

# TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC Firm Brochure - Form ADV Part 2A

*This brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC. If you have any questions about the contents of this brochure, please contact us at (980) 254-7804 or by email at: [info@truststonewealth.com](mailto:info@truststonewealth.com). 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 TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC is also available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov). TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC's CRD number is: 330217.*

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*Registration as an investment adviser does not imply a certain level of skill or training.*

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## **Item 2: Material Changes**

TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC has not yet filed an annual updating amendment using the Form ADV Part 2A. Therefore, there are no material changes to report.

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## Item 4: Advisory Business

### A. Description of the Advisory Firm

TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC (hereinafter "TrustStone") is a Limited Liability Company organized in the State of North Carolina. The firm was formed in January 2024, and the principal owners are Stilley Financial L.L.C. (owned by John Stilley) and JVS Financial L.L.C. (owned by Joshua Stilley). The Chief Compliance Officer is John Stilley.

### B. Types of Advisory Services

#### *Portfolio Management Services*

TrustStone offers ongoing discretionary and non-discretionary portfolio management services based on the individual goals, objectives, time horizon, and risk tolerance of each client. TrustStone creates an Investment Policy Statement for each client, which outlines the client's current situation (income, tax levels, and risk tolerance levels) and then constructs a plan to aid in the selection of a portfolio that matches each client's specific situation. Portfolio management services include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Investment strategy
- Asset allocation
- Risk tolerance
- Personal investment policy
- Asset selection
- Regular portfolio monitoring

TrustStone evaluates the current investments of each client with respect to their risk tolerance levels and time horizon. Risk tolerance levels are documented in the Investment Policy Statement, which is given to each client. TrustStone will manage the client's investment portfolio on a discretionary or a non-discretionary basis pursuant to an investment advisory agreement with the client. Further description of Discretionary and Non-Discretionary engagements is included in Item 16.

TrustStone seeks to provide that investment decisions are made in accordance with the fiduciary duties owed to its accounts and without consideration of TrustStone's economic, investment or other financial interests. To meet its fiduciary obligations, TrustStone attempts to avoid, among other things, investment or trading practices that systematically advantage or disadvantage certain client portfolios, and accordingly, TrustStone's policy is to seek fair and equitable allocation of investment opportunities/transactions among its clients to avoid favoring one client over another over time. It is TrustStone's policy to allocate investment opportunities and transactions it identifies as being appropriate and prudent, including initial public offerings ("IPOs") and other investment opportunities that might have a limited supply, among its clients on a fair and equitable basis over time.

## ***Retirement Plan Consulting Services***

TrustStone offers consulting services to pension or other employee benefit plans (including but not limited to 401(k) plans). These services may include, but are not limited to:

- Serving as a plan fiduciary as described by ERISA § 3(38) or 3(21)A(ii);
- Identifying investment objectives and restrictions;
- Providing guidance on various assets classes and investment options;
- Recommending money managers to manage plan assets in ways designed to achieve objectives;
- Monitoring performance of money managers and investment options and making recommendations for changes;
- Recommending other service providers, such as custodians, administrators and broker-dealers;
- Service provider fee analysis and benchmarking;
- Enrollment and education services for plan participants; and
- Plan design review and recommendations.

These services are based on the goals, objectives, demographics, time horizon, and/or risk tolerance of the plan and its participants.

## ***Financial Planning***

Ongoing financial planning services may include, but are not limited to:

- Investment planning
- Tax concerns
- Estate planning
- Insurance planning
- Retirement and income planning
- Longevity planning

## ***Services Limited to Specific Types of Investments***

TrustStone generally limits its investment advice to mutual funds, fixed income securities, insurance products including fixed annuities, equities, ETFs (including ETFs in the gold and precious metal sectors), treasury inflation protected/inflation linked bonds, non-U.S. securities, venture capital funds and private placements, although TrustStone primarily recommends ETFs. TrustStone may use other securities as well to help diversify a portfolio when applicable.

## ***Written Acknowledgement of Fiduciary Status***

When we provide investment advice to you regarding your retirement plan account or individual retirement account, we are fiduciaries within the meaning of Title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act and/or the Internal Revenue Code, as applicable, which are laws governing retirement accounts. The way we make money

creates some conflicts with your interests, so we operate under a special rule that requires us to act in your best interest and not put our interest ahead of yours. Under this special rule's provisions, we must:

- Meet a professional standard of care when making investment recommendations (give prudent advice);
- Never put our financial interests ahead of yours when making recommendations (give loyal advice);
- Avoid misleading statements about conflicts of interest, fees, and investments;
- Follow policies and procedures designed to ensure that we give advice that is in your best interest;
- Charge no more than is reasonable for our services; and
- Give you basic information about conflicts of interest.

### **C. Client Tailored Services and Client Imposed Restrictions**

TrustStone will tailor a program for each individual client. This will include an interview session to get to know the client's specific needs and requirements as well as a plan that will be executed by TrustStone on behalf of the client. TrustStone may use model allocations together with a specific set of recommendations for each client based on their personal restrictions, needs, and targets. Clients may impose restrictions in investing in certain securities or types of securities in accordance with their values or beliefs. However, if the restrictions prevent TrustStone from properly servicing the client account, or if the restrictions would require TrustStone to deviate from its standard suite of services, TrustStone reserves the right to end the relationship.

### **D. Wrap Fee Programs**

A wrap fee program is an investment program where the investor pays one stated fee that includes management fees and transaction costs. TrustStone does not participate in wrap fee programs.

### **E. Assets Under Management**

TrustStone has the following assets under management:

<b>Discretionary Amounts:</b>	<b>Non-discretionary Amounts:</b>	<b>Date Calculated:</b>
\$0	\$0	February 2024

## Item 5: Fees and Compensation

### A. Fee Schedule

#### *Portfolio Management Fees*

Total Assets Under Management	Annual Fees*
\$0 - \$1,000,000	1.00%
\$1,000,001 - \$2,000,000	0.90%
\$2,000,001 - \$3,000,000	0.80%
\$3,000,001 - \$4,000,000	0.70%
\$4,000,001 - \$5,000,000	0.60%
\$5,000,001 - AND UP	0.50%

\*Subject to a \$2,500 annual minimum fee for service.

The advisory fee is calculated using the value of the assets on the last business day of the prior billing period. We retain the discretion to negotiate alternative fees on a client-by-client basis. The final fee schedule will be memorialized in the client's advisory agreement.

Clients may terminate the agreement without penalty for a full refund of TrustStone's fees within five business days of signing the Investment Advisory Contract. Thereafter, clients may terminate the Investment Advisory Contract generally with 30 days' written notice.

#### *Retirement Plan Consulting Services Fees*

Total Assets Under Management	Annual Fee*
\$0 - \$2,500,000	0.40%
\$2,500,001 - \$10,000,000	0.20%
\$10,000,001 - AND UP	Negotiable

\*Subject to a \$4,000 annual minimum fee for service.

The advisory fee is calculated using the value of the assets on the last business day of the prior billing period. We retain the discretion to negotiate alternative fees on a client-by-client basis. The final fee schedule will be memorialized in the client's advisory agreement.

Clients may terminate the agreement without penalty for a full refund of TrustStone's fees within five business days of signing the Retirement Plan Consulting Agreement.

Thereafter, clients may terminate the Retirement Plan Consulting Agreement generally with 30 days' written notice.

### ***Financial Planning Fees***

Ongoing financial planning fees are billed quarterly in advance at a fixed rate. The fee is \$4,000/yr. (\$1,000/qtr.) for the first year and \$2,000/yr. (\$500/qtr.) for all years following. We retain the discretion to negotiate alternative fees on a client-by-client basis.

Clients may terminate the agreement without penalty, for a full refund of TrustStone's fees, within five business days of signing the Financial Planning Agreement. Thereafter, clients may terminate the Financial Planning Agreement generally upon written notice.

## **B. Payment of Fees**

### ***Payment of Portfolio Management Fees***

Portfolio management fees are withdrawn directly from the client's accounts with client's written authorization on a quarterly basis or may be invoiced and billed directly to the client on a quarterly basis. Clients may select the method in which they are billed. Fees are generally paid in advance.

### ***Payment of Retirement Plan Consulting Fees***

Retirement Plan consulting fees are withdrawn directly from the client's accounts with client's written authorization on a quarterly basis or may be invoiced and billed directly to the client on a quarterly basis. Clients may select the method in which they are billed. Fees are generally paid in advance.

### ***Payment of Financial Planning Fees***

Financial planning fees are invoiced and billed directly to the client on a quarterly basis or may be withdrawn directly from the client's account with the client's written authorization on a quarterly basis if the client is also a portfolio management client. Clients may select the method in which they are billed. Fees are generally paid in advance.

## **C. Client Responsibility For Third Party Fees**

Clients are responsible for the payment of all third party fees (i.e. custodian fees, brokerage fees, mutual fund fees, transaction fees, etc.). Those fees are separate and distinct from the fees and expenses charged by TrustStone. Please see Item 12 of this brochure regarding broker-dealer/custodian.



## **D. Prepayment of Fees**

TrustStone collects fees in advance. Refunds for fees paid in advance but not yet earned will be refunded on a prorated basis and returned within fourteen days to the client via check, or return deposit back into the client's account.

For all asset-based fees paid in advance, the fee refunded will be equal to the balance of the fees collected in advance minus the daily rate\* times the number of days elapsed in the billing period up to and including the day of termination. (\*The daily rate is calculated by dividing the annual asset-based fee rate by 365.)

Fixed fees that are collected in advance will be refunded based on the prorated amount of work completed at the point of termination.

## **E. Outside Compensation For the Sale of Securities to Clients**

Certain supervised persons of TrustStone, in their individual capacities, are also licensed independent insurance agents and may recommend, on a fully disclosed commission basis, the purchase of certain insurance products. As such, a conflict of interest exists to the extent that TrustStone recommends the purchase of insurance products where TrustStone's supervised persons receive insurance commissions or other additional compensation.

When it is determined that certain insurance products are suited to a Client's needs, Clients may be directed to supervised persons who are licensed to sell insurance products. When recommending the sale of investment products for which the supervised persons receive compensation, TrustStone will document the conflict of interest in the client file and inform the client of the conflict of interest. Advisory fees that are charged to clients are not reduced to offset the commissions on insurance products recommended to clients.

Clients have no obligation to purchase any insurance products from such supervised persons and are reminded that they may purchase any recommended insurance products through other, non-affiliated insurance agents.

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

TrustStone does not accept performance-based fees or other fees based on a share of capital gains on or capital appreciation of the assets of a client.

## **Item 7: Types of Clients**

TrustStone generally provides advisory services to the following types of clients:

- ❖ Individuals
- ❖ High-Net-Worth Individuals
- ❖ Retirement Plans (including 401(k), 403(b), profit-sharing, and pension plans)
- ❖ Corporates or Business Entities
- ❖ Charitable Foundations and Endowments
- ❖ Trusts

There is no account minimum for any of TrustStone's services.

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

### A. Methods of Analysis and Investment Strategies

#### *Methods of Analysis*

TrustStone's methods of analysis may include Charting analysis, Cyclical analysis, Fundamental analysis, Modern portfolio theory, Quantitative analysis and Technical analysis.

**Charting Analysis** involves the use of patterns in performance charts.

**Cyclical Analysis** involves the analysis of business cycles to find favorable conditions for buying and/or selling a security.

**Fundamental Analysis** involves the analysis of financial statements, the general financial health of companies, and/or the analysis of management or competitive advantages.

**Modern Portfolio Theory** is a theory of investment that attempts to maximize portfolio expected return for a given amount of portfolio risk, or equivalently minimize risk for a given level of expected return, each by carefully choosing the proportions of various asset.

**Quantitative Analysis** deals with measurable factors as distinguished from qualitative considerations such as the character of management or the state of employee morale, such as the value of assets, the cost of capital, historical projections of sales, and so on.

**Technical Analysis** involves the analysis of past market data, primarily price and volume.

#### *Investment Strategies*

TrustStone may use long-term trading, short-term trading, and margin transactions.

**Investing in securities involves a risk of loss that you, as a client, should be prepared to bear.**

## **B. Material Risks Involved**

### *Methods of Analysis*

**Charting Analysis** strategy involves using and comparing various charts to predict long and short-term performance or market trends. The risk involved in using this method is that only past performance data is considered without using other methods to crosscheck data. Using charting analysis without other methods of analysis would be assuming that past performance will be indicative of future performance. This may not be the case.

**Cyclical Analysis** assumes that the markets react in cyclical patterns which, once identified, can be leveraged to provide performance. The risks with this strategy are two-fold: 1) the markets do not always repeat cyclical patterns; and 2) if too many investors begin to implement this strategy, then it changes the very cycles these investors are trying to exploit.

**Fundamental Analysis** concentrates on factors that determine a company's value and expected future earnings. This strategy would normally encourage equity purchases in stocks that are undervalued or priced below their perceived value. The risk assumed is that the market will fail to reach expectations of perceived value.

**Modern Portfolio Theory** assumes that investors are risk averse, meaning that given two portfolios that offer the same expected return, investors will prefer the less risky one. Thus, an investor will take on increased risk only if compensated by higher expected returns. Conversely, an investor who wants higher expected returns must accept more risk. The exact trade-off will be the same for all investors, but different investors will evaluate the trade-off differently based on individual risk aversion characteristics. The implication is that a rational investor will not invest in a portfolio if a second portfolio exists with a more favorable risk-expected return profile – i.e., if for that level of risk an alternative portfolio exists which has better expected returns.

**Quantitative Analysis** Investment strategies using quantitative models may perform differently than expected as a result of, among other things, the factors used in the models, the weight placed on each factor, changes from the factors' historical trends, and technical issues in the construction and implementation of the models.

**Technical Analysis** attempts to predict a future stock price or direction based on market trends. The assumption is that the market follows discernible patterns and if these patterns can be identified then a prediction can be made. The risk is that markets do not always follow patterns and relying solely on this method may not consider new patterns that emerge over time.

### *Investment Strategies*

TrustStone's use of margin transactions generally holds greater risk, and clients should be aware that there is a material risk of loss using any of those strategies.

**Long-term trading** is designed to capture market rates of both return and risk. Due to its nature, the long-term investment strategy can expose clients to various types of risk that will typically surface at various intervals during the time the client owns the investments. These risks include but are not limited to inflation (purchasing power) risk, interest rate risk, economic risk, market risk, and political/regulatory risk.

**Margin transactions** use leverage that is borrowed from a brokerage firm as collateral. When losses occur, the value of the margin account may fall below the brokerage firm's threshold thereby triggering a margin call. This may force the account holder to either allocate more funds to the account or sell assets in a shorter time frame than desired.

**Short-term trading** risks include liquidity, economic stability, and inflation, in addition to the long-term trading risks listed above. Frequent trading can affect investment performance, particularly through increased brokerage and other transaction costs and taxes.

**Investing in securities involves a risk of loss that you, as a client, should be prepared to bear.**

### C. Risks of Specific Securities Utilized

TrustStone's use of margin transactions generally holds greater risk of capital loss. Clients should be aware that there is a material risk of loss using any investment strategy. The investment types listed below (leaving aside Treasury Inflation Protected/Inflation Linked Bonds) are not guaranteed or insured by the FDIC or any other government agency.

**Mutual Funds:** Investing in mutual funds carries the risk of capital loss and thus you may lose money investing in mutual funds. All mutual funds have costs that lower investment returns. The funds can be of bond "fixed income" nature (lower risk) or stock "equity" nature.

**Equity** investment generally refers to buying shares of stocks in return for receiving a future payment of dividends and/or capital gains if the value of the stock increases. The value of equity securities may fluctuate in response to specific situations for each company, industry conditions and the general economic environments.

**Fixed income** investments generally pay a return on a fixed schedule, though the amount of the payments can vary. This type of investment can include corporate and government debt securities, leveraged loans, high yield, and investment grade debt and structured products, such as mortgage and other asset-backed securities, although individual bonds may be the best-known type of fixed income security. In general, the fixed income market

is volatile and fixed income securities carry interest rate risk. (As interest rates rise, bond prices usually fall, and vice versa. This effect is usually more pronounced for longer-term securities.) Fixed income securities also carry inflation risk, liquidity risk, call risk, and credit and default risks for both issuers and counterparties. The risk of default on treasury inflation protected/inflation linked bonds is dependent upon the U.S. Treasury defaulting (extremely unlikely); however, they carry a potential risk of losing share price value, albeit rather minimal. Risks of investing in foreign fixed income securities also include the general risk of non-U.S. investing described below.

**Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs):** An ETF is an investment fund traded on stock exchanges, similar to stocks. Investing in ETFs carries the risk of capital loss (sometimes up to a 100% loss in the case of a stock holding bankruptcy). Areas of concern include the lack of transparency in products and increasing complexity, conflicts of interest and the possibility of inadequate regulatory compliance. Risks in investing in ETFs include trading risks, liquidity and shutdown risks, risks associated with a change in authorized participants and non-participation of authorized participants, risks that trading price differs from indicative net asset value (NAV), or price fluctuation and disassociation from the index being tracked. Regarding trading risks, regular trading may add cost to your portfolio thus counteracting the low fees that one of the typical benefits of ETFs. Additionally, regular trading to beneficially “time the market” is difficult to achieve. Even paid fund managers struggle to do this every year, with the majority failing to beat the relevant indexes. Regarding liquidity and shutdown risks, not all ETFs have the same level of liquidity. Since ETFs are at least as liquid as their underlying assets, trading conditions are more accurately reflected in implied liquidity rather than the average daily volume of the ETF itself. Implied liquidity is a measure of what can potentially be traded in ETFs based on its underlying assets. ETFs are subject to market volatility and the risks of their underlying securities, which may include the risks associated with investing in smaller companies, foreign securities, commodities, and fixed income investments (as applicable). Foreign securities in particular are subject to interest rate, currency exchange rate, economic, and political risks, all of which are magnified in emerging markets. ETFs that target a small universe of securities, such as a specific region or market sector, are generally subject to greater market volatility, as well as to the specific risks associated with that sector, region, or other focus. ETFs that use derivatives, leverage, or complex investment strategies are subject to additional risks. Precious Metal ETFs (e.g., Gold, Silver, or Palladium Bullion backed “electronic shares” not physical metal) specifically may be negatively impacted by several unique factors, among them (1) large sales by the official sector which own a significant portion of aggregate world holdings in gold and other precious metals, (2) a significant increase in hedging activities by producers of gold or other precious metals, (3) a significant change in the attitude of speculators and investors. The return of an index ETF is usually different from that of the index it tracks because of fees, expenses, and tracking error. An ETF may trade at a premium or discount to its net asset value (NAV) (or indicative value in the case of exchange-traded notes). The degree of liquidity can vary significantly from one ETF to another and losses may be magnified if no liquid market exists for the ETF’s shares when attempting to sell them. Each ETF has a unique risk profile, detailed in its prospectus, offering circular, or similar material, which should be considered carefully when making investment decisions.

**Annuities** are a retirement product for those who may have the ability to pay a premium now and want to guarantee they receive certain monthly payments or a return on investment later in the future. Annuities are contracts issued by an insurance company designed to meet a requirement or other long-term goals.

**Private placements** carry a substantial risk as they are subject to less regulation than are publicly offered securities, the market to resell these assets under applicable securities laws may be illiquid, due to restrictions, and the liquidation may be taken at a substantial discount to the underlying value or result in the entire loss of the value of such assets.

**Venture capital funds** invest in start-up companies at an early stage of development in the interest of generating a return through an eventual realization event; the risk is high as a result of the uncertainty involved at that stage of development.

**Non-U.S.** securities present certain risks such as currency fluctuation, political and economic change, social unrest, changes in government regulation, differences in accounting and the lesser degree of accurate public information available.

**Past performance is not indicative of future results. Investing in securities involves a risk of loss that you, as a client, should be prepared to bear.**

## Item 9: Disciplinary Information

### A. Criminal or Civil Actions

There are no criminal or civil actions to report.

### B. Administrative Proceedings

There are no administrative proceedings to report.

### C. Self-regulatory Organization (SRO) Proceedings

There are no self-regulatory organization proceedings to report.

## Item 10: Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations

### A. Registration as a Broker/Dealer or Broker/Dealer Representative

Neither TrustStone nor its representatives are registered as, or have pending applications to become, a broker/dealer or a representative of a broker/dealer.

## **B. Registration as a Futures Commission Merchant, Commodity Pool Operator, or a Commodity Trading Advisor**

Neither TrustStone nor its representatives are registered as or have pending applications to become either a Futures Commission Merchant, Commodity Pool Operator, or Commodity Trading Advisor or an associated person of the foregoing entities.

## **C. Registration Relationships Material to this Advisory Business and Possible Conflicts of Interests**

Joshua Vincent Stilley is a licensed insurance agent and may offer clients advice or products from those activities. Clients should be aware that these products pay a commission or other compensation and involve a conflict of interest, as commissionable products conflict with the fiduciary duties of a registered investment adviser. TrustStone addresses this conflict of interest by requiring its supervised persons to always act in the best interest of the client, including when acting as an insurance agent. TrustStone periodically reviews recommendations by its supervised persons to assess whether they are based on an objective evaluation of each client's risk profile and investment objectives.

TrustStone will disclose in advance how it or its supervised persons are compensated and will disclose conflicts of interest involving any advice or service provided. At no time will there be tying between business practices and/or services (a condition where a client or prospective client would be required to accept one product or service conditioned upon the selection of a second, distinctive tied product or service). No client is ever under any obligation to purchase any insurance product. Insurance products recommended by TrustStone's supervised persons may also be available and purchase from other, non-affiliated insurance agents.

## **D. Selection of Other Advisers or Managers and How This Adviser is Compensated for Those Selections**

TrustStone does not utilize nor select third-party investment advisers.

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

## **A. Code of Ethics**

TrustStone has a written Code of Ethics that covers the following areas: Prohibited Purchases and Sales, Insider Trading, Personal Securities Transactions, Exempted Transactions, Prohibited Activities, Conflicts of Interest, Gifts and Entertainment, Confidentiality, Service on a Board of Directors, Compliance Procedures, Compliance with Laws and Regulations, Procedures and Reporting, Certification of Compliance,



Reporting Violations, Compliance Officer Duties, Training and Education, Recordkeeping, Annual Review, and Sanctions. TrustStone's Code of Ethics is available free upon request to any client or prospective client.

### **B. Recommendations Involving Material Financial Interests**

TrustStone does not recommend that clients buy or sell any security in which a related person to TrustStone or TrustStone has a material financial interest.

### **C. Investing Personal Money in the Same Securities as Clients**

From time to time, representatives of TrustStone may buy or sell securities for themselves that they also recommend to clients. This may provide an opportunity for representatives of TrustStone to buy or sell the same securities before or after recommending the same securities to clients resulting in representatives profiting off the recommendations they provide to clients. Such transactions may create a conflict of interest. TrustStone will always document any transactions that could be construed as conflicts of interest and will never engage in trading that operates to the client's disadvantage when similar securities are being bought or sold.

### **D. Trading Securities At/Around the Same Time as Clients' Securities**

From time to time, representatives of TrustStone may buy or sell securities for themselves at or around the same time as clients. This may provide an opportunity for representatives of TrustStone to buy or sell securities before or after recommending securities to clients resulting in representatives profiting off the recommendations they provide to clients. Such transactions may create a conflict of interest; however, TrustStone will never engage in trading that operates to the client's disadvantage if representatives of TrustStone buy or sell securities at or around the same time as clients.

## **Item 12: Brokerage Practices**

### **A. Factors Used to Select Custodians and/or Broker/Dealers**

Custodians/broker-dealers will be recommended based on TrustStone's duty to seek "best execution," which is the obligation to seek execution of securities transactions for a client on the most favorable terms for the client under the circumstances. Clients will not necessarily pay the lowest commission or commission equivalent, and TrustStone may also consider the market expertise and research access provided by the broker-dealer/custodian, including but not limited to access to written research, oral communication with analysts, admittance to research conferences and other resources provided by the brokers that may aid in TrustStone's research efforts. TrustStone will



never charge a premium or commission on transactions, beyond the actual cost imposed by the broker-dealer/custodian.

TrustStone will generally require clients to use Schwab Institutional, a division of Charles Schwab & Co., Inc.

### ***1. Research and Other Soft-Dollar Benefits***

While TrustStone has no formal soft dollars program in which soft dollars are used to pay for third party services, TrustStone may receive research, products, or other services from custodians and broker-dealers in connection with client securities transactions (“soft dollar benefits”). TrustStone may enter into soft-dollar arrangements consistent with (and not outside of) the safe harbor contained in Section 28€ of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended. There can be no assurance that any particular client will benefit from soft dollar research, whether or not the client’s transactions paid for it, and TrustStone does not seek to allocate benefits to client accounts proportionate to any soft dollar credits generated by the accounts. TrustStone benefits by not having to produce or pay for the research, products or services, and TrustStone will have an incentive to recommend a broker-dealer based on receiving research or services. Clients should be aware that TrustStone’s acceptance of soft dollar benefits may result in higher commissions charged to the client.

### ***2. Brokerage for Client Referrals***

TrustStone receives no referrals from a broker-dealer or third party in exchange for using that broker-dealer or third party.

### ***3. Clients Directing Which Broker/Dealer/Custodian to Use***

TrustStone will generally require clients to use a specific broker-dealer to execute transactions. Not all advisers require clients to use a particular broker-dealer.

## **B. Aggregating (Block) Trading for Multiple Client Accounts**

If TrustStone buys or sells the same securities on behalf of more than one client, then it may (but would be under no obligation to) aggregate or bunch such securities in a single transaction for multiple clients in order to seek more favorable prices, lower brokerage commissions, or more efficient execution. In such case, TrustStone would place an aggregate order with the broker on behalf of all such clients in order to ensure fairness for all clients; provided, however, that trades would be reviewed periodically to ensure that accounts are not systematically disadvantaged by this policy. TrustStone would determine the appropriate number of shares and select the appropriate brokers consistent with its duty to seek best execution, except for those accounts with specific brokerage direction (if any).

## **Item 13: Review of Accounts**

### **A. Frequency and Nature of Periodic Reviews and Who Makes Those Reviews**

All client accounts for TrustStone's advisory services provided on an ongoing basis are reviewed at least Quarterly by the Managing Partners, John Stilley and Joshua Stilley, with regard to clients' respective investment policies and risk tolerance levels. All accounts at TrustStone are assigned to this reviewer.

All financial planning accounts are reviewed at least quarterly by the Managing Partners, John Stilley and Joshua Stilley. Financial planning clients are provided ongoing financial planning services.

### **B. Factors That Will Trigger a Non-Periodic Review of Client Accounts**

Reviews may be triggered by material market, economic or political events, or by changes in client's financial situations (such as retirement, termination of employment, physical move, or inheritance).

### **C. Content and Frequency of Regular Reports Provided to Clients**

Each client of TrustStone's advisory services provided on an ongoing basis will receive a monthly report detailing the client's account, including assets held, asset value, and calculation of fees. This written report will come from the custodian.

Each financial planning client will receive a financial plan at the beginning of the ongoing financial planning engagement. Financial plan updates will be provided on an as-needed or agreed-upon basis.

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

### **A. Economic Benefits Provided by Third Parties for Advice Rendered to Clients (Includes Sales Awards or Other Prizes)**

TrustStone does not receive any economic benefit, directly or indirectly from any third party for advice rendered to TrustStone's clients.

With respect to Schwab, TrustStone receives access to Schwab's institutional trading and custody services, which are typically not available to Schwab retail investors. These services generally are available to independent investment advisers on an unsolicited

basis, at no charge to them so long as a total of at least \$10 million of the adviser's clients' assets are maintained in accounts at Schwab Advisor Services. Schwab's services include brokerage services that are related to the execution of securities transactions, custody, research, including that in the form of advice, analyses and reports, and access to mutual funds and other investments that are otherwise generally available only to institutional investors or would require a significantly higher minimum initial investment. For TrustStone client accounts maintained in its custody, Schwab generally does not charge separately for custody services but is compensated by account holders through commissions or other transaction-related or asset-based fees for securities trades that are executed through Schwab or that settle into Schwab accounts.

Schwab also makes available to TrustStone other products and services that benefit TrustStone but may not benefit its clients' accounts. These benefits may include national, regional or TrustStone specific educational events organized and/or sponsored by Schwab Advisor Services. Other potential benefits may include occasional business entertainment of personnel of TrustStone by Schwab Advisor Services personnel, including meals, invitations to sporting events, including golf tournaments, and other forms of entertainment, some of which may accompany educational opportunities. Other of these products and services assist TrustStone in managing and administering clients' accounts. These include software and other technology (and related technological training) that provide access to client account data (such as trade confirmations and account statements), facilitate trade execution (and allocation of aggregated trade orders for multiple client accounts, if applicable), provide research, pricing information and other market data, facilitate payment of TrustStone's fees from its clients' accounts (if applicable), and assist with back-office training and support functions, recordkeeping and client reporting. Many of these services generally may be used to service all or some substantial number of TrustStone's accounts. Schwab Advisor Services also makes available to TrustStone other services intended to help TrustStone manage and further develop its business enterprise. These services may include professional compliance, legal and business consulting, publications and conferences on practice management, information technology, business succession, regulatory compliance, employee benefits providers, human capital consultants, insurance and marketing. In addition, Schwab may make available, arrange and/or pay vendors for these types of services rendered to TrustStone by independent third parties. Schwab Advisor Services may discount or waive fees it would otherwise charge for some of these services or pay all or a part of the fees of a third-party providing these services to TrustStone. TrustStone is independently owned and operated and not affiliated with Schwab.

Asset managers including BlackRock, JP Morgan, etc. offer automated trading and tax management of their investment models through a platform called 55ip. 55ip is made available at no additional charge for advisors who use their model portfolios. These asset managers may also provide products and services, provided without cost or at a discount, including trading and receipt of duplicate client statements and confirmations; research related products and tools; access to block trading; and economic and investment research. TrustStone may use these asset managers and/or this platform as part of its portfolio management services.

## **B. Compensation to Non - Advisory Personnel for Client Referrals**

TrustStone may enter into written arrangements with third parties to act as solicitors for TrustStone's investment management services. Solicitor relationships will be fully disclosed to each Client to the extent required by applicable law. TrustStone will ensure each solicitor is exempt, notice filed, or properly registered in all appropriate jurisdictions.

### **Item 15: Custody**

When advisory fees are deducted directly from client accounts at client's custodian, TrustStone will be deemed to have limited custody of client's assets and must have written authorization from the client to do so. Clients will receive all account statements and billing invoices that are required in each jurisdiction, and they should carefully review those statements for accuracy.

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

TrustStone provides discretionary and non-discretionary investment advisory services to clients. The advisory contract established with each client sets forth the discretionary authority for trading. Where investment discretion has been granted, TrustStone generally manages the client's account and makes investment decisions without consultation with the client as to when the securities are to be bought or sold for the account, the total amount of the securities to be bought/sold, what securities to buy or sell, or the price per share. In some instances, TrustStone's discretionary authority in making these determinations may be limited by conditions imposed by a client in investment guidelines or objectives, or client instructions otherwise provided to TrustStone.

### **Item 17: Voting Client Securities (Proxy Voting)**

TrustStone will not ask for, nor accept voting authority for client securities. Clients will receive proxies directly from the issuer of the security or the custodian. Clients should direct all proxy questions to the issuer of the security.

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

#### **A. Balance Sheet**

TrustStone neither requires nor solicits prepayment of more than \$500 in fees per client, six months or more in advance, and therefore is not required to include a balance sheet with this brochure.

#### **B. Financial Conditions Reasonably Likely to Impair Ability to Meet Contractual Commitments to Clients**

Neither TrustStone nor its management has any financial condition that is likely to reasonably impair TrustStone's ability to meet contractual commitments to clients.

#### **C. Bankruptcy Petitions in Previous Ten Years**

TrustStone has not been the subject of a bankruptcy petition in the last ten years.

### **Item 19: Requirements For State Registered Advisers**

#### **A. Principal Executive Officers and Management Persons; Their Formal Education and Business Background**

The education and business backgrounds of TrustStone's current management persons, John Thomas Stilley and Joshua Vincent Stilley, can be found on the Form ADV Part 2B brochure supplements for those individuals.

#### **B. Other Businesses in Which This Advisory Firm or its Personnel are Engaged and Time Spent on Those (If Any)**

Other business activities for each relevant individual can be found on the Form ADV Part 2B brochure supplement for each such individual.

#### **C. Calculation of Performance-Based Fees and Degree of Risk to Clients**

TrustStone does not accept performance-based fees or other fees based on a share of capital gains on or capital appreciation of the assets of a client.

#### **D. Material Disciplinary Disclosures for Management Persons of this Firm**

There are no civil, self-regulatory organization, or arbitration proceedings to report under this section.

**E. Material Relationships That Management Persons Have With Issuers of Securities (If Any)**

See Item 10.C and 11.B.

*This brochure supplement provides information about John Thomas Stilley that supplements the TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC brochure. You should have received a copy of that brochure. Please contact John Thomas Stilley if you did not receive TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC's brochure or if you have any questions about the contents of this supplement.*

*Additional information about John Thomas Stilley is also available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov).*

## **TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC**

Form ADV Part 2B – Individual Disclosure Brochure

*for*

**John Thomas Stilley**

Personal CRD Number: 7076810

Investment Adviser Representative

TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC  
101 Glen Lennox Drive Unit 300  
Chapel Hill, NC 27517  
(919) 726-9236  
[jt@truststonewealth.com](mailto:jt@truststonewealth.com)

UPDATED: 04/09/2024

## Item 2: Educational Background and Business Experience

**Name:** John Thomas Stilley      **Born:** 1991

### **Educational Background and Professional Designations:**

#### **Education:**

Bachelors of Arts Economics, University of North Carolina - 2014

#### **Designations:**

##### **CFP® - Certified Financial Planner**

The CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™, CFP® and federally registered CFP (with flame design) marks (collectively, the “CFP® marks”) are professional certification marks granted in the United States by Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards, Inc. (“CFP Board”).

The CFP® certification is a voluntary certification; no federal or state law or regulation requires financial planners to hold CFP® certification. It is recognized in the United States and a number of other countries for its (1) high standard of professional education; (2) stringent code of conduct and standards of practice; and (3) ethical requirements that govern professional engagements with clients.

To attain the right to use the CFP® marks, an individual must satisfactorily fulfill the following requirements:

- Education – Complete an advanced college-level course of study addressing the financial planning subject areas that CFP Board’s studies have determined as necessary for the competent and professional delivery of financial planning services, and attain a Bachelor’s Degree from a regionally accredited United States college or university (or its equivalent from a foreign university). CFP Board’s financial planning subject areas include insurance planning and risk management, employee benefits planning, investment planning, income tax planning, retirement planning, and estate planning;
- Examination – Pass the comprehensive CFP® Certification Examination. The examination includes case studies and client scenarios designed to test one’s ability to correctly diagnose financial planning issues and apply one’s knowledge of financial planning to real world circumstances;
- Experience – Complete at least three years of full-time financial planning-related experience (or the equivalent, measured as 2,000 hours per year); and
- Ethics – Agree to be bound by CFP Board’s *Standards of Professional Conduct*, a set of documents outlining the ethical and practice standards for CFP® professionals.

Individuals who become certified must complete the following ongoing education and ethics requirements in order to maintain the right to continue to use the CFP® marks:



- i. Continuing Education – Complete 30 hours of continuing education hours every two years, including two hours on the *Code of Ethics* and other parts of the *Standards of Professional Conduct*, to maintain competence and keep up with developments in the financial planning field; and
- ii. Ethics – Renew an agreement to be bound by the *Standards of Professional Conduct*. The Standards prominently require that CFP® professionals provide financial planning services at a fiduciary standard of care. This means CFP® professionals must provide financial planning services in the best interests of their clients.

CFP® professionals who fail to comply with the above standards and requirements may be subject to CFP Board’s enforcement process, which could result in suspension or permanent revocation of their CFP® certification.

**CPFA® - Certified Plan Fiduciary Advisor**

The CPFA designation is acquired through the National Association of Plan Advisors. Course work and the examination cover ERISA Fiduciary Roles and Responsibilities, ERISA Fiduciary Oversight, ERISA Plan Investment Management, and ERISA Plan Management. A plan advisor who has earned his/her CPFA has demonstrated the expertise required to act as a plan fiduciary or help plan fiduciaries manage their roles and responsibilities. Credentialed members must acquire 20 hours of continuing education (CE) credits within a two-year cycle and renew their ASPPA membership annually.

**AIF® - Accredited Investment Fiduciary®**

The AIF Designation certifies that the recipient has specialized knowledge of fiduciary standards of care and their application to the investment management process. To receive the AIF Designation, the individual must meet prerequisite criteria based on a combination of education, relevant industry experience, and/or ongoing professional development, complete a training program, successfully pass a comprehensive, closed-book final examination under the supervision of a proctor and agree to abide by the Code of Ethics and Conduct Standards. To maintain the AIF Designation, the individual must annually attest to the Code of Ethics and Conduct Standards and accrue and report a minimum of six hours of continuing education. The Designation is administered by the Center for Fiduciary Studies, the standards-setting body of fi360.

**Business Background:**

03/2024 - Present	Investment Adviser Representative TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC
03/2019 - 01/2024	VP of Retirement Plan Services Gordon Asset Management, LLC
10/2014 - 03/2019	ERISA Operations Manager Gordon Asset Management, LLC
07/2014 - 10/2014	Intern Gordon Asset Management, LLC

### **Item 3: Disciplinary Information**

There are no legal or disciplinary events that are material to a client's or prospective client's evaluation of this advisory business.

### **Item 4: Other Business Activities**

John Thomas Stilley is owner of Stilley Financial L.L.C. This entity is a holding company and does not perform any business functions. The entity owns the RIA, TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC.

### **Item 5: Additional Compensation**

John Thomas Stilley does not receive any economic benefit from any person, company, or organization, other than TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC in exchange for providing clients advisory services through TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC.

### **Item 6: Supervision**

As the Chief Compliance Officer of TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC, John Thomas Stilley supervises all activities of the firm. John Thomas Stilley's contact information is on the cover page of this disclosure document. John Thomas Stilley adheres to applicable regulatory requirements, together with all policies and procedures outlined in the firm's code of ethics and compliance manual.

## Item 7: Requirements For State Registered Advisers

*This disclosure is required by state securities authorities and is provided for your use in evaluating this investment advisor representative's suitability.*

- A. John Thomas Stilley has NOT been involved in any of the events listed below.
1. An award or otherwise being found liable in an arbitration claim alleging damages in excess of \$2,500, involving any of the following:
    - a) an investment or an investment-related business or activity;
    - b) fraud, false statement(s), or omissions;
    - c) theft, embezzlement, or other wrongful taking of property;
    - d) bribery, forgery, counterfeiting, or extortion; or
    - e) dishonest, unfair, or unethical practices.
  2. An award or otherwise being found liable in a civil, self-regulatory organization, or administrative proceeding involving any of the following:
    - a) an investment or an investment-related business or activity;
    - b) fraud, false statement(s), or omissions;
    - c) theft, embezzlement, or other wrongful taking of property;
    - d) bribery, forgery, counterfeiting, or extortion; or
    - e) dishonest, unfair, or unethical practices.
- B. John Thomas Stilley has NOT been the subject of a bankruptcy.

*This brochure supplement provides information about Joshua Vincent Stilley that supplements the TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC brochure. You should have received a copy of that brochure. Please contact Joshua Vincent Stilley if you did not receive TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC's brochure or if you have any questions about the contents of this supplement.*

*Additional information about Joshua Vincent Stilley is also available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov).*

## **TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC**

Form ADV Part 2B – Individual Disclosure Brochure

*for*

### **Joshua Vincent Stilley**

Personal CRD Number: 6988063

Investment Adviser Representative

TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC  
101 Glen Lennox Drive Unit 300  
Chapel Hill, NC 27517  
(919) 726-9244  
[josh@truststonewealth.com](mailto:josh@truststonewealth.com)

UPDATED: 04/09/2024

## Item 2: Educational Background and Business Experience

**Name:** Joshua Vincent Stilley      **Born:** 1995

### **Educational Background and Professional Designations:**

#### **Education:**

Bachelor of Science Finance, Coastal Carolina University - 2017

#### **Designations:**

##### **CFP® - Certified Financial Planner**

The CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™, CFP® and federally registered CFP (with flame design) marks (collectively, the “CFP® marks”) are professional certification marks granted in the United States by Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards, Inc. (“CFP Board”).

The CFP® certification is a voluntary certification; no federal or state law or regulation requires financial planners to hold CFP® certification. It is recognized in the United States and a number of other countries for its (1) high standard of professional education; (2) stringent code of conduct and standards of practice; and (3) ethical requirements that govern professional engagements with clients.

To attain the right to use the CFP® marks, an individual must satisfactorily fulfill the following requirements:

- Education – Complete an advanced college-level course of study addressing the financial planning subject areas that CFP Board’s studies have determined as necessary for the competent and professional delivery of financial planning services, and attain a Bachelor’s Degree from a regionally accredited United States college or university (or its equivalent from a foreign university). CFP Board’s financial planning subject areas include insurance planning and risk management, employee benefits planning, investment planning, income tax planning, retirement planning, and estate planning;
- Examination – Pass the comprehensive CFP® Certification Examination. The examination includes case studies and client scenarios designed to test one’s ability to correctly diagnose financial planning issues and apply one’s knowledge of financial planning to real world circumstances;
- Experience – Complete at least three years of full-time financial planning-related experience (or the equivalent, measured as 2,000 hours per year); and
- Ethics – Agree to be bound by CFP Board’s *Standards of Professional Conduct*, a set of documents outlining the ethical and practice standards for CFP® professionals.

Individuals who become certified must complete the following ongoing education and ethics requirements in order to maintain the right to continue to use the CFP® marks:

- i. Continuing Education – Complete 30 hours of continuing education hours every two years, including two hours on the *Code of Ethics* and other parts of the *Standards of Professional Conduct*, to maintain competence and keep up with developments in the financial planning field; and
- ii. Ethics – Renew an agreement to be bound by the *Standards of Professional Conduct*. The Standards prominently require that CFP® professionals provide financial planning services at a fiduciary standard of care. This means CFP® professionals must provide financial planning services in the best interests of their clients.

CFP® professionals who fail to comply with the above standards and requirements may be subject to CFP Board’s enforcement process, which could result in suspension or permanent revocation of their CFP® certification.

### **Business Background:**

03/2024 - Present	Investment Adviser Representative TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC
07/2018 - 01/2024	VP of Wealth Management Services Gordon Asset Management, LLC

### **Item 3: Disciplinary Information**

There are no legal or disciplinary events that are material to a client’s or prospective client’s evaluation of this advisory business.

### **Item 4: Other Business Activities**

Joshua Vincent Stilley is a licensed insurance agent. From time to time, he will offer clients advice or products from those activities. Clients should be aware that these services pay a commission and involve a conflict of interest, as commissionable products conflict with the fiduciary duties of a registered investment adviser. TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC always acts in the best interest of the client, including the sale of commissionable products to advisory clients. Clients always have the right to decide whether or not to utilize the services of any representative of TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC in such individuals outside capacities.

Joshua Stilley is owner of JVS Financial L.L.C. This entity is a holding company and does not perform any business functions. The entity owns the RIA, TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC.

### **Item 5: Additional Compensation**

Joshua Vincent Stilley does not receive any economic benefit from any person, company, or organization, other than TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC in exchange for providing clients advisory services through TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC. However, Joshua Vincent Stilley may also receive commissions from the sales of insurance products generated as an insurance agent.

### **Item 6: Supervision**

As a representative of TrustStone Wealth Partners, LLC, Joshua Vincent Stilley is supervised by John Thomas Stilley, the firm's Chief Compliance Officer. John Thomas Stilley is responsible for ensuring that Joshua Vincent Stilley adheres to all required regulations regarding the activities of an Investment Adviser Representative, as well as all policies and procedures outlined in the firm's Code of Ethics and compliance manual. The phone number for John Stilley is (980) 254-7804.

## Item 7: Requirements For State Registered Advisers

*This disclosure is required by state securities authorities and is provided for your use in evaluating this investment advisor representative's suitability.*

A. Joshua Vincent Stilley has NOT been involved in any of the events listed below.

1. An award or otherwise being found liable in an arbitration claim alleging damages in excess of \$2,500, involving any of the following:
  - a) an investment or an investment-related business or activity;
  - b) fraud, false statement(s), or omissions;
  - c) theft, embezzlement, or other wrongful taking of property;
  - d) bribery, forgery, counterfeiting, or extortion; or
  - e) dishonest, unfair, or unethical practices.
  
2. An award or otherwise being found liable in a civil, self-regulatory organization, or administrative proceeding involving any of the following:
  - a) an investment or an investment-related business or activity;
  - b) fraud, false statement(s), or omissions;
  - c) theft, embezzlement, or other wrongful taking of property;
  - d) bribery, forgery, counterfeiting, or extortion; or
  - e) dishonest, unfair, or unethical practices.

B. Joshua Vincent Stilley has NOT been the subject of a bankruptcy.