

SOWA FINANCIAL GROUP, INC.

Experienced. Independent. Trusted.

FIVE-YEAR WINNER

Left to right: Nathan Beauvais;
Five-year winner Steven J. Beauvais, CFP®,
Two-year winner Donna Sowa Allard, CFP®, AIF®,
Two-year winner Donald J. Sowa, CFP®, AIF®, President

Sowa Financial Group, Inc.

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- Fee-based financial planning and asset management
- Fiduciaries, acting in our clients' best interests
- Three decades of knowledge and experience

We believe that choosing a financial advisor is about finding a connection with a professional who has the experience and wisdom to truly understand your needs. After three decades of service to the community, we have learned from the experiences of thousands of clients and share that wisdom with each individual that we serve.

At Sowa Financial Group, we measure our success with each client by more than just earnings, we strive to educate our clients and bring confidence and accountability to their financial lives.

Securities offered through Commonwealth Financial Network, Member FINRA/SIPC, a Registered Investment Adviser. Sowa Financial Group, Inc. is a registered Investment Adviser. Advisory services offered by Sowa Financial Group are separate and unrelated to Commonwealth.



2017 RHODE ISLAND Award Winners

Determination of Award Winners

Award candidates who satisfied 10 objective eligibility and evaluation criteria were named 2017 Five Star Wealth Managers.

Eligibility Criteria – Required

1. Credentialed as a registered investment adviser or a registered investment adviser representative.
2. Actively employed as a credentialed professional in the financial services industry for a minimum of five years.
3. Favorable regulatory and complaint history review.
4. Fulfilled their firm review based on internal firm standards.
5. Accepting new clients.

Evaluation Criteria – Considered

6. One-year client retention rate.
7. Five-year client retention rate.
8. Non-institutional discretionary and/or non-discretionary client assets administered.
9. Number of client households served.
10. Education and professional designations.

Regulatory Review

As defined by Five Star Professional, the wealth manager has not:

- Been subject to a regulatory action that resulted in a license being suspended or revoked, or payment of a fine.
- Had more than a total of three customer complaints filed against them (settled or pending) with any regulatory authority or Five Star Professional's consumer complaint process.
- Individually contributed to a financial settlement of a customer complaint filed with a regulatory authority.
- Filed for personal bankruptcy.
- Been convicted of a felony.

Five Star Professional conducts a regulatory review of each nominated wealth manager using the Investment Adviser Public Disclosure (IAPD) website. Five Star Professional also uses multiple supporting processes to help ensure that a favorable regulatory and complaint history exists. Data submitted through these processes was applied per the above criteria:

- Each wealth manager who passes the Five Star Professional regulatory review must attest that they meet the definition of favorable regulatory history, based upon the criteria listed above.
- Five Star Professional promotes via local advertising the opportunity for consumers to confidentially submit complaints regarding a wealth manager.
- Five Star Professional contacted approximately 1 in 12 households identified as having a high propensity to use the services of wealth managers in order to provide consumers the opportunity to submit complaints regarding a wealth manager.

CONNECT WITH FIVE STAR WEALTH MANAGERS

A Select Award

Finding a wealth manager who suits your needs can be a daunting task. In fact, many consumers have a hard time figuring out where to even begin.

Sometimes, a few simple questions can set one off on the right path. Asking a wealth manager what makes working with him or her a unique experience can help you understand how they work and if their style meshes with your own. Further, asking a financial adviser to talk about any specialties they might have can help uncover skills you might find useful.

Ultimately, how do you find an experienced wealth manager who you feel comfortable working with? One who has high retention rates? One who has undergone a thorough complaint and regulatory review? One who has tenure in the industry?

Rhode Island Monthly and Five Star Professional partnered to find wealth managers who satisfy 10 objective eligibility and evaluation criteria. Among many distinguishing attributes, the average one-year client retention rate for this year's award winners is more than 96 percent. Although this list is a useful tool for anyone looking for help in managing their financial world or implementing aspects of their financial strategies, it should not be considered exhaustive. Undoubtedly, there are many excellent wealth managers who, for one reason or another, are not on this year's list.

In order to consider a broad population of high-quality wealth managers, award candidates are identified by one of three sources: firm nomination, peer nomination or pre-qualification based on industry standing. Self-nominations are not accepted. Rhode Island award candidates were identified using internal and external research data.



Research Disclosures

- Wealth managers do not pay a fee to be considered or placed on the final list of Five Star Wealth Managers.
- The Five Star award is not indicative of the wealth manager's future performance.
- Wealth managers may or may not use discretion in their practice and therefore may not manage their clients' assets.
- The inclusion of a wealth manager on the Five Star Wealth Manager list should not be construed as an endorsement of the wealth manager by Five Star Professional or *Rhode Island Monthly*.
- Working with a Five Star Wealth Manager or any wealth manager is no guarantee as to future investment success, nor is there any guarantee that the selected wealth managers will be awarded this accomplishment by Five Star Professional in the future.
- Five Star Professional is not an advisory firm, and the content of this article should not be considered financial advice. For more information on the Five Star award and the research/selection methodology, go to www.fivestarpromotional.com.
- 476 award candidates in the Rhode Island area were considered for the Five Star Wealth Manager award. 188 (approximately 40 percent of the award candidates) were named 2017 Five Star Wealth Managers.

▶ Learn more at:
FiveStarProfessional.com