

# **RCL Advisors, LLC**

SEC File Number: 801 – 67508

## **ADV Part 2A, Firm Brochure**

**Dated: June 21, 2017**

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This Brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of RCL Advisors, LLC. If you have any questions about the contents of this Brochure, please contact us at (212) 452-5900 or [wcafero@rcladvisors.com](mailto:wcafero@rcladvisors.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 RCL Advisors, LLC (the “Registrant”) also is available on the SEC’s website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov).

References herein to RCL Advisors, LLC as a “registered investment adviser” or any reference to being “registered” does not imply a certain level of skill or training.

## **Item 2           Material Changes**

Since the February 18, 2017 Annual Amendment filing, this ADV Part 2A, Firm Brochure has not been materially amended. Although not material, this Firm Brochure has been amended at Item 4 to disclose the firm's status as a fiduciary in certain instances under the Department of Labor's Fiduciary Rule.

**ANY QUESTIONS: RCL Advisors, LLC's Chief Compliance Officer, William J. Cafero, remains available to address any questions that an existing or prospective client may have regarding this Brochure.**

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## Item 4            Advisory Business

- A. RCL Advisors, LLC, (the “Registrant”) is a limited liability company formed on November 10, 2006 in the State of Delaware. The Registrant became registered as an Investment Adviser Firm in January 2007. The Registrant is principally owned by Barbara Raasch, William Cafero, and Gary Langham. Barbara Raasch is the Registrant’s Managing Member.
- B. As discussed below, the Registrant offers to its clients (individuals, high net worth individuals, trusts, estates, charitable organizations, pension and profit sharing plans, etc.) investment advisory services on a non-discretionary and/or discretionary basis and, to the extent specifically requested by a client, financial planning and related consulting services.

### INVESTMENT ADVISORY SERVICES

The client can determine to engage the Registrant to provide non-discretionary and/or discretionary investment advisory services on a *fee-only* basis. The Registrant’s annual investment advisory fee is based upon a percentage (%) of the market value of the assets placed under the Registrant’s management.

The Registrant may also provide investment advisory services on an annual fixed fee basis. In such event, the Registrant shall price its services based upon various objective and subjective factors. As a result, similar clients could pay diverse fees based upon various factors, including the market value of their assets, the perceived complexity of the engagement, and the anticipated level and scope of the overall investment advisory and/or consulting services to be rendered.

### FINANCIAL PLANNING AND CONSULTING SERVICES (STAND-ALONE)

To the extent specifically requested by a client, the Registrant *may* determine to provide financial planning and/or consulting services (including investment and non-investment related matters, including estate planning, insurance planning, etc.) on a stand-alone separate hourly fee basis. Prior to engaging the Registrant to provide planning or consulting services, clients are generally required to enter into a *Financial Planning and Consulting Agreement* with Registrant setting forth the terms and conditions of the engagement (including termination), describing the scope of the services to be provided, and the portion of the fee that is due from the client prior to Registrant commencing services. If requested by the client, Registrant may recommend the services of other unaffiliated professionals for implementation purposes. The client is under no obligation to engage the services of any such recommended professional. The client retains absolute discretion over all such implementation decisions and is free to accept or reject any recommendation from the Registrant. **Please Note:** If the client engages any such recommended professional, and a dispute arises thereafter relative to such engagement, the client agrees to seek recourse exclusively from and against the engaged professional. **Please Also Note:** It remains the client’s responsibility to promptly notify the Registrant if there is ever any change in his/her/its financial situation or investment objectives for the purpose of reviewing/evaluating/revising Registrant’s previous recommendations and/or services.

## MISCELLANEOUS

**Limitations of Financial Planning and Non-Investment Consulting/Implementation Services.** As indicated above, to the extent requested by a client, Registrant may provide financial planning and related consulting services regarding non-investment related matters, such as estate planning, tax planning, insurance, etc. Registrant **does not** serve as an attorney, accountant, or insurance agency, and no portion of its services should be construed as legal, accounting, or insurance brokerage services. Accordingly, Registrant **does not** prepare estate planning documents, tax returns or sell insurance products. To the extent requested by a client, Registrant may recommend the services of other professionals for certain non-investment implementation purpose (i.e. attorneys, accountants, insurance agents, etc.). Clients are reminded that they are under no obligation to engage the services of any such recommended professional. The client retains absolute discretion over all such implementation decisions and is free to accept or reject any recommendation made by Registrant or its representatives. **Please Note:** If the client engages any unaffiliated recommended professional, and a dispute arises thereafter relative to such engagement, the client agrees to seek recourse exclusively from and against the engaged professional.

**Investment Risk.** Different types of investments involve varying degrees of risk, and it should not be assumed that future performance of any specific investment or investment strategy (including the investments and/or investment strategies recommended or undertaken by Registrant) will be profitable or equal any specific performance level(s).

**Non-Discretionary Service Limitations.** Clients that determine to engage Registrant on a non-discretionary investment advisory basis **must be willing to accept** that Registrant cannot effect any account transactions without obtaining prior consent to such transaction(s) from the client. Thus, in the event that Registrant would like to make a transaction for a client's account (including in the event of an individual holding or general market correction), and the client is unavailable, the Registrant will be unable to effect the account transaction(s) (as it would for its discretionary clients) **without first obtaining the client's consent.**

**Unaffiliated Private Investment Funds.** Registrant may also provide investment advice regarding unaffiliated private investment funds. Registrant, on a non-discretionary basis, may recommend that certain qualified clients consider an investment in unaffiliated private investment funds. Registrant's role relative to the private investment funds shall be limited to its initial and ongoing due diligence and investment monitoring services. If a client determines to become a private fund investor, the amount of assets invested in the fund(s) shall be included as part of "assets under management" for purposes of Registrant calculating its investment advisory fee. **Registrant's clients are under absolutely no obligation to consider or make an investment in a private investment fund(s).**

**Please Note:** Private investment funds generally involve various risk factors including, but not limited to, potential for complete loss of principal, liquidity constraints and lack of transparency, a complete discussion of which is set forth in each fund's offering documents, which will be provided to each client for review and consideration. Unlike liquid investments that a client may maintain, private investment funds do not provide daily liquidity or pricing. Each prospective client investor will be required to complete a Subscription Agreement, pursuant to which the client shall establish that he/she is qualified for

investment in the fund, and acknowledges and accepts the various risk factors that are associated with such an investment.

**Please Also Note: Valuation:** In the event that Registrant references private investment funds owned by the client on any supplemental account reports prepared by Registrant, the value(s) for all private investment funds owned by the client shall reflect the most recent valuation provided by the fund sponsor. If no subsequent valuation post-purchase is provided by the Fund Sponsor, then the valuation shall reflect the initial purchase price (and/or a value as of a previous date), or the current value(s) (either the initial purchase price and/or the most recent valuation provided by the fund sponsor). If the valuation reflects initial purchase price (and/or a value as of a previous date), the current value(s) (to the extent ascertainable) could be significantly more or less than original purchase price. The client's advisory fee shall be based upon reflected fund value(s).

**Independent Managers.** Registrant may allocate (and/or recommend that the client allocate) a portion of a client's investment assets among unaffiliated independent investment managers ("Independent Manager(s)") in accordance with the client's designated investment objective(s). In such situations, the Independent Manager(s) will have day-to-day responsibility for the active discretionary management of the allocated assets. Registrant will continue to render investment supervisory services to the client relative to the ongoing monitoring and review of account performance, asset allocation and client investment objectives. The factors Registrant considers in recommending Independent Manager(s) include the client's designated investment objective(s), management style, performance, reputation, financial strength, reporting, pricing, and research. The investment management fee charged by the Independent Manager(s) is separate form, and in addition to, Registrant's advisory fee as set forth in Item 5.

**Black Diamond.** The Registrant, in conjunction with the services provided by Black Diamond Performance Reporting, LLC and/or ByAllAccounts, Inc, may also provide periodic comprehensive reporting services which can incorporate all of the client's investment assets, including those investment assets that are not part of the assets managed by the Registrant (the "Excluded Assets"). The client and/or their other advisors that maintain trading authority, and not the Registrant, shall be exclusively responsible for the investment performance of the Excluded Assets. The Registrant's service relative to the Excluded Assets is limited to reporting and non-discretionary consulting services only, which does not include investment implementation. The Registrant does not have trading authority for the Excluded Assets. As such, to the extent applicable to the nature of the Excluded Assets (assets over which the client maintains trading authority vs. trading authority designated to another investment professional), the client (and/or the other investment professional), and not the Registrant, shall be exclusively responsible for directly implementing any recommendations relative to the Excluded Assets. The Registrant shall not be responsible for any implementation error (timing, trading, etc.) relative to the Excluded Assets. In the event the client desires that the Registrant provide non-discretionary investment management services (whereby the Registrant would have trading authority) with respect to the Excluded Assets, the client may engage the Registrant to do so pursuant to the terms and conditions of the *Investment Advisory Agreement* between the Registrant and the client.

**Inverse/Enhanced Market Strategies.** The Registrant may utilize long and short mutual funds and/or exchange traded funds that are designed to perform in either an: (1) inverse relationship to certain market indices (at a rate of 1 or more times the inverse [opposite] result of the corresponding index) as an investment strategy and/or for the purpose of hedging against downside market risk; and (2) enhanced relationship to certain market indices (at a rate of 1 or more times the actual result of the corresponding index) as an investment strategy and/or for the purpose of increasing gains in an advancing market. There can be no assurance that any such strategy will prove profitable or successful. In light of these enhanced risks/rewards, a client may direct the Registrant, in writing, not to employ any or all such strategies for his/her/their/its accounts.

**Structured Notes.** In limited circumstances when consistent with a client's investment objectives, the Registrant may purchase structured notes for client accounts. A structured note is a financial instrument that combines two elements, a debt security and exposure to an underlying asset or assets. It is essentially a note, carrying counter party risk of the issuer. However, the return on the note is linked to the return of an underlying asset or assets (such as the S&P 500 Index or commodities). It is this latter feature that makes structured products unique, as the payout can be used to provide some degree of principal protection, leveraged returns (but usually with some cap on the maximum return), and be tailored to a specific market or economic view. In addition, investors may receive long-term capital gains tax treatment if certain underlying conditions are met and the note is held for more than one year. Finally, structured notes may also have liquidity constraints, such that the sale thereof prior to maturity may be limited.

**Use of Mutual Funds.** While the Registrant may recommend allocating investment assets to mutual funds that are not available directly to the public, the Registrant may also recommend that clients allocate investment assets to publically-available mutual funds that the client could obtain without engaging Registrant as an investment advisor. However, if a client or prospective client determines to allocate investment assets to publically-available mutual funds without engaging Registrant as an investment adviser, the client or prospective client would not receive the benefit of Registrant's initial and ongoing investment advisory services.

**Retirement Plan Rollovers – No Obligation / Potential for Conflict of Interest:** A client or prospective client leaving an employer typically has four options regarding an existing retirement plan (and may engage in a combination of these options): (i) leave the money in the former employer's plan, if permitted, (ii) roll over the assets to the new employer's plan, if one is available and rollovers are permitted, (iii) roll over to an Individual Retirement Account ("IRA"), or (iv) cash out the account value (which could, depending upon the client's age, result in adverse tax consequences). If the Registrant recommends that a client roll over their retirement plan assets into an account to be managed by the Registrant, such a recommendation creates a conflict of interest if the Registrant will earn an advisory fee on the rolled over assets. No client is under any obligation to roll over retirement plan assets to an account managed by Registrant. The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, William J. Cafero, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding its prospective engagement and the corresponding conflict of interest presented by such engagement.

**ERISA / IRC Fiduciary Acknowledgment.** If a client is: (i) a retirement plan ("Plan") organized under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 ("ERISA"); (ii) a participant or beneficiary of a Plan subject to Title I of ERISA or described in section

4975(e)(1)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code, with authority to direct the investment of assets in his or her Plan account or to take a distribution; (iii) the beneficial owner of an Individual Retirement Account ("IRA") acting on behalf of the IRA; or (iv) a Retail Fiduciary with respect to a plan subject to Title I of ERISA or described in section 4975(e)(1)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code: then Registrant represents that it and its representatives are fiduciaries under ERISA or the Internal Revenue Code, or both, with respect to any investment advice provided by Registrant or its representatives or with respect to any investment recommendations regarding an ERISA Plan or participant or beneficiary account.

**Client Obligations.** In performing its services, Registrant shall not be required to verify any information received from the client or from the client's other professionals, and is expressly authorized to rely thereon. Moreover, each client is advised that it remains the client's responsibility to promptly notify the Registrant if there is ever any change in the client's financial situation or investment objectives for the purpose of reviewing, evaluating, or revising Registrant's previous recommendations and/or services.

**Disclosure Statement.** A copy of the Registrant's written Brochure as set forth on Part 2 of Form ADV shall be provided to each client prior to, or contemporaneously with, the execution of the *Investment Advisory Agreement* or *Financial Planning and Consulting Agreement*.

- C. The Registrant shall provide investment advisory services specific to the needs of each client. Prior to providing investment advisory services, an investment adviser representative will ascertain each client's investment objective(s). Thereafter, the Registrant shall allocate and/or recommend that the client allocate investment assets consistent with the designated investment objective(s). The client may, at anytime, impose reasonable restrictions, in writing, on the Registrant's services.
- D. **Wrap/Separately Managed Account Programs:** In the event that Registrant is engaged to provide investment advisory services as part of an unaffiliated wrap-fee program, Registrant will be unable to negotiate commissions and/or transaction costs. Under a wrap program, the wrap program sponsor arranges for the investor participant to receive investment advisory services, the execution of securities brokerage transactions, custody and reporting services for a single specified fee. Participation in a wrap program may cost the participant more or less than purchasing such services separately. In the event that Registrant is engaged to provide investment advisory services as part of an unaffiliated managed account program, Registrant will likewise be unable to negotiate commissions and/or transaction costs. If the program is offered on a non-wrap basis, the program sponsor will determine the broker-dealer through which transactions must be effected, and the amount of transaction fees and/or commissions to be charged to the participant investor accounts. **Please Note:** Since the custodian/broker-dealer is determined by the unaffiliated wrap and/or managed account program sponsor, Registrant will be unable to negotiate commissions and/or transaction costs, and/or seek better execution. As a result, clients may pay higher commissions or other transaction costs or greater spreads, or receive less favorable net prices on transactions for the account than would otherwise be the case through alternative clearing arrangements recommended by Registrant. Higher transaction costs adversely impact account performance. Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, William J. Cafero, remains available to address any questions that a client may have regarding participation in a wrap fee program.

- E. As of December 31, 2016, the Registrant had \$1,387,738,194 in assets under management on a non-discretionary basis and \$9,750,029 in assets under management on a discretionary basis.

## Item 5 Fees and Compensation

A.

### INVESTMENT ADVISORY SERVICES

The client can determine to engage the Registrant to provide non-discretionary and/or discretionary investment advisory services on a non-negotiable *fee-only* basis. The Registrant's annual investment advisory fee is based upon a percentage (%) of the market value of the assets placed under the Registrant's management (0.20% and 1.00%) as follows:

<u>Assets Under Management</u>	<u>Annual Fee (%)*</u>
First \$1,000,000*	1.00%
Next \$2,000,000	0.75%
Next \$25,000,000	0.50%
Over \$28,000,000	0.20%

\* Subject to a \$15,000 annual fee minimum

**Please Note:** Clients who maintain less than \$1.5million of assets under the Registrant's management who are subject to the \$15,000 annual minimum fee will pay a higher percentage Annual Fee than the 1.00% referenced in the above fee schedule

The Registrant may also provide investment advisory services on a negotiable annual fixed fee basis. In such event, the Registrant shall price its services based upon various objective and subjective factors including but not limited to: the representative assigned to the account, the amount of assets to be invested, the complexity of the engagement, the anticipated number of meetings and servicing needs, related accounts, future earning capacity, anticipated future additional assets, and negotiations with the client. As a result, similar clients could pay different fees, which will correspondingly impact a client's net account performance. Moreover, the services to be provided by the Registrant to any particular client could be available from other advisers at lower fees. All clients and prospective clients should be guided accordingly.

Registrant's annual investment advisory fee shall include investment advisory services, and, to the extent specifically requested by the client, financial planning and consulting services. In the event that the client requires extraordinary planning and/or consultation services (to be determined in the sole discretion of the Registrant), the Registrant may determine to charge for such additional services, the dollar amount of which shall be set forth in a separate written notice to the client.

### FINANCIAL PLANNING AND CONSULTING SERVICES (STAND-ALONE)

To the extent specifically requested by a client, the Registrant *may* determine to provide financial planning and/or consulting services (including investment and non-investment related matters, including estate planning, insurance planning, etc.) on a stand-alone separate hourly fee basis. Registrant's planning and consulting fees are negotiable, but



generally range from \$150 to \$750 on an hourly rate basis, depending upon the level and scope of the service(s) required and the professional(s) rendering the service(s).

- B. Clients may elect to have the Registrant's advisory fees deducted from their custodial account. Both Registrant's *Investment Advisory Agreement* and the custodial/clearing agreement may authorize the custodian to debit the account for the amount of the Registrant's investment advisory fee and to directly remit that management fee to the Registrant in compliance with regulatory procedures. In the limited event that the Registrant bills the client directly, payment is due upon receipt of the Registrant's invoice. The Registrant shall deduct fees and/or bill clients quarterly in advance, based upon the market value of the assets on the last business day of the previous quarter.
- C. As discussed below, unless the client directs otherwise or an individual client's circumstances require, the Registrant shall generally recommend that Charles Schwab and Co., Inc. ("*Schwab*") and/or Fidelity Investments, LLC ("*Fidelity*") serve as the broker-dealer/custodian for client investment management assets. However, the Registrant has the ability to work with any custodian that the Client may request. Broker-dealers such as *Schwab* and/or *Fidelity* charge brokerage commissions and/or transaction fees for effecting certain securities transactions (i.e. transaction fees are charged for certain no-load mutual funds, commissions are charged for individual equity and fixed income securities transactions). Clients will incur, in addition to Registrant's investment management fee, brokerage commissions and/or transaction fees, and, relative to all mutual fund and exchange traded fund purchases, charges imposed at the fund level (e.g. management fees and other fund expenses).

**Asset Based Pricing Arrangements:** Relative to Independent Manager engagements, Registrant, depending upon anticipated trading activity of the recommended Independent Manager(s), may recommend that its clients consider entering into an asset-based pricing agreement with the account custodian. Under an asset-based pricing arrangement, the amount that the client will pay the custodian for account commission/transaction fees is based upon a percentage (%) of the market value of the client's account (generally, the greater the market value, the lower the %). This differs from transaction-based pricing (which Registrant typically recommends for client accounts), which assesses a separate commission/transaction fee against the client's account for each account transaction. Once implemented, Registrant will assess the benefit of asset-based pricing arrangement on an annual basis. However, there can be no assurance that the volume of transactions will be consistent from year-to-year given changes in market events and security selection. Thus, given the variances in trading volume, any decision by the client to switch to transaction-based pricing could prove to be economically disadvantageous. The client is not obligated to utilize an asset-based pricing arrangement, and can request at any time to switch from asset based pricing to transaction-based pricing. **Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, William J. Cafero, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding Asset-Based versus Transaction-Based pricing.**

- D. Registrant's annual investment advisory fee shall be prorated and paid quarterly, in advance, based upon the market value of the assets on the last business day of the previous quarter.

The *Investment Advisory Agreement* between the Registrant and the client will continue in effect until terminated by either party by written notice in accordance with the terms of

the *Investment Advisory Agreement*. Upon termination, the Registrant shall refund the pro-rated portion of the advanced advisory fee paid based upon the number of days remaining in the billing quarter.

- E. Neither the Registrant, nor its representatives accept compensation from the sale of securities or other investment products.

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

Neither the Registrant nor its representatives accept performance-based fees.

## **Item 7            Types of Clients**

The Registrant's clients generally include individuals, high net-worth individuals, trusts, estates, charitable organizations, pension and profit sharing plans, etc. The Registrant generally requires an annual minimum fee of \$15,000 for investment advisory services. However, the Registrant, in its sole discretion, may waive or modify its annual fee minimum and/or charge a lesser investment management fee based upon certain criteria (i.e. anticipated future earning capacity, anticipated future additional assets, dollar amount of assets to be managed, related accounts, account composition, negotiations with client, etc.). **Please Note:** Clients who maintain less than \$1.5million of assets under the Registrant's management who are subject to the \$15,000 annual minimum fee will pay a higher percentage Annual Fee than the 1.00% referenced in the above fee schedule.

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

- A. The Registrant may utilize the following methods of security analysis:
- Fundamental - (analysis performed on historical and present data, with the goal of making financial forecasts)

The Registrant may utilize the following investment strategies when implementing investment advice given to clients:

- Long Term Purchases (securities held at least a year)
- Short Term Purchases (securities sold within a year)
- Margin Transactions (use of borrowed assets to purchase financial instruments)

**Please Note: Investment Risk.** Investing in securities involves risk of loss that clients should be prepared to bear. Different types of investments involve varying degrees of risk, and it should not be assumed that future performance of any specific investment or investment strategy (including the investments and/or investment strategies recommended or undertaken by the Registrant) will be profitable or equal any specific performance level(s).

- B. The Registrant's methods of analysis and investment strategies do not present any significant or unusual risks. However, every method of analysis has its own inherent risks. To perform an accurate market analysis the Registrant must have access to current/new market information. The Registrant has no control over the dissemination

rate of market information; therefore, unbeknownst to the Registrant, certain analyses may be compiled with outdated market information, severely limiting the value of the Registrant's analysis. Furthermore, an accurate market analysis can only produce a forecast of the direction of market values. There can be no assurances that a forecasted change in market value will materialize into actionable and/or profitable investment opportunities.

The Registrant's primary investment strategies - Long Term Purchases and Short Term Purchases - are fundamental investment strategies. However, every investment strategy has its own inherent risks and limitations. For example, longer term investment strategies require a longer investment time period to allow for the strategy to potentially develop. Shorter term investment strategies require a shorter investment time period to potentially develop but, as a result of more frequent trading, may incur higher transactional costs when compared to a longer term investment strategy.

In addition to the fundamental investment strategies discussed above, in limited circumstances, the Registrant may also implement and/or recommend the use of margin transactions and options strategies (typically through Independent Managers), which both involve high level of inherent risk.

**Margin Transactions.** A margin transaction strategy, in which an investor uses borrowed assets to purchase financial instruments, involves a high level of inherent risk. The investor generally obtains the borrowed assets by using other securities as collateral for the borrowed sum. The effect of purchasing a security using margin is to magnify any gains or losses sustained by the purchase of the financial instruments on margin. **Please note:** To the extent that a client authorizes the use of margin, and margin is thereafter employed by the Registrant in the management of the client's investment portfolio, the market value of the client's account and corresponding fee payable by the client to the Registrant may be increased. As a result, in addition to understanding and assuming the additional principal risks associated with the use of margin, clients authorizing margin are advised of the potential **conflict of interest** whereby the client's decision to employ margin may correspondingly increase the management fee payable to the Registrant. Accordingly, the decision as to whether to employ margin is left totally to the discretion of client.

**Options Strategies.** The use of options transactions as an investment strategy involves a high level of inherent risk. Option transactions establish a contract between two parties concerning the buying or selling of an asset at a predetermined price during a specific period of time. During the term of the option contract, the buyer of the option gains the right to demand fulfillment by the seller. Fulfillment may take the form of either selling or purchasing a security depending upon the nature of the option contract. Generally, the purchase or the recommendation to purchase an option contract by the Registrant shall be with the intent of offsetting or "hedging" a potential market risk in a client's portfolio. **Please Note:** Although the intent of the options-related transactions that may be implemented by the Registrant is to hedge against principal risk, certain of the options-related strategies (i.e. straddles, short positions, etc.), may, in and of themselves, produce principal volatility and/or risk. Thus, a client must be willing to accept these enhanced volatility and principal risks associated with such strategies. In light of these enhanced risks, client may direct the Registrant, in writing, not to employ any or all such strategies for their accounts. For detailed information on the use of options and option strategies, please refer to the Option Clearing Corp.'s Option Disclosure Document, which can be

found at: <http://www.optionsclearing.com/components/docs/riskstoc.pdf>. Hard copies may be ordered by calling 1-888-678-4667 or writing OCC, 1 North Wacker Drive, Suite 500 Chicago, IL 60606.

- C. Currently, the Registrant primarily allocates client investment assets primarily among various individual mutual funds and/or exchange traded funds (“ETFs”) (including inverse ETFs and/or mutual funds that are designed to perform in an inverse relationship to certain market indices), separate account managers, and unaffiliated private investment funds, on a discretionary and non-discretionary and/or discretionary basis in accordance with the client’s designated investment objective(s).

## **Item 9           Disciplinary Information**

The Registrant has not been the subject of any disciplinary actions.

## **Item 10          Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations**

- A. Neither the Registrant, nor its representatives, are registered or have an application pending to register, as a broker-dealer or a registered representative of a broker-dealer.
- B. Neither the Registrant, nor its representatives, are registered or have an application pending to register, as a futures commission merchant, commodity pool operator, a commodity trading advisor, or a representative of the foregoing.
- C. The Registrant has no other relationship or arrangement with a related person that is material to its advisory business. However, Registrant’s representative, Barbara Raasch, is, in her individual capacity, a certified public accountant who may recommend her tax preparation and/or accounting services. To the extent a client determines to engage Ms. Raasch to provide tax preparation and/or accounting services, such services shall be provided by Ms. Raasch in her individual capacity as a certified public accountant, independent of Registrant. Registrant shall receive no portion of fees charged by Ms. Raasch for such services. The recommendation by Ms. Raasch that a client elect her accounting services presents a conflict of interest, as the receipt of fees for accounting services may provide an incentive to recommend such services, rather than recommending such services based upon a particular client’s needs. No client is under any obligation to utilize Ms. Raasch for accounting services. Clients are reminded that they may elect to obtain accounting services recommended by the Registrant through other non-affiliated certified public accountants. The Registrant’s Chief Compliance Officer, William Cafero, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective may have regarding the above potential conflict of interest.
- D. The Registrant does not receive, directly or indirectly, compensation from investment advisors that it recommends or selects for its clients.

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

- A. The Registrant maintains an investment policy relative to personal securities transactions.

This investment policy is part of Registrant's overall Code of Ethics, which serves to establish a standard of business conduct for all of Registrant's representatives that is based upon fundamental principles of openness, integrity, honesty and trust, a copy of which is available upon request.

In accordance with Section 204A of the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, the Registrant also maintains and enforces written policies reasonably designed to prevent the misuse of material non-public information by the Registrant or any person associated with the Registrant.

- B. Neither the Registrant nor any related person of Registrant recommends, buys, or sells for client accounts, securities in which the Registrant or any related person of Registrant has a material financial interest.
- C. The Registrant and/or representatives of the Registrant *may* buy or sell securities that are also recommended to clients. This practice may create a situation where the Registrant and/or representatives of the Registrant are in a position to materially benefit from the sale or purchase of those securities. Therefore, this situation creates a potential conflict of interest. Practices such as "scalping" (i.e., a practice whereby the owner of shares of a security recommends that security for investment and then immediately sells it at a profit upon the rise in the market price which follows the recommendation) could take place if the Registrant did not have adequate policies in place to detect such activities. In addition, this requirement can help detect insider trading, "front-running" (i.e., personal trades executed prior to those of the Registrant's clients) and other potentially abusive practices.

The Registrant has a personal securities transaction policy in place to monitor the personal securities transactions and securities holdings of each of the Registrant's "Access Persons". The Registrant's securities transaction policy requires that Access Person of the Registrant must provide the Chief Compliance Officer or his/her designee with a written report of the their current securities holdings within ten (10) days after becoming an Access Person. Additionally, each Access Person must provide the Chief Compliance Officer or his/her designee with a written report of the Access Person's current securities holdings at least once each twelve (12) month period thereafter on a date the Registrant selects; provided, however that at any time that the Registrant has only one Access Person, he or she shall not be required to submit any securities report described above.

- D. The Registrant and/or representatives of the Registrant *may* buy or sell securities, at or around the same time as those securities are recommended to clients. This practice creates a situation where the Registrant and/or representatives of the Registrant are in a position to materially benefit from the sale or purchase of those securities. Therefore, this situation creates a potential conflict of interest. As indicated above in Item 11.C, the Registrant has a personal securities transaction policy in place to monitor the personal securities transaction and securities holdings of each of Registrant's Access Persons.

## **Item 12      Brokerage Practices**

- A. In the event that the client requests that the Registrant recommend a broker-dealer/custodian for execution and/or custodial services (exclusive of those clients that may direct the Registrant to use a specific broker-dealer/custodian), Registrant generally recommends that investment management accounts be maintained at *Schwab* and/or

*Fidelity*. Prior to engaging Registrant to provide investment management services, the client will be required to enter into a formal *Investment Advisory Agreement* with Registrant setting forth the terms and conditions under which Registrant shall manage the client's assets, and a separate custodial/clearing agreement with each designated broker-dealer/custodian.

Factors that the Registrant considers in recommending *Schwab* and/or *Fidelity* (or another broker-dealer/custodian, investment platform and/or mutual fund sponsor) include historical relationship with the Registrant, financial strength, reputation, execution capabilities, pricing, research, and service. Although the commissions and/or transaction fees paid by Registrant's clients shall comply with the Registrant's duty to obtain best execution, a client may pay a commission that is higher than another qualified broker-dealer might charge to effect the same transaction where the Registrant determines, in good faith, that the commission/transaction fee is reasonable. 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 services, including the value of research provided, execution capability, commission rates, and responsiveness. Accordingly, although Registrant will seek competitive rates, it may not necessarily obtain the lowest possible commission rates for client account transactions. The brokerage commissions or transaction fees charged by the designated broker-dealer/custodian are exclusive of, and in addition to, Registrant's investment management fee. The Registrant's best execution responsibility is qualified if securities that it purchases for client accounts are mutual funds that trade at net asset value as determined at the daily market close.

1. Non-Soft Dollar Research and Additional Benefits

Although not a material consideration when determining whether to recommend that a client utilize the services of a particular broker-dealer/custodian, Registrant may receive from *Schwab* and/or *Fidelity* (or another broker-dealer/custodian, investment platform, unaffiliated investment manager, mutual fund sponsor, or vendor) without cost (or at a discount) support services and/or products, certain of which assist the Registrant to better monitor and service client accounts maintained at such institutions. Included within the support services that may be obtained by the Registrant may be investment-related research, pricing information and market data, software and other technology that provide access to client account data, compliance and/or practice management-related publications, discounted or gratis consulting services, discounted and/or gratis travel and attendance at conferences, meetings, and other educational and/or social events, marketing support, computer hardware and/or software and/or other products used by Registrant in furtherance of its investment advisory business operations.

As indicated above, certain of the support services and/or products that *may* be received may assist the Registrant in managing and administering client accounts. Others do not directly provide such assistance, but rather assist the Registrant to manage and further develop its business enterprise.

Registrant's clients do not pay more for investment transactions effected and/or assets maintained at *Schwab* and/or *Fidelity* as a result of this arrangement. There is no corresponding commitment made by the Registrant to *Schwab* and/or *Fidelity* or any other entity to invest any specific amount or percentage of client assets in any specific mutual funds, securities or other investment products as a result of the above arrangement.

2. The Registrant does not receive referrals from broker-dealers.
3. The Registrant does not generally accept directed brokerage arrangements (when a client requires that account transactions be effected through a specific broker-dealer). In such client directed arrangements, the client will negotiate terms and arrangements for their account with that broker-dealer, and Registrant will not seek better execution services or prices from other broker-dealers or be able to "batch" the client's transactions for execution through other broker-dealers with orders for other accounts managed by Registrant. As a result, client may pay higher commissions or other transaction costs or greater spreads, or receive less favorable net prices, on transactions for the account than would otherwise be the case.

**Please Note:** In the event that the client directs Registrant to effect securities transactions for the client's accounts through a specific broker-dealer, the client correspondingly acknowledges that such direction may cause the accounts to incur higher commissions or transaction costs than the accounts would otherwise incur had the client determined to effect account transactions through alternative clearing arrangements that may be available through Registrant. Higher transaction costs adversely impact account performance. **Please Also Note:** Transactions for directed accounts will generally be executed following the execution of portfolio transactions for non-directed accounts.

The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, William J. Cafero, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above arrangement.

- B. To the extent that the Registrant provides investment management services to its clients, the transactions for each client account generally will be effected independently, unless the Registrant decides to purchase or sell the same securities for several clients at approximately the same time. The Registrant may (but is not obligated to) combine or "bunch" such orders to obtain best execution, to negotiate more favorable commission rates or to allocate equitably among the Registrant's clients differences in prices and commissions or other transaction costs that might have been obtained had such orders been placed independently. Under this procedure, transactions will be averaged as to price and will be allocated among clients in proportion to the purchase and sale orders placed for each client account on any given day. The Registrant shall not receive any additional compensation or remuneration as a result of such aggregation.

### **Item 13      Review of Accounts**

- A. For those clients to whom Registrant provides investment supervisory services, account reviews are conducted on an ongoing basis by the Registrant's representatives. All investment supervisory clients are advised that it remains their responsibility to advise the Registrant of any changes in their investment objectives and/or financial situation. All clients (in person or via telephone) are encouraged to review financial planning issues (to the extent applicable), investment objectives and account performance with the Registrant on an annual basis.

- B. The Registrant may conduct account reviews on an other than periodic basis upon the occurrence of a triggering event, such as a change in client investment objectives and/or financial situation, market corrections and client request.
- C. Clients are provided, at least quarterly, with written transaction confirmation notices and regular written summary account statements directly from the broker-dealer/custodian and/or program sponsor for the client accounts. The Registrant may also provide a written periodic report summarizing account activity and performance.

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

- A. As referenced in Item 12.A.1 above, the Registrant may receive economic benefits from *Schwab, Fidelity*, or another broker-dealer/custodian, including support services and/or products without cost or at a discount. Registrant's clients do not pay more for investment transactions effected and/or assets maintained at *Schwab, Fidelity* and/or any other broker-dealer as a result of any arrangement. There is no corresponding commitment made by the Registrant to *Schwab, Fidelity* or any other broker-dealer to invest any specific amount or percentage of client assets in any specific mutual funds, securities or other investment products as a result of the above arrangement.

The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, William J. Cafero, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above arrangement and any corresponding perceived conflict of interest any such arrangement may create.

- B. Neither the Registrant nor its representatives compensate any person for client referrals.

#### **Item 15      Custody**

The Registrant shall have the ability to have its advisory fee for each client debited by the custodian on a quarterly basis. Clients are provided, at least quarterly, with written transaction confirmation notices and regular written summary account statements directly from the broker-dealer/custodian and/or program sponsor for the client accounts. The Registrant may also provide a written periodic report summarizing account activity and performance.

**Please Note:** To the extent that the Registrant provides clients with periodic account statements or reports, the client is urged to compare any statement or report provided by the Registrant with the account statements received from the account custodian. The account custodian does not verify the accuracy of the Registrant's advisory fee calculation.

**Please Also Note: Custody Situations:** The Registrant engages in other practices and/or services on behalf of its clients that require disclosure at the Custody section of Part 1 of Form ADV, which practices and/or services are subject to an annual surprise CPA examination in accordance with the requirements of Rule 206(4)-2 under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940. The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, William



J. Cafero, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding custody-related issues.

## **Item 16 Investment Discretion**

The client can determine to engage the Registrant to provide investment advisory services on a discretionary basis. Prior to the Registrant assuming discretionary authority over a client's account, the client shall be required to execute an *Investment Advisory Agreement*, naming the Registrant as the client's attorney and agent in fact, granting the Registrant authority to buy, sell, or otherwise effect investment transactions involving the assets in the client's name found in the discretionary account.

Clients who engage the Registrant on a discretionary basis may, at anytime, impose restrictions, in writing, on the Registrant's discretionary authority (i.e. limit the types/amounts of particular securities purchased for their account, exclude the ability to purchase securities with an inverse relationship to the market, limit or proscribe the Registrant's use of margin, etc.).

## **Item 17 Voting Client Securities**

- A. The Registrant does not vote client proxies. Clients maintain exclusive responsibility for: (1) directing the manner in which proxies solicited by issuers of securities owned by the client shall be voted, and (2) making all elections relative to any mergers, acquisitions, tender offers, bankruptcy proceedings or other type events pertaining to the client's investment assets.
- B. Clients will receive their proxies or other solicitations directly from their custodian. Clients may contact the Registrant to discuss any questions they may have with a particular solicitation

## **Item 18 Financial Information**

- A. The Registrant does not solicit fees of more than \$1,200, per client, six months or more in advance.
- B. The Registrant is unaware of any financial condition that is reasonably likely to impair its ability to meet its contractual commitments relating to its discretionary authority over certain client accounts.
- C. The Registrant has not been the subject of a bankruptcy petition.

**ANY QUESTIONS: The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, William J. Cafero, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above disclosures and arrangements.**