading exchanges or markets and option contracts themselves are open to changes at all times.
- Options markets have the right to halt the trading of any options, thus preventing investors from realizing value.
- Risk of erroneous reporting of exercise value.
- If an options brokerage firm goes insolvent, investors trading through that firm may be affected.
- Internationally traded options have special risks due to timing across borders.

Risks that are not specific to options trading include market risk, sector risk and individual stock risk. Option trading risks are closely related to stock risks, as stock options are a derivative of stocks.

## Item 9 Disciplinary Information

We are required to disclose the facts of any legal or disciplinary events that are material to a client's evaluation of our advisory business or the integrity of our management. We do not have any required disclosures under this item.

## Item 10 Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations

### Registrations with Broker-Dealer

Certain employees of BWAM are Dually Registered Persons. Silver Oak Securities, Inc. ("Silver Oak") is a broker-dealer that is independently owned and operated and is not affiliated with BWAM. As discussed previously, certain associated persons of BWAM are registered representatives of Silver Oak. As a result of this relationship, Silver Oak may have access to certain confidential information (e.g., financial information, investment objectives, transactions and holdings) about BWAM's clients, even if client does not establish any account through Silver Oak. If you would like a copy of the Silver Oak's privacy policy, please contact us.

Please refer to Item 12 for additional information regarding the benefits BWAM may receive from Silver Oak and the conflicts of interest associated with receipt of such benefits.

### Arrangements with Affiliated Entities/Insurance Agency

Our firm is affiliated through common control and ownership with two licensed insurance agencies, Redfield Financial Group, LLC and Blue Water Group Agency, LLC. Therefore, persons providing investment advice on behalf of our firm may be licensed as insurance agents. These persons will earn commission-based compensation for selling insurance products, including insurance products they sell to you. Insurance commissions earned by these persons are separate from our advisory fees. See the *Fees and Compensation* section in this brochure for more information on the compensation received by insurance agents who are affiliated with our firm.

These referral arrangements we have with our affiliated entities present a conflict of interest because we may have a financial incentive to recommend our affiliates' services. While we believe that compensation charged by our affiliates are competitive, such compensation may be higher than fees charged by other firms providing the same or similar services. You are under no obligation to use our affiliates' services and may obtain comparable services and/or lower fees through other firms.

### Recommendation of Other Advisers

We may recommend that you use a third party adviser ("MM") based on your needs and suitability.

## Item 11 Code of Ethics, Participation or Interest in Client Transactions and Personal Trading

### Description of Our Code of Ethics

We strive to comply with applicable laws and regulations governing our practices. Therefore, our Code of Ethics includes guidelines for professional standards of conduct for persons associated with our firm. Our goal is to protect your interests at all times and to demonstrate our commitment to our fiduciary duties of honesty, good faith, and fair dealing with you. All persons associated with our firm are expected to adhere strictly to these guidelines. Persons associated with our firm are also required to report any violations of our Code of Ethics. Additionally, we maintain and enforce written policies reasonably designed to prevent the misuse or dissemination of material, non-public information about you or your account holdings by persons associated with our firm.

Clients or prospective clients may obtain a copy of our Code of Ethics by contacting us at the telephone number on the cover page of this brochure.

### **Participation or Interest in Client Transactions**

Neither our firm nor any persons associated with our firm has any material financial interest in client transactions beyond the provision of investment advisory services as disclosed in this brochure.

### **Personal Trading Practices**

Our firm or persons associated with our firm may buy or sell the same securities that we recommend to you or securities in which you are already invested. A conflict of interest exists in such cases because we have the ability to trade ahead of you and potentially receive more favorable prices than you will receive. To mitigate this conflict of interest, it is our policy that neither our firm nor persons associated with our firm shall have priority over your account in the purchase or sale of securities.

### **Block Trading**

Our firm or persons associated with our firm may buy or sell securities for you at the same time we or persons associated with our firm buy or sell such securities for our own account. We may also combine our orders to purchase securities with your orders to purchase securities ("block trading"). Refer to the *Brokerage Practices* section in this brochure for information on our block trading practices.

A conflict of interest exists in such cases because we have the ability to trade ahead of you and potentially receive more favorable prices than you will receive. To eliminate this conflict of interest, it is our policy that neither our firm nor persons associated with our firm shall have priority over your account in the purchase or sale of securities.

## **Item 12 Brokerage Practices**

We recommend the brokerage and custodial services of Charles Schwab & Co., (whether one or more "Custodian"). In all cases, the recommended Custodian is a securities broker-dealer and a member of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority and the Securities Investor Protection Corporation. We believe that the recommended Custodian provides quality execution services for you at competitive prices. Price is not the sole factor we consider in evaluating best execution. We also consider the quality of the brokerage services provided by the Custodian, including the value of the Custodian's reputation, execution capabilities, commission rates, and responsiveness to our clients and our firm. In recognition of the value of the services the Custodian provides, you may pay higher commissions and/or trading costs than those that may be available elsewhere.

### **Research and Other Soft Dollar Benefits**

We do not have any current soft dollar arrangements in place. Our firm and/or some of our investment adviser representatives may receive reimbursements and/or compensation from product sponsors for expenses arising from conducting/sponsoring client seminars, presentations and workshops that provide information regarding certain investment products.

### **Economic Benefits**

As a registered investment adviser, we have access to the institutional platform of your account custodian. As such, we will also have access to research products and services from your account custodian and/or other brokerage firm. These products may include financial publications, information about particular companies and industries, research software, and other products or services that provide lawful and appropriate assistance to our firm in the performance of our investment decision-making responsibilities. Such research products and services are provided to all investment advisers that utilize the institutional services platforms of these firms, and are not considered to be paid for with

soft dollars. However, you should be aware that the commissions charged by a particular broker for a particular transaction or set of transactions may be greater than the amounts another broker who did not provide research services or products might charge.

## **Schwab Advisor Services**

### **The custodian and brokers we use**

We do not maintain custody of your assets that we manage, although we may be deemed to have custody of your assets if you give us authority to withdraw assets from your account (see Item 15—Custody, below). Your assets must be maintained in an account at a “qualified custodian,” generally a broker-dealer or bank. We recommend that our clients use Charles Schwab & Co., Inc. (Schwab), a registered broker-dealer, member SIPC, as the qualified custodian.

We are independently owned and operated and are not affiliated with Schwab. Schwab will hold your assets in a brokerage account and buy and sell securities when we instruct them to. While we recommend that you use Schwab as custodian/broker, you will decide whether to do so and will open your account with Schwab by entering into an account agreement directly with them. Conflicts of interest associated with these arrangements are described below as well as in Item 14 (Client referrals and other compensation). You should consider these conflicts of interest when selecting your custodian.

We do not open the account for you, although we may assist you in doing so. If you do not wish to place your assets with Schwab, then we cannot manage your account. Not all advisors require their clients to use a particular broker-dealer or other custodian selected by the advisor. Even though your account is maintained at Schwab, and we anticipate that most trades will be executed through Schwab, we can still use other brokers to execute trades for your account as described below (see “Your brokerage and custody costs”).

### **How we select brokers/custodians**

We seek to recommend Schwab, a custodian/broker that will hold your assets and execute transactions. When considering whether the terms that Schwab provides are, overall, most advantageous to you when compared with other available providers and their services, we take into account a wide range of factors, including:

- Combination of transaction execution services and asset custody services (generally without a separate fee for custody)
- Capability to execute, clear, and settle trades (buy and sell securities for your account)
- Capability to facilitate transfers and payments to and from accounts (wire transfers, check requests, bill payment, etc.)
- Breadth of available investment products (stocks, bonds, mutual funds, exchange-traded funds [ETFs], etc.)
- Availability of investment research and tools that assist us in making investment decisions
- Quality of services
- Competitiveness of the price of those services (commission rates, margin interest rates, other fees, etc.) and willingness to negotiate the prices
- Reputation, financial strength, security and stability
- Prior service to us and our clients
- Services delivered or paid for by Schwab
- Availability of other products and services that benefit us, as discussed below (see “Products and services available to us from Schwab”)

### **Your brokerage and custody costs**

For our clients' accounts that Schwab maintains, Schwab generally does not charge you separately for custody services but is compensated by charging you commissions or other fees on trades that it executes or that settle into your Schwab account. Certain trades (for example, many mutual funds and ETFs) may not incur Schwab commissions or transaction fees. Schwab is also compensated by earning interest on the uninvested cash in your account in Schwab's Cash Features Program. For some accounts, Schwab charges you a percentage of the dollar amount of assets in the account in lieu of commissions. Schwab's commission rates and asset-based fees applicable to our client accounts were negotiated. This commitment benefits you because the overall commission rates and asset-based fees you pay are lower than they would be otherwise. In addition to commissions and asset-based fees, Schwab charges you a flat dollar amount as a "prime broker" or "trade away" fee for each trade that we have executed by a different broker-dealer but where the securities bought or the funds from the securities sold are deposited (settled) into your Schwab account. These fees are in addition to the commissions or other compensation you pay the executing broker-dealer. Because of this, in order to minimize your trading costs, we have Schwab execute most trades for your account.

We are not required to select the broker or dealer that charges the lowest transaction cost, even if that broker provides execution quality comparable to other brokers or dealers.

Although we are not required to execute all trades through Schwab, we have determined that having Schwab execute most trades is consistent with our duty to seek "best execution" of your trades. Best execution means the most favorable terms for a transaction based on all relevant factors, including those listed above (see "How we select brokers/custodians"). By using another broker or dealer you may pay lower transaction costs.

#### **Products and services available to us from Schwab**

Schwab Advisor Services™ is Schwab's business serving independent investment advisory firms like us. They provide us and our clients with access to their institutional brokerage services (trading, custody, reporting, and related services), many of which are not typically available to Schwab retail customers. However, certain retail investors may be able to get institutional brokerage services from Schwab without going through us.

Schwab also makes available various support services. Some of those services help us manage or administer our clients' accounts, while others help us manage and grow our business. Schwab's support services are generally available on an unsolicited basis (we don't have to request them) and at no charge to us. Following is a more detailed description of Schwab's support services:

**Services that benefit you.** Schwab's institutional brokerage services include access to a broad range of investment products, execution of securities transactions, and custody of client assets.

The investment products available through Schwab include some to which we might not otherwise have access or that would require a significantly higher minimum initial investment by our clients. Schwab's services described in this paragraph generally benefit you and your account.

**Services that do not directly benefit you.** Schwab also makes available to us other products and services that benefit us but do not directly benefit you or your account. These products and services assist us in managing and administering our clients' accounts and operating our firm. They include investment research, both Schwab's own and that of third parties. We use this research to service all or a substantial number of our clients' accounts, including accounts not maintained at Schwab. In addition to investment research, Schwab also makes available software and other technology that:

- Provide access to client account data (such as duplicate trade confirmations and account statements)

- Facilitate trade execution and allocate aggregated trade orders for multiple client accounts
- Provide pricing and other market data
- Facilitate payment of our fees from our clients' accounts
- Assist with back-office functions, recordkeeping, and client reporting

Services that generally benefit only us. Schwab also offers other services intended to help us manage and further develop our business enterprise. These services include:

- Educational conferences and events
- Consulting on technology and business needs
- Consulting on legal and related compliance needs
- Publications and conferences on practice management and business succession
- Access to employee benefits providers, human capital consultants, and insurance providers
- Marketing consulting and support

Schwab provides some of these services itself. In other cases, it will arrange for third-party vendors to provide the services to us. Schwab also discounts or waives its fees for some of these services or pays all or a part of a third party's fees. Schwab also provides us with other benefits, such as occasional business entertainment of our personnel. If you did not maintain your account with Schwab, we would be required to pay for these services from our own resources.

### **Our Interest in Schwab's Services**

The availability of these services from Schwab benefits us because we do not have to produce or purchase them. We don't have to pay for Schwab's services. These services are not contingent upon us committing any specific amount of business to Schwab in trading commissions or assets in custody. The fact that we receive these benefits from Schwab is an incentive for us to recommend the use of Schwab rather than making such a decision based exclusively on your interest in receiving the best value in custody services and the most favorable execution of your transactions. This is a conflict of interest. We believe, however, that taken in the aggregate, our recommendation of Schwab as custodian and broker is in the best interests of our clients. Our selection is primarily supported by the scope, quality, and price of Schwab's services (see "How we select brokers/ custodians") and not Schwab's services that benefit only us.

### **Brokerage for Client Referrals**

We do not receive client referrals from broker-dealers in exchange for cash or other compensation, such as brokerage services or research.

### **Directed Brokerage**

We routinely require that you open an account with and that we execute transactions through Charles Schwab & Co. As such, we may be unable to achieve the most favorable execution of your transactions and you may pay higher brokerage commissions than you might otherwise pay through another broker-dealer that offers the same types of services. Not all advisers require directed brokerage.

Persons providing investment advice on behalf of our firm who are registered representatives of Silver Oak Securities, Inc. would normally be required to recommend Silver Oak Securities, Inc. to you for brokerage services. These individuals are subject to applicable industry rules that restrict them from conducting securities transactions away from Silver Oak Securities, Inc. unless Silver Oak Securities, Inc. provides the representatives with written authorization to do so, which Silver Oak Securities, Inc. has done in this case. Therefore, although these individuals would generally be limited to conducting securities transactions through Silver Oak Securities, Inc., in this instance, as noted above, they will generally recommend Silver Oak Securities, Inc. has given permission for dual representatives to write

business at Schwab under the RIA. It may be the case that Silver Oak Securities, Inc. has given permission for dual reps to write business at Schwab under the RIA. charges higher transaction costs and/or custodial fees than another broker charges for the same types of services. However, if transactions were executed through Silver Oak Securities, Inc. these individuals (in their separate capacities as registered representatives of Silver Oak Securities, Inc.) could earn commission-based compensation as a result of placing the recommended securities transactions through Silver Oak Securities, Inc. This practice would present a conflict of interest because these registered representatives would have an incentive to effect securities transactions for the purpose of generating commissions rather than solely based on your needs. You may utilize the broker-dealer of your choice and have no obligation to purchase or sell securities through such broker as we recommend. However, if you do not use the recommended broker we may not be able to accept your account. See the *Fees and Compensation* section in this brochure for more information on the compensation received by registered representatives who are affiliated with our firm.

### **Block Trades**

We may combine multiple orders for shares of the same securities purchased for advisory accounts we manage (this practice is commonly referred to as "block trading"). We will then distribute a portion of the shares to participating accounts in a fair and equitable manner. The distribution of the shares purchased is typically proportionate to the size of the account, but it is not based on account performance or the amount or structure of management fees. Subject to our discretion regarding factual and market conditions, when we combine orders, each participating account pays an average price per share for all transactions and pays a proportionate share of all transaction costs. Accounts owned by our firm or persons associated with our firm may participate in block trading with your accounts; however, they will not be given preferential treatment.

We combine multiple orders for shares of the same securities purchased for discretionary accounts; however, we do not combine orders for non-discretionary accounts. Accordingly, non-discretionary accounts may pay different costs than discretionary accounts pay.

## **Item 13 Review of Accounts**

The investment adviser representative on your account(s) will monitor your accounts on an ongoing basis and will attempt to conduct account reviews at least annually with you, either in person over the phone, to ensure the advisory services provided to you are consistent with your investment needs and objectives. Additional reviews may be conducted based on various circumstances, including, but not limited to:

- contributions and withdrawals,
- year-end tax planning,
- market moving events,
- security specific events, and/or,
- changes in your risk/return objectives.

Sometimes, we will provide you with additional written reports. You will receive trade confirmations and monthly or quarterly statements from your account custodian(s).

## **Item 14 Client Referrals and Other Compensation**

### **Charles Schwab & Co., Inc.**

We receive an economic benefit from Schwab in the form of the support products and services it makes available to us and other independent investment advisors whose clients maintain their



accounts at Schwab. You do not pay more for assets maintained at Schwab as a result of these arrangements. However, we benefit from the referral arrangement because the cost of these services would otherwise be borne directly by us. You should consider these conflicts of interest when selecting a custodian. The products and services provided by Schwab, how they benefit us, and the related conflicts of interest are described above (see Item 12—Brokerage Practices).

### **Other Compensation and Benefits**

We may receive economic benefits from third parties for providing investment advice or other advisory services to you. Through our participation in certain programs or use of a custodian we are entitled to receive economic benefits. As part of our fiduciary duty, we endeavor at all times to put the interests of our clients first. Clients should be aware, however, that the receipt of economic benefits from a non-client in and of itself creates a potential conflict of interest and may influence our choice in providing services to your account. This arrangement does not cause our clients to pay any additional transaction fees beyond those that are traditionally charged by our firm and/or other service providers.

As disclosed under the *Fees and Compensation* section in this brochure, persons providing investment advice on behalf of our firm may be licensed insurance agents, and may be registered representatives with Silver Oak Securities, Inc. ("Silver Oak"), a securities broker-dealer, and a member of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority and the Securities Investor Protection Corporation. For information on the conflicts of interest this presents, and how we address these conflicts, refer to the *Fees and Compensation* section.

Silver Oak may also provide other compensation to dually registered persons, including but not limited to, bonus payments, repayable and forgivable loans, stock awards and other benefits.

### **Client Referrals**

Currently, we do not compensate any individual or firm for client referrals.

Refer to the *Brokerage Practices* section above for disclosures on research and other benefits we may receive resulting from our relationship with your account custodian.

## **Item 15 Custody**

Upon your written authorization, your independent custodian will directly debit your account(s) for the payment of our advisory fees. This ability to deduct our advisory fees from your accounts causes our firm to exercise limited custody over your funds or securities. We do not have physical custody of any of your funds and/or securities. Your funds and securities will be held with a bank, broker-dealer, or other qualified custodian. You will receive account statements from the qualified custodian(s) holding your funds and securities at least quarterly. The account statements from your custodian(s) will indicate the amount of our advisory fees deducted from your account(s) each billing period. You should carefully review account statements for accuracy.

### **Wire Transfers, Electronic Fund Transfers and/or Standing Letter of Authorization**

Our firm, or persons associated with our firm, may effect wire transfers or electronic fund transfers from client accounts to one or more third parties designated, in writing, by the client without obtaining written client consent for each separate, individual transaction as long as the client has provided us with written authorization to do so. Such written authorization is known as a Standing Letter of Authorization. An adviser with authority to conduct such third party wire transfers or electronic fund transfers has access to the client's assets, and therefore has custody of the client's assets in any related accounts.

However, we do not have to obtain a surprise annual audit, as we otherwise would be required to by reason of having custody, as long as we meet the following criteria:

1. You provide a written, signed instruction to the qualified custodian that includes the third party's name and address or account number at a custodian;
2. You authorize us in writing to direct transfers to the third party either on a specified schedule or from time to time;
3. Your qualified custodian verifies your authorization (e.g., signature review) and provides a transfer of funds notice to you promptly after each transfer;
4. You can terminate or change the instruction;
5. We have no authority or ability to designate or change the identity of the third party, the address, or any other information about the third party;
6. We maintain records showing that the third party is not a related party to us nor located at the same address as us; and
7. Your qualified custodian sends you, in writing, an initial notice confirming the instruction and an annual notice reconfirming the instruction.

We hereby confirm that we meet the above criteria.

### **Item 16 Investment Discretion**

Before we can buy or sell securities on your behalf, you must first sign our discretionary management agreement and the appropriate trading authorization forms. Upon signing our agreement, we may exercise full discretionary authority to supervise and direct the investments of a client's account. This authority allows us and our affiliates to implement investment decisions without prior consultation with the client. Such investment decisions are made in the client's best interest and in accordance with the client's investment objectives. Other than agreed upon management fees due to us, this discretionary authority does not grant the Firm the authority to have custody of any assets in the client's account or to direct the delivery of any securities or the payment of any funds held in the account to us. The discretionary authority granted by the client to the Firm does not allow us to direct the disposition of such securities or funds to anyone except the account holder.

### **Item 17 Voting Client Securities**

We will not vote proxies on behalf of your advisory accounts. At your request, we may offer you advice regarding corporate actions and the exercise of your proxy voting rights. If you own shares of applicable securities, you are responsible for exercising your right to vote as a shareholder.

In most cases, you will receive proxy materials directly from the account custodian. However, in the event we were to receive any written or electronic proxy materials, we would forward them directly to you by mail, unless you have authorized our firm to contact you by electronic mail, in which case, we

would forward any electronic solicitation to vote proxies.

## **Item 18 Financial Information**

Our firm does not have any financial condition that is reasonably likely to impair our ability to meet contractual commitments to clients.

We do not take physical custody of client funds or securities, or serve as signatory for client accounts, and, we do not require the prepayment of more than \$1,200 in fees six or more months in advance. Therefore, we are not required to include a financial statement with this brochure.

We have not filed a bankruptcy petition at any time in the past ten years.

## **Item 19 Requirements for State-Registered Advisers [Not- Applicable]**

Blue Water Asset Management, LLC is registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC"); therefore, this section is not applicable.

## **Item 20 Additional Information**

### **Your Privacy**

We view protecting your private information as a top priority. Pursuant to applicable privacy requirements, we have instituted policies and procedures to ensure that we keep your personal information private and secure.

We do not disclose any nonpublic personal information about you to any non-affiliated third parties, except as permitted by law. In the course of servicing your account, we may share some information with our service providers, such as transfer agents, custodians, broker-dealers, accountants, consultants, and attorneys.

As discussed previously, certain associated persons of the BWAM are registered representatives of Silver Oak Securities, Inc. As a result of this relationship, Silver Oak may have access to certain confidential information (e.g., financial information, investment objectives, transactions and holdings) about BWAM's clients, even if client does not establish any account through Silver Oak.

We restrict internal access to nonpublic personal information about you to employees, who need that information in order to provide products or services to you. We maintain physical and procedural safeguards that comply with regulatory standards to guard your nonpublic personal information and to ensure our integrity and confidentiality. We will not sell information about you or your accounts to anyone. We do not share your information unless it is required to process a transaction, at your request, or required by law.

You will receive a copy of our privacy notice prior to or at the time you sign an advisory agreement with our firm. Thereafter, we will deliver a copy of the current privacy policy notice to you on an annual basis. Contact our main office at the telephone number on the cover page of this brochure if you have any questions regarding this policy.

### **Trade Errors**

In the event a trading error occurs in your account, our policy is to restore your account to the position it should have been in had the trading error not occurred. Depending on the circumstances, corrective actions may include canceling the trade, adjusting an allocation, donating profits to charity, and/or

reimbursing the account.

**Class Action Lawsuits**

We do not determine if securities held by you are the subject of a class action lawsuit or whether you are eligible to participate in class action settlements or litigation nor do we initiate or participate in litigation to recover damages on your behalf for injuries as a result of actions, misconduct, or negligence by issuers of securities held by you.