

**Form ADV Part 2B – Brochure Supplement  
Item 1: Cover Page  
January 2014**

**Rodney A. Simms CFP, ChFC**

**Gradient Capital Advisors, LLC  
2125 Poinsettia Drive  
San Diego, CA 92107  
[www.gradientcapital.com](http://www.gradientcapital.com)**

**Firm Contact:  
Timothy A. Sagawa  
Chief Compliance Officer**

**This brochure supplement provides information about Rodney A. Simms that supplements our brochure. You should have received a copy of that brochure. Please contact Timothy A. Sagawa, Chief Compliance Officer if you did not receive Gradient Capital Advisors, LLC's brochure or if you have any questions about the contents of this supplement.**

**Additional information about Rodney A. Simms is available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov).**

## Item 2: Educational Background & Business Experience

**Rodney A. Simms**  
**Year of Birth: 1966**

### **Educational Background:**

- 1994; American College; Bryn Mawr, PA; Master of Science in Financial Services
- 1988; Point Loma Nazarene University; San Diego, CA; Business Administration

### **Business Background:**

- 01/2014 – Present      Gradient Capital Advisors, LLC;  
Senior Partner and Managing Principal
- 03/1989 – 01/2014      Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.; Private Wealth Advisor

### **Exams, Licenses & Other Professional Designations:**

- 06/2003 – Series 66
- 02/1995 – Series 63
- 09/1994 – CFP® - Certified Financial Planner™
- 10/1993 – ChFC® - Chartered Financial Consultant
- 11/1989 – Series 7

### **CFP® - CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™:**

The CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™, CFP® and federally registered CFP marks are professional certification marks granted in the United States by Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards, Inc. (“CFP Board”).

The CFP® certification is a voluntary certification; no federal or state law or regulation requires financial planners to hold CFP® certification. It is recognized in the United States and a number of other countries for its high standard of professional education, stringent code of conduct and standards of practice and ethical requirements that govern professional engagements with clients.

To attain the right to use the CFP® marks, an individual must satisfactorily fulfill the following requirements: Complete an advanced college-level course of study addressing the financial planning subject areas that CFP Board’s studies have determined as necessary for the competent and professional delivery of financial planning services, and attain a Bachelor’s Degree from a regionally accredited United States college or university (or its equivalent from a foreign university, pass the comprehensive CFP® Certification Examination, Complete at least three years of full-time financial planning-related experience and agree to be bound by CFP Board’s *Standards of Professional Conduct*.

Individuals who become certified must complete 30 hours of continuing education hours every two years, including two hours on the *Code of Ethics* and other parts of the *Standards of Professional Conduct*, to maintain competence and keep up with developments in the financial industry and renew an agreement to be bound by the *Standards of Professional Conduct*. The Standards prominently require that CFP® professionals provide financial planning services at a fiduciary standard of care. This means CFP® professionals must provide financial planning services in the best interests of their clients.

### **ChFC® - Chartered Financial Consultant:**

Mr. Simms has a professional designation, Chartered Financial Consultant. The ChFC® is offered by The American College. To receive the ChFC® designation, you must successfully complete all courses in your selected program, meet experience requirements and ethics standards, and agree to comply with The American College Code of Ethics and Procedures.

Three years of full-time business experience is required for all Huebner School designations. The following activities meet the required business experience qualifications included in the ChFC® certification process.

#### **Insurance and health care:**

- Field underwriting and management, including sales and service activities, supervision and management of persons involved in sales or services, or staff support of persons in these activities.
- Company management and operations in positions involving substantial responsibility. Financial services and employee benefits
- Client service and related management, including direct contact with clients, supervision and management of persons involved directly in the process of providing financial services or employee benefits, or staff support of persons in these activities.
- Financial institution management and operations in positions involving substantial responsibility.

#### **Other:**

- University or college teaching of subjects related to the Huebner School curriculum on a full-time basis at an accredited institution of higher education.
- Government regulatory service in a responsible administrative, supervisory, or operational capacity.
- Activities directly or indirectly related to the protection, accumulation, conservation, or distribution of the economic value of human life; these include the work of actuaries, attorneys, CPAs, investment advisers, real estate investment advisers, stockbrokers, trust officers, or persons in other similar occupations.

### **Item 3: Disciplinary Information<sup>1</sup>**

If there are legal or disciplinary events material to your evaluation of Mr. Simms, we are required to disclose all material facts regarding those events.

There are no legal or disciplinary events material to your evaluation of Mr. Simms.

<sup>1</sup> Note: Our firm may, under certain circumstances, rebut the presumption that a disciplinary event is material. If an event is immaterial, we are not required to disclose it. When we review a legal or disciplinary event involving Mr. Simms to determine whether it is appropriate to rebut the presumption of materiality, we consider all of the following factors: (1) the proximity of Mr. Simms to the advisory function; (2) the nature of the infraction that led to the disciplinary event; (3) the severity of the disciplinary sanction; and (4) the time elapsed since the date of the disciplinary event. If we conclude that the materiality presumption has been overcome, we prepare and maintain a file memorandum of our determination in our records. We follow SEC rule 204-2(a)(14)(iii) and similar state rules.

#### Item 4: Other Business Activities

A. If Mr. Simms is actively engaged in any investment-related business or occupation, including if Mr. Simms is registered, or has an application pending to register, as a broker-dealer, registered representative of a broker-dealer, futures commission merchant ("FCM"), commodity pool operator ("CPO"), commodity trading advisor ("CTA"), or an associated person of an FCM, CPO, or CTA, we are required to disclose this fact and describe the business relationship, if any, between the advisory business and the other business.

1. If a relationship between the advisory business and Mr. Simms' other financial industry activities creates a material conflict of interest with you, the SEC requires us to describe the nature of the conflict and generally how we address it.

We have nothing to disclose in this regard.

2. If Mr. Simms receives commissions, bonuses or other compensation based on the sale of securities or other investment products, including as a broker-dealer or registered representative, and including distribution or service ("trail") fees from the sale of mutual funds, we have to disclose this fact. If this compensation is not cash, we are required to explain what type of compensation Mr. Simms receives. We must explain that this practice gives Mr. Simms an incentive to recommend investment products based on the compensation received, rather than on your needs.

We have nothing to disclose in this regard.

B. If Mr. Simms is actively engaged in any business or occupation for compensation not discussed in response to Item 4.A, above, and the other business activity or activities provide a substantial source of Mr. Simms' income or involve a substantial amount of Mr. Simms' time, we are required to disclose this fact and must describe the nature of that business. If the other business activities represent less than 10 percent of Mr. Simms' time and income, we may presume that they are not substantial.

Mr. Simms serves as an Adjunct Professor for Point Loma Nazarene University's Fermanian School of Business. Mr. Simms spends approximately 18 hours per month from January to May of each year, during non-trading hours. Such outside business activity has been reviewed and approved by Timothy A. Sagawa, Chief Compliance Officer.

#### Item 5: Additional Compensation

If someone who is not a client provides an economic benefit to Mr. Simms for providing advisory services, we are required to generally describe the arrangement. For purposes of this Item, economic benefits include sales awards and other prizes, but do not include Mr. Simms' regular salary. Any bonus that is based, at least in part, on the number or amount of sales, client referrals, or new accounts should be considered an economic benefit, but other regular bonuses should not.

We have nothing to disclose in this regard.

### **Item 6: Supervision**

We are required to explain how we supervise Mr. Simms, including how we monitor the advice Mr. Simms provides to you. Our firm has to provide the name, title and telephone number of the person responsible for supervising Mr. Simms' advisory activities on behalf of our firm.

Timothy A. Sagawa, Chief Compliance Officer of Gradient Capital Advisors, LLC, supervises and monitors Mr. Simms' activities on a regular basis. Mr. Sagawa reviews all outgoing correspondence for written financial advice that Mr. Simms provides to his clients. Please contact Mr. Sagawa if you have any questions about Mr. Simms' brochure supplement at (619) 255-0700.