

Finding Good Financial Help

Can a New Broker Fix Your Portfolio? Need a Good Accountant or Estate Planner? Here's Where to Get Money Help. By **DEBORAH KNUCKEY**

MEW MONEY OR OLD MONEY? Comfortable or stretched to the limit? Looking for help?

The collapse of many local high-tech companies—and general weakness in the financial markets—have trimmed zeros off the end of many families' net worth. But the market-research firm Claritas estimates that almost 62,000 area households still have income-producing assets worth \$1 million or more. Widen the net to include the more than 500,000 households that have an income of \$100,000 plus and you're talking serious money. And with serious money comes serious decisions.

Whether your net worth is in the millions or still in the making, you might want help in four areas: financial planning, investment management, estate planning, and tax preparation. Our list of Washington's 156 top financial professionals can help you find the help you need.

Does expert advice bring peace of mind? Perhaps yes when it comes to managing taxes and planning your estate. But even the best advice is no guarantee when it comes to investments. Still, in uncertain times, experts can point you down rational financial paths.

BY ANY OTHER NAME ...

THE CONVERSATION IS GETTING CIRCULAR. "SO IS HE A FINANCIAL planner or investment adviser or estate planner?" I ask the contact I have to go through to set up an interview

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with one of the area's top money men.

"Well . . ." Finally he resorts to letters. "He's a CIMC and CFM." That helps only a little.

The conversation highlights the confusing mix of people in the industry. While there are some purists—estate attorneys the prime example—the boundaries blur for most financial experts. For example, many financial planners also manage investments or sell insurance, and many people selling insurance or investments couch their offerings in a less-than-objective financial plan. Many professionals advise about estate planning, though only an attorney can draw up documents.

How do you sort through it all? Charles A. Jaffe, author of *The Right Way to Hire Financial Help*, recommends starting with a specialist whose services you most need

rather than going with a generalist who offers a wide range of services.

"It's the difference between having a utility infielder versus someone you would put up as a starter," Jaffe says. "It is better to get the best in each field and create a strong team."

If you need a general road map, hire a financial planner. If you need a will, hire an estate planner. And so on.

Often, working with one professional will lead you to needing others: It is only when your financial planner slaps you on the wrist for not having an estate plan that you realize you have more holes in your financial life than you should.

Though some experts you hire may refer you to other professionals, their recommendations are just a starting point; you should research each person separately. If you ever feel pressured into, say, buying insurance through your financial planner or using an investment adviser who works with your accountant, trust your gut and reconsider that planner or accountant.

As for whether you actually need professionals: "You can do it yourself, but use professionals when you don't know enough or don't have time to do it yourself," Jaffe says. Sure, do-it-yourselfers can go online to buy an index fund in two minutes flat, but try unraveling the complexities of estate planning. A mistake can cost you your financial security or peace of mind.

The challenge is knowing when you don't know enough. Virginia McArthur, former president of the DC Estate Planning Council, says that in the case of estate planning, there are too many nuances that need to be considered.

One trap many parents fall into is what she calls the "red-Porsche consequence"—naming their spouse and then minor children as beneficiaries. Trouble arises if both parents die and the children receive their money at the age of 18, an age when a red Porsche sounds more fun than an education.

Knowing what you need is the first step. The next challenge is to find a professional.

"Too many people will spend more time choosing a microwave oven than a financial professional," Jaffe says. He suggests choosing financial experts almost as carefully as you would choose a spouse—and aiming to have a relationship that lasts a lifetime.

While the list that starts on page 157 provides a starting place, ask for referrals from other professionals, friends, and colleagues. When it comes to referrals, keep in mind that most people don't like to admit to mistakes about money.

Interview a few candidates to ensure that their skills, style, and experience match your needs. Be prepared to ask questions about

their training, request copies of disclosure documents that show if they have been disciplined by the industry, and ask all those awkward questions about how they are compensated. And if their promises sound too good to be true—they'll get you every tax deduction known to man or guarantee returns in the stock market—they probably are.

FINANCIAL PLANNERS:

The Big Picture

I HAD SPENT HUNDREDS OF DOLLARS FOR this? Holding a smartly printed report full of graphs that would have impressed a novice, I knew that I had been churned through a simple software program by someone who was about to suggest that I put all of my money under her employer's management.

I had fallen into the trap of mistaking a salesperson for a financial planner. Yes, she had credentials following her name and

One trap parents fall into, says an estate planner: the red-Porsche problem. Trouble arises if both parents die and the kids receive money at age 18.

worked for a high-profile local firm, but all of our previous discussions about my lifestyle goals, the age I wanted to retire at, and the amount I expected to save each year had been ignored. After several more discussions, the firm agreed to waive its fee. I walked away none the poorer but no wiser about my retirement plans.

A good financial planner is a great starting point if you have never looked at your overall picture. He or she should map out where you are, where you're going, and what tools you need to get there. He or she should also consider a few of the worst-case scenarios.

Anyone can call himself a financial planner, warns Michael Herndon of the Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards: "The government doesn't regulate financial planners per se." Planners who also give investment advice or sell securities or insurance will be regulated by those industries, he says.

Start your search by finding someone with credentials that are worth the paper they are written on. While the certified financial planner (CFP) is the best-known, at least two other credentials are well worth considering: chartered financial analysts (CFA), who have an investment back-

ground, and certified public accountants who have the personal financial specialist (PFS) designation. If your financial planner is also going to be recommending or managing investments, also check his or her qualifications as an investment adviser.

If a planner says he or she is a certified financial planner, you can check whether those credentials are current and whether he or she has been disciplined by calling 888-CFP-MARK (888-237-6275) or checking www.cfp.net.

Financial planners come in two flavors: fee-only advisers who are compensated on an hourly basis and those who are compensated by a combination of commissions for products they sell and insurance policies they write, management fees for funds they invest on your behalf, and perhaps advisory fees. Though all planners are supposed to follow ethical guidelines and only sell products that you need, you ought to understand how your planner gets compensated. My preference is to use a fee-only planner, eliminating the risk of conflicts of interest. Their services start at around \$100 an hour.

If you choose a financial planner to also manage your money, know that you will get not only someone who is likely to pick your investments from a relatively limited universe of mutual funds his or her firm offers but also someone for whom watching the markets is only a part of the job. Fine if you want to buy and hold a diversified portfolio of funds—but not if you are looking to find the next wunderstock.

INVESTMENT ADVISERS:

Trickiest of All to Pick

I'M PREPARING FOR A PHONE CALL THAT has knotted my stomach for weeks. I'm breaking up with my broker.

"It's not you, it's me," I say.

Our relationship has been a disaster. Market timing had something to do with it: The Nasdaq plunged in the months after I handed over my money. But while I excuse myself for being frozen in the headlights, he also seemed stunned by market events, not taking losses until many stocks were 20 percent of their former selves. Miscommunication about stop losses and my eroded trust in his ability to pick winners have been eating away at me. Despite this, I really like the guy and have put off the firing.

Sometimes hindsight is so perfect, it's painful. It was easy to think we could manage our own money when the market offered consistent double-digit returns and the Internet presented bounties of research. But too many of us learned: Never mistake a bull market for intelligence. Sobering times have many of us doubting our ability to make even simple financial decisions. No

longer aiming to get rich quick, most of us would be satisfied merely to stop the slide.

Of all the experts you can hire, an investment adviser is the hardest to choose—and the most critical to choose well. A bad choice can have a very big impact on your financial future. Countless studies cast doubt on any adviser's ability to beat the market on a consistent basis. The guy with the golden record offers no guarantee of great returns to come and may very well do worse in the future. Same for mutual funds.

The stock picker with the golden record offers no guarantee of great returns to come and may very well do worse in the future.

So why not just buy a *Wall Street Journal* and a handful of darts? Because the one thing investment advisers should bring is a little distance from your decisions. While the flaws of human psychology may cause you to hold a losing investment long after it goes bad, an investment adviser should bring third-party rationality to the table.

It comes at a cost. The percent or two a year you may pay in management fees or commissions can erode your long-term earnings. Still, many of us prefer to lose the percent or two than to lose sleep over our own imperfect decision-making.

INVESTMENT ADVICE GOES BY MANY names: Brokers, investment advisers, stock pickers, money managers, and private wealth advisers, along with some financial planners, are all people who can advise you in how to invest. While some use managed accounts—an institutional version of a mutual fund—others invest directly in stocks and bonds. They are all focused on trying to squeeze a decent return out of an unknowable market.

Most investment advisers have a minimum portfolio that they are willing to manage, and it can be tough to find an adviser willing to take on a portfolio under \$100,000. The best-known often have much higher minimums: Jaffe says that these advisers aren't necessarily better at picking stocks; they simply are able to value their time at a higher price, due to good word of mouth and professional service. Their happy clients may think they have found a great stock picker, but it may take

20 years to find out if they have handed their money to the next Warren Buffett or the next Kenneth Lay.

If your investable assets haven't hit six figures, your best bet may be to educate yourself about stocks or mutual funds, then trade through an online broker offering good research tools. You can also hire an adviser by the hour to check out your portfolio every 6 or 12 months. Online brokers also offer portfolio-analysis tools. For example, Charles Schwab's free Web-based portfolio checkup allows users to compare their portfolio against ideal asset allocations and determine how to balance it.

Choosing the right investment adviser is as much about checking that she knows her stuff as about designing a relationship that works. You have to trust that your investment adviser has your best interests at heart. Marc Beauchamp of the North American Securities Administrators Association believes an investment relationship needs to be personal.

"Do they understand your goals, your risk tolerance, your personality?" Beauchamp says.

There is a range of qualifications. Some qualify the adviser to recommend investments, while others allow him to conduct transactions. Some cover a narrow range of investments such as mutual funds, while others cover much of the investment universe.

Some of the most respected designations include chartered financial consultant (ChFC), chartered financial analyst (CFA), and certified investment management analyst (CIMA). A registered representative who has passed the Series 6 and Series 7 National Association of Securities Dealers exams is qualified to advise as well as transact most of the investment products that a typical investor will use.

Often advisers work with a team and may rely on research conducted by others and have others perform the transactions. You need to understand exactly whose advice you are buying and how independent it is—you do not want to find out that a dud fund that you bought on an adviser's recommendation happened to win him a trip to Hawaii in a sales competition. It's fair to ask your adviser what factors influence his or her advice.

There are shady brokers out there. Invest a few minutes into checking a potential ad-

Eat and Become Rich

Is an Evening Seminar a Good Investment?

THERE AREN'T MANY FANCY CARS IN THE PARKING LOT OF THE Far East Chinese restaurant in Rockville when I pull up to an event run by insurance adviser Donald Garner of the MONY Group featuring the estate-planning firm Binstock, Torchinsky and Associates.

There seems to be more cash than flash among the millionaire-next-door types who responded to Garner's direct-mail campaign to rich Zip codes in Bethesda, Chevy Chase, and Potomac.

While most of the money could be described as modest wealth—a million or two—these events occasionally turn up a gold needle in the haystack. Shelton Binstock recently gained a client with tens of millions who accepted an invitation for a night of estate planning and egg foo yong.

THE MARKETERS IN THE FINANCIAL INDUSTRY ALL TARGET THE FEW WITH money. How much money and how they target it varies.

At the low end, infomercials tempt the almost liquid to plunge into scam-infested pools. At the high end, word of mouth plays a big role, with the occasional event that well-heeled clients can invite their well-heeled friends to. The middle of the market is filled with educational seminars: investing 101, estate-planning basics, tax-law changes. The more complex the topic, Binstock says, the more it attracts higher-end potential clients.

Not all marketing events are information-filled. After agreeing to not quote any clients by name and not to stray from the side of my keeper for the evening, I swing an invitation to a private viewing of the Jackie O exhibition at the Corcoran Gallery with Merrill Lynch's private wealth-management group.

In these conditions, I hear the PR person's fear that I will turn up in a cheap suit and make the company's ultra-affluent clients—\$10 million net worth and up—feel exposed or uncomfortable.

The event is refined: a trio, full bar, canapés. The wealthy and their friends receive attention from the advisers. And there is nothing better for potential clients than to meet satisfied clients.

Greg Popera, a wealth adviser at Merrill Lynch, says, "Whenever we do an event, we try to mix both current clients and prospective clients."

After sipping an aperitif, I spend some time communing with the dresses that saw history. No crowds, free food. It's good to be rich.



BACK IN ROCKVILLE, BINSTOCK, GARNER, AND THEIR COLLEAGUES WRAP up a folksy night of estate-planning strategies by drawing door prizes: a book on estate planning and a car emergency kit.

A mother-son team seated next to me has attended a few similar events. They would never seek out seminars, but a nicely printed invitation and an engaging topic can tempt them out for a night. At most events they digest a little new information. This time they seem satisfied. "I learned a lot. A lot," the mother muses.

The hosts smile. This could be the start of a beautiful relationship.

—DEBORAH KNUCKEY

viser's regulatory report—his Form ADV (short for adviser)—that discloses information about how he does business as well as whether he has ever been disciplined. While you can look him up on the Web (www.nasdr.com/investors.asp), Jaffe recommends asking for a copy of Form ADV parts one and two directly. The response can give you a clue as to how it will be to work with the adviser.

"It's a warning signal if they're reluctant to give you Form ADV part one," Jaffe says, referring to the part of the form that shows any disciplinary actions. "If you don't feel comfortable from the beginning, how will you get comfortable when they make decisions?"

Understand whether the adviser you choose is compensated on a per-transaction basis or by a percentage—usually 1 to 2 percent—of your assets. It's tough for someone who's paid by the transaction to practice buy-and-hold sensibility, so if you are paying by the transaction, agree on what will trigger a buy or sell transaction. Think twice before allowing your broker to make trades at will on your behalf: Allow such discretionary trading only after you have worked with a broker long enough to be confident and comfortable.

Designing a relationship requires that you know your own style as much as your potential investment manager's. How often do you want to be contacted? How do you handle market fluctuations? I discovered I was kidding myself about how well I tolerate risk: Despite being twentysomething years from retirement, a 40-percent plunge in my portfolio value left me sleepless.

At the end of the day, even some brokers you've met through referrals, looked in the eye, checked out with regulatory agencies, and talked through strategies with can lose a good slice of your money.

As for me, I'm off to a passive manager who doesn't pretend to beat markets but will invest in a balance of index funds with minimal management fees.

TAX ACCOUNTANTS: Once-a-Year Godsend

COME APRIL, I GET STRANGELY EXCITED. As someone who enjoys being organized, tax time is the chance to show off a year's worth of meticulous record-keeping.

My accountant, Allan Roberts of Liptz, Roberts & Marquez in Chevy Chase, humors me, admires my neat files, and settles in for debates about whether to depreciate or expense major repairs to a rental-property roof. His willingness to discuss the thinking behind his recommendations reassures me that I am paying for his experience, not just buying a number-cruncher.

Almost as important, he makes me laugh. Although financial decisions should be rational, chemistry counts.

Form 1040EZ, tax-preparation software, and easy-to-follow annual tax guidebooks allow many households to forgo a tax accountant. For those who face more complexity, prefer that someone else deal with the shoeboxes of receipts, or simply want a professional's opinion, a good accountant is a godsend.

Try to find an accountant whose practice focuses primarily on individual filers. If you are, say, a real-estate investor or small-busi-

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ness owner, find an accountant who serves others in your tax situation. Before hiring an accountant, make sure you understand what costs, aside from the accountant's time, you may be charged for. Good advice does not come cheap. Not only does a top accountant charge several hundred dollars an hour, but reviewing and computer charges can add another significant slice. Still, a typical family is likely to spend under \$1,000 to have its taxes done by a CPA at a local firm, possibly much less if using a one-person operation with a lower hourly rate.

Certified public accountants (CPAs) are not the only game in town. IRS-tested enrolled agents (EAs) are tax specialists who, like CPAs, have the ability to represent you in front of the IRS if you are audited. Accredited tax preparers (ATPs) and the more highly qualified accredited tax advisers (ATAs) also offer expertise, usually at a lower hourly rate.

Referrals are a good way to begin your search. The national associations for EAs (www.naea.org) and ATPs and ATAs (www.acatcredentials.org) offer member referrals, as do some state CPA organizations (www.aicpa.org/states/info/index.htm), though the latter is not a thorough database.

ESTATE PLANNERS: Where There's a Will

DO I WANT TO BE BURIED IN A LAVISH rosewood box or be cremated? I'd prefer immortality.

I don't plan to exit for some time, but I

visit an estate planner. Along with all the fun plotting who will benefit from my demise, there are decisions such as whether I wish to be kept alive by machines that go ping and whether to donate my organs.

An estate plan is more than a will, says Robert Gazzola, former cochair of the Estates, Trust and Probate Law section of the DC Bar.

"Estate planning is, for people of modest means, a will, power of attorney, and a living will. When you get up in the value of the estate, the sophistication of the plan increases, perhaps including trusts, family limited partnerships, charitable trusts," Gazzola says. "Estate planning becomes, in part, wealth management."

Having an estate plan is important even if you have little in the way of assets, because two of what Gazzola says are the most critical elements—the power of attorney and the living will—deal with the difficult issues of who can make decisions for you when you are not able to and how much medical intervention you want.

Unlike other money mavens you may turn to, you will interact with your estate planner only every few years once your plan is set up, so competence is more important than chemistry. You might get recommendations from friends and professionals, then screen to find a lawyer whose practice focuses on estates, trusts, and probate and who is active in the regional estate-planning council. Another good resource, according to Gazzola, is www.lawyers.com, Martindale-Hubbell's free, easily searched site with detailed listings of more than 440,000 lawyers and law firms.

Estate planner Edward L. Weidenfeld argues that only specialists can stay on top of the issues. "The industry is changing so rapidly," he says. "It requires hours every month just to stay current." He estimates he spends well over ten hours a month in continuing education and reviewing industry periodicals and specialist e-mail discussion groups, "and I always feel like there is more I could be doing."

A financial planner, investment adviser, tax accountant, and estate planner are the four experts you are most likely to need. You may need them all or simply hire one or two to fill in gaps in your knowledge or handle tasks you don't enjoy.

At times, you may need to call on other experts, such as insurance specialists. As your money grows, the experts you hire will need to act more like a team. If your net worth is more than \$5 million, it's more likely that a private banker or wealth management expert will coordinate a team for you.

Top of Their Game

156 People You Can Trust With Your Money BY DEBORAH KNUCKEY

GOOD FINANCIAL HELP DOES NOT HAVE TO be hard to find.

While no list can substitute for doing your homework, the advisers named here are well worth a spot on your shortlist.

This list is not exhaustive—there are bound to be good advisers who did not make the list simply because the market is so large. However, all those named here are well-regarded by their peers.

The list was compiled through my own research as well as through a peer-review survey. The questionnaire asked financial professionals to name experts they would send a friend or family member to. Those surveyed included the people named in *The Washingtonian's* previous listing of top financial experts, in 1994, as well as those top-rated by *Worth* magazine.

We've listed, along with an expert's name and contact information, some credentials, though not all. Because there's an alphabet soup of certifications and degrees that a financial expert might list after his or her name, we've included only what I consider key designations: CFP, certified financial planner; CFA, chartered financial analyst; PFS, personal financial specialist; ChFC, chartered financial consultant; CFA, chartered financial analyst; CIMA, certified investment management analyst; CPA, certified public accountant; and JD, attorney.

We've included the fee structure for financial planners and brokers—who charge by the hour, by commission, or both—as well as the minimum portfolio they accept. The information on fees, minimums, and credentials came directly from the advisers.

Many of these advisers have large minimum investment amounts. When you are known as one of the top in the field, you can afford to limit business to the most profitable clients.

FINANCIAL PLANNERS

- **Alexandra Armstrong**, CFP, Armstrong, MacIntyre & Severns, 1155 Connecticut Ave., NW; 202-887-8135; www.amsindc.com. Minimum investment: \$1 million. Both set fees and percentage of assets.
- **Stephen E. Bingham**, CFP, Bingham Financial Advisory, 1610 N. Harrison St., Arlington; 703-536-6863. Fee only.
- **Eleanor K.H. Blayney**, CFP, Sullivan,

Bruyette, Speros & Blayney, 8180 Greensboro Dr., McLean; 703-734-9300; www.sbsbinc.com. Minimum: \$1 million. Fee only.

■ **Bill Brennan**, PFS, CFP, CPA, Capital Management Group, 1730 Rhode Island Ave., NW; 202-296-3306; www.mcquadebrennan.com. Minimum: \$500,000. Fee only.

■ **Chris Brown**, CFP, Commonwealth Advisory Group, 12212 Galesville Dr., Gaithersburg; 301-258-1300. Minimum: \$200,000. Fee only.

■ **Glen J. Buco**, CFP, West Financial Services, 1355 Beverly Rd., McLean; 703-847-2500; www.westfinancial.com. Minimum: \$700,000. Fee based on percentage of assets.

■ **Elissa Buie**, CFP, Financial Planning Group, 510 N. Washington St., Falls Church; 703-538-2116; www.fpginc.com. Minimum annual fee: \$4,500. Fee only.

■ **Paul Coccozza**, CFP, CPA, Coccozza Financial Planning, 3400 N. 21st Ave., Arlington; 703-276-1243. No minimum investment. Fee only.

■ **Ken Diehl**, CFP, CPA, Cornerstone Financial Planning, 24908 Silver Crest Dr., Gaithersburg; 301-253-0600. No minimum investment. Fee only.

■ **Blaine P. Dunn**, CFP, Dunn Financial Advisors, 115 Bedford Dr., Winchester, Va.; 540-665-8006. No minimum investment. Fee only.

■ **James Eichelberger**, CFP, Eichelberger, Griesser, Eddy & Alms, 7300 Grace Dr., Columbia; 410-988-9494; www.swealth.com. Minimum: \$500,000. Fee only.

■ **Marjorie L. Fox**, CFP, JD, Rembert, D'Orazio & Fox, 7647 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church; 703-821-6655; www.rdfadvisors.com. Minimum: \$500,000. Fee only.

■ **Susan Freed**, CFP, Susan Freed & Associates, 2 Wisconsin Cir., Chevy Chase; 301-657-1700. No minimum investment; minimum annual fee: \$2,500. Fee only.

■ **Barry Glassman**, CFP, Cassaday & Company, 8180 Greensboro Dr., McLean; 703-506-8200; www.cassaday.com. Minimum: \$750,000. Both set fees and fees based on percentage of assets.

■ **Thomas C. Grzymala**, CFP, Alexandria Financial Associates, 1800 N. Beauregard St., Alexandria; 703-671-5959; www.afawealth.com. Minimum: \$500,000. Fee only.

■ **Dennis M. Gurtz**, CFP, CPA/PFS, CFA, Dennis M. Gurtz & Associates, 6400 Greensboro Rd., Bethesda; 301-320-0500. No minimum investment. Fee and commissions.



Glen Buco, a big vote getter in our survey.

■ **Patricia P. Houlihan**, CFP, Houlihan Financial Resource Group, 4000 Legato Rd., Fairfax; 703-352-1570. Minimum: \$700,000. Fee based on percentage of assets.

■ **Mark Johannessen**, CFP, Sullivan, Bruyette, Speros & Blayney, 8180 Greensboro Dr., McLean; 703-734-9300; www.sbsbinc.com. Minimum: \$1 million. Fee only.

■ **Jocelyn Kaplan**, CFP, Advisors Financial, 510 N. Washington St., Falls Church; 703-883-0300; www.advisorsfinancial.com. Minimum: \$300,000. Both set rate and fees based on percentage of assets.

■ **Glenn Kautt**, CFP, the Monitor Group, 12450 Fair Lakes Cir., Fairfax; 703-968-3002; www.themonitorgroup.com. Minimum: \$500,000. Fee only.

■ **John MacIntyre**, CFP, Armstrong, MacIntyre & Severns, 1155 Connecticut Ave., NW; 202-887-8135; www.amsindc.com. Minimum: \$1 million. Both set rate and fees based on percentage of assets.

■ **Mary A. Malgoire**, CFP, Family Firm, 8120 Woodmont Ave., Bethesda; 301-656-3999; www.familyfirm.com. Minimum: \$750,000. Fee based on percentage of assets.

■ **L. Edward O'Hara Jr.**, CFP, Capital Asset Management Services, 12510 Prosperity Dr., Silver Spring; 301-680-0840. No minimum. Fee only.

■ **Christopher P. Parr**, CFP, Financial Advantage, 10025 Governor Warfield Pkwy., Columbia; 410-715-9200; www.financialadvantage.com. Minimum annual fee: \$5,000. Fee only.

■ **Newton G. Pendleton III**, CFP, Rembert, D'Orazio & Fox, 7647 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church; 703-821-6655; www.rdfadvisors.com. Minimum: \$500,000. Fee only.

■ **Dolores Royston**, CFP, Royston Financial Services, 5550 Friendship Blvd., Chevy Chase; 301-656-8090. Minimum: \$150,000. Both set rate and fees based on percentage of assets.

■ **Dom Salvemini**, Ernst & Young, 8484 Westpark Dr., McLean; 703-747-1000. www.ey.com. Minimum: \$100 million. Fee only.

■ **Karen Schaeffer**, CFP, Schaeffer Financial, 1 Church St., Rockville; 301-933-5550. No minimum. Fee only.

■ **Annette Simon**, CFP, Mosaic Financial Advisors, 6701 Democracy Blvd.; 301-922-5831; www.mosaicinvest.com. Minimum: \$500,000. Fee only.

■ **Greg Sullivan**, CFP, CPA/PFS, Sullivan, Bruyette, Speros & Blayney, 8180 Greensboro Dr., McLean; 703-734-9300; www.sbsbinc.com. Minimum: \$1 million. Fee only.

■ **Steven Thalheimer**, CFP, Thalheimer Financial Planning, 715 Boundary Ave., Silver



Alexandra Armstrong: a top financial adviser in DC.



Respected adviser Mary Malgoire of Bethesda.