

# **Howard Wealth Management, LLC**

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

This brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of Howard Wealth Management, LLC. If you have any questions about the contents of this brochure, contact us at 203-421-8339. The information in this brochure has not been approved or verified by the United States Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") or by any state securities authority.

Additional information about Howard Wealth Management, LLC is available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov).

Howard Wealth Management, LLC 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

Howard Wealth Management believes that communication and transparency are the foundation of its relationship with its clients and will continually strive to provide its clients with complete and accurate information at all times. Howard Wealth Management encourages all current and prospective clients to read this Disclosure Brochure and discuss any questions you may have with us. And of course, we always welcome your feedback.

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 the filing of our last annual updating amendment, dated February 21, 2023 we have made the following material changes to our Brochure:

We revised Item 12 to disclose that we now recommend the use of Charles Schwab & Co., Inc. ("Schwab") as our broker-dealer/custodian and we have removed all references to TD Ameritrade in Items 12, 15, and 20. In light of Schwab's acquisition of TD Ameritrade, all clients have been moved to the Schwab platform.

Additionally, we revised Items 5, 10 and 14 to remove references to Brett Howard as a licensed independent insurance agent. Mr. Howard has decided not to renew his insurance license.

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## Item 4 Advisory Business

### Description of Firm

Howard Wealth Management, LLC is a registered investment adviser primarily based in Madison, Connecticut. We are organized as a limited liability company ("LLC") under the laws of the State of Connecticut. We have been providing investment advisory services since November 2018. Howard Wealth Management, LLC is owned by Justin Howard and Brett Howard.

Howard Wealth Management serves as a fiduciary to Clients, as defined under applicable laws and regulations. As a fiduciary Howard Wealth Management upholds a duty of loyalty, fairness and good faith towards each Client and seeks to mitigate potential conflicts of interest. Our fiduciary commitment is further described in our Code of Ethics. For more information regarding our Code of Ethics, please see Item 11 – *Code of Ethics, Participation or Interest in Client Transactions and Personal Trading*.

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 "we," "our," and "us" refer to Howard Wealth Management, LLC and the words "you," "your," and "client" refer to you as either a client or prospective client of our firm.

### Portfolio Management Services

We provide customized investment advisory solutions for our Clients. This is achieved through continuous personal Client contact and interaction while providing discretionary investment management and related advisory services. Howard Wealth Management works with each Client to identify their investment goals and objectives as well as risk tolerance and financial situation in order to create a portfolio strategy. Howard Wealth Management will then construct a portfolio, consisting of low-cost, diversified mutual funds and/or exchange-traded funds ("ETFs") to achieve the Client's investment goals. We may also utilize individual stocks, bonds and alternative investments to meet the needs of its Clients.

If you engage us for discretionary portfolio management services, we will require you to grant us discretionary authority to manage your account. Discretionary authorization will allow us to determine the specific securities, as well as the amount of securities to be purchased or sold for your account without your approval prior to each transaction. Discretionary authority is typically granted by the investment advisory agreement you sign with our firm and the appropriate trading authorization forms.

You may limit our discretionary authority (for example, limiting the types of securities that can be purchased or sold for your account) by providing our firm with your restrictions and guidelines in writing.

We may also offer non-discretionary portfolio management services. If you enter into non-discretionary arrangements with our firm, we must obtain your approval prior to executing any transactions on behalf of your account. You have an unrestricted right to decline to implement any advice provided by our firm on a non-discretionary basis.

We evaluate and select investments for inclusion in Client portfolios only after applying our internal due diligence process. We may recommend, on occasion, redistributing investment allocations to diversify the portfolio. We may recommend specific positions to increase sector or asset class weightings and may recommend employing cash positions as a possible hedge against market movement. We may also recommend selling positions for reasons that include, but are not limited to, harvesting capital

gains or losses, business or sector risk exposure to a specific security or class of securities, overvaluation or overweighting of the position(s) in the portfolio, change in risk tolerance of Client, generating cash to meet Client needs, or any risk deemed unacceptable for the Client's risk tolerance.

At no time will we accept or maintain custody of a Client's funds or securities. All Client assets will be managed within their designated account(s) at the Custodian, pursuant to the Client investment advisory agreement. For additional information, please see Item 12 – *Brokerage Practices* and Item 15 – *Custody*.

### **Asset Allocation Services**

We offer asset allocation services that are tailored to meet our Clients' needs and investment objectives. Once you have retained our firm for asset allocation services, we will gather information about your financial situation and objectives, and assist you in determining your investment goals, objectives, risk tolerance, and retirement plan time horizon. We will initially provide you with recommendations as to how to allocate your investments among categories of assets. We will then review your account on a periodic basis. Where appropriate, we may provide you with recommendations to change your asset allocation in an effort to remain consistent with your stated financial objectives. You are free at all times to accept or reject any of our investment recommendations. You are solely responsible for implementing our recommendations. Unless you separately retain us for portfolio management services, we will not execute any transactions or changes in asset allocation on your behalf.

### **Financial Planning Services**

Howard Wealth Management will typically provide a variety of financial planning services to individuals and families, pursuant to a written financial planning agreement. Services are offered in several areas of a Client's financial situation, depending on their goals, objectives and financial situation.

Generally, such financial planning services will involve preparing a financial plan or rendering a financial consultation based on the Client's financial goals and objectives. This planning or consulting may encompass one or more areas of need, including, but not limited to, investment planning, retirement planning, personal savings, education savings, insurance needs, and other areas of a Client's financial outlook.

A financial plan developed for, or financial consultation rendered to, the Client will usually include general recommendations for a course of activity or specific actions to be taken by the Client. For example, recommendations may be made that the Client start or revise their investment programs, commence or alter their retirement savings, establish education savings and/or charitable giving programs. We may also refer Clients to an accountant, attorney or another specialist, as appropriate for their unique situation. Depending on the arrangements made at the inception of the engagement, a comprehensive written financial plan may or may not be included. For certain financial planning engagements, we will provide a written summary of Client's financial situation, observations, and recommendations. For consulting, or ad-hoc, engagements we may not provide a written summary. Plans or consultations are typically completed within six months of contract date, assuming all information and documents requested are provided promptly.

Financial planning and consulting recommendations may pose a potential conflict between our interests and the interests of the Client. For example, a recommendation to engage us for investment management services or to increase the level of investment assets with us would pose a conflict, as it would increase the advisory fees paid to us. Clients are not obligated to implement any recommendations made by us. Clients are also not obligated to maintain an ongoing relationship with us. If the Client elects to act on any of the recommendations made by us, the Client is under no obligation to implement the transaction through us.

**Financial Consulting Services**

We offer financial consulting services to individuals, owners, and key employees of closely-held companies that primarily involves advising clients on specific financial-related topics. The topics we address may include, but are not limited to, business succession and exit planning, strategic planning, risk assessment/management, investment planning, financial organization, or financial decision making/negotiation.

**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 educational seminars to plan participants on such topics as:

- Diversification
- Asset allocation
- Risk tolerance
- Time horizon

Our educational seminars may include other investment-related topics specific to the particular plan.

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.

**Family Office and Wealth Planning Services**

We offer Family Office and Wealth Planning Services designed to help our clients organize their financial situation and plan for the successful transfer of wealth to the next generation in the most tax-advantaged manner. Such services generally include financial planning in the following areas:

- Family Continuity
- Estate Planning and Trustee Oversight
- Integrated Tax and Financial Planning
- Lifestyle Management
- Family Philanthropy
- Risk Management

### **Educational Seminars and Workshops**

Employers may also engage us to provide educational seminars or workshops for their employees in order to explain various types of investments and the securities industry generally. In that event, the individual employees are not considered to be clients of the firm unless they engage us separately. In addition, we also provide educational discussions related to financial planning in general which may include, but is not limited to: retirement planning, estate planning, tax planning and debt management.

### **Types of Investments**

We offer advice on equity securities, corporate debt securities (other than commercial paper), commercial paper, certificates of deposit, municipal securities, mutual fund shares, United States government securities, money market funds, real estate investment trusts ("REITs"), structured notes and exchange traded funds ("ETFs").

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 an ERISA account to an account that we manage or provide investment advice to, because the assets increase our Assets Under Management and, in turn, our advisory fees. In contrast, we receive less, or no, compensation if assets remain in the current plan or are rolled over to another Company's plan in which you may participate.

### **Assets Under Management**

As of February 12, 2024, we provide continuous management services for \$290,500,000 in client assets on a discretionary basis, and \$0 in client assets on a non-discretionary basis.

## Item 5 Fees and Compensation

### Portfolio Management Services

Our annual fee for portfolio management services is negotiable and ranges from 0.25% to 1.50% depending on your financial situation, your objectives, the type and complexity of the asset management services provided, as well as the level of administration requested either directly or assumed by the Client. Assets in each of your account(s) are included in the fee assessment unless specifically identified in writing for exclusion.

Our annual portfolio management fee is billed and payable, quarterly in advance, based on the balance of your portfolio at the beginning of the billing period.

If the portfolio management agreement is executed at any time other than the first day of a calendar quarter, our fees will apply on a pro rata basis, which means that the advisory fee is payable in proportion to the number of days in the quarter for which you are a Client.

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. Combining account values may increase the asset total, which may result in you paying a lower overall percentage rate based on our negotiated fee.

We will 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.

In the event we have provided you with an invoice, we encourage you to reconcile our invoices with the statement(s) you receive from the qualified custodian. If you find any discrepancies between our invoice and the statement(s) you receive from the qualified custodian call our main office number located on the cover page of this brochure.

You may terminate the portfolio management agreement upon written notice. You will incur a pro rata charge for services rendered prior to the termination of the portfolio 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.

### Asset Allocation Services

Depending on the arrangements made at the inception of the engagement, we may charge either a fixed fee or an hourly rate for asset allocation services. The applicable fee is negotiated with the client and determined in advance of services rendered. Our annual fixed fee ranges from \$500 to \$30,000 and is billed quarterly. Depending on the arrangements made at the inception of the engagement, we may bill at the beginning or end of the quarter. Our hourly fee ranges from \$200 to \$375 per hour with certain legacy clients being charged a different hourly rate based on prior engagements with Justin and/or Brett at previous advisory firms. Depending on the arrangements made at the inception of the engagement, we may charge a portion of the hourly fee in advance, but typically our hourly fee is billed in arrears.



Our fees are negotiable and typically payable in arrears depending on the arrangements made at the inception of the engagement. You may terminate the investment advisory agreement by providing written notice to our firm in accordance with the terms of the agreement for services. If you have pre-paid advisory fees that we have not yet earned, you will receive a prorated refund of those fees.

### **Financial Planning Services**

We charge an annual fixed fee for financial planning services, which generally ranges from \$500 to \$30,000 and is billed quarterly. Depending on the arrangements made at the inception of the engagement, our fee for financial planning may be due either in advance or at the conclusion of the service. The fee is negotiable depending upon the complexity and scope of the plan, your financial situation, and your objectives. We do not require you to pay fees in excess of \$1,200 six or more months in advance. 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.

Depending on the arrangements made at the inception of the engagement, we may also agree to charge an hourly fee ranging from \$200 to \$375 for financial planning services, with certain legacy Clients being charged a different hourly rate based on prior engagements with Justin and/or Brett at previous advisory firms. Depending on the arrangements made at the inception of the engagement, we may charge a portion of the hourly fee in advance, but typically our hourly fee is billed in arrears. 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 also offer advice on single subject financial planning/general consulting services at the same hourly rate.

You may terminate the financial planning agreement upon written notice to our firm. If you have pre-paid financial planning fees that we have not yet earned, you will receive a prorated refund of those fees.

### **Financial Consulting Services**

We charge an hourly fee which ranges from \$200 to \$375 for financial consulting services with certain legacy clients being charged a different hourly rate based on prior engagements with Justin and/or Brett at previous advisory firms. Depending on the arrangements made at the inception of the engagement, we may charge a portion of the hourly fee in advance, but typically our hourly fee is billed in arrears.

As noted above, depending on the arrangements made at the inception of the engagement, we may also agree to charge a fixed fee for financial consulting services. Fixed fees are negotiable, range from \$500 to \$30,000, and are billed quarterly, depending on the scope and complexity of services rendered. Depending on the arrangements made at the inception of the engagement, our consulting fee may be due either in advance or upon completion of the agreed upon consulting services.

You may terminate the financial consulting agreement upon written notice to our firm. If you have pre-paid financial consulting fees that we have not yet earned, you will receive a prorated refund of those fees. If financial consulting fees are payable in arrears, you will be responsible for a prorated fee based on services performed prior to termination of the financial consulting agreement.

### **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 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.

### **Family Office and Wealth Planning Services**

As noted above, depending on the arrangements made at the inception of the engagement, we may agree to charge either a fixed fee or an hourly rate for family office and wealth planning services.

Fixed fees are negotiable and range from \$500 to \$30,000, depending on the scope and complexity of services rendered with the hourly rate ranging from \$200 to \$375, with certain legacy clients being charged a different hourly rate based on prior engagements with Justin and/or Brett at previous advisory firms. The fees are due and payable as invoiced.

You may terminate the family office and wealth planning services agreement upon 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.

### **Educational Seminars and Workshops**

When an employer has engaged us to provide an educational seminar or workshop for their employees (separate and apart from any educational seminars that might be provided in conjunction with retirement or pension services we provide to an employer), we will charge that employer either a flat fee or an hourly rate depending on the arrangements made at the inception of the engagement. The fee is negotiable and ranges from \$500 to \$10,000 as a flat fee or an hourly rate ranging from \$200 to \$375. Fees are due in advance.

### **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 – Item 12* 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.

We do not manage any proprietary investment funds or limited partnerships (for example, a mutual fund or a hedge fund) and have no financial incentive to recommend any particular investment options to our Clients.

## Item 7 Types of Clients

We generally offer investment advisory services to the following types of clients:

- Individuals
- High-net-worth individuals
- Pension and profit sharing plans (but not the plan participants unless they engage us separately)
- Corporations or other businesses

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

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

**Charting Analysis** - involves the gathering and processing of price and volume pattern information for a particular security, sector, broad index or commodity. This price and volume pattern information is analyzed. The resulting pattern and correlation data is used to detect departures from expected performance and diversification and predict future price movements and trends.

**Risk:** Our charting analysis may not accurately detect anomalies or predict future price movements. Current prices of securities may reflect all information known about the security and day-to-day changes in market prices of securities may follow random patterns and may not be predictable with any reliable degree of accuracy.

**Fundamental Analysis** - involves analyzing individual companies and their industry groups, such as a company's financial statements, details regarding the company's product line, the experience and expertise of the company's management, and the outlook for the company and its industry. The resulting data is used to measure the true value of the company's stock compared to the current market value.

**Risk:** The risk of fundamental analysis is that information obtained may be incorrect and the analysis may not provide an accurate estimate of earnings, which may be the basis for a stock's value. If securities prices adjust rapidly to new information, utilizing fundamental analysis may not result in favorable performance.

**Modern Portfolio Theory** - 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.

Our investment strategy is primarily long-term focused, but we may buy, sell or re-allocate positions that have been held less than one year to meet the objectives of the Client or due to market conditions. We will construct, implement and monitor the portfolio to ensure it meets the goals, objectives, circumstances, and risk tolerance agreed to by the Client. Each Client will have the opportunity to place reasonable restrictions on the types of investments to be held in their respective portfolio, subject to acceptance by us. Investment advice provided to different clients regarding the same security or investment might differ. Our investment strategies and advice may vary depending upon each client's specific financial situation.

**It is important that you notify us immediately with respect to any material changes to your financial circumstances, including for example, a change in your current or expected income level, tax circumstances, or employment status.**

### **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.

Custodians and broker-dealers must report the cost basis of equities acquired in client accounts. Your custodian will default to the First-In First-Out ("FIFO") 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.

**Other Risk Considerations**

When evaluating risk, financial loss may be viewed differently by each client and may depend on many different risks, each of which may affect the probability and magnitude of any potential losses. The following risks may not be all-inclusive, but should be considered carefully by a prospective client before retaining our services.

**Liquidity Risk:** The risk of being unable to sell your investment at a fair price at a given time due to high volatility or lack of active liquid markets. You may receive a lower price or it may not be possible to sell the investment at all.

**Credit Risk:** Credit risk typically applies to debt investments such as corporate, municipal, and sovereign fixed income or bonds. A bond issuing entity can experience a credit event that could impair or erase the value of an issuer's securities held by a client.

**Inflation and Interest Rate Risk:** Security prices and portfolio returns will likely vary in response to changes in inflation and interest rates. Inflation causes the value of future dollars to be worth less and may reduce the purchasing power of a client's future interest payments and principal. Inflation also generally leads to higher interest rates which may cause the value of many types of fixed income investments to decline.

**Horizon and Longevity Risk:** The risk that your investment horizon is shortened because of an unforeseen event, for example, the loss of your job. This may force you to sell investments that you were expecting to hold for the long term. If you must sell at a time that the markets are down, you may lose money. Longevity Risk is the risk of outliving your savings. This risk is particularly relevant for people who are retired, or are nearing retirement.

**Recommendation of Particular Types of Securities**

We recommend various types of securities and we do not primarily recommend one particular type of security over another 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. A description of the types of securities we may recommend to you and some of their inherent risks are provided below.

**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 or all of your principal. The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") 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 a Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation ("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 result in a positive outcome. However, if it goes

down and you earn less than you expected to earn, you may 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, U.S. government securities are backed by the full faith and credit of the U.S. 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.

**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 Exchange Traded Funds:** Mutual funds and exchange traded funds ("ETF") 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. ETFs 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.



ETFs may have tracking error risks. For example, the ETF investment adviser may not be able to cause the ETF's performance to match that of the Underlying Index or other benchmark, which may negatively affect the ETF's performance. In addition, for leveraged and inverse ETFs that seek to track the performance of their Underlying Indices or benchmarks on a daily basis, mathematical compounding may prevent the ETF from correlating with performance of its benchmark. In addition, an ETF may not have investment exposure to all of the securities included in its Underlying Index, or its weighting of investment exposure to such securities may vary from that of the Underlying Index. Some ETFs may invest in securities or financial instruments that are not included in the Underlying Index, but which are expected to yield similar performance.

**Commercial Paper:** Commercial paper ("CP") is, in most cases, an unsecured promissory note that is issued with a maturity of 270 days or less. Being unsecured the risk to the investor is that the issuer may default. There is a less risk in asset based commercial paper (ABCP). The difference between ABCP and CP is that instead of being an unsecured promissory note representing an obligation of the issuing company, ABCP is backed by securities. Therefore, the perceived quality of the ABCP depends on the underlying securities.

**Real Estate Investment Trust:** A real estate investment trust ("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 periodically. 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.

**Structured Products:** A structured product, also known as a market-linked product, is generally a pre-packaged investment strategy based on derivatives, such as a single security, a basket of securities, options, indices, commodities, debt issuances, and/or foreign currencies, and to a lesser extent, swaps. Structured products are usually issued by investment banks or affiliates thereof. They have a fixed maturity, and have two components: a note and a derivative. The derivative component is often an option. The note provides for periodic interest payments to the investor at a predetermined rate, and the derivative component provides for the payment at maturity. Some products use the derivative component as a put option written by the investor that gives the buyer of the put option the right to sell to the investor the security or securities at a predetermined price. Other products use the derivative component to provide for a call option written by the investor that gives the buyer of the call option the right to buy the security or securities from the investor at a predetermined price. A feature of some structured products is a "principal guarantee" function, which offers protection of principal if held to maturity. However, these products are not always Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation insured; they may only be insured by the issuer, and thus have the potential for loss of principal in the case of a liquidity crisis, or other solvency problems with the issuing company. Investing in structured products involves a number of risks including but not limited to: fluctuations in the price, level or yield of underlying instruments, interest rates, currency values and credit quality; substantial loss of principal; limits on participation in any appreciation of the underlying instrument; limited liquidity; credit risk of the issuer; conflicts of interest; and, other events that are difficult to predict.

## Item 9 Disciplinary Information

**There are no legal, regulatory or disciplinary events involving us or any of the persons providing investment advice on our behalf.** We value the trust you place in us. As we advise all Clients, we encourage you to perform the requisite due diligence on any advisor or service provider with whom you partner. Our backgrounds are on the Investment Adviser Public Disclosure website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov) and may be found by searching our firm name or our CRD # 299052. You may also search the background of the persons providing investment advice on our behalf by entering their name.

## Item 10 Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations

We have not provided information on other financial industry activities and affiliations, except as otherwise noted below, because we do not have any relationship or arrangement that is material to our advisory business or to our Clients with any of the types of entities listed below.

1. investment company or other pooled investment vehicle (including a mutual fund, closed-end investment company, unit investment trust, private investment company or "hedge fund," and offshore fund).
2. other investment adviser or financial planner.
3. futures commission merchant, commodity pool operator, or commodity trading advisor.
4. banking or thrift institution.
5. accountant or accounting firm.
6. lawyer or law firm.
7. insurance company or agency.
8. pension consultant.
9. real estate broker or dealer.
10. sponsor or syndicator of limited partnerships.

## 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. **At no time will we, or any Supervised Person affiliated with us, transact in any security to the detriment of any Client.** 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 and Block Trading**

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. In addition, 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. In both cases, a conflict of interest exists 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.

Note: We may also combine our orders to purchase securities with your orders to purchase securities ("block trading"). Refer to Item 12 - *Brokerage Practices* section in this brochure for information on our block trading practices.

## **Item 12 Brokerage Practices**

### **The custodian and brokers we use - Charles Schwab (Schwab)**

We do not maintain custody of your assets that we manage or on which we advise, 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 require that our clients use Charles Schwab & Co., Inc. (Schwab), a registered broker-dealer, member SIPC, as the qualified custodian, when investing with us.

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 this arrangement 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. 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 use 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. In addition to commissions and/or 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 selection 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.

### **Soft Dollar Benefits**

We do not have any soft dollar arrangements.

### **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 direct our firm to execute transactions through Schwab. 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 investment advisers require their clients to direct brokerage.

**Block Trades**

Transactions for each client generally will be effected independently, unless we decide to purchase or sell the same securities for several clients at approximately the same time. We may, but are not obligated to, 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. Generally, participating accounts will pay a fixed transaction cost regardless of the number of shares transacted. In certain cases, each participating account pays an average price per share for all transactions and pays a proportionate share of all transaction costs on any given day. In the event an order is only partially filled, the shares will be allocated to participating accounts in a fair and equitable manner, typically in proportion to the size of each Client's order. 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 do not block trade for non-discretionary accounts. Accordingly, non-discretionary accounts may pay different costs than discretionary accounts pay. If you enter into non-discretionary arrangements with our firm, we may not be able to buy and sell the same quantities of securities for you and you may pay higher commissions, fees, and/or transaction costs than clients who enter into discretionary arrangements with our firm.

**Item 13 Review of Accounts**

We monitor securities in Client accounts on a regular and continuous basis. Formal reviews are generally conducted at least annually or more or less frequently depending on the needs of the Client. Reviews may be conducted more or less frequently at the Client's request. Accounts may be reviewed as a result of major changes in economic conditions, known changes in the Client's financial situation, and/or large deposits or withdrawals in the Client's account(s). The Client is encouraged to notify us if changes occur in the Client's personal financial outlook that might adversely affect the Client's investment plan. Additional reviews may be triggered by material market, economic or political events. 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.

We will provide you with additional or regular written reports in conjunction with account reviews. Reports we provide to you will contain relevant account and/or market-related information such as an inventory of account holdings and account performance, etc. You will receive trade confirmations and monthly or quarterly statements from your account custodian(s). The Client may also establish electronic access to the Custodian's website so that the Client may view these reports and their account activity.

Justin Howard and Brett Howard will review financial plans as needed, depending on the arrangements made with you at the inception of your advisory relationship to ensure that the advice provided is consistent with your investment needs and objectives. Generally, we will contact you periodically to determine whether any updates may be needed based on changes in your circumstances. Changed circumstances may include, but are not limited to, marriage, divorce, birth, death, inheritance, lawsuit, retirement, job loss and/or disability, among others. We recommend meeting with you at least annually to review and update your plan, if needed. Additional reviews will be conducted upon your request. Such reviews and updates may be subject to our then current hourly rate if you have engaged us for financial planning separately from our portfolio management service. Written updates to the financial plan will be provided in conjunction with the review. If you implement financial planning advice, you will receive trade confirmations and monthly or quarterly statements from relevant custodians.

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

We do not receive any compensation from any third party in connection with providing investment advice to you nor do we 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**

Howard Wealth Management does not accept or maintain custody of any Client accounts, except for the authorized deduction of our fee. As paying agent for our firm, Schwab may directly debit your account(s) for the payment of our advisory fees depending on the arrangements made at the inception of the engagement. The ability to deduct our advisory fees from your accounts will cause our firm to exercise limited custody over your funds and/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 Schwab at least quarterly.

In the event we also provide statements to you reflecting the amount of the advisory fee deducted from your account, you should compare our statements with the statements from Schwab to reconcile the information reflected on each statement. If you have a question regarding your account statement, or if you did not receive a statement from Schwab, contact us immediately at the telephone number on the cover page of this brochure.

### **Standing Letters of Authorization, Wire Transfer and/or Check-Writing Authority**

We do not permit third party wire transfers to be processed without client consent. Nor do we have signatory or check writing authority for client accounts. A client may either provide a letter of authorization for the transaction or provide us with a standing letter of authorization ("SLOA") that would direct us to instruct the qualified custodian holding the Client's account to transfer the assets to a third party designated by the Client in the SLOA. The SEC has determined that, in such cases investment advisers are deemed to have custody of those client assets that the SLOA applies to. The SEC has noted, however, that investment advisers would not be required to have those assets audited under the following circumstances:

1. The Client provides an instruction to the qualified custodian, in writing, that includes the Client's signature, the third party's name, and either the third party's address or the third party's account number at a custodian to which the transfer should be directed.
2. The Client authorizes the investment adviser, in writing, either on the qualified custodian's form or separately, to direct transfers to the third party either on a specified schedule or from time to time.

3. The Client's qualified custodian performs appropriate verification of the instruction, such as a signature review or other method to verify the Client's authorization, and provides a transfer of funds notice to the Client promptly after each transfer.
4. The Client has the ability to terminate or change the instruction to the Client's qualified custodian.
5. The Company has no authority or ability to designate or change the identity of the third party, the address, or any other information about the third party contained in the Client's instruction.
6. The Company maintains records showing that the third party is not a related party of the Company or located at the same address as the Company.
7. The Client's qualified custodian sends the client, in writing, an initial notice confirming the instruction and an annual notice reconfirming the instruction.

We have confirmed that the qualified custodian we recommend complies with the above requirements and we also comply with those provisions applicable to us. We periodically review SLOA arrangements for compliance with the Custody Rule including the above requirements.

## **Item 16 Investment Discretion**

We generally have discretion over the selection and amount of securities to be bought or sold in Client accounts without obtaining prior consent or approval from the Client. However, these purchases or sales may be subject to specified investment objectives, guidelines, or limitations previously set forth by the Client and agreed to by us. Discretionary authority will only be authorized upon full disclosure to the Client. The granting of such authority will be evidenced by the Client's execution of an investment advisory agreement containing all applicable limitations to such authority. All discretionary trades we make will be in accordance with each Client's investment objectives and goals.

If you enter into non-discretionary arrangements with our firm, we will obtain your approval prior to the execution of any transactions for your account(s). You have an unrestricted right to decline to implement any advice provided by our firm on a non-discretionary basis.

## **Item 17 Voting Client Securities**

We do not accept proxy-voting responsibility for any Client. Clients will receive proxy statements directly from the Custodian. We will assist in answering questions relating to proxies, however, the Client retains the sole responsibility for proxy decisions and voting.

## **Item 18 Financial Information**

Our firm does not have any financial condition or impairment that would prevent us from meeting our contractual commitments to you. We do not take physical custody of client funds or securities, or serve as trustee or 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**

We are a federally registered investment adviser; therefore, we are not required to respond to this item.



## Item 20 Additional Information

### Trade Errors

From time-to-time an error might occur in submitting a trade order on your behalf. When this occurs, Advisor may place a correcting trade with the broker-dealer which has custody of your account. If an investment gain results from the correcting trade, the gain will remain in your account unless the same error involved other client account(s) that should have received the gain, it is not permissible for you to retain the gain, or we confer with you and you decide to forego the gain (e.g., due to tax reasons). If the gain does not remain in your account and Charles Schwab & Co. Inc. ("Schwab") is the custodian, Schwab will donate the amount of any gain \$100 and over to charity. If a loss occurs greater than \$100, Advisor will pay for the loss. Schwab will maintain the loss or gain (if such gain is not retained in your account) if it is under \$100 to minimize and offset its administrative time and expense. Generally, if related trade errors result in both gains and losses in your account, they may be netted.

### Class Action Lawsuits

We will assist you, in conjunction with your legal counsel or other professionals, in filing claims with the claims administrator to participate in any settlement proceeds related to class action settlements involving a security held in your portfolio. We may also work with your legal counsel to determine whether you are eligible to participate in class action litigation to recover damages on your behalf for injuries as a result of actions, misconduct, or negligence by issuers of securities held in your portfolio.

### 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:

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 70.5.
  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.