

**Item 1: Cover Page  
Part 2A of Form ADV: Firm Brochure  
December 2019**

**Blue Zone Wealth Advisors, LLC  
11812 San Vicente Blvd Ste. 250  
Los Angeles, CA 90049**

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Chief Compliance Officer**

This brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of Blue Zone Wealth Advisors, LLC. If clients have any questions about the contents of this brochure, please contact us at [jlu@bluezoneadvisory.com](mailto:jlu@bluezoneadvisory.com). The information in this brochure has not been approved or verified by the United States Securities and Exchange Commission or by any State Securities Authority. Additional information about our firm is also available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov) by searching CRD #305943.

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

## **Item 2: Material Changes**

Blue Zone Wealth Advisors, LLC is required to make clients aware of information that has changed since the last annual update to the Firm Brochure ("Brochure") and that may be important to them. Clients can then determine whether to review the brochure in its entirety or to contact us with questions about the changes.

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## Item 4: Advisory Business

Our firm is dedicated to providing individuals and other types of clients with a wide array of investment advisory services. Our firm is a limited liability company formed under the laws of the State of Delaware in 2019 and has been in business as an investment adviser since that time. Our firm is owned by Judith Lu.

The purpose of this Brochure is to disclose the conflicts of interest associated with the investment transactions, compensation and any other matters related to investment decisions made by our firm or its representatives. As a fiduciary, it is our duty to always act in the client's best interest. This is accomplished in part by knowing our client. Our firm has established a service-oriented advisory practice with open lines of communication for many different types of clients to help meet their financial goals while remaining sensitive to risk tolerance and time horizons. Working with clients to understand their investment objectives while educating them about our process, facilitates the kind of working relationship we value.

### **Types of Advisory Services Offered**

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#### **Comprehensive Portfolio Management:**

As part of our Comprehensive Portfolio Management service clients will be provided asset management and financial planning or consulting services. This service is designed to assist clients in meeting their financial goals through the use of a financial plan or consultation. Our firm conducts client meetings to understand their current financial situation, existing resources, financial goals, and tolerance for risk. Based on what is learned, an investment approach is presented to the client, consisting of individual stocks, bonds, ETFs, options, mutual funds and other public and private securities or investments. Once the appropriate portfolio has been determined, portfolios are continuously and regularly monitored, and if necessary, rebalanced based upon the client's individual needs, stated goals and objectives. Upon client request, our firm provides a summary of observations and recommendations for the planning or consulting aspects of this service.

When deemed suitable for the client, our firm utilizes the sub-advisory services of a third party investment advisory firm or individual advisor to aid in the implementation of an investment portfolio designed by our firm. Before selecting a firm or individual, our firm will ensure that the chosen party is properly licensed or registered.

#### **Retirement Plan Consulting:**

Our firm provides retirement plan consulting services to employer plan sponsors on an ongoing basis. Generally, such consulting services consist of assisting employer plan sponsors in establishing, monitoring and reviewing their company's participant-directed retirement plan. As the needs of the plan sponsor dictate, areas of advising may include:

- Establishing an Investment Policy Statement – Our firm will assist in the development of a statement that summarizes the investment goals and objectives along with the broad strategies to be employed to meet the objectives.

- Investment Options – Our firm will work with the Plan Sponsor to evaluate existing investment options and make recommendations for appropriate changes.
- Asset Allocation and Portfolio Construction – Our firm will develop strategic asset allocation models to aid Participants in developing strategies to meet their investment objectives, time horizon, financial situation and tolerance for risk.
- Investment Monitoring – Our firm will monitor the performance of the investments and notify the client in the event of over/underperformance and in times of market volatility.
- Participant Education – Our firm will provide opportunities to educate plan participants about their retirement plan offerings, different investment options, and general guidance on allocation strategies.

In providing services for retirement plan consulting, our firm does not provide any advisory services with respect to the following types of assets: employer securities, real estate (excluding real estate funds and publicly traded REITS), participant loans, non-publicly traded securities or assets, other illiquid investments, or brokerage window programs (collectively, “Excluded Assets”). All retirement plan consulting services shall be in compliance with the applicable state laws regulating retirement consulting services. This applies to client accounts that are retirement or other employee benefit plans (“Plan”) governed by the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, as amended (“ERISA”). If the client accounts are part of a Plan, and our firm accepts appointment to provide services to such accounts, our firm acknowledges its fiduciary standard within the meaning of Section 3(21) or 3(38) of ERISA as designated by the Retirement Plan Consulting Agreement with respect to the provision of services described therein.

### **Tailoring of Advisory Services**

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Our firm offers individualized investment advice to our Comprehensive Portfolio Management clients. General investment advice will be offered to our Retirement Plan Consulting clients.

Each Comprehensive Portfolio Management client has the opportunity to place reasonable restrictions on the types of investments to be held in the portfolio. Restrictions on investments in certain securities or types of securities may not be possible due to the level of difficulty this would entail in managing the account.

### **Participation in Wrap Fee Programs**

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Our firm does not offer or sponsor a wrap fee program.

### **Regulatory Assets Under Management**

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Our firm is a newly registered adviser and does not have initial assets to report.

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## Item 5: Fees & Compensation

### Compensation for Our Advisory Services

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#### Comprehensive Portfolio Management:

Advisory fees for this service will be charged either on a percentage of assets under management and/or for a fixed fee. If Client is charged as a percentage of assets under management, the maximum annual fee charged for this service will not exceed 1.5%. Fixed Fees will not exceed \$10,000,000 nor represent a fee of more than 1.5% of the client's assets under management. A combination of a fixed fee and fee calculated according to Client's assets under management may be negotiated. In such cases the aggregate of the fixed fee and asset-based fee will not exceed 1.5%. Fees to be assessed will be outlined in the advisory agreement to be signed by the client. Annualized fees are billed on a pro-rata basis quarterly in arrears based on the value of the account(s) on the last day of the quarter. Fees are negotiable and will be deducted from client account(s). Adjustments will be made for deposits and withdrawals during the quarter. In rare cases, our firm will agree to directly invoice. As part of this process, Clients understand the following:

- a) The client's independent custodian sends statements at least quarterly showing the market values for each security included in the Assets and all account disbursements, including the amount of the advisory fees paid to our firm;
- b) Clients will provide authorization permitting our firm to be directly paid by these terms. Our firm will send an invoice directly to the custodian; and
- c) If our firm sends a copy of our invoice to the client, a legend urging the comparison of information provided in our statement with those from the qualified custodian will be included.

The combined annual fee charged to clients whose portfolios incorporate third party money managers, sub advisors and/or separately managed accounts (collectively "third parties") will not exceed the maximum fee published above for this service. Our firm will debit its fees for this service as laid out in the executed advisory agreement between the client and our firm. This fee shall be exclusive of any fees assessed by a chosen third party. The third parties we recommend will not charge you a higher fee than they would have charged without us introducing you to them. Third parties establish and maintain their own billing procedures over which we have no control. In general, they will directly bill you and you will receive a copy of the appropriate disclosure documents that explain these procedures.

#### Retirement Plan Consulting:

Our Retirement Plan Consulting services are billed based on the percentage of Plan assets under management. The total estimated fee, as well as the ultimate fee charged, is based on the scope and complexity of our engagement with the client. Fees based on a percentage of managed Plan assets will not exceed 1%. The fee-paying arrangements will be determined on a case-by-case basis and will be detailed in the signed consulting agreement.

## **Other Types of Fees & Expenses**

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Clients will incur transaction fees for trades executed by their chosen custodian, either based on a percentage of the dollar amount of assets in the account(s) or via individual transaction charges. These transaction fees are separate from our firm's advisory fees and will be disclosed by the chosen custodian. Clients may also pay holdings charges imposed by the chosen custodian for certain investments, charges imposed directly by a mutual fund, index fund, or exchange traded fund, which shall be disclosed in the fund's prospectus (i.e., fund management fees, initial or deferred sales charges, mutual fund sales loads, 12b-1 fees, surrender charges, variable annuity fees, IRA and qualified retirement plan fees, and other fund expenses), mark-ups and mark-downs, spreads paid to market makers, fees for trades executed away from custodian, wire transfer fees and other fees and taxes on brokerage accounts and securities transactions. Our firm does not receive a portion of these fees.

## **Termination & Refunds**

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Either party may terminate the advisory agreement signed with our firm for Comprehensive Portfolio Management services in writing at any time. Upon notice of termination pro-rata advisory fees for services rendered to the point of termination will be charged. If advisory fees cannot be deducted, our firm will send an invoice for due advisory fees to the client.

Either party to a Retirement Plan Consulting Agreement may terminate at any time by providing written notice to the other party. Full refunds will only be made in cases where cancellation occurs within 5 business days of signing an agreement. After 5 business days from initial signing, either party must provide the other party 30 days written notice to terminate billing. Billing will terminate 30 days after receipt of termination notice. Clients will be charged on a pro-rata basis, which takes into account work completed by our firm on behalf of the client. Clients will incur charges for bona fide advisory services rendered up to the point of termination (determined as 30 days from receipt of said written notice) and such fees will be due and payable.

## **Commissionable Securities Sales**

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Our firm and representatives do not sell securities for a commission in advisory accounts.

## **Item 6: Performance-Based Fees & Side-By-Side Management**

Our firm does not charge performance-based fees.

## **Item 7: Types of Clients & Account Requirements**

Our firm has the following types of clients:

- Individuals and High Net Worth Individuals;
- Trusts, Estates or Charitable Organizations;
- Pension and Profit Sharing Plans;
- Corporations, Limited Liability Companies and/or Other Business Types

Our firm does not impose requirements for opening and maintaining accounts or otherwise engaging us.

## Item 8: Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies & Risk of Loss

### Methods of Analysis

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We use the following methods of analysis in formulating our investment advice and/or managing client assets:

**Charting:** In this type of technical analysis, our firm reviews charts of market and security activity in an attempt to identify when the market is moving up or down and to predict when how long the trend may last and when that trend might reverse.

**Duration Constraints:** Our firm adhere to a discipline of generally maintaining duration within a narrow band around benchmark duration in order to limit exposure to market risk. Our portfolio management team rebalances client portfolios to their current duration targets on a periodic basis. The risk of constraining duration is that the client may not participate fully in a large rally in bond prices.

**Fundamental Analysis:** The analysis of a business's financial statements (usually to analyze the business's assets, liabilities, and earnings), health, and its competitors and markets. When analyzing a stock, futures contract, or currency using fundamental analysis there are two basic approaches one can use: bottom up analysis and top down analysis. The terms are used to distinguish such analysis from other types of investment analysis, such as quantitative and technical. Fundamental analysis is performed on historical and present data, but with the goal of making financial forecasts. There are several possible objectives: (a) to conduct a company stock valuation and predict its probable price evolution; (b) to make a projection on its business performance; (c) to evaluate its management and make internal business decisions; (d) and/or to calculate its credit risk; and (e) to find out the intrinsic value of the share.

When the objective of the analysis is to determine what stock to buy and at what price, there are two basic methodologies investors rely upon: (a) Fundamental analysis maintains that markets may misprice a security in the short run but that the "correct" price will eventually be reached. Profits can be made by purchasing the mispriced security and then waiting for the market to recognize its "mistake" and reprice the security; and (b) Technical analysis maintains that all information is reflected already in the price of a security. Technical analysts analyze trends and believe that sentiment changes predate and predict trend changes. Investors' emotional responses to price movements lead to recognizable price chart patterns. Technical analysts also analyze historical trends to predict future price movement. Investors can use one or both of these different but complementary methods for stock picking. This presents a potential risk, as the price of a security can move up or down along with the overall market regardless of the economic and financial factors considered in evaluating the stock.

**Qualitative Analysis:** A securities analysis that uses subjective judgment based on unquantifiable information, such as management expertise, industry cycles, strength of research and development,



and labor relations. Qualitative analysis contrasts with quantitative analysis, which focuses on numbers that can be found on reports such as balance sheets. The two techniques, however, will often be used together in order to examine a company's operations and evaluate its potential as an investment opportunity. Qualitative analysis deals with intangible, inexact concerns that belong to the social and experiential realm rather than the mathematical one. This approach depends on the kind of intelligence that machines (currently) lack, since things like positive associations with a brand, management trustworthiness, customer satisfaction, competitive advantage and cultural shifts are difficult, arguably impossible, to capture with numerical inputs. A risk in using qualitative analysis is that subjective judgment may prove incorrect.

**Quantitative Analysis:** The use of models, or algorithms, to evaluate assets for investment. The process usually consists of searching vast databases for patterns, such as correlations among liquid assets or price-movement patterns (trend following or mean reversion). The resulting strategies may involve high-frequency trading. The results of the analysis are taken into consideration in the decision to buy or sell securities and in the management of portfolio characteristics. A risk in using quantitative analysis is that the methods or models used may be based on assumptions that prove to be incorrect.

**Sector Analysis:** Sector analysis involves identification and analysis of various industries or economic sectors that are likely to exhibit superior performance. Academic studies indicate that the health of a stock's sector is as important as the performance of the individual stock itself. In other words, even the best stock located in a weak sector will often perform poorly because that sector is out of favor. Each industry has differences in terms of its customer base, market share among firms, industry growth, competition, regulation and business cycles. Learning how the industry operates provides a deeper understanding of a company's financial health. One method of analyzing a company's growth potential is examining whether the amount of customers in the overall market is expected to grow. In some markets, there is zero or negative growth, a factor demanding careful consideration. Additionally, market analysts recommend that investors should monitor sectors that are nearing the bottom of performance rankings for possible signs of an impending turnaround.

**Technical Analysis:** A security analysis methodology for forecasting the direction of prices through the study of past market data, primarily price and volume. A fundamental principle of technical analysis is that a market's price reflects all relevant information, so their analysis looks at the history of a security's trading pattern rather than external drivers such as economic, fundamental and news events. Therefore, price action tends to repeat itself due to investors collectively tending toward patterned behavior – hence technical analysis focuses on identifiable trends and conditions. Technical analysts also widely use market indicators of many sorts, some of which are mathematical transformations of price, often including up and down volume, advance/decline data and other inputs. These indicators are used to help assess whether an asset is trending, and if it is, the probability of its direction and of continuation. Technicians also look for relationships between price/volume indices and market indicators. Technical analysis employs models and trading rules based on price and volume transformations, such as the relative strength index, moving averages, regressions, inter-market and intra-market price correlations, business cycles, stock market cycles or, classically, through recognition of chart patterns. Technical analysis is widely used among traders and financial professionals and is very often used by active day traders, market makers and pit traders. The risk associated with this type of analysis is that analysts use subjective judgment to decide which pattern(s) a particular instrument reflects at a given time and what the interpretation of that pattern should be.

## Investment Strategies We Use

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We use the following strategies in managing client accounts, provided that such strategies are appropriate to the needs of the client and consistent with the client's investment objectives, risk tolerance, and time horizons, among other considerations:

**Asset Allocation:** The implementation of an investment strategy that attempts to balance risk versus reward by adjusting the percentage of each asset in an investment portfolio according to the investor's risk tolerance, goals and investment time frame. Asset allocation is based on the principle that different assets perform differently in different market and economic conditions. A fundamental justification for asset allocation is the notion that different asset classes offer returns that are not perfectly correlated, hence diversification reduces the overall risk in terms of the variability of returns for a given level of expected return. Although risk is reduced as long as correlations are not perfect, it is typically forecast (wholly or in part) based on statistical relationships (like correlation and variance) that existed over some past period. Expectations for return are often derived in the same way.

An asset class is a group of economic resources sharing similar characteristics, such as riskiness and return. There are many types of assets that may or may not be included in an asset allocation strategy. The "traditional" asset classes are stocks (value, dividend, growth, or sector-specific [or a "blend" of any two or more of the preceding]; large-cap versus mid-cap, small-cap or micro-cap; domestic, foreign [developed], emerging or frontier markets), bonds (fixed income securities more generally: investment-grade or junk [high-yield]; government or corporate; short-term, intermediate, long-term; domestic, foreign, emerging markets), and cash or cash equivalents. Allocation among these three provides a starting point. Usually included are hybrid instruments such as convertible bonds and preferred stocks, counting as a mixture of bonds and stocks. Other alternative assets that may be considered include: commodities: precious metals, nonferrous metals, agriculture, energy, others.; Commercial or residential real estate (also REITs); Collectibles such as art, coins, or stamps; insurance products (annuity, life settlements, catastrophe bonds, personal life insurance products, etc.); derivatives such as long-short or market neutral strategies, options, collateralized debt, and futures; foreign currency; venture capital; private equity; and/or distressed securities.

There are several types of asset allocation strategies based on investment goals, risk tolerance, time frames and diversification. The most common forms of asset allocation are: strategic, dynamic, tactical, and core-satellite.

- **Strategic Asset Allocation:** The primary goal of a strategic asset allocation is to create an asset mix that seeks to provide the optimal balance between expected risk and return for a long-term investment horizon. Generally speaking, strategic asset allocation strategies are agnostic to economic environments, i.e., they do not change their allocation postures relative to changing market or economic conditions.
- **Dynamic Asset Allocation:** Dynamic asset allocation is similar to strategic asset allocation in that portfolios are built by allocating to an asset mix that seeks to provide the optimal balance between expected risk and return for a long-term investment horizon. Like strategic allocation strategies, dynamic strategies largely retain exposure to their original asset classes; however, unlike strategic strategies, dynamic asset allocation portfolios will adjust their postures over time relative to changes in the economic environment.
- **Tactical Asset Allocation:** Tactical asset allocation is a strategy in which an investor takes a more active approach that tries to position a portfolio into those assets, sectors, or individual stocks that show the most potential for perceived gains. While an original asset mix is

formulated much like strategic and dynamic portfolio, tactical strategies are often traded more actively and are free to move entirely in and out of their core asset classes

- **Core-Satellite Asset Allocation:** Core-Satellite allocation strategies generally contain a 'core' strategic element making up the most significant portion of the portfolio, while applying a dynamic or tactical 'satellite' strategy that makes up a smaller part of the portfolio. In this way, core-satellite allocation strategies are a hybrid of the strategic and dynamic/tactical allocation strategies mentioned above.

**Alternative Investments:** Hedge funds, commodity pools, Real Estate Investment Trusts (“REITs”), Business Development Companies (“BDCs”), and other alternative investments involve a high degree of risk and can be illiquid due to restrictions on transfer and lack of a secondary trading market. They can be highly leveraged, speculative and volatile, and an investor could lose all or a substantial amount of an investment. Alternative investments may lack transparency as to share price, valuation and portfolio holdings. Complex tax structures often result in delayed tax reporting. Compared to mutual funds, hedge funds and commodity pools are subject to less regulation and often charge higher fees. Alternative investment managers typically exercise broad investment discretion and may apply similar strategies across multiple investment vehicles, resulting in less diversification.

**Exchange Traded Funds (“ETFs”):** An ETF is a type of Investment Company (usually, an open-end fund or unit investment trust) whose primary objective is to achieve the same return as a particular market index. The vast majority of ETFs are designed to track an index, so their performance is close to that of an index mutual fund, but they are not exact duplicates. A tracking error, or the difference between the returns of a fund and the returns of the index, can arise due to differences in composition, management fees, expenses, and handling of dividends. ETFs benefit from continuous pricing; they can be bought and sold on a stock exchange throughout the trading day. Because ETFs trade like stocks, you can place orders just like with individual stocks - such as limit orders, good-until-canceled orders, stop loss orders etc. They can also be sold short. Traditional mutual funds are bought and redeemed based on their net asset values (“NAV”) at the end of the day. ETFs are bought and sold at the market prices on the exchanges, which resemble the underlying NAV but are independent of it. However, arbitrageurs will ensure that ETF prices are kept very close to the NAV of the underlying securities. Although an investor can buy as few as one share of an ETF, most buy in board lots. Anything bought in less than a board lot will increase the cost to the investor. Anyone can buy any ETF no matter where in the world it trades. This provides a benefit over mutual funds, which generally can only be bought in the country in which they are registered.

One of the main features of ETFs are their low annual fees, especially when compared to traditional mutual funds. The passive nature of index investing, reduced marketing, and distribution and accounting expenses all contribute to the lower fees. However, individual investors must pay a brokerage commission to purchase and sell ETF shares; for those investors who trade frequently, this can significantly increase the cost of investing in ETFs. That said, with the advent of low-cost brokerage fees, small or frequent purchases of ETFs are becoming more cost efficient.

**Fixed Income:** Fixed income is a type of investing or budgeting style for which real return rates or periodic income is received at regular intervals and at reasonably predictable levels. Fixed-income investors are typically retired individuals who rely on their investments to provide a regular, stable income stream. This demographic tends to invest heavily in fixed-income investments because of the reliable returns they offer. Fixed-income investors who live on set amounts of periodically paid income face the risk of inflation eroding their spending power.

Some examples of fixed-income investments include treasuries, money market instruments, corporate bonds, asset-backed securities, municipal bonds and international bonds. The primary risk associated with fixed-income investments is the borrower defaulting on his payment. Other considerations include exchange rate risk for international bonds and interest rate risk for longer-dated securities. The most common type of fixed-income security is a bond. Bonds are issued by federal governments, local municipalities and major corporations. Fixed-income securities are recommended for investors seeking a diverse portfolio; however, the percentage of the portfolio dedicated to fixed income depends on your own personal investment style. There is also an opportunity to diversify the fixed-income component of a portfolio. Riskier fixed-income products, such as junk bonds and longer-dated products, should comprise a lower percentage of your overall portfolio.

The interest payment on fixed-income securities is considered regular income and is determined based on the creditworthiness of the borrower and current market rates. In general, bonds and fixed-income securities with longer-dated maturities pay a higher rate, also referred to as the coupon rate, because they are considered riskier. The longer the security is on the market, the more time it has to lose its value and/or default. At the end of the bond term, or at bond maturity, the borrower returns the amount borrowed, also referred to as the principal or par value.

**Long-Term Purchases:** Our firm may buy securities for your account and hold them for a relatively long time (more than a year) in anticipation that the security's value will appreciate over a long horizon. The risk of this strategy is that our firm could miss out on potential short-term gains that could have been profitable to your account, or it's possible that the security's value may decline sharply before our firm makes a decision to sell.

**Margin Transactions:** Our firm may purchase stocks, mutual funds, and/or other securities for your portfolio with money borrowed from your brokerage account. This allows you to purchase more stock than you would be able to with your available cash, and allows us to purchase stock without selling other holdings. Margin accounts and transactions are risky and not necessarily appropriate for every client. The potential risks associated with these transactions are (1) You can lose more funds than are deposited into the margin account; (2) the forced sale of securities or other assets in your account; (3) the sale of securities or other assets without contacting you; and (4) you may not be entitled to choose which securities or other assets in your account(s) are liquidated or sold to meet a margin call.

**Mutual Funds:** A mutual fund is a company that pools money from many investors and invests that money in a variety of differing security types based on the objectives of the fund. The portfolio of the fund consists of the combined holdings it owns. Each share represents an investor's proportionate ownership of the fund's holdings and the income those holdings generate. The price that investors pay for mutual fund shares are the fund's per share net asset value ("NAV") plus any shareholder fees that the fund imposes at the time of purchase (such as sales loads). Investors typically cannot ascertain the exact make-up of a fund's portfolio at any given time, nor can they directly influence which securities the fund manager buys and sells or the timing of those trades. With an individual stock, investors can obtain real-time (or close to real-time) pricing information with relative ease by checking financial websites or by calling a broker or your investment adviser. Investors can also monitor how a stock's price changes from hour to hour—or even second to second. By contrast, with a mutual fund, the price at which an investor purchases or redeems shares will typically depend on the fund's NAV, which is calculated daily after market close.

The benefits of investing through mutual funds include: (a) Mutual funds are professionally managed by an investment adviser who researches, selects, and monitors the performance of the securities purchased by the fund; (b) Mutual funds typically have the benefit of diversification, which is an investing strategy that generally sums up as “Don’t put all your eggs in one basket.” Spreading investments across a wide range of companies and industry sectors can help lower the risk if a company or sector fails. Some investors find it easier to achieve diversification through ownership of mutual funds rather than through ownership of individual stocks or bonds.; (c) Some mutual funds accommodate investors who do not have a lot of money to invest by setting relatively low dollar amounts for initial purchases, subsequent monthly purchases, or both.; and (d) At any time, mutual fund investors can readily redeem their shares at the current NAV, less any fees and charges assessed on redemption.

Mutual funds also have features that some investors might view as disadvantages: (a) Investors must pay sales charges, annual fees, and other expenses regardless of how the fund performs. Depending on the timing of their investment, investors may also have to pay taxes on any capital gains distributions they receive. This includes instances where the fund performed poorly after purchasing shares.; (b) Investors typically cannot ascertain the exact make-up of a fund’s portfolio at any given time, nor can they directly influence which securities the fund manager buys and sells or the timing of those trades.; and (c) With an individual stock, investors can obtain real-time (or close to real-time) pricing information with relative ease by checking financial websites or by calling a broker or your investment adviser. Investors can also monitor how a stock’s price changes from hour to hour—or even second to second. By contrast, with a mutual fund, the price at which an investor purchases or redeems shares will typically depend on the fund’s NAV, which the fund might not calculate until many hours after the investor placed the order. In general, mutual funds must calculate their NAV at least once every business day, typically after the major U.S. exchanges close.

When investors buy and hold an individual stock or bond, the investor must pay income tax each year on the dividends or interest the investor receives. However, the investor will not have to pay any capital gains tax until the investor actually sells and makes a profit. Mutual funds, however, are different. When an investor buys and holds mutual fund shares, the investor will owe income tax on any ordinary dividends in the year the investor receives or reinvests them. Moreover, in addition to owing taxes on any personal capital gains when the investor sells shares, the investor may have to pay taxes each year on the fund’s capital gains. That is because the law requires mutual funds to distribute capital gains to shareholders if they sell securities for a profit, and cannot use losses to offset these gains.

**Mutual Fund and/or Exchange Traded Fund (“ETF”) Analysis:** Analysis of the experience and track record of the manager of the mutual fund or ETF in an attempt to determine if that manager has demonstrated an ability to invest over a period of time and in different economic conditions. The underlying assets in a mutual fund or ETF are also reviewed in an attempt to determine if there is significant overlap in the underlying investments held in another fund(s) in the Client’s portfolio. The funds or ETFs are monitored in an attempt to determine if they are continuing to follow their stated investment strategy. A risk of mutual fund and/or ETF analysis is that, as in all securities investments, past performance does not guarantee future results. A manager who has been successful may not be able to replicate that success in the future. In addition, as our firm does not control the underlying investments in a fund or ETF, managers of different funds held by the Client may purchase the same security, increasing the risk to the Client if that security were to fall in value. There is also a risk that a manager may deviate from the stated investment mandate or strategy of the fund or ETF, which could make the holding(s) less suitable for the Client’s portfolio.

**Options:** An option is a financial derivative that represents a contract sold by one party (the option writer) to another party (the option holder, or option buyer). The contract offers the buyer the right, but not the obligation, to buy or sell a security or other financial asset at an agreed-upon price (the strike price) during a certain period of time or on a specific date (exercise date). Options are extremely versatile securities. Traders use options to speculate, which is a relatively risky practice, while hedgers use options to reduce the risk of holding an asset. In terms of speculation, option buyers and writers have conflicting views regarding the outlook on the performance of a:

- *Call Option:* Call options give the option to buy at certain price, so the buyer would want the stock to go up. Conversely, the option writer needs to provide the underlying shares in the event that the stock's market price exceeds the strike due to the contractual obligation. An option writer who sells a call option believes that the underlying stock's price will drop relative to the option's strike price during the life of the option, as that is how he will reap maximum profit. This is exactly the opposite outlook of the option buyer. The buyer believes that the underlying stock will rise; if this happens, the buyer will be able to acquire the stock for a lower price and then sell it for a profit. However, if the underlying stock does not close above the strike price on the expiration date, the option buyer would lose the premium paid for the call option.
- *Put Option:* Put options give the option to sell at a certain price, so the buyer would want the stock to go down. The opposite is true for put option writers. For example, a put option buyer is bearish on the underlying stock and believes its market price will fall below the specified strike price on or before a specified date. On the other hand, an option writer who sells a put option believes the underlying stock's price will increase about a specified price on or before the expiration date. If the underlying stock's price closes above the specified strike price on the expiration date, the put option writer's maximum profit is achieved. Conversely, a put option holder would only benefit from a fall in the underlying stock's price below the strike price. If the underlying stock's price falls below the strike price, the put option writer is obligated to purchase shares of the underlying stock at the strike price.

The potential risks associated with these transactions are that (1) all options expire. The closer the option gets to expiration, the quicker the premium in the option deteriorates; and (2) Prices can move very quickly. Depending on factors such as time until expiration and the relationship of the stock price to the option's strike price, small movements in a stock can translate into big movements in the underlying options.

**Short Sales:** A short sale is a transaction in which an investor sells borrowed securities in anticipation of a price decline and is required to return an equal number of shares at some point in the future. These transactions have a number of risks that make it highly unsuitable for the novice investor. This strategy has a slanted payoff ratio in that the maximum gain (which would occur if the shorted stock was to plunge to zero) is limited, but the maximum loss is theoretically infinite (since stocks can in theory go up infinitely in price). The following risks should be considered: (1) In addition to trading commissions, other costs with short selling include that of borrowing the security to short it, as well as interest payable on the margin account that holds the shorted security. (2) The short seller is responsible for making dividend payments on the shorted stock to the entity from whom the stock has been borrowed. (3) Stocks with very high short interest may occasionally surge in price. This usually happens when there is a positive development in the stock, which forces short sellers to buy the shares back to close their short positions. Heavily shorted stocks are also susceptible to "buy-ins," which occur when a broker closes out short positions in a difficult-to-borrow stock whose lenders are demanding it back. (4) Regulators may impose bans on short sales in a

specific sector or even in the broad market to avoid panic and unwarranted selling pressure. Such actions can cause a spike in stock prices, forcing the short seller to cover short positions at huge losses. (5) Unlike the “buy-and-hold” investor who can afford to wait for an investment to work out, the short seller does not have the luxury of time because of the many costs and risks associated with short selling. Timing is everything when it comes to shorting. (5) Short selling should only be undertaken by experienced traders who have the discipline to cut a losing short position, rather than add to it hoping that it will eventually work out.

**Short-Term Purchases:** When utilizing this strategy, our firm may also purchase securities with the idea of selling them within a relatively short time (typically a year or less). Our firm does this in an attempt to take advantage of conditions that our firm believes will soon result in a price swing in the securities our firm purchase.

**Third-Party Money Manager Analysis:** The analysis of the experience, investment philosophies, and past performance of independent third-party investment managers in an attempt to determine if that manager has demonstrated an ability to invest over a period of time and in different economic conditions. Analysis is completed by monitoring the manager’s underlying holdings, strategies, concentrations and leverage as part of our overall periodic risk assessment. Additionally, as part of the due-diligence process, the manager’s compliance and business enterprise risks are surveyed and reviewed. A risk of investing with a third-party manager who has been successful in the past is that they may not be able to replicate that success in the future. In addition, as our firm does not control the underlying investments in a third-party manager’s portfolio, there is also a risk that a manager may deviate from the stated investment mandate or strategy of the portfolio, making it a less suitable investment for our clients. Moreover, as our firm does not control the manager’s daily business and compliance operations, our firm may be unaware of the lack of internal controls necessary to prevent business, regulatory or reputational deficiencies.

## **Risk of Loss**

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Investing in securities involves risk of loss that clients should be prepared to bear. While the stock market may increase and the account(s) could enjoy a gain, it is also possible that the stock market may decrease and the account(s) could suffer a loss. It is important that clients understand the risks associated with investing in the stock market, and that their assets are appropriately diversified in investments. Clients are encouraged to ask our firm any questions regarding their risk tolerance.

**Company Risk:** When investing in stock positions, there is always a certain level of company or industry specific risk that is inherent in each investment. This is also referred to as unsystematic risk and can be reduced through appropriate diversification. There is the risk that the company will perform poorly or have its value reduced based on factors specific to the company or its industry. For example, if a company’s employees go on strike or the company receives unfavorable media attention for its actions, the value of the company may be reduced.

**ETF & Mutual Fund Risk:** When investing in an ETF or mutual fund, you will bear additional expenses based on your pro rata share of the ETF’s or mutual fund’s operating expenses, including the potential duplication of management fees. The risk of owning an ETF or mutual fund generally reflects the risks of owning the underlying securities, the ETF, or mutual fund holds. Clients will also incur brokerage costs when purchasing ETFs.

**Fixed Income Securities Risk:** Typically, the values of fixed-income securities change inversely with prevailing interest rates. Therefore, a fundamental risk of fixed-income securities is interest rate risk,

which is the risk that their value will generally decline as prevailing interest rates rise, which may cause your account value to likewise decrease, and vice versa. How specific fixed income securities may react to changes in interest rates will depend on the specific characteristics of each security. Fixed-income securities are also subject to credit risk, prepayment risk, valuation risk, and liquidity risk. Credit risk is the chance that a bond issuer will fail to pay interest and principal in a timely manner, or that negative perceptions of the issuer's ability to make such payments will cause the price of a bond to decline.

**Growth Securities Risk:** Securities of companies perceived to be "growth" companies may be more volatile than other stocks and may involve special risks. The price of a "growth" security may be impacted if the company does not realize its anticipated potential or if there is a shift in the market to favor other types of securities.

**Liquidity Risk:** Certain assets may not be readily converted into cash or may have a very limited market in which they trade. Thus, you may experience the risk that your investment or assets within your investment may not be able to be liquidated quickly, thus, extending the period of time by which you may receive the proceeds from your investment. Liquidity risk can also result in unfavorable pricing when exiting (i.e. not being able to quickly get out of an investment before the price drops significantly) a particular investment and therefore, can have a negative impact on investment returns.

**Manager Risk:** There is always the possibility that poor security selection will cause your investments to underperform relative to benchmarks or other funds with a similar investment objective.

**Options Risk:** Options on securities may be subject to greater fluctuations in value than an investment in the underlying securities. Additionally, options have an expiration date, which makes them "decay" in value over the amount of time they are held and can expire worthless. Purchasing and writing put and call options are highly specialized activities and entail greater than ordinary investment risks.

**Past Performance:** Charting and technical analysis are often used interchangeably. Technical analysis generally attempts to forecast an investment's future potential by analyzing its past performance and other related statistics. In particular, technical analysis often times involves an evaluation of historical pricing and volume of a particular security for the purpose of forecasting where future price and volume figures may go. As with any investment analysis method, technical analysis runs the risk of not knowing the future and thus, investors should realize that even the most diligent and thorough technical analysis cannot predict or guarantee the future performance of any particular investment instrument or issuer thereof.

### **Description of Material, Significant or Unusual Risks**

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Our firm generally invests client cash balances in money market funds, FDIC Insured Certificates of Deposit, high-grade commercial paper and/or government backed debt instruments. Ultimately, our firm tries to achieve the highest return on client cash balances through relatively low-risk conservative investments. In most cases, at least a partial cash balance will be maintained in a money market account so that our firm may debit advisory fees for our services related to our Comprehensive Portfolio Management, services, as applicable.



## **Item 9: Disciplinary Information**

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

## **Item 10: Other Financial Industry Activities & Affiliations**

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

## **Item 11: Code of Ethics, Participation or Interest in Client Transactions & Personal Trading**

As a fiduciary, it is an investment adviser's responsibility to provide fair and full disclosure of all material facts and to act solely in the best interest of each of our clients at all times. Our fiduciary duty is the underlying principle for our firm's Code of Ethics, which includes procedures for personal securities transaction and insider trading. Our firm requires all representatives to conduct business with the highest level of ethical standards and to comply with all federal and state securities laws at all times. Upon employment with our firm, and at least annually thereafter, all representatives of our firm will acknowledge receipt, understanding and compliance with our firm's Code of Ethics. Our firm and representatives must conduct business in an honest, ethical, and fair manner and avoid all circumstances that might negatively affect or appear to affect our duty of complete loyalty to all clients. This disclosure is provided to give all clients a summary of our Code of Ethics. If a client or a potential client wishes to review our Code of Ethics in its entirety, a copy will be provided promptly upon request.

Our firm recognizes that the personal investment transactions of our representatives demands the application of a Code of Ethics with high standards and requires that all such transactions be carried out in a way that does not endanger the interest of any client. At the same time, our firm also believes that if investment goals are similar for clients and for our representatives, it is logical, and even desirable, that there be common ownership of some securities.

In order to prevent conflicts of interest, our firm has established procedures for transactions effected by our representatives for their personal accounts<sup>1</sup>. In order to monitor compliance with our personal trading policy, our firm has pre-clearance requirements and a quarterly securities transaction reporting system for all of our representatives.

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<sup>1</sup> For purposes of the policy, our associate's personal account generally includes any account (a) in the name of our associate, his/her spouse, his/her minor children or other dependents residing in the same household, (b) for which our associate is a trustee or executor, or (c) which our associate controls, including our client accounts which our associate controls and/or a member of his/her household has a direct or indirect beneficial interest in.

Neither our firm nor a related person recommends, buys or sells for client accounts, securities in which our firm or a related person has a material financial interest without prior disclosure to the client.

Related persons of our firm may buy or sell securities and other investments that are also recommended to clients. In order to minimize this conflict of interest, our related persons will place client interests ahead of their own interests and adhere to our firm's Code of Ethics, a copy of which is available upon request.

Likewise, related persons of our firm buy or sell securities for themselves at or about the same time they buy or sell the same securities for client accounts. In order to minimize this conflict of interest, our related persons will place client interests ahead of their own interests and adhere to our firm's Code of Ethics, a copy of which is available upon request. Further, our related persons will refrain from buying or selling the same securities prior to buying or selling for our clients in the same day unless included in a block trade.

## Item 12: Brokerage Practices

### Custodian & Brokers Used

Our firm does not maintain custody of client assets (although our firm may be deemed to have custody of client assets if give the authority to withdraw assets from client accounts. See *Item 15 Custody*, below). Client assets must be maintained in an account at a "qualified custodian," generally a broker-dealer or bank. Our firm recommends that clients engage:

- The Schwab Advisor Services division of Charles Schwab & Co. Inc. ("Schwab"), a FINRA-registered broker-dealer, member SIPC; or
- The TD Ameritrade Institutional program. TD Ameritrade Institutional is a division of TD Ameritrade, Inc. ("TD Ameritrade") member FINRA/SIPC. TD Ameritrade is an independent [and unaffiliated] SEC-registered broker-dealer.

Our firm is independently owned and operated and is not affiliated with either Schwab or TD Ameritrade (herein "Custodians"). The Custodians will hold client assets in a brokerage account and buy and sell securities when instructed. While our firm recommends that clients use either of the Custodians as custodian/broker, clients will decide whether to do so and open an account with one of the Custodians by entering into an account agreement directly with them. Our firm does not open the account. Even though the account is maintained the Custodians, our firm can still use other brokers to execute trades, as described in the next paragraph.

### How Brokers/Custodians Are Selected

Our firm seeks to recommend a custodian/broker who will hold client assets and execute transactions on terms that are overall most advantageous when compared to other available providers and their services. A wide range of factors are considered, including, but not limited to:

- combination of transaction execution services along with asset custody services (generally without a separate fee for custody)
- capability to execute, clear and settle trades (buy and sell securities for client accounts)

- capabilities to facilitate transfers and payments to and from accounts (wire transfers, check requests, bill payment, etc.)
- breadth of investment products made available (stocks, bonds, mutual funds, exchange traded funds (ETFs), etc.)
- availability of investment research and tools that assist 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 them
- reputation, financial strength and stability of the provider
- prior service to our firm and our other clients
- availability of other products and services that benefit our firm, as discussed below (see *"Products & Services Available from The Custodians"*)

### **Custody & Brokerage Costs**

The Custodians generally do not charge separately for custodial services but are compensated by charging commissions or other fees to clients on trades that are executed or that settle into the Custodians' account. For some accounts, the Custodians may charge your account a percentage of the dollar amount of assets in the account in lieu of commissions. The Custodians' commission rates and/or asset-based fees applicable to client accounts were negotiated based on our firm's commitment to maintain a minimum threshold of assets statement equity in accounts at the Custodians. This commitment benefits clients because the overall commission rates and/or asset-based fees paid are lower than they would be if our firm had not made the commitment. In addition to commissions or asset-based fees, the Custodians charge a flat dollar amount as a "prime broker" or "trade away" fee for each trade that our firm has executed by a different broker-dealer but where the securities bought or the funds from the securities sold are deposited (settled) into one of the Custodians' accounts. These fees are in addition to the commissions or other compensation paid to the executing broker-dealer. Because of this, in order to minimize client trading costs, our firm has one of the Custodians execute most trades for our clients' accounts.

### **Products & Services Available from the Custodians**

Schwab Advisor Services and TD Ameritrade Institutional program are the Custodians' businesses serving independent investment advisory firms like our firm. They provide our firm and clients with access to its institutional brokerage – trading, custody, reporting and related services – many of which are not typically available to either custodian's retail customers. The Custodians also make available various support services. Some of those services help manage or administer our client accounts while others help manage and grow our business. The Custodians' support services are generally available on an unsolicited basis (our firm does not have to request them) and at no charge to our firm. The availability of the Custodians products and services are not based on the provision of particular investment advice, such as purchasing particular securities for clients. Here is a more detailed description of the Custodians' support services:

### **Services that Benefit Clients**

The Custodians' 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 these programs include some to which our firm might not otherwise have access

or that would require a significantly higher minimum initial investment by firm clients. The Custodians' services described in this paragraph generally benefit clients and their accounts.

### **Services that May Not Directly Benefit Clients**

The Custodians also make available other products and services that benefit our firm but may not directly benefit clients or their accounts. These products and services assist in managing and administering our client accounts. They include investment research, both proprietary to each custodian and that of third parties. This research may be used to service all or some substantial number of client accounts, including accounts not maintained by either of the Custodians. In addition to investment research, the Custodians also make available software and other technology that:

- provides access to client account data (such as duplicate trade confirmations and account statements);
- facilitates trade execution and allocate aggregated trade orders for multiple client accounts;
- provides pricing and other market data;
- facilitates payment of our fees from our clients' accounts; and
- assists with back-office functions, recordkeeping and client reporting.

### **Services that Generally Benefit Only Our Firm**

The Custodians also offer other services intended to help manage and further develop our business enterprise. These services include:

- educational conferences and events
- technology, compliance, legal, and business consulting;
- publications and conferences on practice management and business succession; and
- access to employee benefits providers, human capital consultants and insurance providers.

The Custodians may provide some of these services. In other cases, the Custodians will arrange for third-party vendors to provide the services to our firm. The Custodians may also discount or waive fees for some of these services or pay all or a part of a third party's fees. The Custodians may also provide our firm with other benefits, such as occasional business entertainment for our personnel.

Irrespective of direct or indirect benefits to our clients through the Custodians, our firm strives to enhance the client experience, help clients reach their goals and put client interests before that of our firm and associated persons.

### **Our Interest in The Custodians' Services.**

The availability of these services from the Custodians benefits our firm because our firm does not have to produce or purchase them. Our firm does not have to pay for these services, and they are not contingent upon committing any specific amount of business to the Custodians in trading commissions or assets in custody.

In light of our arrangements with the Custodians, a conflict of interest exists as our firm may have incentive to require that clients maintain their accounts with the Custodians based on our interest in receiving the Custodians' services that benefit our firm rather than based on client interest in receiving the best value in custody services and the most favorable execution of transactions. As part of our fiduciary duty to our clients, our firm will endeavor at all times to put the interests of our clients first. Clients should be aware, however, that the receipt of economic benefits by our firm or

our related persons creates a potential conflict of interest and may indirectly influence our firm's choice of the Custodians as a custodial recommendation. Our firm examined this potential conflict of interest when our firm chose to recommend the Custodians and has determined that the recommendation is in the best interest of our firm's clients and satisfies our fiduciary obligations, including our duty to seek best execution.

In seeking best execution, the determinative factor is not the lowest possible cost, but whether the transaction represents the best qualitative execution, taking into consideration the full range of a broker-dealer's services, including the value of research provided, execution capability, commission rates, and responsiveness. Although our firm will seek competitive rates, to the benefit of all clients, our firm may not necessarily obtain the lowest possible commission rates for specific client account transactions. Our firm believes that the selection of the Schwab and TD Ameritrade as a custodian and broker is in the best interest of our clients. This is primarily supported by the scope, quality and price of both custodians' suite of services, and not solely the Custodians' services that only benefit our firm.

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### **Client Brokerage Commissions**

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The Custodians do not make client brokerage commissions generated by client transactions available for our firm's use.

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### **Client Transactions in Return for Soft Dollars**

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Our firm does not direct client transactions to a particular broker-dealer in return for soft dollar benefits.

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### **Brokerage for Client Referrals**

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Our firm does not receive brokerage for client referrals.

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### **Directed Brokerage**

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Neither our firm nor any of our firm's representatives have discretionary authority in making the determination of the brokers-dealers and/or custodians with whom orders for the purchase or sale of securities are placed for execution, and the commission rates at which such securities transactions are conducted. Our firm routinely recommends that clients direct us to execute through a specified broker-dealer. Our firm recommends the use of the Custodians. Each client will be required to establish their account(s) with the Custodians if not already done. Please note that not all advisers have this requirement.

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

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A retirement or ERISA plan client may direct all or part of portfolio transactions for its account through a specific broker or dealer in order to obtain goods or services on behalf of the plan. Such direction is permitted provided that the goods and services provided are reasonable expenses of the plan incurred in the ordinary course of its business for which it otherwise would be obligated and empowered to pay. ERISA prohibits directed brokerage arrangements when the goods or services purchased are not for the exclusive benefit of the plan. Consequently, our firm will request that plan

sponsors who direct plan brokerage provide us with a letter documenting that this arrangement will be for the exclusive benefit of the plan.

### **Client-Directed Brokerage**

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Our firm does not allow client-directed brokerage outside our recommendations.

### **Aggregation of Purchase or Sale**

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

## **Item 13: Review of Accounts or Financial Plans**

Our management personnel or financial advisors review accounts on at least an annual basis for our Comprehensive Portfolio Management clients. The nature of these reviews is to learn whether client accounts are in line with their investment objectives, appropriately positioned based on market conditions, and investment policies, if applicable. Our firm does not provide written reports to clients, unless asked to do so. Verbal reports to clients take place on at least an annual basis when our Comprehensive Portfolio Management clients are contacted.

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

Retirement Plan Consulting clients receive reviews of their retirement plans for the duration of the service. Our firm also provides ongoing services where clients are met with upon their request to discuss updates to their plans, changes in their circumstances, etc. Retirement Plan Consulting clients do not receive written or verbal updated reports regarding their plans unless they choose to engage our firm for ongoing services.

## **Item 14: Client Referrals & Other Compensation**

### **TD Ameritrade**

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Our firm may recommend TD Ameritrade to clients for custody and brokerage services. There is no direct link between our firm's participation in the program and the investment advice given to clients,

although we receive economic benefits through our participation in the program that are typically not available to TD Ameritrade retail investors. These benefits include the following products and services (provided without cost or at a discount): receipt of duplicate client statements and confirmations; research related products and tools; consulting services; access to a trading desk serving our firm's participants; access to block trading (which provides the ability to aggregate securities transactions for execution and then allocate the appropriate shares to client accounts); the ability to have advisory fees deducted directly from client accounts; access to an electronic communications network for client order entry and account information; access to mutual funds with no transaction fees and to certain institutional money managers; and discounts on compliance, marketing, research, technology, and practice management products or services provided to us by third party vendors. TD Ameritrade may also have paid for business consulting and professional services received by our firm's related persons. Some of the products and services made available by TD Ameritrade through the program may benefit our firm but may not benefit our client accounts. These products or services may assist us in managing and administering client accounts, including accounts not maintained at TD Ameritrade. Other services made available by TD Ameritrade are intended to help us manage and further develop our business enterprise. The benefits received by our firm or our personnel through participation in the program do not depend on the amount of brokerage transactions directed to TD Ameritrade. As part of our fiduciary duties to our clients, we endeavor at all times to put the interests of our clients first. Clients should be aware, however, that the receipt of economic benefits by our firm or our related persons in and of itself creates a potential conflict of interest and may indirectly influence our firm's choice of TD Ameritrade for custody and brokerage services.

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## **Schwab**

Our firm receives economic benefit from Schwab in the form of the support products and services made available to our firm and other independent investment advisors that have their clients maintain accounts at Schwab. These products and services, how they benefit our firm, and the related conflicts of interest are described above (*see Item 12 – Brokerage Practices*). The availability of Schwab's products and services is not based on our firm giving particular investment advice, such as buying particular securities for our clients.

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## **Product Sponsor Funded Events**

Various product wholesalers provide financial assistance to allow us to sponsor client appreciation events, or attend such events hosted by the product sponsor. This money is not directly tied to our use of their products, nor is it contingent upon any future business to be directed to their products, nonetheless it creates a conflict of interest that may incentivize us to utilize their products. Our firm will adhere to our fiduciary duty to act in our client's best interest when selecting what products to use in client accounts.

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## **Referral Fees**

Our firm pays referral fees (non-commission based) to independent solicitors (non-registered representatives) for the referral of their clients to our firm in accordance with Rule 206 (4)-3 of the Investment Advisers Act of 1940. Such referral fee represents a share of our investment advisory fee charged to our clients. This arrangement will not result in higher costs to the referred client. In this regard, our firm maintains Solicitors Agreements in compliance with Rule 206 (4)-3 of the Investment Advisers Act of 1940 and applicable state and federal laws. All clients referred by

Solicitors to our firm will be given full written disclosure describing the terms and fee arrangements between our firm and Solicitor(s). In cases where state law requires licensure of solicitors, our firm ensures that no solicitation fees are paid unless the solicitor is registered as an investment adviser representative of our firm. If our firm is paying solicitation fees to another registered investment adviser, the licensure of individuals is the other firm's responsibility.

## Item 15: Custody

While our firm does not maintain physical custody of client assets (which are maintained by a qualified custodian, as discussed above), we are deemed to have custody of certain client assets if given the authority to withdraw assets from client accounts, as further described below under "Standing Instructions." All our clients receive account statements directly from their qualified custodian(s) at least quarterly upon opening of an account. We urge our clients to carefully review these statements. Additionally, if our firm decides to send its own account statements to clients, such statements will include a legend that recommends the client compare the account statements received from the qualified custodian with those received from our firm. Clients are encouraged to raise any questions with us about the custody, safety or security of their assets and our custodial recommendations.

### Third Party Money Movement:

On February 21, 2017, the SEC issued a no-action letter ("Letter") with respect to Rule 206(4)-2 ("Custody Rule") under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940 ("Advisers Act"). The letter provided guidance on the Custody Rule as well as clarified that an adviser who has the power to disburse client funds to a third party under a standing letter of instruction ("SLOA") is deemed to have custody. As such, our firm has adopted the following safeguards in conjunction with our custodian:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- The client has the ability to terminate or change the instruction to the client's qualified custodian.
- The investment adviser 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.
- The investment adviser maintains records showing that the third party is not a related party of the investment adviser or located at the same address as the investment adviser.
- The client's qualified custodian sends the client, in writing, an initial notice confirming the instruction and an annual notice reconfirming the instruction.



### **Item 16: Investment Discretion**

Clients must provide our firm with investment discretion on their behalf, pursuant to an executed investment advisory client agreement. By granting investment discretion, our firm is authorized to execute securities transactions, determine which securities are bought and sold, and the total amount to be bought and sold.

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

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

### **Item 18: Financial Information**

Our firm is not required to provide financial information in this Brochure because:

- Our firm does not require the prepayment of more than \$1,200 in fees when services cannot be rendered within 6 months.
- Our firm does not take custody of client funds or securities.
- Our firm does not have a financial condition or commitment that impairs our ability to meet contractual and fiduciary obligations to clients.
- Our firm has never been the subject of a bankruptcy proceeding.