
Honorable Mention

By Editorial Staff *Thu, Sep 21, 2017*

Brief or late-breaking items from Nuveen, Ubiquity Retirement + Savings, and Conning.

Advisors recommend closed-end funds for income: Nuveen

Overall closed-end fund (CEF) usage has increased significantly since 2013, according to a study focused on financial advisors and their use of CEFs released today by Nuveen, the investment management arm of TIAA. When looking for new sources of income, more than half (57%) of all advisors recommend CEFs as an investment option.

Nuveen's study monitors trends in the CEF space, specifically tracking usage among the financial advisor community, which has increased since the inaugural study in 2013, and remained steady from 2016. Nearly two-thirds of advisors (62%) currently use CEFs in client portfolios - up from roughly half (51%) in 2013. Closed-end funds remain an attractive investment option as financial advisors are reportedly recommending the funds to clients seeking income and diversification opportunities for income portfolios.

Of those advisors who reported increasing CEF usage over the past year, the top two reasons include the attractive yield and return on investment as well as helping clients generate more income in their portfolios. Nine out of 10 advisors (91%) say clients ask about income producing investments - such as CEFs and other fund types. Increasing income remains the top reason for using CEFs in investment portfolios, according to 62% of the financial advisors surveyed who use CEFs.

Dubick & Associates conducted the latest version of the study of financial advisors' closed-end fund usage on behalf of Nuveen using a sample drawn from the Discovery Database.

The study, also conducted in 2013 and 2016 by Dubick & Associates, included a weighted statistically valid sample of 326 financial advisors from wirehouses, regional broker/dealers, independent broker/dealers, registered investment advisors, bank and insurance companies. The 2017 study was fielded from April 27-May 11.

Ubiquity Retirement + Savings recognized for growth rate

For the 11th consecutive year, Ubiquity Retirement + Savings, a flat-fee 401(k) provider for small businesses and individuals founded in 1999, has been named in the Inc. 5000 list of the nation's fastest-growing private companies.

The 2017 Inc. 5000, unveiled online at Inc.com and with the top 500 companies featured in the September issue of Inc. (available on newsstands), is the most competitively successful group in the list's history. The

average company achieved a three-year average growth of 481%.

“Our placement on the Inc. 5000 for so many years represents our commitment to supporting small businesses and educating the market on the importance of personal savings,” said Chad Parks, CEO and founder of Ubiquity Retirement + Savings, in a release. “Since 1999, Ubiquity has strived to reach unserved markets, which makes up more than 40% of our nation’s workforce.”

Conning publishes study of life-annuity leaders

A new Conning study, “[Individual Life-Annuity Growth and Profit Leaders: Preparing to Change Tack](#)” analyzes individual life-annuity insurer performance, identifies the most successful firms based on Conning’s multi-year leadership criteria, and identifies shared characteristics among the successful firms.

“Companies that met our criteria to be considered growth and profit leaders did so by successfully managing through operating and market complexity,” said Steve Webersen, Head of Insurance Research at Conning.

“Leading companies of all sizes consistently exhibited faster capital growth than their peers and had bond portfolios of longer maturity than the remaining companies. Overall, annuity products performed better in the period than life insurance, which explains the predominance of annuity specialists among the leading companies,” he added.

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