SEPTEMBER 2023 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) and Closed-End Income. 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, blended benchmarks that we believe are commensurate in risk to our strategies, and passively managed funds-of-funds from Vanguard.

Salzinger Sheaff Brock (%)	August 2023	YTD	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years	10 Years	Inception
Growth Inception 2/1/2010	**-2.06**	**11.08**	**9.03**	**4.13**	**6.41**	**8.84**	**9.86**
Benchmark (90% Lipper Multi-cap Core/10% Lipper General Bond Fund)	*-2.51*	*11.39*	*11.69*	*6.62*	*6.19*	*7.45*	*8.28*
Growth & Income Inception 9/1/2009	**-1.80**	**9.92**	**7.50**	**3.34**	**5.36**	**7.61**	**8.91**
Benchmark (75% Lipper Multi-cap Core/25% Lipper General Bond Fund)	*-2.25*	*9.92*	*9.91*	*5.24*	*5.63*	*6.74*	*7.62*
Conservative Balanced Inception 10/1/2009	**-1.46**	**7.77**	**6.13**	**2.38**	**4.09**	**6.06**	**6.64**
Benchmark (60% Lipper Multi-cap Core/40% Lipper General Bond Fund)	*-1.87*	*8.60*	*8.29*	*3.87*	*5.03*	*5.99*	*6.68*
Closed-End Income Inception 10/1/2014	**-1.83**	**5.56**	**2.41**	**2.40**	**3.20**	**--**	**4.31**
Benchmark (First Trust Composite Closed-End Fund TR)	*-2.67*	*5.79*	*0.23*	*2.53*	*2.39*	*--*	*3.82*
Retirement Income Inception 11/1/2010	**-1.26**	**6.76**	**5.19**	**1.51**	**2.54**	**4.69**	**5.16**
Benchmark (50% Lipper Multi-cap Core/50% Lipper General Bond Fund)	*-1.61*	*7.70*	*7.16*	*2.93*	*4.57*	*5.46*	*5.82*
Index							
S&P 500	-1.59	18.73	15.94	10.52	11.12	12.81	-
Russell 3000&&	-1.93	18.01	14.76	9.81	10.25	12.23	-
Russell 2000##	-5.00	8.96	4.65	8.12	3.14	7.96	-
FTSE Global All Cap X-US@@	-4.21	9.17	12.10	4.75	3.88	5.06	-
Barclays Aggregate Bond	-0.64	1.37	-1.19	-4.41	0.49	1.48	-
Mutual Fund/ETF Comparisons							
Vanguard LifeStrategy Growth&	-2.47	11.71	10.78	5.19	6.20	7.84	-
Vanguard LifeStrategy Moderate Growth#	-1.95	9.32	7.94	2.88	4.87	6.36	-
Vanguard LifeStrategy Conservative Gr@	-1.46	6.93	5.05	0.58	3.48	4.82	-
Vanguard LifeStrategy Income^	-0.94	4.55	2.22	-1.78	1.97	3.21	-

Through 8-31-2023. Returns over 12 months annualized. Performance data quoted represents past performance. Past performance does not guarantee future results and there is a risk of loss of all or part of your investment. Salzinger Sheaff Brock, LLC ("SSB"), is a federally registered investment adviser founded in 2009. Performance presented are time-weighted returns. Valuations and performance is reported in U.S. dollars. Composite performance is presented on a net-of-fees basis and includes the reinvestment of income (dividends/interest). Net-of-fees returns are calculated by deducting a model management fee of 0.24%, ¼ of the highest annual management fee of 0.96%, from the quarterly gross composite return, applied the first month of each quarter. Actual advisory fees incurred by clients may vary. Composite performance consists of fully discretionary portfolios, including those accounts no longer with the firm. (continued on back).

The equity market has had a tough time since the beginning of August. For the month alone, while the S&P 500 dropped only 1.6%, smaller-cap, broader U.S., and indexes of foreign stocks fell about three times more. This reversed superior relative performance outside the S&P 500 that had occurred in the months prior.

Surely, one of the culprits lately has been rising interest rates. Since reaching a low of 3.3% in early April, the yield of the 10-year Treasury bond reached 4.3% by late August and has increased a bit more since. This type of rapid rise in rates hurts various types of assets, including not only longer-term bonds but also myriad types of stocks, including such interest-sensitive equities as utilities and REITs, smaller-cap growth stocks (as the current values represent their potential future cash flows, discounted by higher rates) and highly indebted companies, which face the prospect of having to refinance maturing debt at increasingly high rates.

Though the future path of longer-term rates is sure to be winding, I suspect the overall direction will still be up for the time being, though not to a dramatically higher level. That's because outside the period of rate suppression by the Fed after the financial crisis, the historical record suggests that the 10-year Treasury bond typically yields about two percentage points more than inflation. With various measures of inflation averaging (very approximately) around the 3% range over the past 12 months, it seems to me a 5% rate for the 10-year Treasury bond would be a reasonable expectation.

While this would be a headwind for equities, gradually rising long-term rates needn't be a death knell for the potential for positive returns over the next six to 12 months. Contrary to conventional wisdom, historically the stock market has been up more often than down during periods of rising rates. The problems tend to come if recession hits, and corporate earnings fall at an accelerating rate, juxtaposed against high valuations.

I suspect an increasing fear of recession within the next 12 months among investors is behind much of the stock market's recent struggle. And one reason for that is an increased prospect for continued tightening in monetary policy by the Federal Reserve Board. Though the Fed refrained from increasing the rates under its control at its September meeting, a majority of its voting members expect the central bank to increase rates at least one more time this year and to maintain rates at these relatively high levels for longer next year than previously forecast.

The rising price of oil is not helping matters. Neither is the continuing war in Europe and aggressive demands from unionized autoworkers in Detroit. But at least the U.S. labor participation rate is inching its way higher, while the so-called quit rate is falling. Additionally, inflation expectations in the public are stable, though higher, I'm sure, than the Fed would like.

Currently, our client accounts are generally more conservatively positioned than their benchmarks. Specifically, both the month-to-

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month volatility (i.e., standard deviation) and beta (fluctuations attributed to moves in the benchmarks) of the accounts are lower versus their benchmarks than they've been historically. Moreover, though our client accounts have virtually never been as volatile as the S&P 500, the difference is now quite pronounced. Case in point: over the past 12 months, the average standard deviation of the accounts within the composite of even our most aggressive style, SSB Growth, has been 14.91, vs. 17.62 for the S&P 500 (so, more than 15% less volatile), while the beta has been 0.84 (vs. 1.00).

We are trying to provide each client with the opportunity for capital growth in a risk-sensible manner. Though the accounts maintain exposure to the type of stocks that has been working best in the stock market (large-cap technology), they tend to include more than the benchmarks in types of stocks, especially smaller-cap, that I believe hold promise for above-average future gains, given their low current valuations.

On the fixed-income side, we have been keeping risk low by strongly favoring money-market and short-term, high-quality bond funds as opposed to long-term bond funds, though we have a bit of the latter scattered about for diversification in some cases (mainly funds for municipal bonds and Treasury Inflation Protection Securities). While our small-cap equity exposure has damaged returns so far this year, our fixed-income positioning has added to returns and dampened volatility.

To get started in any of our strategies, please call us at 866-575-5700, or send an email to info@salzingersheaffbrock.com. Thank you!

SALZINGER SHEAFF LLC BROCK

8801 River Crossing Blvd.
Suite 100
Indianapolis, Indiana 46240

salzingersheaffbrock.com
866-575-5700

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

Mark Salzinger

Mark Salzinger
Chief Investment Officer and Portfolio Manager

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Indexes: Lipper Global Multi-Cap Core 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. 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. First Trust Composite Closed-End Fund Index is a capitalization weighted index designed to provide a broad representation of the US municipal, fixed income and equity closed-end fund universe. 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. Russell 2000 Index measures the performance of the small-cap segment of the US equity universe. Russell 3000 Index measures the performance of the largest 3,000 US companies. Bloomberg US Aggregate Index is 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). FTSE Global All Cap X-US is an equity index which captures most of the world's stocks ex-US. Indexes are unmanaged and unavailable for direct investment. Style Comparisons: & A comparison for SSB Growth and SSB Growth & Income. # A slightly lower risk comparison for SSB Growth & Income. @ A comparison for SSB Conservative Balanced. ^A comparison for SSB Retirement Income. An index should only be compared with a mandate that has a similar investment objective. *Effective 10/31/22 the SSB Closed-End Income Composite changed the benchmark from 25% Lipper Global Multi-Cap Core Index/75% Lipper General Bond Index to the First Trust Composite Closed-End Fund Index.