
The Bucket

By Editorial Staff *Wed, Oct 6, 2010*

Late-breaking items about the Financial Planning Association, InFRE, Principal Financial, Mutual of Omaha, AllianceBernstein and more...

FPA to Offer InFRE Materials to Advisors

Under an alliance between Financial Planning Association (FPA) and the International Foundation for Retirement Education (InFRE), FPA members will have access to discounts on new retirement planning tools and resources. The assistance is benefit of the FPA Member Advantage Program.

FPA members now have access to discounted educational packages offered through the InFRE Retirement Resource Center (IRRC) on various topics within retirement planning, such as the *Strategies for Managing Retirement Income Package*, *Certified Retirement Counselor (CRC) Program*, *"Managing Your Retirement Income" Educational Workshop* and many more. CRC certificants and registrants will also receive discounts on FPA's Virtual Learning Center archives and are eligible for a group membership program discount.

FPA members will receive 20 percent off the purchase price of InFRE retirement programs through October 31, 2010. After October 31, resources are available to FPA members for 15 percent off the purchase price.

The Principal Expands Online Library for Advisors

To attract retirement-minded advisors to its offerings, Principal Financial Group has launched a Retirement Education Portal that gives advisors access to an online library focused on retirement income planning and "tools and resources for overall retirement plan education."

Financial professionals will be able to select materials based on number of years prior to retirement or by the stages of retirement planning. Resources include customizable education plans, meeting materials, and a new magazine called *Education Edge*.

The portal also gives financial professionals access to "local education personnel" who conduct group education meetings and one-on-one meetings with participants. The expanded portal is part of Principal's Retirement Income Edge program.

Mutual of Omaha Says "Aha!" to Social Media

Mutual of Omaha, which sponsors a campaign that it calls "Life's Aha Moments," has launched an online survey inviting people to vote for their favorite aha moments of the year. The top vote getters will become commercials for the company's 2011 national broadcast advertising campaign, which will debut early next year.

“Aha Moments” are the epiphanies that are the topic of the “uplifting” and “inspirational” stories that Mutual of Omaha has collected from the public. The company kicked off its sponsorship of life’s aha moments in February 2009 with national advertising, a website devoted to aha moments, and an online community through Facebook, Twitter and other social applications.

For more information on aha moments, visit <http://www.mutualofomaha.com/aha>.

The company recorded more than 1,000 such stories during a recent four-month, 25-city national tour. From those 1,000, the company selected 75 moments for the first round of voting, which began October 1 and concludes on October 15. Consumers will be able to view and vote for all of the eligible entries at <http://ahamoment.com/vote>.

Following the first round of voting, the top 25 vote getters will move into the final round of voting, which begins on October 18th and ends on October 31, 2010. The top-10 moments will become the company’s newest television ads. The website will also allow people to encourage others to vote by sharing their favorite moments via e-mail, Facebook, Twitter and other popular social media outlets.

Phoenix and AltiSure Launch ‘Secure Lifestyle’ Annuity Series

The Phoenix Companies, Inc., and The AltiSure Group, an annuity and life insurance design and distribution company, announced the launch of their co-developed Secure Lifestyle Annuity Series, which includes The Secure Lifestyle and the Secure Lifestyle Bonus fixed indexed annuities.

The Secure Lifestyle Annuity Series offers two benefits: 1) The Safety Growth Strategy, a new interest crediting method, and 2) The Guaranteed Income and Family Wealth Transfer Benefit (GIFT), which combines guaranteed lifetime withdrawals with an enhanced death benefit for one charge.

“With the Safety Growth Strategy, a client can benefit from the positive return of the S&P 500 in excess of 5%,” said Philip K. Polkinghorn, senior executive vice president, business development at Phoenix.

The product’s GIFT Benefit is an optional rider that offers clients guaranteed lifetime withdrawals and an enhanced death benefit with a 6% compound annual rollup in one package. Clients can maximize their income opportunity by deferring the start of withdrawals under their Guaranteed Lifetime Withdrawal Benefit (GLWB), while remaining protected by the enhanced death benefit until the beginning of the guaranteed withdrawals under the GLWB rider.

“If the client defers the start of withdrawals for 12 years, the income benefit base used to calculate the annual GLWB amount will grow to more than triple the original premium with the Secure LifeStyle Bonus Annuity,” said Niju Vaswani, president of AltiSure.

The 10% premium bonus offered with the Secure LifeStyle Bonus Annuity boosts the initial account value by 10% of the original premium at contract issue. A percentage of the premium bonus and its earnings vest each year during the surrender charge period. All interest is credited on the entire account value including the premium bonus. Generally, products that do not offer bonuses have higher credited interest rates,

participation rates and caps.

Optional riders such as the GIFT Benefit involve a fee calculated as a percentage of the benefit base that is deducted from the contract value. There are surrender charges during the first 10 years.

AllianceBernstein Acquires Alternative Investments Group from SunAmerica

As part of its expansion into alternative investments, AllianceBernstein L.P. has acquired a group at SunAmerica that manages a portfolio of hedge fund and private equity fund investments.

“We are pleased to add to our alternative investment capabilities this exceptional hedge fund and private equity fund investment team,” said AllianceBernstein Chairman and CEO Peter Kraus. “Marc Gamsin and his SunAmerica Alternative Investments colleagues have built an outstanding platform.”

“We’ve admired AllianceBernstein’s superb investment research for many years, and we’re thrilled to become a part of this respected, global institution, while maintaining our long-standing SunAmerica relationship,” Gamsin said.

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