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

This Brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of Cirrus Wealth Management, LLC. If you have any questions about the contents of this Brochure, please contact us at 216-503-9310. 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 Cirrus Wealth Management, LLC is available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov). Cirrus Wealth Management, LLC is a registered investment adviser. Registration with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission or any state securities authority does not imply a certain level of skill or training.

## Item 2 Summary of Material Changes

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

We are a newly registered investment adviser; therefore, we have no material changes to report.

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## Item 4 Advisory Business

### Description of Firm

Cirrus Wealth Management, LLC is a registered investment adviser based in Cleveland, Ohio. We are organized as a limited liability company ("LLC") under the laws of the State of Ohio, and have been providing investment advisory services since March 2016. Joseph P. Heider is the owner of our firm, and he has been working in the financial industry since 1979.

The following paragraphs describe our services and fees. Please refer to the description of each investment advisory service listed below for information on how we tailor our advisory services to your individual needs. As used in this brochure, the words "we," "our," and "us" refer to Cirrus Wealth Management, LLC and the words "you," "your," and "client" refer to you as either a client or prospective client of our firm. Cirrus Wealth Management, LLC offers investment advice with the assistance of its Investment Adviser Representatives (IARs).

### Portfolio Management Services

We offer discretionary and non-discretionary portfolio management services where our investment advice is tailored to meet our clients' individual needs and investment objectives. These services include an initial consultation along with follow up consultations, as may be agreed, to discuss your unique investment objectives, time horizon, risk tolerance, tax circumstances, and various other financial factors. We will ask that you complete certain investor questionnaires, on-boarding forms, and other documents (such as, for example, a client profiling and risk questionnaire) to assist us in gathering information about your financial needs and circumstances.

Based on our evaluation of the foregoing factors, we will use the information we gather to develop a strategy that enables our firm to give you continuous and focused investment advice and/or to make investments on your behalf. Once we customize an investment portfolio for you based on your individual investment objectives, we will monitor your portfolio's performance on an ongoing basis, and will rebalance the portfolio as required by changes in market conditions and in your financial circumstances. In our sole discretion, we may allow you to impose reasonable investment restrictions (for example, limiting the types of securities that can be purchased for your account) by providing our firm with your restrictions and guidelines in writing.

If you engage our firm for discretionary portfolio management services, we require you to grant our firm discretionary authority to manage your account. Discretionary authorization will allow us to determine the specific securities, and the amount of securities, to be purchased or sold for your account without your approval prior to each transaction. If you enter into non-discretionary arrangements with our firm, we must obtain your approval prior to executing any transactions on behalf of your account. Please see Item 16 (Investment Discretion) of this Disclosure Brochure for more information on the types of management authority we offer under our portfolio management services.

Our firm provides portfolio management services through the *Vision2020 Wealth Management Platform - Advisor Managed Portfolios Program*. This program is made available to our firm by Royal Alliance, an unaffiliated Broker-Dealer and Investment Adviser with whom some of our investment adviser representatives may also be registered with. Through this program our firm will directly manage your portfolio and execute transactions in your managed account based on your investment profile. Clients are required to establish an account with Pershing LLC for execution, clearing, and custodial services (see Item 12 of this Disclosure Brochure for more information on our firm's brokerage practices). Client portfolios typically consist of the following holdings subject to each client's investment profile: equity securities, corporate debt securities (including ladder bonds), mutual funds, and exchange traded funds (ETFs). Please see Item 8 of this Disclosure Brochure for more

information on our firm's methods of analysis and investment strategies. Clients may submit investment restrictions on the types of investments in their portfolio, and such requests must be submitted to our firm in writing.

Our firm may also provide portfolio management services where we recommend that you use the services of a third party asset manager ("TPAM") to manage all, or a portion of, your investment portfolio. After gathering information about your financial situation and objectives, we will recommend that you engage a specific TPAM or investment program if appropriate. Factors that we take into consideration when making our recommendation(s) include, but are not limited to, the following: the TPAM's performance, methods of analysis, fees, your financial needs, investment goals, risk tolerance, and investment objectives. We will periodically monitor the TPAM(s)' performance to ensure its management and investment style remains aligned with your investment goals and objectives. The TPAM(s) will actively manage your portfolio and will assume discretionary investment authority over your account. In some circumstances we will assume discretionary authority to hire and fire TPAM(s) and/or reallocate your assets to other TPAM(s) where we deem such action appropriate.

### **Financial Planning Services**

Our firm also provides financial planning services as a stand-alone service. We offer broad-based, project-based, and consultative financial planning services that typically involve providing a variety of advisory services to clients regarding the management of their financial resources based upon an analysis of their individual needs. If you retain our firm for financial planning services, we will meet with you to gather information about your financial circumstances and objectives. As required, we will conduct follow-up interviews for the purpose of reviewing and/or collecting additional financial data. Once such information has been reviewed and analyzed, we will provide you with our financial planning recommendations designed to help you achieve your stated financial goals and objectives. Financial planning recommendations are based on your financial situation at the time we provide our recommendations, and on the financial information you provide to our firm. You have the right to accept or reject our financial planning recommendations, and you may choose any firm to assist you with implementing our recommendations.

### **Pension Consulting Services**

We offer pension consulting services to employee benefit plans and their fiduciaries based upon the needs of the plan and the services requested by the plan sponsor or named fiduciary. In general, these services may include an existing plan review and analysis, plan-level advice regarding fund selection and investment options, education services to plan participants, investment performance monitoring, and/or ongoing consulting.

We may also assist with participant enrollment meetings and provide investment-related educational seminars to plan participants on such topics as: Diversification; Asset allocation; Risk tolerance; Time horizon. Our educational seminars may include other investment-related topics specific to the particular plan. We may also provide additional types of pension consulting services to plans on an individually negotiated basis. All services, whether discussed above or customized for the plan based upon requirements from the plan fiduciaries (which may include additional plan-level or participant-level services) shall be detailed in a written agreement and be consistent with the parameters set forth in the plan documents.

### **IRA Rollover Considerations**

As part of our investment advisory services to you, we may recommend that you withdraw the assets from your employer's retirement plan and roll the assets over to an individual retirement account ("IRA") that we will manage on your behalf. If you elect to roll the assets to an IRA that is subject to our management, we will charge you an asset based fee as set forth in the agreement you executed with our firm. This practice presents a conflict of interest because persons providing investment advice on

our behalf have an incentive to recommend a rollover to you for the purpose of generating fee based compensation rather than solely based on your needs. You are under no obligation, contractually or otherwise, to complete the rollover. Moreover, if you do complete the rollover, you are under no obligation to have the assets in an IRA managed by our firm.

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

An employee will typically have four options:

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

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

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

1. Determine whether the investment options in your employer's retirement plan address your needs or whether you might want to consider other types of investments.
  1. Employer retirement plans generally have a more limited investment menu than IRAs.
  2. Employer retirement plans may have unique investment options not available to the public such as employer securities, or previously closed funds.
2. Your current plan may have lower fees than our fees.
  1. If you are interested in investing only in mutual funds, you should understand the cost structure of the share classes available in your employer's retirement plan and how the costs of those share classes compare with those available in an IRA.
  2. You should understand the various products and services you might take advantage of at an IRA provider and the potential costs of those products and services.
3. Our strategy may have higher risk than the option(s) provided to you in your plan.
4. Your current plan may also offer financial advice.
5. If you keep your assets titled in a 401k or retirement account, you could potentially delay your required minimum distribution beyond age 70.5.
6. Your 401k may offer more liability protection than a rollover IRA; each state may vary.
  1. Generally, federal law protects assets in qualified plans from creditors. Since 2005, IRA assets have been generally protected from creditors in bankruptcies. However, there can be some exceptions to the general rules so you should consult with an attorney if you are concerned about protecting your retirement plan assets from creditors.
7. You may be able to take out a loan on your 401k, but not from an IRA.
8. IRA assets can be accessed any time; however, distributions are subject to ordinary income tax and may also be subject to a 10% early distribution penalty unless they qualify for an exception such as disability, higher education expenses or the purchase of a home.
9. If you own company stock in your plan, you may be able to liquidate those shares at a lower capital gains tax rate.
10. Your plan may allow you to hire us as the manager and keep the assets titled in the plan name.

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

### **Types of Investments**

We primarily offer advice on equity securities, debt securities (including laddered bonds), mutual funds, exchange traded funds (ETFs), and publicly traded real estate investment trusts (REITs). Additionally, we may advise you on various types of investments based on your stated goals and objectives. We may also provide advice on any type of investment held in your portfolio at the inception of our advisory relationship. Please refer to the Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies and Risk of Loss below for additional disclosures on this topic.

### **Assets Under Management**

As of July 6, 2016, we provide continuous management services for \$103,074,164 in client assets on a discretionary basis, and \$0 in client assets on a non-discretionary basis.

## **Item 5 Fees and Compensation**

### **Portfolio Management Services**

Our fee for portfolio management services is based on a percentage of the assets in your account and is set forth in the following annual blended tiered fee schedule:

| <b>Assets Under Management</b> | <b>Annual Fee*</b> |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| First \$1,000,000              | 1.00%              |
| Next \$2,000,000               | 0.75%              |
| Next \$2,000,000               | 0.55%              |
| Next \$5,000,000               | 0.40%              |
| Over \$10,000,000              | 0.24%              |

\*In addition to the annual portfolio management fee (see blended tiered fee schedule above), we charge an annual administration fee of 0.25% not to exceed \$750 annually.

Our annual portfolio management fee is billed and payable quarterly in advance based on the value of your account on the last business day of the preceding calendar quarter. If the portfolio management agreement is executed at any time other than the first day of a calendar quarter, our fees will apply on a pro rata basis, which means that the advisory fee is payable in proportion to the number of days in the quarter for which you are a client. Our advisory fee is negotiable depending on individual client circumstances.

We will combine the account values of family members living in the same household to determine the applicable advisory fee (unless instructed otherwise by the client). For example, we may combine account values for you and your minor children, joint accounts with your spouse, and other types of related accounts. Combining account values may increase the asset total, which may result in your paying a reduced advisory fee based on the available breakpoints in our tiered fee schedule stated above.

Unless we agree to invoice you directly for our portfolio management services, we will deduct our fee directly from your account through the qualified custodian holding your funds and securities. We will deduct our advisory fee only when you have given our firm written authorization permitting the fees to be paid directly from your account. Further, the qualified custodian will deliver an account statement to you at least quarterly. These account statements will show all disbursements from your account, and

you should review all statements for accuracy. In the event we agree to invoice you directly, payment is due within 30 days from the date of the invoice. Where invoices are not paid in full within the 30 day time frame, we reserve the right to debit our fee from your account.

You may terminate the portfolio management agreement upon 30 day written notice to our firm in accordance with the terms of the agreement for services. You will incur a pro rata charge for services rendered prior to the termination of the portfolio management agreement, which means you will incur advisory fees only in proportion to the number of days in the month for which you are a client.

Where we refer you to a third part asset manager ("TPAM"), our recommendations are included in our portfolio management fee. We do not charge you a separate fee for the selection of other advisers nor will we share in the advisory fee you pay directly to the TPAM. Advisory fees that you pay to the TPAM are established and payable in accordance with the Form ADV Part 2 disclosure brochure or other equivalent disclosure document provided by each TPAM. These fees may or may not be negotiable. You should review the recommended TPAM's disclosure brochure for information on its fees and services.

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

### **Financial Planning Services**

We offer financial planning services on either an hourly basis or fixed fee basis. Our hourly fee for advisory services ranges up to \$300 and our fixed fees may range up to \$7,500. We also charge an hourly fee for work performed by our staff that may range from \$35 to \$50 an hour. Generally, our hourly fee is billed for general consulting services and our fixed fees are typically billed for broad-based or project-based financial planning services.

Our financial planning fees - both hourly and fixed fees - are negotiable depending upon the complexity and scope of the service to be performed, your financial situation, and your objectives. Our hourly fees are generally due upon completion of services rendered. For our fixed fees, however, we typically require that you pay 50% of the fee in advance with the remaining portion due upon completion of services rendered. All terms of the engagement will be evidenced in the agreement that you sign with our firm.

We do not require advance payments in excess of \$1,200 for services not performed within six months from the date of engagement. Should the engagement last longer than six months between acceptance of the financial planning agreement and delivery of the negotiated services, any prepaid unearned fees will be promptly returned to you less a pro rata charge for bona fide financial planning services rendered to date. You may terminate the financial planning agreement by providing written notice to our firm. You will incur a pro rata charge for services rendered prior to the termination of the agreement. If you have pre-paid advisory fees that we have not yet earned, you will receive a prorated refund of those fees.

### **Pension Consulting Services**

Our advisory fee for pension consulting services is based on a percentage of the plan assets as set forth in the blended tiered fee schedule noted below. This fee is billed and payable quarterly in advance based on the value of the plan assets on the last business day of the preceding calendar quarter.



**Assets Under Management****Annual Fee\***

|                   |       |
|-------------------|-------|
| First \$1,000,000 | 1.00% |
| Next \$2,000,000  | 0.75% |
| Next \$2,000,000  | 0.55% |
| Next \$5,000,000  | 0.40% |
| Over \$10,000,000 | 0.24% |

Either party may terminate the agreement upon 30-days' written notice to the other party. The pension consulting fees will be prorated for the quarter in which the termination notice is given and any unearned fees will be refunded to the client.

**General - Advisory Services to Retirement Plans and Plan Participants**

As disclosed above, we offer various levels of advisory and consulting services to employee benefit plans ("Plan") and to the participants of such plans ("Participants"). Pursuant to adopted regulations of the U.S. Department of Labor, we are required to provide the Plan's responsible plan fiduciary (the person who has the authority to engage us as an investment adviser to the Plan) with a description of the services we provide to the Plan, the compensation we receive for providing those services, and our status (which is described below).

The services we provide to your Plan and the compensation that we receive for such services are described above, and in the service agreement that you sign with our firm. We do not reasonably expect to receive any other compensation, direct or indirect, for the services we provide to the Plan or Participants unless we are retained under a separate engagement. If we receive any other compensation for such services, we will (i) offset the compensation against our stated fees, and (ii) we will promptly disclose the amount of such compensation, the services rendered for such compensation and the payer of such compensation to you.

In providing services to the Plan and Participants, our status is that of an investment adviser registered under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, and we are not subject to any disqualifications under Section 411 of ERISA. To the extent we perform fiduciary services, we are acting as a fiduciary of the Plan as defined in either Section 3(21) or 3(38) under ERISA. The agreement you sign with our firm will specify our fiduciary status.

**Additional Fees and Expenses**

As part of our investment advisory services to you, we may invest, or recommend that you invest, in mutual funds and exchange traded funds. The fees that you pay to our firm for investment advisory services are separate and distinct from the fees and expenses charged by mutual funds or exchange traded funds (described in each fund's prospectus) to their shareholders. These fees will generally include a management fee and other fund expenses. You will also incur transaction charges and/or brokerage fees when purchasing or selling securities. These charges and fees are typically imposed by the broker-dealer or custodian through whom your account transactions are executed. We do not share in any portion of the brokerage fees/transaction charges imposed by the broker-dealer or custodian. To fully understand the total cost you will incur, you should review all the fees charged by mutual funds, exchange traded funds, our firm, and others. For information on our brokerage practices, refer to the *Brokerage Practices* section (Item 12) of this disclosure brochure.

We may trade client accounts on margin. Each client must sign a separate margin agreement before margin is extended to that client account. Fees for advice and execution on these securities are based on the total asset value of the account, which includes the value of the securities purchased on margin. While a negative amount may show on a client's statement for the margined security as the result of a

lower net market value, the amount of the fee is based on the absolute market value. This creates a conflict of interest where we have an incentive to encourage the use of margin to create a higher market value and therefore receive a higher fee. The use of margin may also result in interest charges in addition to all other fees and expenses associated with the security involved.

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

Our firm's Investment Advisor Representatives (IARs) may be registered representatives with Royal Alliance, a securities broker-dealer, and member FINRA/SIPC. In their separate capacity as a registered representative, such IARs may receive commission-based compensation in connection with the purchase and sale of securities, including 12b-1 fees for the sale of investment company products. Additionally, certain IARs of our firm may also be licensed as independent insurance agents, and may earn commission-based compensation for selling insurance products to you.

Compensation earned by these IARS in their separate capacities as registered representatives and/or licensed insurance agents is separate and in addition to our advisory fees. These practices present a conflict of interest because IARs of our firm who are registered representatives and/or licensed insurance agents have a financial incentive to effect securities transactions on your behalf and/or sell insurance products to you. In efforts to mitigate any conflicts of interest, it is our firm's strict policy that our firm and investment adviser representatives act in our client's best interests. Clients are under no obligation to purchase securities and/or insurance products through any person affiliated with our firm.

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

We do not accept performance-based fees or participate in side-by-side management. Our fees are calculated as described in the *Fees and Compensation* section (Item 5) above, and are not charged on the basis of a share of capital gains upon, or capital appreciation of, the funds in your advisory account.

## **Item 7 Types of Clients**

We offer investment advisory services to individuals (other than high net worth individuals), high net worth individuals, pension and profit sharing plans, charitable organizations and corporations.

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

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

### **Our Methods of Analysis and Investment Strategies**

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

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

*Risk:* Using a long-term purchase strategy generally assumes the financial markets will go up in the long-term which may not be the case. There is also the risk that the segment of the market that you are invested in or perhaps just your particular investment will go down over time even if

the overall financial markets advance. Purchasing investments long-term may create an opportunity cost - "locking-up" assets that may be better utilized in the short-term in other investments.

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

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

Short Sales - Unlike a straightforward investment in stocks where you buy shares with the expectation that their price will increase so you can sell at a profit, in a "short sale" you borrow stocks from your brokerage firm and sell them immediately, hoping to buy them later at a lower price. Thus, a short seller hopes that the price of a stock will go down in the near future. A short seller thus uses declines in the market to his advantage. The short seller makes money when the stock prices fall and loses when prices go up. The SEC has strict regulations in place regarding short selling.

*Risk:* Short selling is very risky. A short seller will profit if the stock goes down in price, but if the price of the shares increase, the potential losses are unlimited. There is no ceiling on how much a short seller can lose in a trade. The share price may keep going up and the short seller will have to pay whatever the prevailing stock price is to buy back the shares. However, gains have a ceiling level because the stock price cannot fall below zero. A short seller has to undertake to pay the earnings on the borrowed securities as long as the short seller chooses to keep the short position open. If the company declares huge dividends or issues bonus shares, the short seller will have to pay that amount to the lender. Any such occurrence can skew the entire short investment and make it unprofitable. The broker can use the funds in the short seller's margin account to buy back the loaned shares or issue a "call away" to get the short seller to return the borrowed securities. If the broker makes this call when the stock price is much higher than the price at the time of the short sale, then the investor can end up taking huge losses.

Margin Transactions - a securities transaction in which an investor borrows money to purchase a security, in which case the security serves as collateral on the loan.

*Risk:* If the value of the shares drops sufficiently, the investor will be required to either deposit more cash into the account or sell a portion of the stock in order to maintain the margin requirements of the account. This is known as a "margin call." An investor's overall risk includes the amount of money invested plus the amount that was loaned to them.

Option Writing - a securities transaction that involves selling an option. An option is the right, but not the obligation, to buy or sell a particular security at a specified price before the expiration date of the option. When an investor sells an option, he or she must deliver to the buyer a specified number of shares if the buyer exercises the option. The seller pays the buyer a premium (the market price of the option at a particular time) in exchange for writing the option.

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

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

*Risk:* When a frequent trading policy is in effect, there is a risk that investment performance within your account may be negatively affected, particularly through increased brokerage and other transactional costs and taxes.

Our investment strategies and advice may vary depending upon each client's specific financial situation. As such, we determine investments and allocations based upon your predefined objectives, risk tolerance, time horizon, financial information, liquidity needs and other various suitability factors. Your restrictions and guidelines may affect the composition of your portfolio. **It is important that you notify us immediately with respect to any material changes to your financial circumstances, including for example, a change in your current or expected income level, tax circumstances, or employment status.**

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

### **Tax Considerations**

Our strategies and investments may have unique and significant tax implications. Regardless of your account size or any other factors, we strongly recommend that you consult with a tax professional regarding the investing of your assets.

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

### **Risk of Loss**

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

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

We primarily offer advice on equity securities, corporate debt securities (including laddered bonds), mutual funds, and exchange traded funds (ETFs). Each type of security or investment product has its own unique set of risks associated with it and it would not be possible to list here all of the specific risks of every type of investment. Even within the same type of investment, risks can vary

widely. However, in very general terms, the higher the anticipated return of an investment, the higher the risk of loss associated with the investment. A description of the types of securities we primarily recommend and some of their inherent risks are provided below.

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

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

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

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

## Item 9 Disciplinary Information

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

## Item 10 Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations

### Registrations with Broker-Dealer

Investment Advisor Representatives of our firm may be registered representatives with Royal Alliance, a securities broker-dealer, and member of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority and the Securities Investor Protection Corporation. Please see the *Fees and Compensation* section (Item 5) in this disclosure brochure for more information on the compensation received by registered representatives who are affiliated with our firm.

### Licensed Insurance Agents

Investment Advisor Representatives of our firm may also be licensed as insurance agents. These persons will earn commission-based compensation for selling insurance products, and such compensation is separate from our advisory fees. Please see the *Fees and Compensation* section (Item 5) in this disclosure brochure for more information on the compensation received by insurance agents who are affiliated with our firm.

### Affiliated Third Party Administrator

Our firm is affiliated under common control and ownership with Qualified Pensions Consultants, Inc., a firm providing record keeping and third party administration services to retirement plans and their participants. If an advisory client requires such services, we may recommend that clients use the services of our affiliate, Qualified Pensions Consultants, Inc. Although our advisory services and fees are separate and distinct from the compensation paid to our affiliate, this referral arrangement presents a conflict of interest because our firm generally has a financial incentive to recommend the services of Qualified Pensions Consultants, Inc. In efforts to mitigate this conflict of interest, it is our firm's strict policy and fiduciary duty to act in our client's best interest. Clients should be aware that any compensation paid to Qualified Pensions Consultants, Inc. may be higher than fees charged by other firms providing the same or similar services. Clients are under no obligation to use our affiliate's services and may obtain comparable services and/or lower fees through other firms.

### Recommendation of Other Advisers

We may recommend that you use a third party asset manager based on your needs and suitability. We will not receive separate compensation, directly or indirectly, from the other investment adviser for recommending that you use their services. Please refer to the *Advisory Business* section (Item 4) and the *Fees and Compensation* section (Item 5) above for additional disclosures on this topic.

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

### Description of Our Code of Ethics

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



reasonably designed to prevent the misuse or dissemination of material, non-public information about you or your account holdings by persons associated with our firm. Clients or prospective clients may obtain a copy of our Code of Ethics by contacting us at the telephone number on the cover page of this brochure.

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

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

### **Personal Trading Practices**

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

## **Item 12 Brokerage Practices**

We routinely require you to establish an account with a qualified custodian with whom we have an existing relationship with. Our firm typically recommends the brokerage and custodial services of Fidelity Brokerage Services LLC (Fidelity) and Pershing LLC (Pershing) (whether one or more "Custodian"). In all cases, the recommended Custodian is a securities broker-dealer and a member of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority and the Securities Investor Protection Corporation. We believe that the recommended Custodian provides quality execution services for you at competitive prices. Price is not the sole factor we consider in evaluating best execution. We also consider the quality of the brokerage services provided by the Custodian, including the value of the Custodian's reputation, execution capabilities, commission rates, and responsiveness to our clients and our firm. In recognition of the value of the services the Custodian provides, you may pay higher commissions and/or trading costs than those that may be available elsewhere.

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

We do not have any soft dollar arrangements.

### **Economic Benefits**

As a registered investment adviser, we have access to the institutional platform of your account custodian. As such, we will also have access to research products and services from your account custodian and/or other brokerage firm. These products may include financial publications, information about particular companies and industries, research software, and other products or services that provide lawful and appropriate assistance to our firm in the performance of our investment decision-making responsibilities. Such research products and services are provided to all investment advisers that utilize the institutional services platforms of these firms, and are not considered to be paid for with soft dollars. However, you should be aware that the commissions charged by a particular broker for a particular transaction or set of transactions may be greater than the amounts another broker who did not provide research services or products might charge.

### **Brokerage for Client Referrals**

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

**Block Trades**

We do not combine multiple orders for shares of the same securities purchased for advisory accounts we manage (the practice of combining multiple orders for shares of the same securities is commonly referred to as "block trading"). Accordingly, you may pay different prices for the same securities transactions than other clients pay. Furthermore, we may not be able to buy and sell the same quantities of securities for you.

**Item 13 Review of Accounts**

The Investment Adviser Representative appointed to your account(s) will monitor your account(s) on an ongoing basis. At a minimum, accounts are reviewed by your Investment Adviser Representative and/or senior management on an annual basis to ensure that current investments remain consistent with stated objectives. Significant changes in the market, as well as any changes in your financial circumstances that you notify us of, can trigger a review of your investments. Furthermore, client accounts are reviewed when a major event or shift in market conditions are likely to impact holdings.

Clients will receive account statements from the acting account custodian on at least an annual basis. We may also prepare periodic reports for clients showing the performance of their accounts.

**Item 14 Client Referrals and Other Compensation**

As disclosed under the *Fees and Compensation* section in this brochure, investment adviser representatives of our firm may be registered representatives with Royal Alliance, a securities broker-dealer, and may also be licensed insurance agents. For information on the conflicts of interest this outside capacities present, and how we address these conflicts, please refer to the *Fees and Compensation* section of this disclosure brochure.

We directly compensate non-employee (outside) consultants, individuals, and/or entities (Solicitors) for client referrals. In order to receive a cash referral fee from our firm, Solicitors must comply with the requirements of the jurisdictions in which they operate. If you were referred to our firm by a Solicitor, you should have received a copy of this brochure along with the Solicitor's disclosure statement at the time of the referral. If you become a client, the Solicitor that referred you to our firm will receive a percentage of the advisory fee you pay our firm for as long as you are a client with our firm, or until such time as our agreement with the Solicitor expires. You will not pay additional fees because of this referral arrangement. Referral fees paid to a Solicitor are contingent upon your entering into an advisory agreement with our firm. Therefore, a Solicitor has a financial incentive to recommend our firm to you for advisory services. This practice creates a conflict of interest; however, you are not obligated to retain our firm for advisory services. Comparable services and/or lower fees may be available through other firms.



## **Item 15 Custody**

Unless we agree to invoice you directly for portfolio management services, your independent custodian will directly debit your account(s) for the payment of our advisory fees. This ability to deduct our advisory fees from your accounts causes our firm to exercise "limited" custody over your funds or securities. We do not have physical custody of any of your funds and/or securities. Your funds and securities will be held with a bank, broker-dealer, or other qualified custodian (such as Fidelity and/or Pershing). You will receive account statements from the qualified custodian(s) holding your funds and securities on at least a quarterly basis. The account statements from your custodian(s) will indicate the amount of our advisory fees deducted from your account(s) each billing period. You should carefully review account statements for accuracy and if you find any information that is accurate, please contact our office immediately.

## **Item 16 Investment Discretion**

If you engage us to perform discretionary management services, you must first sign our discretionary management agreement before we can buy or sell securities on your behalf. Discretionary authorization enables our firm to exercise discretion over the selection and amount of securities to be purchased or sold for your account(s) without obtaining your consent or approval prior to each transaction. You may specify investment objectives, guidelines, and/or impose certain conditions or investment parameters for your account(s). For example, you may specify that the investment in any particular stock or industry should not exceed specified percentages of the value of the portfolio and/or restrictions or prohibitions of transactions in the securities of a specific industry or security.

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

## **Item 17 Voting Client Securities**

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

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

## **Item 18 Financial Information**

Our firm does not have any financial condition or impairment that would prevent us from meeting our contractual commitments to you. In addition, we (i) do not take physical custody of client funds or securities; (ii) do not serve as trustee or signatory for client accounts; (iii) do not require the prepayment of more than \$1,200 in fees six or more months in advance; and, (iv) have not filed a bankruptcy petition at any time in the past ten years. Consequently, rules and regulations do not require our firm to include a financial statement with this Brochure.

## **Item 19 Requirements for State-Registered Advisers**

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

## **Item 20 Additional Information**

### **Your Privacy**

We view protecting your private information as a top priority. Pursuant to applicable privacy requirements, we have instituted policies and procedures to ensure that we keep your personal information private and secure. We may disclose your non-public personal information to non-affiliated third parties. In the course of servicing your account, we may share some information with our service providers, such as transfer agents, custodians, broker-dealers, accountants, consultants, and attorneys.

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

You will receive a copy of our privacy notice prior to or at the time you sign an advisory agreement with our firm. Thereafter, we will deliver a copy of the current privacy policy notice to you on an annual basis. Please contact our main office at the telephone number on the cover page of this disclosure brochure if you have any questions regarding this policy. If you decide to close your account(s) we will adhere to our privacy policies, which may be amended from time to time.

If we make any substantive changes in our privacy policy that would further permit or require disclosures of your private information, we will provide written notice to you. Where the change is based on permitted disclosures, you will be given an opportunity to direct us as to whether such disclosure is acceptable. Where the change is based on required disclosures, you will only receive written notice of the change. You may not opt out of the required disclosures. If you have questions about our privacy policies, please contact our main office at the telephone number on the cover page of this Brochure and ask to speak to the Chief Compliance Officer.

### **Trade Errors**

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

### **Class Action Lawsuits**

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