

Top 12 Best Financial Advisors in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (Tri-State)

2016 RANKING OF TOP FINANCIAL ADVISORS

Exploring the Top Financial Advisors in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (Tri-State), US

Financial stability. Security. Peace of mind. The growth of wealth. Long-term retirement strategies. Preservation of wealth across generations. These are just a few of the many reasons clients become involved with wealth management and investment advisory firms. The role of a wealth manager goes beyond accounting and, instead, is about creating a strategy that's beneficial for clients in the short and long term. The decision of who to partner with as a wealth advisor is a significant one.

Not all wealth advisors are the same, and without choosing an expert firm with a dedication to the client's best interests, clients could be left with inadequate planning and solutions to financial complexities. On the other hand, when you select a top wealth management firm, you'll find that, besides preserving your wealth, you can also grow it over time and meet your lifestyle objectives.

The following is a list of the top-ranked wealth management firms in the D.C., Maryland, and Virginia metro. These wealth management firms in the tri-state area are among the most reputable, and many have long histories serving the diverse needs of clients. This ranking of financial advisors in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia looks at factors such as investment approach and philosophy, the certification of advisors, and reputation, among many other specific factors.



AdvisoryHQ's List of the Best Financial Advisors in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (Tri-State), US

- **Bernhardt Wealth Management**
- **Burt Wealth Advisors**
- **Cassaday & Company, Inc.**
- **FBB Capital Partners**
- **Harbour Capital Advisors**
- **Kendall Capital Management**
- **McLean Asset Management**
- **SageVest Wealth Management**
- **Seneca Financial Advisors**
- **The Family Firm**
- **Trumbower Financial Advisors**
- **West Financial Services**

This list is sorted alphabetically (click any of the above names to go directly to the detailed review for that advisor)

Top 12 Financial Advisors in the Tri-State Area *(List is sorted alphabetically)*

No.	Firm	Location
1	Bernhardt Wealth Management	McLean, VA
2	Burt Wealth Advisors	Rockville, MD
3	Cassady and Company	McLean, VA
4	FBB Capital Partners	McLean, VA/Bethesda, MD
5	Harbour Capital Advisors	McLean, VA
6	Kendall Capital	Rockville, MD
7	McLean Asset Management	McLean, VA
8	SageVest Wealth Management	McLean, VA
9	Seneca Financial Advisors	Washington, DC
10	The Family Firm	Bethesda/Washington DC
11	Trumbower Financial Advisors	Bethesda, MD
12	West Financial Services	McLean, VA

Methodology for Selecting Financial Advisors in D.C., Maryland and Virginia (Tri-State), US

So how did we create this comprehensive ranking of the top financial advisors in the tri-state area? To begin, we researched local firms and took into account widely available public sources of information.

Then our signature “Breakthrough Selection Methodology” was applied to create a list of the top 12 financial advisors in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (tri-state), US.

Click here for a detailed explanation of our methodology: [AdvisoryHQ's Methodology for Selecting Top Financial Advisors](#)

Detailed Review – Top Ranking Financial Advisors in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (Tri-State), US

After carefully considering D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (tri-state) financial advisors, we created the following list of the top 12 firms. As you continue reading, you'll find detailed reviews for each of our picks as well as specifics of some of the factors we used in our decision-making process.

Bernhardt Wealth Management Review

Located in McLean, Virginia, [Bernhardt Wealth Management](#) is a tri-state financial advising firm that works primarily with wealth and high-net-worth investors to address their challenges and uncover new opportunities. Working with Bernhardt allows investors in the tri-state area to make wise choices aimed at not just protecting current wealth but also growing it in the future.

Gordon Bernhardt leads a team of savvy financial advisors in the D.C., Maryland, and Virginia metro with a consultative approach, covering all aspects of wealth management from investment management to estate planning.

Key Factors That Enabled This Firm to Rank as a Top 2016 Financial Advisor Firm

The list below names some of the key reasons Bernhardt Wealth Management was selected as one of the top 12 financial advisors in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (tri-state).

Investment Philosophy

As a reputable financial advisor, the belief behind services offered by Bernhardt is that success is more easily achieved when a defined set of investment principles and a guiding philosophy are in place.

This philosophy includes:

- Efficient markets: The idea here is that picking individual stocks won't ensure superior performance.
- Modern portfolio theory: Much of the investment approach at Bernhardt is based on modern portfolio theory (MPT), which focuses on assessing portfolios through the lens of risk and return.
- Diversification: Loss can be potentially reduced through diversification.
- Asset allocation: The choice of asset classes and the percentage of a portfolio that are allotted to each can be the most important element of portfolio strategy according to the beliefs held by the investors at Bernhardt.

Core Values

Along with guided investment principles, core values are also central to the investment strategies and services delivered by Bernhardt, a leading investment advisor in the D.C., Maryland, and Virginia metro.

Some of these values include:

- A genuine interest in the well-being of the client.
- The investment advisors make the utmost effort to understand the distinctive needs, values, and goals of each client before recommending strategies.
- A personalized investment plan will be developed for each client.
- The investment plan will be created using academically sound investment strategies that are prudent and appropriate as well as being based on client objectives.
- Clients hold the ultimate decision-making power.

Affiliations

As one of the leading wealth management firms in the D.C., Maryland, and Virginia area, Bernhardt is also affiliated with several prestigious professional organizations. These affiliations include:

- The National Association of Personal Financial Advisors (NAPFA): A leading organization of fee-only financial advisors.

- **Fee-Only Network:** This group is designed to highlight the expertise of financial professionals who work only on fees and their dedication to focusing on the best interest of their clients.

Certified Financial Planner: The CFP Board administers this designation, and it shows the public those firms and wealth advisors that have met stringent professional standards and also have vowed to uphold principles of integrity, objectivity, competence, fairness, confidentiality, professionalism, and diligence.



Network of Professionals

Bernhardt, as a well-respected metro wealth manager, is associated with Dimensional Fund Advisors. Dimensional Fund Advisors is a financial consulting firm that works with a limited group of independent financial advisors.

The result of this relationship is the ability of Bernhardt to deliver world-class asset management solutions to clients at a level often reserved only for large corporations and very wealthy family groups. Dimensional utilizes research from affiliations with leading financial

academics and creates solutions that can be practically applied in investment.

Burt Wealth Advisors Review

Located in Rockville, Maryland, [Burt Wealth Advisors](#) is a tri-state wealth management firm that works with high-net-worth individuals, families, and business owners, with the goal of protecting assets across generations.

Burt Wealth is an independent, Registered Investment Advisor in the D.C., Maryland, and Virginia metro that takes a client-centric approach.

As a Registered Investment Advisor with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, this firm is regulated by the Investment Advisers Act and is designated as a fiduciary.

Key Factors That Led Us to Rank This Firm as a Top 12 2016 Wealth Management Firm in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (Tri-State)

Represented below are key reasons Burt Wealth Advisors was selected as one of the 2016 top financial advisors in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (tri-state), US.

Experience

Burt Wealth Advisors has been a leading wealth management firm in the D.C., Maryland, and Virginia area [since 1985](#) and has continuously provided in-depth and robust wealth management services. The lead advisors that take charge of a client's team have anywhere from [15 to 25 years' experience](#) or more as Certified Financial Planners.

This deep experience ensures that the team working with each investment client is going to be adept at developing tailored investment strategies as well as at solving a range of complex financial challenges.

Philosophy

Each firm of wealth managers in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia is going to have a distinctive approach to investment. At Burt Wealth Advisors,

this investment philosophy is based on being conservative, balanced, and disciplined.

This team of expert financial planners in the tri-state area strives to create customized plans that help clients achieve their goals while simultaneously minimizing their risk. They do this by building a portfolio with a smart mix of asset classes and optimized choices of individual securities.

Modern portfolio theory is also used as an essential part of their investment approach.

Investment Approach

There are four primary components of the investment approach utilized by Burt Wealth Advisors. These components include:

- **Personalized service:** Each client relationship begins by taking a thoughtful approach to that person's goals and objectives. The needs of the client are the basis of ongoing collaboration. Considerations may include not only objectives but also timelines, risk tolerance, and tax considerations.
- **Portfolio construction:** The portfolio is designed to represent the right mix of investments based on client goals. Diversification is also essential to the Burt approach.
- **Rigorous oversight:** The analysts and investment committee at this tri-state wealth management firm follow a carefully defined process to find money managers, and it continues to offer stringent supervision and make adjustments as they become necessary.
- **Reporting:** Quarterly progress reports look at asset allocation, interest and dividends, gains and losses, rate of return on an annualized basis, and portfolio balance.

Services

As a leading wealth manager in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia, Burt Wealth Advisors offers a variety of services all aimed at helping clients have peace of mind and a simplified financial situation.

Services include:

- Financial planning for retirement, tax reduction, business planning, and education funding

- Estate planning, including distribution, minimizing expenses, and estate tax planning
- Wealth management, such as investment strategies for complex situations and inter-generational wealth transfer
- Tax planning to monitor changes and rulings, and Burt's team will also work closely with client accountants
- Charitable planning and gifting strategies both during one's lifetime and through an estate
- Investment strategies for women with a focus on a longer lifespan, wage disparities, and fewer working years

Also included as part of the available services from this tri-state financial planner are investments and portfolio construction.

Cassaday & Company Review

Cassaday & Company is an independent advisory and financial planning firm founded in 1993. Currently, this wealth management firm in the D.C., Maryland, and Virginia metro manages or supervises more than **\$1.7 billion in assets** and is governed by objectivity, honesty, and integrity.

Cassaday & Company is registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) as an investment advisor, and the firm is located in McLean, Virginia. Cassaday & Company operates as a firm of individual wealth planners.

Key Factors That Enabled This Firm to Rank as a Top 2016 Accounting Firm in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (Tri-State)

Listed below are factors that weighed heavily on the decision to rank Cassaday & Company as one of the top 12 2016 D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (tri-state) financial advisors.

Awards and Recognition

Cassaday & Company is one of the leading tri-state wealth management firms, and it has frequently been recognized as leaders in the industry by peers and financial publications.

Some of the recent awards this tri-state financial advisor firm has received include:

- *Barron's* Top 100 Financial Advisors 2016
- *Barron's* Top Financial Advisors: Profiles of 51 State Champs
- Pensions and Investments Best Places to Work 2015
- Washingtonian Great Places to Work 2015
- *Barron's* Top 100 Independent Advisors 2015
- Financial Times Top 300 Registered Investment Advisors in the US 2015

Top Financial Professionals Ranked by *Northern Virginia Magazine*



Investment Team Certifications

The employees at Cassaday & Company are paid based on the firm's revenue, which creates a stakeholder mentality. In addition, this Registered Investment Advisor in the D.C., Maryland, and Virginia metro has a team of financial advisors with professional designations and certifications that include:

- Certified Financial Planner Professional
- Certified Fund Specialist
- Certified Private Wealth Advisor
- Certified Investment Management Analyst
- Chartered Mutual Fund Counselor

- Accredited Estate Planner
- Chartered Advisor in Philanthropy
- Chartered Retirement Planning Counselor
- Certified Long Term Care
- Certified Annuity Specialist
- Accredited Investment Fiduciary

Independence

One distinctive element emphasized at this client-centric wealth management firm is its independence.

Cassaday is fully independent, meaning it doesn't work for a bank, brokerage firm, mutual fund or insurance company. This ensures it's not recommending a product based on affiliation or commission but, instead, is recommending a product or client strategy based solely on expertise and objectivity.

Client Service

Cassaday maintains a [firm size](#) that allows it to be flexible and agile in how it approaches each client engagement. It also has years of experience that has allowed it to hone its client-centric approach to wealth management.

The Cassaday features that ensure client interests remain at the center of everything it does, including:

- A competent, experienced staff
- All staff members have access to top management
- Clients will receive the benefit of regular reporting of their investment results
- Statements are simple and easy to understand
- Clients can access account data online
- All clients are given comprehensive, personal guidance

FBB Capital Partners Review

Working with private clients and established institutions, [FBB Capital Partners](#) is respected among D.C., Maryland, and Virginia financial

planners. For more than 25 years, the firm has been offering wealth management, investment, and financial planning services throughout the Washington, D.C. metro.

This independent wealth management firm offers a highly personalized approach, and as a fee-only advisor, FBB Capital Partners avoids problems that can come with being associated with particular financial institutions.

Key Factors That Allowed This Firm to Rank as a Top 2016 Financial Advisor

When assessing D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (tri-state) financial advisors, below are some of the key reasons FBB Capital Partners was selected as one of 2016's top 12 financial advisors in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (tri-state).

Fiduciary Responsibility

FBB Capital Partners is designated and registered as a fiduciary. What this means is that the firm and the investment advisors employed by FBB Capital are required to work following only the highest industry standards, which include trust, confidence, and loyalty.

This is important because everything FBB Capital Partners offers to clients is done so with the client's best interest as the key focus. Additionally, since FBB Capital is a fee-only advisor, it doesn't have conflicts of interest that can come into play with other financial advisory scenarios.

The Process

FBB Capital Partners was **founded in 1989**, and, since that time, the goal has always been to ensure clients have a steady growth of capital as well as predictable income to increase their financial security.

This is achieved by looking at each individual client situation and then working to adjust strategies over time as the financial and investment market environments inevitably change.



Female Leadership

Susan Emma Owens Breakefield Fulton co-founded FBB in 1989, and, currently, she is not only the founder but also the principal. Under Susan’s leadership, FBB has been consistently recognized for excellence in wealth management, and she was one of the first five Certified Financial Planners in the Washington metro.



Susan also serves as a regular contributor on CNBC and the Fox Business Network, and she has also been featured in *Business Week* and the *Wall Street Journal* many times over the years.

Flexibility

As a top wealth manager in the D.C., Maryland, and Virginia metro, one way that FBB distinguishes itself is through its flexibility in how strategies and portfolios are created. Along with this goes a sense of personal attention.

Every FBB client works with a dedicated portfolio manager, and, rather than receiving a one-size-fits-all portfolio approach, clients will find everything is based on their goals, risk preferences, tax situation, and timeline.

Additionally, the advisement team at FBB will work with clients' other key advisors, including lawyers and tax professionals.

Harbour Capital Advisors Review

Located in McLean, Virginia, [Harbour Capital Advisors](#) is a privately-owned and independent metro D.C., Maryland, and Virginia wealth management firm. The focus at Harbour is on serving the needs of a limited number of families that have complicated financial needs.

Harbour defines its mission as helping clients solve the problems they may not even have yet, and this fee-only advisor and fiduciary has a staff of professionals with an average of [20 years' experience](#) in every area from private banking to advanced wealth and tax planning.

Key Factors That Enabled Us to Rank This Firm as a Top 2016 Financial Advisor

When considering D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (tri-state) financial advisors, the following represents criteria used in the selection of Harbour Capital Advisors as one of 2016's top financial planners in the tri-state area.

Personal CFO Approach

The approach undertaken by Harbour Capital Advisors is unique because it considers itself as its clients' "personal CFO." This means it'll look beyond the surface and the original numbers and take the time required to understand each client's objectives and priorities.

Clients have the benefit of working with a highly experienced team as well as access to customized solutions to preserve wealth and solve challenges.

Additionally, since there aren't conflicts of interest, and Harbour Capital Advisors is a small, boutique wealth management firm, clients receive a sense of dedication and consistency from their team.

Investment Advisory

The investment advisors at Harbour Capital are active, objective, and flexible in their approach. Decisions are based not only on thoughtfulness, in-depth assessment, and expertise but also by looking at global economies and conducting thorough market research.

The benefits of the [investment advisory services](#) from Harbour Capital include the following:

- All portfolios are actively managed
- Advice is independent
- The approach is a top-down macro analysis of both market and larger economic drivers
- There is a sense of flexibility, allowing strategy evolution based on changing circumstances
- Clients receive the benefit of full reporting across all providers
- Investment advisors will work in conjunction with wealth and tax planning teams

Wealth Planning

[Wealth planning services](#) are designed to address complexity, and these services specifically include wealth transfer, incapacity and succession planning, estates, income tax projects, stock options strategies, financial and cash flow planning, and exit strategy planning.

Principles that guide wealth planning services offered by this firm of wealth managers in McLean include:

- Advisors listen to the clients and partner with other advisors to create layered, customized plans to not only preserve but also build wealth
- Life goals and non-tax issues are addressed, yet there is still a focus on being efficient in terms of taxes
- Clients' values and priorities are implemented within the framework of legal, economic, and tax considerations
- Guidance is created with an eye toward the future

Family Office

The specialization of this McLean wealth manager and financial planner firm is wealthy families. [Family office services](#) available from Harbour Capital Advisors include:

- Family governance: This includes creating family constitutions, multi-general family meetings, design of financial education, and training of younger generations
- Asset, liability, and risk management: Services include debt advising, liquidity, and cash management and reconciliation
- Personal accounting: The family office advisors at Harbour can help minimize administrative burdens for clients
- Foundation advisory: The Harbour professional team will provide clients with guidance on the foundation mission, fiduciary, and administrative issues

Kendall Capital Management Review

Located in Rockville, Maryland, [Kendall Capital Management](#) is a trusted and respected metro area D.C., Maryland, and Virginia wealth management firm headed by Clark Kendall, who is the president and founder. The motto of Kendall is based on helping clients preserve, strengthen, and grow their wealth through sound investment strategies.

The approach is fee-only, so advisors don't receive commissions on any recommended products, meaning the client's best interests are always at

the forefront of the strategies and solutions created by the Kendall Capital team.

Key Factors Leading Us to Rank This Firm as a Top 2016 Financial Advisor

Below are highlights of Kendall Capital leading to its selection as one of 2016's top 12 financial advisors in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (tri-state).

Fee-Only

As mentioned above, Kendall Capital is a fee-only firm, and it's also registered with NAPFA. This means that when clients partner with Kendall Capital, the firm's advisors are paid only based on fees for financial planning and investment management.

They're not paid to recommend particular products, including stocks or mutual funds, and they're also not paid based on transaction fees, commissions or bonuses.

This ensures that all services and strategies are delivered with the customer's best interest as the number one focus. The interests of the advisors at Kendall are directly in line with the interests of the clients with whom they work.

Middle-Class Millionaire

While many investment advisors in the metro area work largely with high-net-worth individuals and wealthy families, Kendall also offers another area of focus, which is on what it calls "[middle-class millionaires](#)."

This concept is based on the idea that a significant number of people are becoming millionaires because of things like employer retirement plans, so Kendall offers an array of services aimed at this population.

It works to provide middle-class millionaire clients with access to unique opportunities and investment management tactics that help them preserve what they've accumulated and also grow it.

Wealth Management Services

Much of what Kendall offers regarding wealth management is aimed at those people who own small businesses or have **more than \$500,000 in investable assets**. Wealth management services from Kendall Capital can help clients address the following areas:

- Cash flow projections that show the potential impact on net worth
- Projections for education funding and strategies for saving
- Retirement requirements, funding, and the development of viable strategies
- Designing of customized investment portfolios and allocation
- Income tax planning
- Wealth transfer and estate planning
- Social Security evaluation
- Philanthropic planning

Growth Strategies

While the professional Rockville financial advisors that work at Kendall Capital can certainly guide wealth preservation strategies, they also work with clients to help them grow their wealth.

Growth strategies utilized by Kendall Capital include:

- Fund-of-Mutual Funds portfolio
- Growth at a Reasonable Price portfolio
- Alternative Investment Portfolio

Each of these strategies aims to help clients of Kendall identify earning opportunities that put their wealth and assets to the best possible use and let them grow their wealth in a passive way.

McLean Asset Management Review

McLean Asset Management is a metro D.C., Maryland, and Virginia planner focused on creating viable retirement solutions for clients. The firm is headquartered in McLean, Virginia and also maintains offices in Bedford, New Hampshire and Denver, Colorado.

This firm was founded in 1984 and, as well as general retirement planning, services include wealth management and investment advice

offered to private clients and for employer retirement plans. McLean Asset Management is also a Registered Investment Advisor in the D.C., Maryland, and Virginia metro.

Key Factors That Enabled This Firm to Rank as One of the Top 2016 Financial Advisors

When considering companies to include on this ranking of D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (tri-state) financial advisor firms, the following were criteria used to select McLean Asset Management as one of 2016's top 12 financial advisors in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (tri-state).

Distinctive Approach

McLean prides itself on taking a focused approach to retirement planning, based on in-depth research and an evidence-based foundation. While these are critical to the process, so is client input and assessment.

The discovery process at McLean is driven by details, which begin with a risk questionnaire and an in-person meeting to learn more about the client's preferences, goals, values, and future life events that could impact their financial situation.



InStream Solutions

Even if a client is only able to meet with his/her investment advising team once a year, the individual will always have the peace of mind that comes with knowing McLean is constantly monitoring his/her financial situation. Portfolios and strategies are assessed and monitored in an ongoing way, and advisors use InStream Solutions, which is a signature platform created by the company to alert them of changes in client accounts.

If notable changes are seen, advisors will alert clients and let them know what the impact of these changes could be.

Additionally, U.S. and global events are constantly monitored, and if things happen that could impact a client's portfolio, those are also shared.

Employer Services

One way that McLean stands out from other financial advisors in the D.C., Maryland, and Virginia metro is its offering of services for not just private individuals but also for employers.

The McLean team can work to help companies of all sizes create employer-sponsored retirement plans that will allow business owners to create value. Plans are designed to maximize the benefits for employers while maintaining a sense of flexibility and the opportunity to save on taxes and identify opportunities for reinvestment.

Retirement Income Distribution

An area of specialization offered by McLean is retirement income distribution plans. Several factors go into the creation of viable plans, including consideration of when an individual plans stop working, detailed oversight, mathematical modeling, and management of taxes. The [team](#) at McLean goes beyond model portfolios and, instead, takes into account the impact of future expenses as well as creating estimates of future income and expenses.

SageVest Wealth Management Review

Based in McLean, [SageVest](#) is a respected wealth management firm in the D.C., Maryland, and Virginia metro, offering a full slate of investment and wealth management services to not only individuals but also families, trusts, and small businesses. SageVest is a fee-only advisory firm, and each of the advisors making up the team is a Certified Financial Planner.

Along with being an independent firm, SageVest vows to maintain complete honesty and full disclosure to clients at all times, and the details of this transparency are highlighted in its Regulatory Disclosure Document.

Key Factors That Led Us to Rank This Firm as a Top 2016 Financial Advisor

Cited below are factors considered in the ranking of SageVest as one of 2016's top 12 financial advisors in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (tri-state).

Recognition

As one of the top-ranked regional D.C., Maryland, and Virginia wealth managers, SageVest receives frequent recognition for its service and dedication to excellence.

Recent honors have included:

- *Washingtonian's* Top Money Advisor 2016
- Five Star Professional Wealth Manager 2015—Washington, D.C. Metro Area
- *Washingtonian's* Top Money Advisor 2014
- *Northern Virginia Magazine* Top Financial Professional 2015—NoVA
- RIA Rankings

Comprehensive Approach

The approach undertaken by the professional financial advisors making up the team at SageVest is one that's based on comprehensiveness, which goes beyond what may be offered by many traditional advisors.

The wealth management approach at SageVest looks at a client's larger investment decisions so that every aspect of a client's finances can be integrated.

This means solutions speak to not just retirement but also current lifestyle, family plans, and legacy planning.



Technology

When a client opts to partner with SageVest, he/she is not only going to be working with a D.C., Maryland, and Virginia wealth management firm but also with advisors who want to make his/her finances and lives simpler and easier.

Much of this is done through the use of innovative technology. With the implementation of technology solutions from SageVest, clients can maintain a clear picture of their investments and financial situation at any time.

They can view aggregations of their accounts and net worth, quickly access planning projections and recommendations, and maintain access to all of their important documents in one secure location.

Real-Life Focus

SageVest and the team of highly expert advisors making up this financial planner in the D.C., Maryland, and Virginia metro work to create viable and valuable solutions for clients, all from within the framework of the client's real life.

Rather than creating abstract solutions and approaches, the goal of SageVest advisors is to design strategies that reflect the actual day-to-day life and needs of the client.

They then explain these strategies in a simplified way that makes sense and invite feedback from clients during these discussions.

Seneca Financial Advisors Review

Seneca Financial Advisors is a highly engaged firm of advisors that works to help clients in the development of financial plans that are uniquely their own. This objective, independent company is based in Rochester, NY but also maintains a Washington, D.C. office on Pennsylvania Avenue.

Services available from this wealth manager and investment advisor include tax and retirement planning, employee benefits planning, education planning, and health care cost planning.

Key Factors Considered When Ranking This Firm as a Top 2016 Financial Advisor

Below is a representation of factors leading to the inclusion of Seneca as one of the 2016 top 12 financial advisors in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (tri-state).

Process

The belief and philosophy driving the process of investment and wealth management at Seneca is one that focuses on efficiency and comprehensive advice. Seneca uses an open architecture platform and then constructs portfolios using individual account managers, ETFs, and mutual funds.

The [process](#) from Seneca includes:

- Independent advice with no sales commissions
- Consistent contact
- In-depth information, and if there are issues that are outside of the realm of an advisor's expertise he/she will recommend other professionals as necessary
- Direct and continuous information flow
- A long-term commitment to maintain a steady sense of consistency for the client

The Platform

One of the many ways Seneca has distinguished itself as a leader among D.C., Maryland, and Virginia financial planners is through its technology integration with a personal wealth management platform.

The Seneca platform emphasizes security and protection of personal data, along with convenience and streamlined access to client financial information.

Features of the personal wealth management [platform](#) offered by Seneca include:

- Safe storage of all relevant documents in one centralized location, including legal, financial, and personal documents
- Constant online and mobile access from anywhere
- Updated reports, including investments, trusts, retirement, insurance, real estate, and bank accounts
- Real-time balance sheets
- Account tracking history
- Up-to-date investment research
- Account integration

Service Flexibility

Uniquely, when you opt to work with Seneca, one of the top tri-state wealth management firms, you will be able to choose from customized services that will meet your particular needs. What this means is that Seneca offers clients the opportunity to receive advice in a particular realm, or they can opt for comprehensive services that cover the whole of their financial and investment needs.

Seneca also caters to the needs of everyone from individuals to business owners, and each step of the flexible service provided by Seneca is guided by simplicity, explanations, and strategies designed to meet unique client goals.

It's not just about creating a plan at Seneca but is also about ensuring clients are comfortable with each aspect of that plan.



Single Point of Contact

The approach to every client engagement handled by Seneca is two-fold. Clients will be assigned an investment advisor who will serve as their single point of contact to address all of their questions and needs. This clears up confusion and improves accessibility and responsiveness.

At the same time, while there may be one point person for a client, there is also a collaborative team driving forward the strategies and monitoring all of the investment plans that are implemented.

This offers the best of all worlds for clients who seek a wealth management firm that emphasizes convenience but also one that brings together an abundance of resources.

The Family Firm Review

A D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (tri-state) financial advisor and independent wealth management firm, [The Family Firm](#) doesn't receive a commission and doesn't work for a bank, insurance company or brokerage. Headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, this fee-only firm is led by Nathan J. Gendelman, MBA, ACAS, who serves as president and director of investments, and Mary A. Malgoire, MBA and CFP, who is the founder of the firm.

Services available from The Family Firm range from investment management to educational planning and charitable giving strategies.

Key Factors That Led to Our Ranking of This Firm as a Top 2016 Financial Advisor

The following represent unique features of The Family Firm that led to its ranking as one of 2016's top financial advisors in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (tri-state).

The Process

While all strategies are completely unique from one another, The Family Firm does use a guided process to develop these strategies.

This begins with the first year, where advisors meet with clients to discuss and assess their financial activities. The initial meetings are very interactive, and, during this time, Nathan Gendelman will participate in relevant meetings as well as an associate financial advisor. A Family Firm financial advisor becomes the key contact person and someone who participates in each meeting.

After that, investment plans and portfolio recommendations are made. Meeting three is designed to discuss strategies concerning asset protection and estate planning, and meeting four is a review and follow-up.

Investment Philosophy

The situation-based investment philosophy is objective, unbiased, and is guided by the following principles:

- **Bottom-line orientation:** Advisors at The Family Firm strive to make sure they minimize costs including transaction fees, and they also create strategies with tax effects taken into consideration.
- **Diversification:** The professional advisors at this tri-state wealth manager create diversified plans based on both domestic and foreign stocks as well as bonds, cash, and other investments.
- **Independent thinking:** Rather than following the status quo or the example set by other advisors, The Family Firm bases its investments on facts, valuations, and research.
- **Risk management:** The Family Firm's advisors create strategies based on profitability and long-term goals.

Fees

As a fee-based tri-state financial planner, The Family Firm charges a simple, convenient flat fee for all services. The fee can be paid quarterly, and it's calculated twice a year. It's designed as a percentage of the investments being supervised, and there is a set fee schedule, meaning there are no surprises for the client.

For the first one million dollars of investment assets, [the fee is 1% per year](#). Between one million and 4 million in invested assets, the fee is 0.8% per year. For anything over \$4 million in assets, the fee drops to 0.035% per year.

Principles and Beliefs

All services offered by The Family Firm are guided by a set of defined principles. [These include:](#)

- The best financial advice should be independent and unbiased, without conflicts of interest
- Financial security should be protected
- Financial strategies are best when they're created by having an understanding of personal circumstances and goals
- The Family Firm works to invest successfully, without requiring clients to pay many of the fees associated with traditional investment
- Financial security is created and maintained by making good decisions about both savings and lifestyle
- Financial advisors should be trusted partners to help clients navigate complexity
- Peace of mind of the client is of the utmost importance

Trumbower Financial Advisors Review

[Trumbower Financial Advisors](#) is a creative and innovative personal finance management firm based in Bethesda, Maryland. Trumbower is an independent company that doesn't sell financial products, and it bases all of its guidance and financial strategies on academic principles.

Trumbower's team of financial experts can help a variety of clients address even extremely challenging financial issues.

These are some of the many factors which have led this Bethesda wealth management firm to become top-ranked in the industry.

Key Factors That Led to Our Ranking of This Firm as a Top 2016 Financial Advisor

Below are some elements that weighed into the decision to include Trumbower as one of the top financial advisors in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (tri-state).

Personal Financial Planning

Trumbower offers comprehensive personal financial planning and tax compliance and under that larger umbrella are the specific services [which include](#):

- Cash flow management
- Wealth accumulation strategies
- Estate planning and assistance with administration
- Investment portfolio allocation and management
- Retirement planning
- Tax planning advice
- Tax return preparation
- Insurance analysis and comparison
- Financial planning for marriage or divorce
- Personal record keeping
- Bill paying

Mission

The mission of every area of service offered by Trumbower Financial Advisors is driven by experience as well as the following concepts:

- Trumbower advisors deliver continual technical expertise and excellence in every area that impacts a client's finances and decisions.
- Objectivity comes from the fact that Trumbower is independently operated and doesn't work based on commission or compensation for selling financial products.

- You're always valued as a client of Trumbower and with this comes continuity and personalized attention.
- Other advisors are consulted with, and services are coordinated with them when necessary, improving efficiency and minimizing the potential for oversight.
- Services from Trumbower are comprehensive, so clients aren't left with a list of things they need to complete on their own. It's all handled.

Investment Advisory

Services from this leading metro D.C., Maryland, and Virginia financial advisor firm are based on a five-step process. The process includes the following:

- Step One: This is when goals, risk tolerance, and liquidity requirements are discussed, as are any other factors that could impact investment and financial strategies.
- Step Two: During this stage, Trumbower advisors will look at how clients have their assets currently allocated, and their investment standing with regard to what was discovered during Step One.
- Step Three: This is the point in the process where a target portfolio is selected. Portfolios reflect the concepts of modern portfolio theory, and advanced software tools are used.
- Step Four: Investment suggestions are implemented in the most efficient manner possible during Step Four.
- Step Five: It's at this point in the process that an approach for evaluation performance is created, and a portfolio rebalancing timetable is established.

Flexible Fee Schedule

As an independent financial planner in the D.C., Maryland, and Virginia metro, Trumbower never charges fees based on sales or commission, and it has **fixed-fee** arrangements that are flexible depending on the type of service you receive, so there isn't a one-size-fits-all approach to how fees are charged.

Many of the personal financial services offered by Trumbower are based on an hourly fee, and regardless of the structure that applies to a client's situation, the client is provided with an estimate beforehand so he/she is not surprised by the fees.

West Financial Services Review

West Financial Services is a metro D.C., Maryland, and Virginia wealth management firm, based in McLean and serving the needs of clients throughout Fairfax County and all of the Washington, D.C. area. West Financial Services was established in 1982 and, for more than 30 years, it has been providing a sense of financial conservatism and ethical responsibility to the clients it serves.

As well as working with private individuals, West Financial Services also partners with businesses, foundations, and various associations to deliver expertise and smart guidance to reach whatever their goals may be.

Key Factors That Led to Our Ranking of This Firm as a Top 2016 Financial Advisor

Details below highlight some of the reasons West Financial Services was selected as one of the top financial advisors in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (tri-state).

Stability

As a leading presence among metro financial advisors in the area, West Financial stands apart because of its long history. For more than thirty years, this company has been paving the way for secure client financial futures, and it is stable, with a reliable, dependable history.

It's this sense of reliability and continuity in service that is a big part of how West Financial continues to remain a leader in the financial industry.

Affiliations

This well-established tri-state wealth management firm is affiliated with a number of prestigious industry organizations.

Some of these [affiliations include](#):

- American Institute of CPAs (AICPA)
- CFA Institute
- Independent Community Bankers of America (ICBA)
- Investment Management Consultants Association (IMCA)
- National Association for Female Executives
- NAPFA Registered Financial Advisor
- Financial Planning Association (FPA)
- CFP Board
- International Society of Certified Employee Benefit Specialists
- Washington Association of Money Managers



Community Involvement

As a well-respected financial advisor in the D.C., Maryland, and Virginia metro, West Financial Services is actively involved with the local community. This firm supports initiatives and causes throughout the area, and it leads to a stronger sense of collaboration among employees, which, in turn, lets it deliver better client service.

Some of the organizations West Financial Services and its staff are involved with include The Anne Frank House, Susan G. Komen, Rebuilding Together, Race for Hope Washington, D.C., Kiwanis International, Rotary International, and the Fairfax County Animal Shelter.

Team Experience and Expertise

The financial advisors at West Financial Services offer clients the utmost **inexpertise, qualifications, and certifications**. The result is a high level of client service, with a basis on trust, integrity, experience, and accessibility.

Each client relationship includes a team of financial planning and investment team members as well as a dedicated administrative staff member. This ensures personalized strategies and continual communication.

Most the professionals at this firm have industry designations, including being Certified Financial Planners (CFP), Certified Employee Benefit Specialists (CEBS), and Certified Investment Management Analysts (CIMA).

Conclusion – Top 12 Financial Advisors in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (Tri-State), US

When looking at the top rated wealth management firms in the D.C., Maryland, and Virginia area, there are so many important factors that come into the equation. Some of the most relevant considerations include whether or not the firm is independent and how it approaches investment, retirement, and general financial planning.

Also important are professional affiliations, advisor certifications, and general reputability.

These concepts were critical in the AdvisoryHQ selection of the top financial advisors in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia.

The above list is representative of financial planners and wealth managers that may have a distinctive approach to the services they provide, but they are all similar in their dedication to excellence as well as a client-centric mentality.

If you have questions, comments or tips about this “Top 12 Best Financial Advisors in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (Tri-State), US” article, send us an **email**. Also, follow us on social media to be the first to hear about major economic news stories.

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Cheers,
AdvisoryHQ Team