Q1 | 2021

ParsecFinancial

RETIREMENT & THE GOLDEN YEARS

"And in the end, it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years."

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ParsecFinancial

Retirement & The Golden Years

A NOTE FROM THE CEO

Let's craft a retiree health care plan.

At the heart of life's goals is our health. Having good health is central to all the plans we have.

Being intentional about setting health goals includes having a very good understanding of the health care system and the insurance that helps to pay for it. For Americans age 65 and over, Medicare is the primary insurance coverage. When Medicare is combined with Medigap supplemental coverage, a participant has the backbone of their health care strategy in place.

Last fall we hosted a webinar for our clients to learn more about Medicare in terms of how it affects participants as well as caregivers. My keynote kicked off the day and centered on aligning health and wellness and intentionally supporting that goal financially.

Increasing longevity is a blessing that many of us will experience. Making the most of our time is a universal goal across our clients' financial plans. You can embrace a healthy life more intentionally by creating financial goals that support your wellness goals.

For instance, I encourage you to use the Medicare Annual Wellness Visit (AWV). This free benefit to Medicare beneficiaries is an appointment with a primary care provider to create your own personalized prevention plan (PPP). The PPP helps prevent illness based on your current health and risk factors. It is voluntary and includes detection of cognitive impairment. The appointment is available via telehealth.

During my talk, I discussed ways to begin your wellness plan:

1. Walk more.
2. Learn about the benefits of nutrition and then adopt a diet that better supports your goal.
3. Find positive ways to lower stress and calm the mind and body, such as meditation, prayer, yoga and breathing.
4. Do strength training. Consult your physician and then customize a routine.
5. Laugh and play games of any kind: pickleball, tennis, golf. Make sure to add variety.
6. Take a fitness class; having a scheduled activity can help motivate you. If injured, talk with your doctor and get appropriate physical therapy.

In case you missed our virtual Medicare event, I invite you to watch any of the replays at parsecfinancial.com/medicare-guidance.

Be well!

- Rick Manske, CFP®, BFA™

> "You can embrace a healthy life more intentionally by creating financial goals that support your wellness goals."

How Social Security Fits Into Your Retirement Plan

Michael Baughman, CFP® | Senior Financial Advisor

Social Security is a critically important part of your overall financial and retirement plan that will be around for generations to come. The decision to claim or delay benefits should be carefully considered.

Let's start with a brief history lesson:

Social Security is a commonly used term for the federal Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance (OASDI) program. When the law that created the Social Security system we now know was passed in August of 1935 (Social Security Act of 1935), America was struggling to dig out of the Great Depression and was inching its way toward WWII. Germany had just passed the Nuremberg trials stripping Jews of their civil rights. The unemployment rate was 20%, and the average annual earnings for a worker in the U.S. was $474 (just over $9,000 in today's dollars). It wasn't all bad though; 1935 was also the year nylon and swing music were created. Can you imagine a world without the Social Security system, nylon and the music of Benny Goodman?

There are three parts to the Social Security system:

1. Retirement income
2. Disability insurance
3. Survivors' insurance

As a financial advisor who specializes in retirement income planning, I tend to only focus on the retirement income program since that is most relevant to my clients, but Social Security is so much more than a monthly check for our nation's retirees.

Here are a few definitions and explanations that will hopefully help you gain a better understanding of our Social Security system.

Remember that strange acronym, OASDI? Let's break it down for further clarity:

- "OA" stands for Old Age and refers to the retirement income program for seniors, which is what most of us think of when we hear the term Social Security. Sorry to those of you age 62 and up, but remember that when the program was initially created, life expectancy in the U.S. was barely 65. In 1935 age 62 was truly old. To compare, in the first half of 2020 life expectancy was 77.8 years.
- "SDI" stands for Survivors and Disability Insurance, which is the life and disability insurance program administered by the Social Security Administration.

We're all in this together.

Singer Jackie DeShannon said it well in 1969 when she penned, "Think of your fellow man. Lend him a helping hand. Put a little love in your heart."

Social Security is a pay-as-you-go (PAYGO) system, meaning current beneficiaries are receiving a portion of their benefits from those paying into the system right now via payroll taxes. Those receiving benefits today paid for those receiving benefits decades ago. Think of it as one giant, pay-it-forward system.

Current beneficiaries (those receiving benefits today) are dependent on current workers (those paying into the system today). We do not have a choice. In my opinion, sometimes the fewer choices we have, the better off our society is as a whole. Social Security is a perfect example of that. If everyone had a choice whether to participate, the system would be doomed. So, remember, we're all in this together. Our interests are aligned!

It's not as bad as you think.

Next, I want to debunk a myth that's gaining traction. Social Security will not go bankrupt. Or at least it shouldn't. Let me explain.

Social Security has been around since 1935 and has faced some tremendous challenges as our country dealt with depressions, recessions, wars and hyperinflation. Yet Social Security is still here today providing income for more than 64 million Americans. Some small tweaks to the system will keep it solvent for generations to come.

According to the latest Social Security trustees report, even if no changes are made, current trust fund balances and payroll taxes will cover 100% of projected benefits until 2035. After that time, again assuming no changes are made, there will still be enough income from payroll taxes to cover 75% of ongoing benefits. Now, no one wants to take a 25% cut in income when they may likely need it the most and I do not think our elected representatives will allow such a huge negative impact on the largest block of voters in our country.

> "It's rare that I hear a complaint about Social Security, except that the cost-of-living adjustment is too low. Social Security is the bedrock of many retirees' financial plans."

The last time the solvency of our Social Security system was addressed was almost 40 years ago in 1983. A lot has changed over the last 40 years, and some modest adjustments to the system appear to be in line with what most Americans want. Polls show most Americans favor raising payroll taxes or extending the retirement age for current workers to ensure the system is solvent for generations to come. Those who say Social Security won't be around for them are either misinformed or are misrepresenting the facts. And, if we use history as any guide, we have a few more years of procrastination before any real policy changes will be brought to bear. We tend to wait until the storm clouds are within a few miles from shore before we start to leave the beach.

The last time major financial reform happened to the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) system was during a period from 1973 to 1983 when the system was running a cash flow deficit threatening the system's solvency. Then came the Social Security Amendments of 1977 and 1983, which evolved the system to what we have today. More changes are required and will likely happen at the last minute, making the system solvent again for future generations to come.

It's rare that I hear a complaint about Social Security, except that the cost-of-living adjustment is too low. Social Security is the bedrock of many retirees' financial plans. In fact, for many retirees, it represents most of their income in retirement. This statement is frightening when you think that the average benefit payment as of January 2021 was $1,424 per beneficiary.

For many of my clients, Social Security, while important, is not the bedrock of their financial plan. However, when to claim benefits is still a critical decision that all Americans will face as they transition into retirement. For most, it is the most important financial decision they may make in their retirement years. It's a decision you and your spouse (if married) will have to live with for the rest of your lives. Thus, I recommend you put at least as much time into this decision as you do your annual vacation.

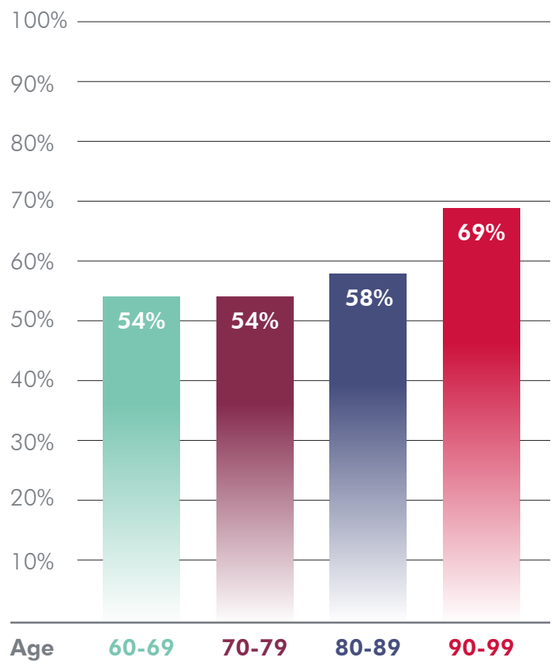
Ladies first!

Since women on average tend to live longer, earn less, take more time out of the workforce to raise children, and thus accumulate less savings and smaller pensions, Social Security is especially important and beneficial for women. 96% of current survivor's benefits are paid out to women. Also, women make up more than half of those receiving retirement benefits.

When I am advising a married couple on the most efficient way to claim Social Security, I remind them that our goal is to maximize the benefits from Social Security over both their lifetimes. This conversation usually, but not always, leads a client to defer Social Security payments as long as possible to max out the surviving spouse's income should something happen to the higher-earning spouse. There are lots of reasons why you should — and should not — delay Social Security payments, and those are beyond the scope of this article, so discuss your specifics with your advisor.

Social Security Is Especially Beneficial for Women*

Percent of female Social Security beneficiaries, by age group

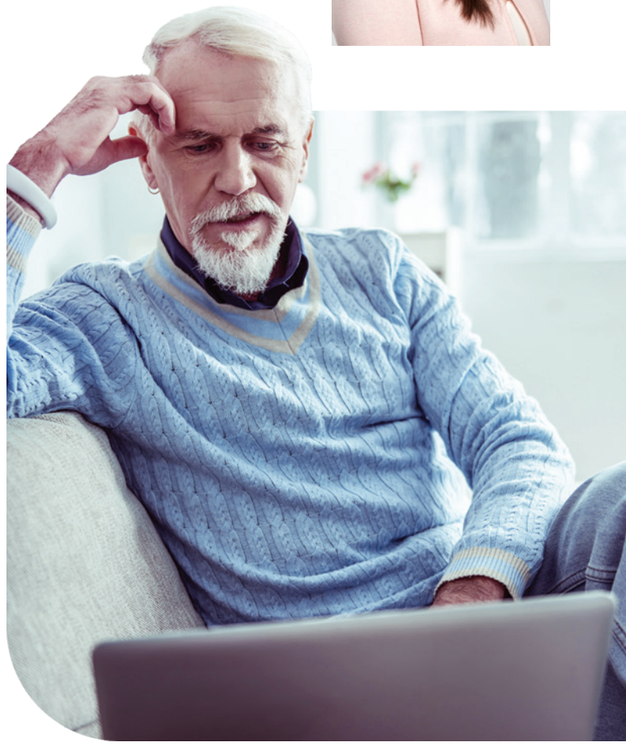


* Source: Social Security Administration, Annual Statistical Supplement 2020. Data are for December 2019.

Applying for Social Security Benefits

Ashley Gragtmans, CFP®, BFA™, CSRIC™ | Senior Financial Advisor

You've worked hard, met with your financial advisor, determined when to take Social Security and are set to retire … Now what?



Many retirees get to this point and are not sure what the next steps are when applying for Social Security. Thankfully, you have three options!

1. **Online:** Prefer to handle things on your own? Today, it's easier than ever to apply for Social Security by applying online. Visit the Social Security Administration (secure.ssa.gov/iClaim/rib) to get the process started. If you don't finish the application, they make it convenient by allowing you to return and finish later.

2. **By phone:** Not savvy with the computer? You can also call Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. at 1-800-772-1213 to speak with a representative and apply for your benefit.

3. **In person:** Prefer to handle things face to face? You can visit your local Social Security office to apply for your benefit. Please visit the Social Security coronavirus webpage (ssa.gov/coronavirus) to see if you are eligible for an in-person appointment. If so, you can find the office closest to you via their office locator (secure.ssa.gov/ICON).

It's important to be prepared when starting the application process for your benefit. Below are some of the items that you may need to be prepared to provide when applying.

- Birth certificate – this needs to be an original certificate or one certified by an issuing agency. A photocopy will not be accepted.
- Proof of citizenship or lawful alien status.
- Copies of W-2 forms and/or self-employment tax return for the previous year.

If you don't have all the appropriate documents, don't let that stop you from applying. The Social Security office will take what you have, allowing you time to collect the other documents. Any original documents that you have provided will be returned to you once you have completed the application process. If you don't know how to get all the documents required, I recommend speaking with a representative at your local office. They can help point you in the right direction.

It's important to note that the Social Security office recommends that you apply for benefits at least three months prior to the date you wish to start receiving your benefit. The earliest you can sign up for your benefit is 61 years and 9 months of age.

If you are nearing retirement and would like to determine the best time to start receiving your benefit, please call your financial advisor to discuss. We are here to help!

When Should You Take Social Security?

Harli Palme, CFA, CFP® | Chief Operating Officer, Chief Compliance Officer

The ages between 62 and 70 are a critical time for determining how and when to take Social Security benefits. There are many options when it comes to this program, and which option is best for you will depend on your specific situation.

The full retirement age (FRA) for beginning Social Security benefits is age 66 for those born after 1943; it is age 67 for those born after 1959. You can take reduced benefits starting at age 62. If you live to your average life expectancy, the total dollar amount you will receive if you take reduced benefits early is equal to the total amount you will receive if you wait for higher benefits at your FRA. A variety of factors will help you decide which course is better for you, including what your income needs are and what you believe your actual life expectancy is compared to the average assumed by the Social Security Administration. You can even delay benefits beyond your FRA, up to age 70. Each year that you defer benefits past your FRA, your benefit will increase about 8% per year.

Spouses are also eligible for benefits based on their partner's record, whether or not they earned Social Security themselves. If you do not have enough credits to earn Social Security on your own, you are entitled to one-half of your spouse's benefit if you've been married more than one year. Even if you did earn enough to qualify for Social Security on your own, you are still entitled to half of your spouse's benefit, if half of their benefit is larger than your whole benefit. You can even get a benefit on the record of your deceased spouse or ex-spouse if you were married more than ten years and have not remarried.

If you earn money while taking Social Security, your benefits may be reduced. The amount of the reduction depends on your income. The chart below gives the 2021 earnings threshold for Social Security reductions. The reduction is dramatic if you take the benefit before your FRA while still working.

AGE	EARNINGS THRESHOLD	REDUCTION OF BENEFITS
Under FRA	$18,960	Your benefits will be reduced by $1 for every $2 you earn above the earnings threshold.
In the year you reach FRA	$50,520	Your benefits will be reduced by $1 for each $3 you earn above the earnings threshold.
After you reach FRA	$0	There is no benefit reduction due to earnings.

In addition to having your benefits reduced if you have earned income, your Social Security benefits can also be taxed. Below is a table that gives 2021 earnings threshold for taxing Social Security benefits.

TAXPAYER STATUS	ANNUAL INCOME (INCLUDING ½ OF BENEFITS)	AMOUNT OF BENEFITS THAT ARE SUBJECT TO INCOME TAX
Married filing jointly	Combined income is greater than $32,000	50% of benefits are taxable
Married filing jointly	Combined income is greater than $44,000	85% of benefits are taxable
Single filers	Income is greater than $25,000	50% of benefits are taxable
Single filers	Income is greater than $34,000	85% of benefits are taxable

Getting started

If you have questions, the Social Security Administration is a good place to start. You can contact them at www.ssa.gov or 800-772-1213. Your financial advisor can also help you determine what the best course of action is for your specific set of circumstances.

A Deeper Look at Social Security Survivor's Benefits

Tracy H. Allen, CFP®
Financial Advisor

If you are widowed and you have not remarried, you are able to begin receiving survivor's benefits starting at age 60. Your survivor's benefit is 100% of the deceased spouse's earned benefit based on the amount he or she paid into the system. It is important to note that survivor's benefits are not eligible for delayed retirement credits and, as is the case with worker benefits, the amount is permanently reduced if taken before reaching FRA. Also, unfortunately if your spouse earned less than you, you will not receive anything.

One option is to receive your survivor's benefit, thus letting your own benefit grow and earn delayed retirement credits until age 70, and then switching to the higher benefit. But, if your survivor's benefit will be larger, you can instead collect your earned worker's benefit at 62 and switch to your survivor's benefit once you reach full retirement age.

If you were divorced from your deceased ex and you were married for at least 10 years, you are entitled to the same benefits as a married spouse. Again, you cannot have remarried before age 60 and if you claim benefits prior to reaching FRA, those benefits will be permanently reduced.

Determining when to start Social Security Survivor's benefits can be a daunting task. Your financial advisor has several tools available to help you with this crucial decision.

To Everything There Is a Season — Is Downsizing on Your Horizon?

Larry B. Harris, CPA, CFP®, PFS | Director of Tax Services

"To everything (turn, turn, turn)
There is a season (turn, turn, turn)
And a time to every purpose, under heaven
A time to build up, a time to break down
A time to dance, a time to mourn
A time to cast away stones, a time to gather stones together"

"Turn! Turn! Turn!" written by Peter Seeger and made famous by The Byrds was released in 1965. If listening to this song on the AM station was part of your high school memories, then you are probably thinking about downsizing or soon will be. Downsizing is a time to break things down and a time to cast things away. Hopefully there will be some laughter and dancing and not too much to mourn, but probably some tears are inevitable.

My professional life has provided the great privilege of working with clients throughout various seasons of life, and downsizing is inevitable for most. Like every chore, some enjoy the process, while for others it is more difficult. The intimidating task of parting with things that connect to those you love and have accumulated in your home over the decades is difficult.

It seems wise to understand there are many going through these sometimes-difficult transitions and that seeking help and assistance makes good sense for many of us.

Downsizing Real Estate

When changing homes, we want to look at the current state of different borrowing needs. For instance, should you borrow short term using a pledged asset line of credit, take advantage of low interest rates and lock into a mortgage, liquidate some of your portfolio, or do some combination of thereof? We want to make sure this decision is made for each client in the most tax-efficient way.

> "Clients should be mindful that gift tax returns are required for gifts to any one individual that exceed the annual exclusion that is **$15,000** in 2021."

Many clients who have been in the same home for decades should be mindful of the tax rules for reporting the sale of a principal residence. First, note that the sale must be reported on your tax return. This means that your tax preparer will need the closing statement when preparing your income tax return in the year of the sale. Secondly, you will need to provide the cost basis of your home to your tax preparer. Your cost basis is what you originally paid for the home plus significant additions over the years. Coming up with this information can be a daunting task for clients who have been in their home for many years. Your tax professional can assist you and note that the American Institute of Certified Public Accountant's Statements on Standards for Tax Services allow CPAs to use estimates when not prohibited by any statutes or rules. Accordingly, your CPA can rely on a reasonable estimate of cost basis if you do not have exact records.

The tax rules provide for an exclusion of the gain resulting from the sale of a taxpayer's principal residence of $500,000 for those filing joint returns and $250,000 for those filing as single taxpayers. The exclusion is available to taxpayers who have owned and used the residence as their principal residence for at least two years during the five-year period ending on the date of the sale. There are other exceptions, but these basic rules apply to most clients.

If you are in the unfortunate position of having to sell your home at a loss, the tax rules are not helpful. You are not able to deduct the loss on the sale of personal-use property.

Downsizing Objects via Donation

When donating objects of substantial value, there are three things to keep in mind:

- When making your donation of cash or goods, be sure to get a receipt. The IRS requires a receipt for donations greater than $250. For donations under $250, you need to have supported documentation, such as a bank record or receipt documenting the contribution.
- For donated property with a value of more than $5,000, you're generally required to obtain a qualified appraisal and to attach an appraisal summary to the tax return. However, a qualified appraisal isn't required for publicly traded securities for which market quotations are readily available. For non-publicly traded securities, a written appraisal is required only when the deduction claimed exceeds $10,000.
- For gifts of art valued at $20,000 or more, you must attach a complete copy of the signed appraisal (rather than an appraisal summary) to your return.

Downsizing Objects via Estate Planning

Many clients might be in a position such that downsizing must be done with an eye on estate and gift tax implications. You might have valuable art objects, antique furniture or jewelry that you wish to pass along to your children as you downsize. At a minimum, making a gift can create the need to file a gift tax return and, depending on the situation, could very well impact your estate plan. I also encourage you to discuss your gifting intentions with your loved ones to ensure they want it. If not, it likely does not make sense to take on the tax liability.

Clients should be mindful that gift tax returns are required for gifts to any one individual that exceed the annual exclusion ($15,000 in 2021). If the property gifted is of significant value, it is prudent to obtain appraisals from qualified professionals to substantiate the amount of the gift, which is the fair market value on the date of the gift. The appraisal should be attached to the gift tax return, which is a calendar year return due on April 15 just like your individual income tax return. Although the amount of the gift is the fair market value on the date gifted, the cost basis of the gift in the hands of the recipient is the carry-over basis from the donor.

It is the donor who is responsible for filing gift tax returns, and if there is tax that must be paid it is the donor who is responsible. Finally, it is important to note that there is a generation-skipping tax that should be considered if making gifts to grandchildren.

The estate and gift tax rules comprise a transfer tax. Many observers think it likely there will be significant changes in the gift and estate tax rules on the near horizon due to the recent change in leadership in Congress and the White House. Currently a taxpayer can transfer over $11 million by lifetime cumulative gifts or through their estate without having to pay gift or estate tax even though gift tax returns are required each year if the reporting requirements are met.

The comments offered are a sufficient reminder that gift and estate taxes and associated non-tax implications can quickly become complicated. Accordingly, your attorney and Parsec advisor and team should be consulted when your downsizing is done by way of gifting personal property to children or to others.

Retirement Income: A Closer Look

Bill Hansen, CFA | President, Chief Investment Officer

Earned income stops for everyone at some point, and people then need to navigate the transition from saving for retirement to spending from their investment portfolio.

From a financial planning standpoint, we generally encourage clients to be debt-free in retirement so that when their earned income stops, so do their debt payments. Exceptions may be made for situations with reasonable levels of debt at extremely low interest rates or for loans with short remaining terms.

In retirement, clients generally have a mix of stocks, bonds and cash in their investment portfolios. It is important to select an asset allocation that suits your individual situation and risk tolerance and to stick with that mix of assets through various market conditions. We counsel our clients to avoid market timing, or shifting large amounts of assets in and out of the stock market based on the mood of the day.

Bonds, or fixed income, provide a limited amount of current income and serve as a source of retirement spending when stock prices are lower, historically about three out of every 10 years. However, you never know when these negative years will come. As of the end of 2020, only two of the past 18 years were negative for large company stocks. But, there were three negative years in a row before that (2000-2002). Still, that interest income on a bond portfolio will increase gradually along with the overall level of interest rates. This occurs as individual bonds (or bonds within a bond mutual fund) mature and the proceeds are reinvested at higher rates. But the increase in interest rates usually comes in tandem with inflation, or an overall increase in prices. By its very nature, we do not expect capital appreciation in a bond portfolio over long time periods, though it has happened historically in periods of falling interest rates.

Since there is typically some level of inflation in the economy, retirees need to have some investments that provide rising income over time in order to preserve their purchasing power and offset the effects of inflation over time. For that, we focus on stocks, particularly those that pay dividends.

Modern financial theory holds that the value of any investment is the sum of the present value of its future cash flows. This logic applies whether the investment is a publicly-traded stock, a piece of commercial real estate or a hot dog stand. With a dividend-paying stock, you are getting a return on your initial investment each quarter rather than relying purely on future earnings growth to make a profit. While short-term volatility can be considerable, over longer time periods stock prices historically follow rising earnings and dividends.

The current dividend yield on the S&P 500 index is about 1.5%. We believe that dividends help put a floor under the value of an individual stock because you are receiving an ongoing stream of cash flow from the time that you make your investment.

Total return is comprised of two components: income and price appreciation. Since 1926, the income component of total return has represented about 38% of the overall return of the stock market and has always been positive (by definition, the income component can't be negative). However, the variability of the income return has been much lower than that of the appreciation component.

Over that same period, the annual standard deviation or volatility of the income component was only about 1.6% versus over 19% for the price or capital appreciation component.

By focusing on those companies that we believe are likely to have consistent dividend growth over time, particularly for those of our clients who are retired and spending from their portfolios, we are setting up a condition where there is less uncertainty about a significant component of their overall return.

Growth stocks, which pay lower or no dividends, must earn their total return exclusively from a change in price. All else being equal, a company that does not pay a dividend must have a higher expected growth rate than a dividend-paying stock to command the same valuation.

> A retiree who is spending from their portfolio, in addition to likely having an allocation to fixed income (bonds), may have more dividend-paying stocks than a younger client in the accumulation phase.

We believe it is important to consider both the level and sustainability of dividends. The S&P 500 currently has a dividend payout ratio of about 42%. This means that for every $1.00 in earnings, companies are paying an average of about $0.42 in dividends. Significant levels of debt or off-balance sheet obligations like underfunded pension plans or post-retirement health care benefits may restrict a company's ability to pay dividends in the future, since these are competing claims on the company's cash flow. When evaluating individual stocks for inclusion in client portfolios, our research committee considers the current dividend yield, the company's historical track record of dividend increases and the dividend payout ratio. A high dividend payout ratio of 75% or more may indicate that the dividend is at risk of being cut in the future. An unusually high dividend yield is also a sign that the dividend may not be sustainable. If something seems too good to be true, it usually is. At the same time, there are many well-known companies that have increased their dividends every year for 25, 35, 50 or even 60 consecutive years. You may already own some of these companies, especially if you are a Parsec client. We want to focus on companies with sustainable and increasing dividends to provide a source of retirement spending.

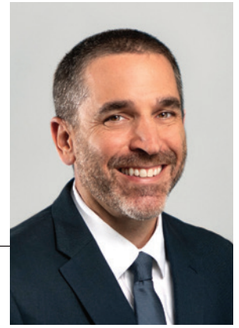
The traditional theory taught in universities and graduate schools worldwide used to be that the lower the dividend payout ratio, the higher the earnings growth rate in subsequent periods. More recent studies have demonstrated exactly the opposite: that higher dividend payouts actually resulted in higher future earnings growth. This relationship was shown to hold true across a number of different countries and time periods. If this continues to hold true, it would be a double win for investors, since they would capture both a higher current dividend as well as higher future earnings growth by investing in dividend-paying stocks.

Why not buy all dividend-paying stocks? Different clients with different investment objectives may have different levels of dividend-paying stocks. A retiree who is spending from their portfolio, in addition to likely having an allocation to fixed income (bonds), may have more dividend-paying stocks than a younger client in the accumulation phase. As we review client portfolios for potential improvements, increasing portfolio income is one factor that we consider. Also, a cornerstone of our investment philosophy is broad diversification among growth and value companies; small, medium and large companies; and international companies. We never know what the future holds, so we want to have a mix of assets that will perform well under a variety of market conditions. If we focused exclusively on dividend-paying stocks, we would be forced to underweight sectors of the economy like technology that we believe have attractive future growth prospects.

For our client portfolios that include individual stocks, we focus on high- quality companies with the potential for rising earnings and dividends. We then combine 30 to 40 such companies into a well-diversified portfolio, including mutual funds and ETFs for small companies, mid-size companies, international companies and about half of the allocation to large-cap U.S. companies. Regardless of what happens in the stock market over the next year, your portfolio income should be higher each subsequent year. The management teams of high-quality companies with long track records of dividend increases are very reluctant to cut their dividends. Even in a recessionary environment, more companies should increase their dividends rather than maintain or cut them.

We encourage our clients to focus on this concept of rising portfolio income to meet their investment goals and help provide peace of mind during the inevitable corrections and bear markets that we will all experience at some point.

Do You Need a Care Manager?



Judson Meinhart, CFP®, BFA™ | Financial Advisor, Manager of Financial Planning

As parents, we never endeavor to become a burden to our children, which is why having a plan for aging in place before the time for care comes is important, as is knowing the resources available to individuals and caregivers to help alleviate some of the burden.

My 3-year-old son has a toy drill. He calls it his "grown-up drill," and I'm not allowed to use it because "it's for grown-ups" and he wants to keep me safe. Like most other things that come out of his mouth, intelligent or not, he got this from me telling him that he couldn't use my drill one day when we were hanging pictures around the house because "it's a grown-up drill and it's not safe for you to use it."

It seems like when we're young, all we can think about is being a grown-up so we can do the things that mom and dad do, and when we're mom and dad, all we can think about is keeping our children safe and cared for. However, one day, hopefully very far into the future, these roles may reverse, and our children are the ones caring for us while we're the ones wishing we were their age again. I encourage you to create a plan for the day when these roles do reverse.

Certified care managers work with patients and caregivers to navigate decisions about the care for a loved one, which can oftentimes be a complex and emotionally-charged process. A care manager's role is to provide professional support, monitor the client, coordinate all care and serve as a patient advocate to ensure the best care is being given. In the same way a financial advisor helps coordinate your tax, estate and investment plans, a care manager serves as the point person for the care team, communicating between individuals and adjusting care if circumstances change.

> A care manager's role is to provide professional support, monitor the client, coordinate all care and serve as a patient advocate to ensure the best care is being given.

Of course, not everyone needs a care manager, but how can you tell if hiring one might help? Ask yourself the following questions. If you are a caregiver or a patient and answer "yes" to any of the following, a care manager may be beneficial to your situation:

- Are you confused or overwhelmed by a new diagnosis and need a road map?
- Are you faced with an increasing amount of stress due to your caregiving role?
- Do you need additional support and resources in order to maintain independence?
- Do you need a professional assessment to evaluate and/or help create a care plan?
- Do you have limited social support?
- Are you having trouble obtaining consistent, unbiased and accurate communication from providers?
- Do family members disagree on next steps for care?

The inevitable reality of aging is never fun to think about, but with some proactive planning we can leverage the right "grown-up tools" to lessen the burden on our loved ones and provide peace of mind and quality of life to everyone involved.

I encourage you to talk to your primary care physician about your needs. You can also find a certified care manager near you by visiting aginglifecare.org.

Parsec Announcements

Upcoming closings:

April 2: Good Friday
May 31: Memorial Day

Parsec kudos:

Congratulations to Roger A. James who was recognized as a "Best-In-State Wealth Advisor" by Forbes.

Learn more:
parsecfinancial.com/news/roger-james-named-forbes-best-in-state-wealth-advisor

New employees:

We are excited to welcome Justin White, CPA, as a tax manager in South Asheville, NC.

We are delighted to welcome Lori Pilon, CFP®, as our newest financial advisor in Winston Salem, NC.

We warmly welcome Alexa Arnold as a compliance analyst based in Asheville, NC.

Employee promotions:

Congratulations to Aaron Combs who is now a senior financial advisor in Charlotte, NC.

Congratulations to Ashley Gragtmans who is now a senior financial advisor in Asheville, NC.

Congratulations to Chad Foster who is now a senior financial advisor in Asheville, NC.

Congratulations to Misty Cardone who is now a client service manager in Asheville, NC.

Congratulations to Christina Schappert who is now a portfolio manager in Charlotte, NC.

Congratulations to Karisa Weissgerber who is now a trader in Charlotte, NC.

Congratulations to Brian Smith who is now a senior data services specialist in Asheville, NC.

Congratulations to Laura Greene who is now a senior data services specialist in Asheville, NC.

ParsecFinancial
WEALTH MANAGEMENT

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