



MAJESTIC FINANCIAL

“Working hard for something we don’t care about is called stress; working hard for something we love is called passion.” - Simon Sinek



A Message from Leon Bennett *COO, Majestic Financial, Financial Consultant, RJFS*

Springtime in Michigan is one of my favorite transitions. It is a refreshing time of year full of re-birth and a time in which we can all step out of our Winter hibernation and reflect on the changes we are observing around us. There is a key window of time in which seemingly overnight we go from no leaves and dull greenish grass to vibrant blue skies, lush lawns, and flowering trees. In this transition, time seems to be moving in warp speed. I can say the same about this past year as we created and grew Majestic Financial. In the blink of an eye, we are at the one-year anniversary of our financial practice.

As we look back on the first year of Majestic Financial's existence, we are proud of what we have accomplished and the strong foundation that has been established. We are also grateful for the relationships that we have had for years, for the clients that followed us to our new home with Majestic and Raymond James, and also for the ones we recently started.

People often refer to our line of work as the financial industry. This takes away from the human connection we love to be a part of as Financial Advisors. More accurately, we think of what we do as a people business. We are in the business of

people, their families and loved ones, and their hopes and dreams for these people and themselves. This career is extremely rewarding, and I can speak on behalf of myself and our team that we all are grateful for the opportunity to serve you, our clients, and for playing such a significant role in your lives. We are honored to have your trust and take it very seriously. Thank you for your partnership and for making the last year successful and one of great purpose. We look forward to many more years and the experiences we share together.

Thank you!

Beyond the Mountain Range

A blog written by Leon Bennett



Account Consolidation

The average person will have 12 jobs in their lifetime over a span of three to four decades (Zippia.com, May 19, 2021, Chris Kolmar). During this time, a lot can happen in a person's life. Other than career moves, someone may get married, have children, move residences multiple times, divorce, remarry, inherit money or property, and encounter other serious life events that shape who we are as a person. All these things cost money too. While you cannot plan for some of these things, you could be better prepared by what you are doing beforehand.

One way to be better prepared is to consider consolidating your accounts as you go through life, such as when you change jobs or retire. There are many types of financial accounts. There are taxable accounts such as Single, Joint, and Trust, which are not retirement accounts. There are retirement accounts like Traditional and Roth IRAs (Individual Retirement

Account) which the individual manages. These have more options for investments, more strategies available and, ultimately, more control. There are also employer sponsored plans like 401Ks, 403Bs, 457s and SIMPLE IRAs, all depending on where a person works. Not all these accounts should be consolidated into one. For example, when a person retires, they may not want to withdraw their 401K and deposit it into their savings account at their bank, unless they enjoy paying taxes.

However, there are many benefits to consolidating accounts as you go through life. When money is invested, it's usually done with a goal and timeframe in mind; a retirement date, buying a home, paying for grad school, children's or grandchildren's education, and so on. When accounts are consolidated, they may be easier to manage and could be implemented into an efficient strategy to reach your goal. For instance, if you plan to retire

by a certain date, do you know how much you will need to save by then in order to live life on your terms? Congratulations if you do know this amount because that is the first step. Now that you know that, what is the return you will need from your investments to transform the amount you currently have into the amount required to enjoy retirement and be financially secure? What is the dollar amount you need to contribute on a regular basis to make this happen? If you have multiple accounts at multiple establishments working towards one goal it could be difficult to manage, inefficient and probably more costly.

If you do not know the answers to the questions above then there really isn't a plan. The value of a financial advisor is evident in this situation.

Read the rest of the Account Consolidation blog along with past and future posts at InvestMajestic.com.

Have you set up your online client access account?

NO

YES

What you need:

- Internet and your personal information.
- Your brokerage account number. If you don't know your account number, please email Josh Budlong at josh@investmajestic.com and he will provide it to you.

Next Steps

1. Open the internet on your laptop, tablet or cell phone and go to investmajestic.com.
2. Hover over the heading titled "Client Access", wait for the dropdown menu to appear and click on the second option titled "Enroll". If you are using a tablet or phone, click the three bars in the top left of the screen, and click "Client Access" at the bottom of the list.
3. A new window will open that's titled "Enrollment for Client Access" and you will enter your personal information including name, date of birth, email address, social security and brokerage account number.
4. Follow the instructions on the screen.

Helpful tips:

- Everyone can make their own personal login information, even if they share an account. Households will most likely be able to see everyone's accounts once they login, but each partner can make their own login, or they can share a mutual login.
- You can pay bills automatically from your account. Go to "Bill Pay" under "My Accounts" and click on "Payment Center". From here, click on "Add a company or person" and search for the company, or add the person you would like to pay. After entering all of the requested information and clicking add, you will return to the payment center home screen where you can enter the amount and deliver by date.
- You can quickly get stock quotes by using the "Market Research" tab and searching for your desired stock.

Equity Sector Performance During Federal Reserve Tightening Cycles

Written by Nicholas Lacy, CFA, Chief Portfolio Strategist, Asset Management Services

With the US Federal Reserve (Fed) and other central banks going down the path of increasing policy rates, it seemed a good time to look at market impacts over the last 40 years or so. Since 1984, there have been six cycles where the Fed raised the fed funds rate multiple times. Each time the Fed raised rates, it was based on a different set of circumstances; however, there were usually some similarities in each cycle. Bear in mind, it takes time for rate hikes to work through the economy, yet the markets are attempting to forecast the impact one year out.

Historically, the Fed has raised interest rates as a way to cut pricing pressures that could lead to higher inflation. In each instance in which the Fed raised rates in the last 40 years, inflation was moving to a higher point and unemployment was at, or below, the natural level of unemployment. On average, the unemployment rate has been 5.5% when the Fed started the rate hike cycle, with the 4.2% unemployment rate in 1999 being the lowest rate. When the Fed started raising rates in March of 2022, the unemployment rate was approximately 3.8% and below the 4.0% target the Fed set. The big difference in 2022 is the level of inflation which is the highest since 1982. How this impacts sector performance going forward compared to the past remains to be seen.

Sector performance varied from cycle to cycle

but there were some constants. For example: most sectors were positive one and two years out from the first time the Fed started to hike the fed funds rate. The Information Technology, Energy and Industrials sectors have outperformed, on average, one year from the time the Fed starts hiking. At the same time, Communication Services, Consumer Discretionary and Consumer Staples have been the worst performing sectors. Many believe that financial stocks always perform well during rate hike cycles because banks benefit from higher rates. This may be true, yet, historically other sectors have tended to perform better. The chart at the right shows the ranges of one-year returns from the point the Fed starts hiking rates as well as the average returns. Most sectors have seen at least one period of negative returns. Information Technology, Energy, and Health Care are exceptions.

Looking beyond sectors to market segments; large/small and growth/value, small caps and growth stocks had the highest return one year following the first-rate hike. While value stocks had a positive one-year return, they trailed the broad market and growth stocks. It was two years after the first-rate hike when value stocks started showing the strongest returns. The same thing can be seen for two years from the first-rate hike where Financials, Real Estate stocks, and Utilities have tended to be strong relative performers.

Looking out more than one to two years from the first-rate hike, little changes as Energy, Financials, and Utilities posted the strongest returns while Communication Services, Consumer Discretionary, and Consumer Staples were still the worst performing sectors. Markets were still positive two years out with small caps continuing to beat large caps, while value outperformed growth by a small margin.

History teaches us that stocks generally continue to perform well two years out from the first-rate hike yet leadership shifts as the length of time extends. When the Fed starts hiking rates, it is normally good for equity investors for the next 12-24 months before economic conditions start to slow enough to increase the probability of a recession. Investors in the stock market should have some degree of confidence that markets don't fall apart just because the Fed starts hiking rates, and the negative impact is normally smaller than what one might think.

Read the rest of the Raymond James Investment Strategy Quarterly [here](#).

Seasonal Recipe

By Becky Sharp

Summer No-Bake Cheesecake

Ingredients:

- 1 package Lemon Oreos (36 cookies)
- 6 TBSP melted butter
- 8 ounces softened cream cheese
- 1 Cup powdered sugar
- 2 (16 ounce) Cool-whip, thawed
- 2 pkgs (3.4 ounce) instant cheesecake pudding
- 3 Cups cold milk
- 3 Cups strawberries, cleaned & quartered (blueberries may be substituted)

Cooking Directions:

- Place oreos in a food processor and pulse until cookies are a fine crumb. Add melted butter and mix well. Press mixture into a 9x13 glass dish and chill until next step is complete.
- Combine cream cheese and powdered sugar in medium bowl. Beat with electric mixer until smooth. Fold in 1 ½ cups Cool-whip. Spread over cookie layer.
- Using the same bowl, combine pudding mix and milk with electric mixer for 2-3 minutes. Fold in 1 ½ cups Cool-whip. Spread over cream cheese layer.
- Top with remaining Cool-whip. Chill until ready to serve. Top with strawberries just before serving.



Employee Highlight

Brandon Wilkins, Chief Financial Officer, Majestic Financial, Financial Consultant, Raymond James



What's your favorite hobby?

- Reading and collecting baseball cards.

What's the best piece of advice you've ever been given?

- Always do what you say you are going to do. Make your yes, yes and your no, no.

What's a random interesting fact about yourself?

- I enjoy hunting for morel mushrooms.

What's your favorite part about your job/working at Majestic?

- I love the team atmosphere and no two days are the same. I like the diversity of work.

What are three things on your bucket list?

- I want to help lead 1 million people to Jesus, I want to be able to give \$1 million per year to missions (above and beyond my title), and I want to earn my 8th Dan Grandmaster in Tang Soo Do.

If you could travel to anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?

- Israel, I want to see where my savior Jesus walked.

Dogs or Cats?

- Dogs



Jaime Merriam, Client Service Manager

What would be your personal motto?

- Take a Little time to do whatever makes a happy you!

What's a random interesting fact about yourself?

- I was named after the Bionic Woman- Jaime (Sommers).

If we went to Happy Hour, what would you order?

- A "Jaime Ginger" Jameson and Ginger Ale or "just a Coors Light"

What's your favorite part about your job/working at Majestic?

- We have such a great team and great clients. I love having a job that I look forward to coming to everyday!

If you could travel to anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?

- Lots of places, but my bucket list destination is Ireland. I love the folklore, the land, the people and the music and I haven't even been there. I would love to be able to spend a lot of time in the country getting to know all those things personally.

Dogs or Cats?

- I especially like kittens and puppies, but if I HAD to choose, cats.



How a new Michigan financial practice works for clients' interest, not a company's

Written by Nate Reens at [MLive Media Group](#) on 8/17/2021

As Sean Budlong, Brandon Wilkins and Leon Bennett evaluated their successful financial planning careers working in West Michigan offices of a large national corporation, each of the men sensed part of their passion was being stifled and that they were missing their true calling.

They wanted to provide true customer service, forming close relationships with clients as people and not as simply numbers in a portfolio.

They craved being a member of a team that emphasized their diverse strengths and balanced their personal drive with shared goals and visions of how to reach their clients' aspirations.

They felt a desire to be a resource for individuals just starting their career, those looking to secure their future, growing families and small business owners.

Enter Majestic Financial, a Plainwell-based financial consultancy

that the trio launched this year with Sean Budlong as CEO, MF, Financial advisor, RJFS, Brandon Wilkins as CFO, MF, FA, RJFS, and Leon Bennett COO, MF, FA, RJFS. The trio, with more than 50 years of combined experience in financial planning and accounting experience, lead a growing staff that caters to people at every stage of life and any location across the country.

"The goal was to venture out and be a part of something that wasn't solely about making money and signing up people with a lot of money wasn't the most important thing," Budlong said. "Now, of course, we want to help people build wealth and improve their financial future. But we want to be there for the person that has \$1,000 or \$10,000, just like we will be for the person who has \$1 million."

"We are working for our clients' best interest, not a company's interest."



The Majestic Financial team is built to guide personal investors and small business owners as a coach, helping educate and simplify what is available to them and set a detailed, diversified and holistic financial plan.

They frequently find that individuals are reluctant to do more than contribute to a 401(k) plan because they are intimidated, just as business owners, who want to provide their employees the best possible perks, aren't always aware of their options.

Read the full article [here](#).

Upcoming Local Events

[Kalamazoo Institute of Arts Fair](#)

Bronson Park
June 3rd & 4th

[Plainwell Days Festival](#)

Downtown Plainwell
June 25th

[Barry County Business & Community Expo](#)

Thornapple Kellogg Schools
April 23rd

[West Michigan Beer Tour](#)

Downtown Kalamazoo
Every Saturday throughout the Summer

Upcoming Majestic Events

[One Year Anniversary BBQ](#)

Majestic Financial Plainwell Office
April 22nd

[Summer Golf Outing](#)

Saskatoon Golf Course
May 27th

[Fall Golf Outing](#)

Course TBD in Kalamazoo area
September

[Fall Client Appreciation Event](#)

Bowling Center in Kalamazoo area
November

The Majestic Team



Brandon Wilkins
CFO, Majestic Financial
Financial Consultant, RJFS
Hastings



Sean Budlong
CEO, Majestic Financial
Financial Consultant, RJFS
Plainwell



Leon Bennett
COO, Majestic Financial
Financial Consultant, RJFS
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Laurie Budlong
Senior Client Service Manager
Plainwell



Kendra Omans
Senior Client Service Manager
Hastings



Jaime Merriam
Client Service Manager
Plainwell



Becky Sharp
Client Service Manager
Plainwell



Alyx Hampel
Client Service Manager
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Josh Budlong
Marketing Coordinator
Remote - Denver, CO



Isiah Penney
Marketing Assistant
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