

## SEPTEMBER 2017 UPDATE

We provide composite returns for Growth, Growth & Income (a combination of “Growth & Income and “Moderate Balanced” accounts), Conservative Balanced, Retirement Income (a combination of “Retirement Income” and “High Monthly Payout” accounts), Closed-End Income, ETF Options Income and Alternative. We present net-of-fee results in the following table. (SSB composites are in boldface.) For the sake of comparison, we also include returns for various indexes and blended benchmarks that we believe are commensurate in risk to our strategies, as well as passively managed funds of funds from Vanguard, and a PowerShares ETF.

Salzinger Sheaff Brock	August 2017	YTD	One Yr	Three Yrs	Five Yrs
<b>Growth</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>12.3%</b>	<b>15.0%</b>	<b>7.0%</b>	<b>11.8%</b>
<i>Benchmark (90% Lipper Multi-cap Core/10% Lipper General Bond Fund)</i>	0.3%	13.3%	16.3%	5.8%	10.3%
<b>Growth &amp; Income</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>10.8%</b>	<b>12.7%</b>	<b>6.3%</b>	<b>10.2%</b>
<i>Benchmark (75% Lipper Multi-cap Core/25% Lipper General Bond Fund)</i>	0.4%	12.0%	14.1%	5.4%	9.1%
<b>Conservative Balanced</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>9.1%</b>	<b>10.1%</b>	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>7.9%</b>
<i>Benchmark (60% Lipper Multi-cap Core/40% Lipper General Bond Fund)</i>	0.4%	10.6%	11.8%	4.9%	7.9%
<b>Closed-End Income</b>	<b>-0.5%</b>	<b>14.1%</b>	<b>12.1%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>ETF Option Income</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>10.1%</b>	<b>12.3%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Retirement Income</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	<b>8.5%</b>	<b>5.0%</b>	<b>6.7%</b>
<i>Benchmark (50% Lipper Multi-cap Core/50% Lipper General Bond Fund)</i>	0.5%	9.7%	10.3%	4.6%	7.1%
<b>Alternative</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	<b>14.2%</b>	<b>11.0%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>1.7%</b>
<i>Benchmark (50% GSCI/50% Lipper Emerging Market Fund)</i>	0.8%	9.3%	13.1%	-10.1%	-5.0%
<b>Index</b>					
S&P 500	0.3%	11.9%	16.2%	9.5%	14.3%
Russell 3000 &&	0.2%	11.2%	16.1%	9.1%	14.3%
Russell 2000 ##	-1.3%	4.4%	14.9%	7.7%	13.2%
MSCI EAFE @@	0.0%	17.1%	17.6%	2.8%	8.5%
MSCI Emerging Markets	2.2%	28.3%	24.5%	2.4%	5.3%
Barclays Aggregate Bond	0.9%	3.6%	0.5%	2.7%	2.2%
<b>Mutual Fund/ETF Comparisons</b>					
Vanguard LifeStrategy Growth &	0.4%	12.0%	13.5%	6.2%	10.2%
Vanguard LifeStrategy Moderate Growth #	0.5%	9.8%	10.0%	5.4%	8.2%
Vanguard LifeStrategy Conservative Gr @	0.7%	7.5%	6.7%	4.6%	6.3%
Vanguard LifeStrategy Income ^	0.8%	5.2%	3.3%	3.6%	4.2%
DB Commodity Index Tracking Fund !	0.4%	-4.7%	4.9%	-15.5%	-12.1%

YTD through 8/31/2017. PLEASE SEE IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER ON BACK. Note: &&A good measure of the broad market, ##Small-cap stocks. @@Developed market foreign stocks. Style Comparisons: &A comparison for SSB Growth and SSB Growth & Income. #A comparison for SSB Moderate Balanced. @A comparison for Salzinger Sheaff Brock, LLC (SSB) Conservative Balanced. ^A comparison for SSB Retirement Income. !A comparison for SSB Alternative. Composites include all fully discretionary accounts including those accounts no longer with the firm. Returns are presented net of management fees and all trading expenses, and the reinvestment of all income. Net-of-fee performance was calculated using actual management fees and is annualized for multi-year periods. Actual advisory fees and transaction fees will vary depending on, among other things, the portfolio, account size, and activity. Fees are described in SSB's ADV Part 2A. The securities mentioned in this report can be, and often are, owned by clients and employees SSBIA. **Past performance is not indicative or a guarantee of future results and investors may experience a loss.** (continued on back)

As the U.S. stock market continues to reach new highs throughout 2017, many prognosticators in the media and even among investment professionals state equities are exuberantly expensive. While they don't come out and say it, the logical response of those who nod in agreement would be to sell their equity investments and attempt to hide out somewhere else—maybe in gold and other commodities, perhaps in various structured investments like long-short products, or even just in cash.

Of these three options, we'd probably prefer cash, which, despite money-market yields still in the 1% area most places, at least has virtually no risk of absolute loss. However, instead of discussing this trio of potential alternatives, today I want to discuss whether there's ample justification for considering any of them in the first place for a large percentage of a typical investor's portfolio. In other words, I want to ask the question: is the equity market so expensive that a deep and sustained drop is likely, especially given the current economic backdrop?

Current valuations of the broad U.S. market certainly are above av-

erage. According to S&P Global, the price/earnings ratio (P/E) on trailing 12-month earnings of the S&P 500 (measured as the 12 months back from March 31) was 23.56, which is high. However, on projected 12-month earnings from August 31, the P/E falls to 18.06. While still high versus a long-term average in the mid-teens, this is not so high as to forestall the opportunity for continued gains... provided the economy continues to perform decently (which we expect) and corporate earnings meet or exceed expectations.

We would also note that given the outsized performance of a relative few large stocks so far in 2017, a majority of stocks are cheaper than the broad indexes. For example, the S&P 500 SPDR (SPY) recently had a P/E on forecast earnings of 20.45, according to Morningstar, and portfolio-wide earnings growth of 9.77%. In comparison, Guggenheim S&P 500 Equal Weight ETF (RSP), which creates an equal-weighted portfolio by cutting the weights of the larger constituents in the index and raising the weights of the smaller, recently had a P/E of 19.52 (almost a full point lower) and earnings growth of 9.42 (so, just slightly lower). In addition, the average among all funds

Continued on back

and ETFs of the 'large blend' Morningstar category (in which SPY and RSP reside) was recently 19.42, with faster earnings growth than the index: 10.45%.

In fact, across investment styles, we are noticing fairly large differences in valuations when comparing index products with actively managed ones of the same investment style. Just to name a couple of such comparisons: Vanguard Value Index (VVIAX) has a P/E of 18.7 and earnings growth of 4.8%, while its quantitatively managed sibling, Vanguard U.S. Value (VUVLX), has a P/E of 17.4 and earnings growth of 7.4%, despite virtually the same sector weightings. Vanguard Small Cap Index (VSMAX) has a P/E of 19.8

and earnings growth of 11.0%, versus a P/E of 17.6 and earnings growth of 11.5% for Vanguard Strategic Equity Small Cap (VSTCX).

In sum, while broad capitalization-weighted indexes can be considered to have high current valuations, many active and so-called fundamental strategies really don't. So, if risk reduction is one of your paramount concerns, let us know and we'll consider adding some active funds with lower valuations to your account, or favoring them when designing original allocation for new accounts.

To get started in any of our strategies, please call us at 866-575-5700, or send an email to [info@salzingersheaffbrock.com](mailto:info@salzingersheaffbrock.com). We look forward to hearing from you!



8801 River Crossing Blvd.  
Suite 100  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46240  
[salzingersheaffbrock.com](http://salzingersheaffbrock.com)  
866-575-5700

Thank you for your continued interest in Salzinger Sheaff Brock (SSB), the only source of actual personalized money management by me,

Mark Salzinger  
Chief Investment Officer and Portfolio Manager

The S&P 500 Index is a market capitalization-weighted index comprised of the 500 stocks with the largest market capitalizations trading in the United States. This is not a managed portfolio and does not reflect the deduction of fees or expenses; The Lipper Global Multi-Cap Index is comprised of the 30 largest funds by asset size investing in a variety of market cap equities without concentrating 75% of their assets in any one market cap over an extended time. 25% to 75% of their assets are in companies both inside and outside of the U.S. The Lipper General Bond Index consists of the 30 largest funds by assets that do not have any quality or maturity restrictions, and keep a bulk of their assets in corporate and government debt issues. The Lipper Emerging Market Index consists of the 30 largest funds by assets that keep a bulk of their assets in emerging market equities. Lipper indices reflect the deduction of fund fees or expenses; returns include dividends. The GSCI commodity index is a leading measure of inflation and commodity prices using world production weighted commodities with liquid active futures markets. The Barclays US Aggregate Bond Index is a broad-based benchmark that measures the investment grade, US dollar-denominated, fixed-rate taxable bond market in the United States, including Treasuries, government-related and corporate securities, mortgage backed securities, asset-backed securities and CMBS (agency and non-agency). DB Commodity Index Tracking Fund (DBC) seeks to track changes, whether positive or negative, in the level of the DBIQ Optimum Yield Diversified Commodity Index Excess Return™ (DBIQ Opt Yield Diversified Comm Index ER) plus the interest income from the Fund's holdings of primarily US Treasury securities less the Fund's expenses. The Fund is designed for those who want a cost-effective and convenient way to invest in commodities. The Index is composed of futures contracts on 14 of the most heavily traded physical commodities in the world. The Alternative portfolio is a commodity centric portfolio of ETFs and mutual funds whose constituents' profits are highly sensitive to general commodity prices. It may perform differently than DBC since the composite does not hold futures contracts. Russell 3000 and Russell 2000 indices are market capitalization weighted equity indices maintained by the Russell Investment Group. The 3000 seeks to be a benchmark of the entire U.S. stock market, and the 2000 seeks to be a benchmark of the small-cap U.S. stock market. More specifically, they encompass the 3,000 largest, or 2000 smallest U.S.-traded stocks respectively, in which the underlying companies are incorporated in the U.S. The MSCI EAFE Index is an equity index which captures large and mid cap representation across Developed Markets countries\* around the world, excluding the US and Canada. With 928 constituents, the index covers approximately 85% of the free float-adjusted market capitalization in each country. The MSCI Emerging Markets Index captures large and mid cap representation across 23 Emerging Markets (EM) countries. With 835 constituents, the index covers approximately 85% of the free float-adjusted market capitalization in each country. Indexes are unmanaged and unavailable for direct investment. Benchmark returns include reinvestment of income, but do not reflect taxes, or other fees that would reduce performance. Two general types of benchmarks are provided. The first type is a well-known and widely-recognized index, such as the S&P 500 Index and the Barclays US Aggregate Bond Index (both described above). These types of indices are not selected to represent an appropriate benchmark with which to evaluate a composite's performance, but rather to allow for comparison of a composite's performance to that of a widely recognized index. The second type of index is a more narrowly-focused index selected based on one or more characteristics, such as asset class, style or strategy. A more narrowly-focused index may have characteristics similar to those of a composite, actual composite holdings will differ significantly from the index. Consequently, use of a narrowly-focused index does not indicate that a composite will achieve returns, volatility or other results similar to the index. Clients should NOT expect performance comparable to the narrowly-focused index in an actual account. Securities may be mentioned in a portfolio description, and if so a list of a transactions/recommendations for the trailing 12 months is available upon request. There is the chance that market conditions or portfolio performance may deteriorate in the future, and clients may experience real capital losses in their managed accounts. None of the indices may be an appropriate comparison index as our managed accounts may own companies not represented in the benchmarks. Salzinger Sheaff Brock, LLC (SSB) provides this Newsletter for general informational and educational purposes, and where appropriate, to assist in explaining the portfolios and composites. It is not investment advice for any person. Information is obtained from sources SSB believes are reliable, however, SSB does not audit, verify, or guarantee the accuracy or completeness of any material contained therein. The statements and opinions reflect the judgment of the firm, and along with the information from third-party sources and calculations, are made on the date hereof and are subject to change without notice. SSB does not assume liability for any loss that may result from reliance by any person upon any material in this Newsletter. Clients or prospective clients are directed to SSB's Form ADV Part 2A or to one or SSB's representatives for individualized information prior to deciding to participate in any portfolio. SSB does not provide tax advice. Clients are strongly urged to consult their tax advisors regarding any potential investment.