

**Item 1: Cover Page  
Part 2A of Form ADV: Firm Brochure  
December 2021**



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**Firm Contact:  
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Chief Compliance Officer**

This brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of ARQ Wealth Advisors, LLC ("ARQ"). If clients have any questions about the contents of this brochure, please contact us at (480) 214-9572. The information in this brochure has not been approved or verified by the United States Securities and Exchange Commission or by any State Securities Authority. Additional information about our firm is also available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov) by searching CRD #147351. Please note that the use of the term "registered investment adviser" and description of our firm and/or our associates as "registered" does not imply a certain level of skill or training. Clients are encouraged to review this Brochure and Brochure Supplements for our firm's associates who advise clients for more information on the qualifications of our firm and our employees.

## Item 2: Material Changes

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

Since the last annual amendment filing on 01/20/2021, there are no material changes to report that we have not previously disclosed to our clients.

- At our firms discretion, we may now provide Complimentary Financial Planning Services.

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## Item 4: Advisory Business

Our firm provides individuals and other types of clients with a wide array of investment advisory services. Our firm is a limited liability company formed under the laws of the State of Arizona in 2008. Our firm is owned by Richard Siegel, Gregory Yocum, James Robinson and John Remm.

Our firm provides fee-only asset management and financial planning services for many different types of clients to help meet their financial goals while remaining sensitive to risk tolerance and time horizons. As a fiduciary, it is our duty to always act in the client’s best interest. This is accomplished in part by knowing the client. Our firm has established a service-oriented advisory practice with open lines of communication. Working with clients to understand their investment objectives while educating them about our process, facilitates the kind of working relationship we value.

We have voluntarily subscribed to the “Real Fiduciary™ Practices” published by the Institute for the Fiduciary Standard. Real Fiduciary™ Practices offer a simple code of conduct and outline a commitment to clients of subscribing financial advisors. They seek to clearly articulate what a client can expect to receive from a subscribing financial advisor. These Real Fiduciary™ Practices do not replace our regulatory compliance obligations or duties to clients under relevant laws, rules, or regulations. The Institute for the Fiduciary Standard’s role is limited to publishing the practices as well as maintaining a corresponding register of subscribing financial advisors. You can verify our affirmation of Real Fiduciary™ Practices on our website or at the Institute for the Fiduciary Standard website at [www.thefiduciaryinstitute.org](http://www.thefiduciaryinstitute.org). The practices can be found at <https://thefiduciaryinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Real-Fiduciary-Practices-2019-02-22.pdf>

## **Types of Advisory Services Offered**

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Through our Wealth Apex™ or Wealth Builder™ services, our firm assist clients in meeting their financial goals through the use of a financial plan or consultation. Our firm conducts client meetings to understand their current financial situation, existing resources, financial goals, and risk tolerance. Based on our findings, an investment approach is presented to the client, consisting of individual stocks, bonds, ETFs, options, mutual funds and other public and private securities or investments. Upon client request, our firm provides a summary of observations and recommendations for the planning or consulting aspects of this service.

### **Wealth Apex™:**

Our Wealth Apex™ service requires a minimum portfolio balance of **\$500,000**. This service features the management of assets along with comprehensive financial planning. Participating clients will establish financial goals, have their risk tolerance evaluated, have a personalized asset allocation designed and have an investment policy statement developed. Once the appropriate portfolio has been determined, portfolios are continuously and regularly monitored, and if necessary, rebalanced based upon the client's individual needs, stated goals and objectives. The Wealth Apex™ service is highlighted with **quarterly client meetings** which include a detailed review of client portfolios and pertinent financial planning topics. Clients have ongoing access to a financial advisor to assess live changes and financial issues. As part of the financial planning process, ARQ will complete a net worth statement and cash flow-based retirement and income plan along with customized financial planning solutions on an as needed basis. Our written financial plans or financial consultations rendered to clients usually include general recommendations for a course of activity or specific actions to be taken by the client(s). These customized solutions include one or more of the following: Family Needs Planning, Credit and Lending, Tax Planning, Insurance and Liability Management, Executive Compensation Management, Estate Planning, and Retirement Planning. ARQ may recommend the need for a specialized consultation or legal document drafting from an unaffiliated third party within the estate planning or taxation fields. At Client's request, ARQ will make recommendations to an unaffiliated third party for such services.

### **Wealth Builder™:**

Our Wealth Builder™ service requires a minimum portfolio balance of **\$125,000** and a minimum monthly contribution of \$500. This service features the management of assets along with targeted financial planning analyses. Participating clients will establish financial goals, have their risk tolerance evaluated, have a personalized asset allocation designed and have an investment policy statement developed. Once the appropriate portfolio has been determined, portfolios are continuously and regularly monitored, and if necessary, rebalanced based upon the client's individual needs, stated goals and objectives. The Wealth Builder™ Service is highlighted with **semi-annual client meetings** which include a detailed review of client portfolios and pertinent financial planning topics. Clients have ongoing access to a financial advisor to assess live changes and financial issues. As part of the financial planning process, our firm will complete an analysis of household budgets, savings planning, and college planning on an as needed basis.

### **Complimentary Financial Planning:**

At our firms discretion, we may provide standalone financial planning and consulting services to clients for the management of financial resources based upon an analysis of current situation, goals, and objectives. Our Complementary Financial planning services will typically involve preparing a financial plan or rendering a financial consultation for clients based on the client's financial goals and objectives **at no charge to the client**. This planning or consulting may encompass Investment Planning, Retirement Planning, Estate Planning, Charitable Planning, Education Planning, Corporate and Personal Tax Planning, Cost Segregation Study, Corporate Structure, Real Estate Analysis, Mortgage/Debt Analysis, Insurance Analysis, Lines of Credit Evaluation, or Business and Personal Financial Planning. Existing Wealth Apex™, Wealth Builder™, and Retirement Plan program clients will not be offered this complimentary service.

Written financial plans or financial consultations rendered to clients usually include general recommendations for a course of activity or specific actions to be taken by the clients. Implementation of the recommendations will be at the discretion of the client. Our firm provides clients with a summary of their financial situation, and observations for financial planning engagements. Financial consultations are not typically accompanied by a written summary of observations and recommendations, as the process is less formal than the planning service.

### **Retirement Plan Program:**

Our firm provides discretionary management of retirement plans to employer plan sponsors on an ongoing basis. Generally, this service consists of assisting employer plan sponsors in establishing, monitoring and reviewing their company's participant-directed retirement plan. As the needs of the plan sponsor dictate, areas of advising may include:

- **Establishing an Investment Policy Statement** – Our firm may assist in the development of a statement that summarizes the investment goals and objectives along with the broad strategies to be employed to meet the objectives.
- **Investment Options, Asset Allocation, and Portfolio Construction** – Our firm will develop strategic asset allocation models in order to meet the Plan's investment objectives, time horizon, financial situation and tolerance for risk. Once established, our firm will manage the pooled retirement account on a discretionary basis. Our firm will communicate with the Plan Sponsor to evaluate existing investments and make recommendations for appropriate changes.
- **Investment Monitoring** – Our firm will monitor and review the performance and transactions of the investments with the Plan Sponsor.

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

### **Tailoring of Advisory Services**

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Our firm offers individualized investment advice to our Wealth Apex™ and Wealth Builder™ clients. General investment advice will be offered to our Retirement Plan Program clients. Each Wealth Apex™ and Wealth Builder™ client may place reasonable restrictions on the types of investments to be held in the portfolio. Restrictions on investments in certain securities or types of securities may not be possible due to the level of difficulty this would entail in managing the account.

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

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Our firm previously offered a wrap fee program as further described in Part 2A, Appendix 1 (the "Wrap Fee Program Brochure"). However, this service is only made available to our legacy clients. Our firm does not manage wrap fee accounts in a different fashion than non-wrap fee accounts. All accounts are managed on an individualized basis according to the client's investment objectives, financial goals, risk tolerance, etc.

## **Regulatory Assets Under Management**

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As of November 23, 2021, our firm manages \$1,904,084 on a discretionary basis and \$400,538,380 on a non-discretionary basis, which totals \$402,442,380 in regulatory assets under management.

## **Item 5: Fees & Compensation**

### **Compensation for Our Advisory Services**

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For both the Wealth Apex™ Service and Wealth Builder™ Service, portfolio values include money market funds, mutual funds, exchange traded funds, individual securities (including options), annuities, IRAs, and defined contribution plans (401(k), 403(b), and 457 plans). Portfolio values do not include bank accounts, savings bonds, real estate properties, residences, defined benefit plans, closely held stock, or life insurance cash values. Portfolio values are based on the closing prices on the last business day of each calendar quarter.

#### **Wealth Apex™:**

<b>Assets Under Management</b>	<b>Annual Percentage of Assets Charge</b>
First \$1,000,000	1.25%
Next \$1,000,000	1.00%
Next \$3,000,000	0.80%
Over \$5,000,000	0.60%

Fees to be assessed will be outlined in the advisory agreement to be signed by the client. Annualized fees are billed on a pro-rata basis quarterly in arrears based on the value of the account(s) on the last day of the quarter. For example, a client with a \$2,000,000 portfolio will be charged 1.25 % annually or .3125% per quarter on the first \$1,000,000, and then 1.00% annually or .25% per quarter on the second \$1,000,000. Fees are negotiable and will be deducted from client account(s). Cash flows contributed/distributed throughout the quarter will be adjusted pro-rata at the end of each billing cycle up to a certain threshold. In rare cases, our firm will agree to directly invoice. As part of this process, Clients understand the following:

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

#### **Wealth Builder™:**

The annual fee charged for this service is 1.25% or an annual minimum fee of \$2,000, whichever is greater. Fees to be assessed will be outlined in the advisory agreement to be signed by the client. Annualized fees are billed on a pro-rata basis quarterly in arrears based on the value of the account(s) on the last day of the quarter. Fees are negotiable and will be deducted from client account(s). Cash flows contributed/distributed throughout the quarter will be adjusted pro-rata at the end of each billing cycle up to a certain threshold. In rare cases, our firm will agree to directly invoice. As part of this process, Clients understand the following:

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

## **Complimentary Financial Planning**

Our firm will not charge a fee for our Complimentary Financial Planning Service.

## **Retirement Plan Program:**

Our firm charges a fee based on a percentage of Plan asset under management for our Retirement Plan Program service. Fees based on a percentage of managed Plan assets will not exceed 1.25%. The fee-paying arrangements will be determined on a case-by-case basis and will be detailed in the signed consulting agreement.

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

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Non-Wrap Clients will incur transaction charges for trades executed by their chosen custodian via individual transaction charges. These transaction fees are separate from our firm's advisory fees and will be disclosed by the chosen custodian. TD Ameritrade, Inc. ("TD Ameritrade") does not charge transaction fees for U.S. listed equities and exchange traded funds. Clients may also pay charges imposed directly by a mutual fund, index fund, or exchange traded fund, which shall be disclosed in the fund's prospectus (i.e., fund management fees, initial or deferred sales charges, mutual fund sales loads, 12b-1 fees, surrender charges, variable annuity fees, IRA and qualified retirement plan fees, and other fund expenses). Our firm does not receive a portion of these fees. Our firm at one time offered a wrap fee program, however, our wrap service is only made available to legacy clients. These clients will not incur transaction costs for trades.

## **Termination & Refunds**

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Either party may terminate the investment advisory services received from our firm without penalty upon written notice within five (5) business days after entering into the advisory agreement. Thereafter, either party may terminate either the Wealth Apex™, Wealth Builder™, or Retirement Plan Program service at any time by notifying the other party in writing. Upon termination, the client will be charged a pro-rated amount for time spent working on the plan, implementing the plan, transferring assets, preparing the Investment Policy Statement, and management of the assets. If advisory fees cannot be deducted, our firm will send an invoice for due advisory fees to the client.

## **Commissionable Securities Sales**

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

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

Our firm does not charge performance-based fees.

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

Our firm has the following types of clients:

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

Our requirements for opening and maintaining accounts or otherwise engaging us:

- Our Wealth Apex™ service requires a minimum portfolio balance of \$500,000; and
- Our Wealth Builder™ service requires a minimum portfolio balance of \$125,000 and a minimum monthly contribution of \$500.

Households may aggregate their assets in order to meet the minimum portfolio balance requirements for our Wealth Apex™ and Wealth Builder™ services. However, our firm requires a minimum account balance of \$10,000 for individual accounts. These minimum account balance requirements may be reduced or waived on a case-by-case basis at our firm's discretion.

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

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

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

**Cyclical Analysis:** In this type of technical analysis, we measure the movements of a particular stock against the overall market in an attempt to predict the price movement of the security.

**Fundamental Analysis:** We attempt to measure the intrinsic value of a security by looking at economic and financial factors (including the overall economy, industry conditions, and the financial condition and management of the company itself) to determine if the company is underpriced (indicating it may be a good time to buy) or overpriced (indicating it may be time to sell). Fundamental analysis does not attempt to anticipate market movements. This presents a potential risk, as the price of a security can move up or down along with the overall market regardless of the economic and financial factors considered in evaluating the stock.

**Technical Analysis:** We analyze past market movements and apply that analysis to the present in an attempt to recognize recurring patterns of investor behavior and potentially predict future price movement. Technical analysis does not consider the underlying financial condition of a company. This presents a risk in that a poorly-managed or financially unsound company may underperform regardless of market movement.

**Asset Allocation:** Rather than focusing primarily on securities selection, we attempt to identify an appropriate ratio of securities, fixed income, and cash suitable to the client's investment goals and risk tolerance. A risk of asset allocation is that the client may not participate in sharp increases in a particular security, industry or market sector. Another risk is that the ratio of securities, fixed income, and cash will change over time due to stock and market movements and, if not corrected, will no longer be appropriate for the client's goals.

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

**Long-Term Purchases:** When utilizing this strategy, we may purchase securities with the idea of holding them for a relatively long time (typically held for at least a year). A risk in a long-term purchase strategy is that by holding the security for this length of time, we may not take advantages of short-term gains that could be profitable to a client. Moreover, if our predictions are incorrect, a security may decline sharply in value before we make the decision to sell. We typically employ this sub-strategy when we believe the securities to be well

valued; and/or we want exposure to a particular asset class over time, regardless of the current projection for this class. The potential risks associated with this investment strategy involve a lower than expected return, for many years in a row. Lower-than-expected returns that last for a long time and/or that are severe in nature would have the impact of dramatically lowering the ending value of your portfolio, and thus could significantly threaten your ability to meet financial goals.

**Short-Term Purchases:** When utilizing this strategy, we may also purchase securities with the idea of selling them within a relatively short time (typically a year or less). We do this in an attempt to take advantage of conditions that we believe will soon result in a price swing in the securities we purchase. The potential risk associated with this investment strategy is associated with the currency or exchange rate. Currency or exchange rate risk is a form of risk that arises from the change in price of one currency against another. The constant fluctuations in the foreign currency in which an investment is denominated vis-à-vis one's home currency may add risk to the value of a security. Currency risk is greater for shorter term investments, which do not have time to level off like longer term foreign investments.

**Option Writing:** We may use options as an investment strategy. An option is a contract that gives the buyer the right, but not the obligation, to buy or sell an asset (such as a share of stock) at a specific price on or before a certain date. An option, just like a stock or bond, is a security. An option is also a derivative, because it derives its value from an underlying asset. The two types of options are calls and puts. A call gives us the right to buy an asset at a certain price within a specific period of time. A put gives us the holder the right to sell an asset at a certain price within a specific period of time. We use "covered calls", in which we sell an option on a security you own. With this strategy, you receive a fee for making the option available, and the person purchasing the option has the right to buy the security from you at an agreed-upon price. The potential risks associated with these transactions are that (1) all options expire. The closer the option gets to expiration, the quicker the premium in the option deteriorates; and (2) Prices can move very quickly. Depending on factors such as time until expiration and the relationship of the stock price to the option's strike price, small movements in a stock can translate into big movements in the underlying options.

**Fixed Income Portfolio Management Investment Strategies:** We believe that a conservative, risk-averse approach to fixed income management will provide both steady incremental outperformance, and low relative volatility. The disciplined process we employ in an effort to realize this philosophy is generally grounded in four key decisions:

- Constraint of portfolio duration within a narrow range relative to the benchmark in order to limit exposure to market and interest rate risk.
- Strategic allocations to key sectors to add value relative to the benchmark.
- Proactive management of term structure to add value in different yield curve environments.
- Security selection based on rigorous credit and relative value analysis and broad diversification of nongovernment issuers.

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

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

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



## **Item 9: Disciplinary Information**

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

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

Representatives of our firm are non-practicing licensed insurance agents. Insurance products are not offered by ARQ or through its representatives. Clients will be referred to other agents or institutions should they be interested in insurance products. Compensation will not be provided to ARQ or its representatives for any of these referrals.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Item 12: Brokerage Practices

### Selecting a Brokerage Firm

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Our firm does not maintain custody of client assets. Client assets must be maintained by a qualified custodian. Our firm seeks to recommend a custodian who will hold client assets and execute transactions on terms that are overall most advantageous when compared to other available providers and their services. The factors considered, among others, are these:

- Timeliness of execution
- Timeliness and accuracy of trade confirmations
- Research services provided
- Ability to provide investment ideas
- Execution facilitation services provided
- Record keeping services provided
- Custody services provided
- Frequency and correction of trading errors
- Ability to access a variety of market venues
- Expertise as it relates to specific securities
- Financial condition
- Business reputation
- Quality of services

With this in consideration, our firm participates in the TD Ameritrade Institutional program. TD Ameritrade Institutional is a division of TD Ameritrade, Inc. ("TD Ameritrade") member FINRA/SIPC. TD Ameritrade is an independent [and unaffiliated] SEC-registered broker-dealer. TD Ameritrade offers services to independent investment advisers which includes custody of securities, trade execution, clearance and settlement of transactions. TD Ameritrade enables us to obtain many no-load mutual funds without transaction charges and other no-load funds at nominal transaction charges. TD Ameritrade does not charge client accounts separately for custodial services. Client accounts will be charged transaction fees, commissions or other fees on trades that are executed or settle into the client's custodial account. TD Ameritrade recently eliminated transaction fees on U.S. listed equities and exchange traded funds. Transaction fees are negotiated with TD Ameritrade and are generally discounted from customary retail commission rates. This benefits clients because the overall fee paid is often lower than would be otherwise.

TD Ameritrade may make certain research and brokerage services available at no additional cost to our firm. Research products and services provided by TD Ameritrade may include: research reports on recommendations or other information about particular companies or industries; economic surveys, data and analyses; financial publications; portfolio evaluation services; financial database software and services; computerized news and pricing services; quotation equipment for use in running software used in investment decision-making; and other products or services that provide lawful and appropriate assistance by TD Ameritrade to our firm in the performance of our investment decision-making responsibilities. The aforementioned research and brokerage services qualify for the safe harbor exemption defined in Section 28(e) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

TD Ameritrade does not make client brokerage commissions generated by client transactions available for our firm's use. The aforementioned research and brokerage services are used by our firm to manage accounts for which our firm has investment discretion. Without this arrangement, our firm might be compelled to purchase the same or similar services at our own expense.

As part of our fiduciary duty to our clients, our firm will endeavor at all times to put the interests of our clients first. Clients should be aware, however, that the receipt of economic benefits by our firm or our related persons creates a potential conflict of interest and may indirectly influence our firm's choice of TD Ameritrade as a custodial recommendation. Our firm examined this potential conflict of interest when our firm chose to

recommend TD Ameritrade and have determined that the recommendation is in the best interest of our firm's clients and satisfies our fiduciary obligations, including our duty to seek best execution.

Our non-wrap fee clients may pay a transaction fee or commission to TD Ameritrade that is higher than another qualified broker dealer might charge to effect the same transaction where our firm determines in good faith that the commission is reasonable in relation to the value of the brokerage and research services provided to the client as a whole.

In seeking best execution, the determinative factor is not the lowest possible cost, but whether the transaction represents the best qualitative execution, taking into consideration the full range of a broker-dealer's services, including the value of research provided, execution capability, commission rates, and responsiveness. Although our firm will seek competitive rates, to the benefit of all clients, our firm may not necessarily obtain the lowest possible commission rates for specific client account transactions.

### **Soft Dollars**

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Our firm does not receive soft dollars in excess of what is allowed by Section 28(e) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. The safe harbor research products and services obtained by our firm will generally be used to service all of our clients but not necessarily all at any one particular time. On occasion, our firm may share the cost of a client event with one of our strategic partners.

### **Client Brokerage Commissions**

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TD Ameritrade does not make client brokerage commissions generated by client transactions available for our firm's use.

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

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

### **Brokerage for Client Referrals**

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Our firm does not receive brokerage for client referrals.

### **Directed Brokerage**

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In certain instances, clients may seek to limit or restrict our discretionary authority in making the determination of the brokers with whom orders for the purchase or sale of securities are placed for execution, and the commission rates at which such securities transactions are effected. Clients may seek to limit our authority in this area by directing that transactions (or some specified percentage of transactions) be executed through specified brokers in return for portfolio evaluation or other services deemed by the client to be of value. Any such client direction must be in writing (often through our advisory agreement) and may contain a representation from the client that the arrangement is permissible under its governing laws and documents, if this is relevant. Our firm provides appropriate disclosure in writing to clients who direct trades to particular brokers, that with respect to their directed trades, they will be treated as if they have retained the investment discretion that our firm otherwise would have in selecting brokers to effect transactions and in negotiating commissions and that such direction may adversely affect our ability to obtain best price and execution. In addition, our firm will inform clients in writing that the trade orders may not be aggregated with other clients' orders and that direction of brokerage may hinder best execution.

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

A retirement or ERISA plan client may direct all or part of portfolio transactions for its account through a specific broker or dealer in order to obtain goods or services on behalf of the plan. Such direction is permitted

provided that the goods and services provided are reasonable expenses of the plan incurred in the ordinary course of its business for which it otherwise would be obligated and empowered to pay. ERISA prohibits directed brokerage arrangements when the goods or services purchased are not for the exclusive benefit of the plan. Consequently, our firm will request that plan sponsors who direct plan brokerage provide us with a letter documenting that this arrangement will be for the exclusive benefit of the plan.

### **Client-Directed Brokerage**

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Our firm allows clients to direct brokerage outside our recommendation. Our firm may be unable to achieve the most favorable execution of client transactions. Client directed brokerage may cost clients more money. For example, in a directed brokerage account, clients may pay higher brokerage commissions because our firm may not be able to aggregate orders to reduce transaction costs, or clients may receive less favorable prices.

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

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Our firm provides investment management services for various clients. There are occasions on which portfolio transactions may be executed as part of concurrent authorizations to purchase or sell the same security for numerous accounts served by our firm, which involve accounts with similar investment objectives. Although such concurrent authorizations potentially could be either advantageous or disadvantageous to any one or more particular accounts, they are affected only when our firm believes that to do so will be in the best interest of the effected accounts. When such concurrent authorizations occur, the objective is to allocate the executions in a manner which is deemed equitable to the accounts involved. In any given situation, our firm attempts to allocate trade executions in the most equitable manner possible, taking into consideration client objectives, current asset allocation and availability of funds using price averaging, proration and consistently non-arbitrary methods of allocation. We do not use block trades at this time.

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

Our management personnel or financial advisors review accounts on at least a quarterly basis for our Wealth Apex™ clients and on at least a semi-annual basis for our Wealth Builder™ clients. The nature of these reviews is to learn whether client accounts are in line with their investment objectives, appropriately positioned based on market conditions, and investment policies, if applicable. Performance reports are provided to all clients on a quarterly basis. Verbal reports to clients take place on at least an annual basis when our Wealth Apex™ and Wealth Builder™ clients are contacted. Our firm may review client accounts more frequently than described above. Among the factors which may trigger an off-cycle review are major market or economic events, the client's life events, requests by the client, etc.

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

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

### **TD Ameritrade, Inc.**

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Our firm may recommend TD Ameritrade to clients for custody and brokerage services. There is no direct link between our firm's participation in the program and the investment advice given to clients, although we receive economic benefits through our participation in the program that are typically not available to TD Ameritrade retail investors. These benefits include the following products and services (provided without cost or at a discount): receipt of duplicate client statements and confirmations; research related products and tools; consulting services; access to a trading desk serving our firm's participants; access to block trading (which provides the ability to aggregate securities transactions for execution and then allocate the appropriate shares to client accounts); the ability to have advisory fees deducted directly from client accounts; access to an

electronic communications network for client order entry and account information; access to mutual funds with no transaction fees and to certain institutional money managers; and discounts on compliance, marketing, research, technology, and practice management products or services provided to us by third party vendors. TD Ameritrade may also have paid for business consulting and professional services received by our firm's related persons. Some of the products and services made available by TD Ameritrade through the program may benefit our firm but may not benefit our client accounts. These products or services may assist us in managing and administering client accounts, including accounts not maintained at TD Ameritrade. Other services made available by TD Ameritrade are intended to help us manage and further develop our business enterprise. The benefits received by our firm or our personnel through participation in the program do not depend on the amount of brokerage transactions directed to TD Ameritrade. As part of our fiduciary duties to our clients, we endeavor at all times to put the interests of our clients first. Clients should be aware, however, that the receipt of economic benefits by our firm or our related persons in and of itself creates a potential conflict of interest and may indirectly influence our firm's choice of TD Ameritrade for custody and brokerage services.

### **Referral Fees**

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Our firm pays referral fees (non-commission based) to independent solicitors (non-registered representatives) for the referral of their clients to our firm in accordance with Rule 206 (4)-3 of the Investment Advisers Act of 1940. Such referral fee represents a share of our investment advisory fee charged to our clients. This arrangement will not result in higher costs to the referred client. In this regard, our firm maintains Solicitors Agreements in compliance with Rule 206 (4)-3 of the Investment Advisers Act of 1940 and applicable state and federal laws. All clients referred by Solicitors to our firm will be given full written disclosure describing the terms and fee arrangements between our firm and Solicitor(s). In cases where state law requires licensure of solicitors, our firm ensures that no solicitation fees are paid unless the solicitor is registered as an investment adviser representative of our firm. If our firm is paying solicitation fees to another registered investment adviser, the licensure of individuals is the other firm's responsibility.

## **Item 15: Custody**

### **Deduction of Advisory Fees:**

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

### **Third Party Money Movement:**

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

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

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

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

Clients have the option of providing our firm with investment discretion on their behalf, pursuant to an executed investment advisory client agreement. By granting investment discretion, our firm is authorized to execute securities transactions, determine which securities are bought and sold, and the total amount to be bought and sold. Limitations may be imposed by the client in the form of specific constraints on any of these areas of discretion with our firm's written acknowledgement.

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

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

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

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

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