Business IN GREATER GAINESVILLE

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THE SIMPLE LIFE

How Lowry Financial Advisors Helps Clients Achieve their Dreams

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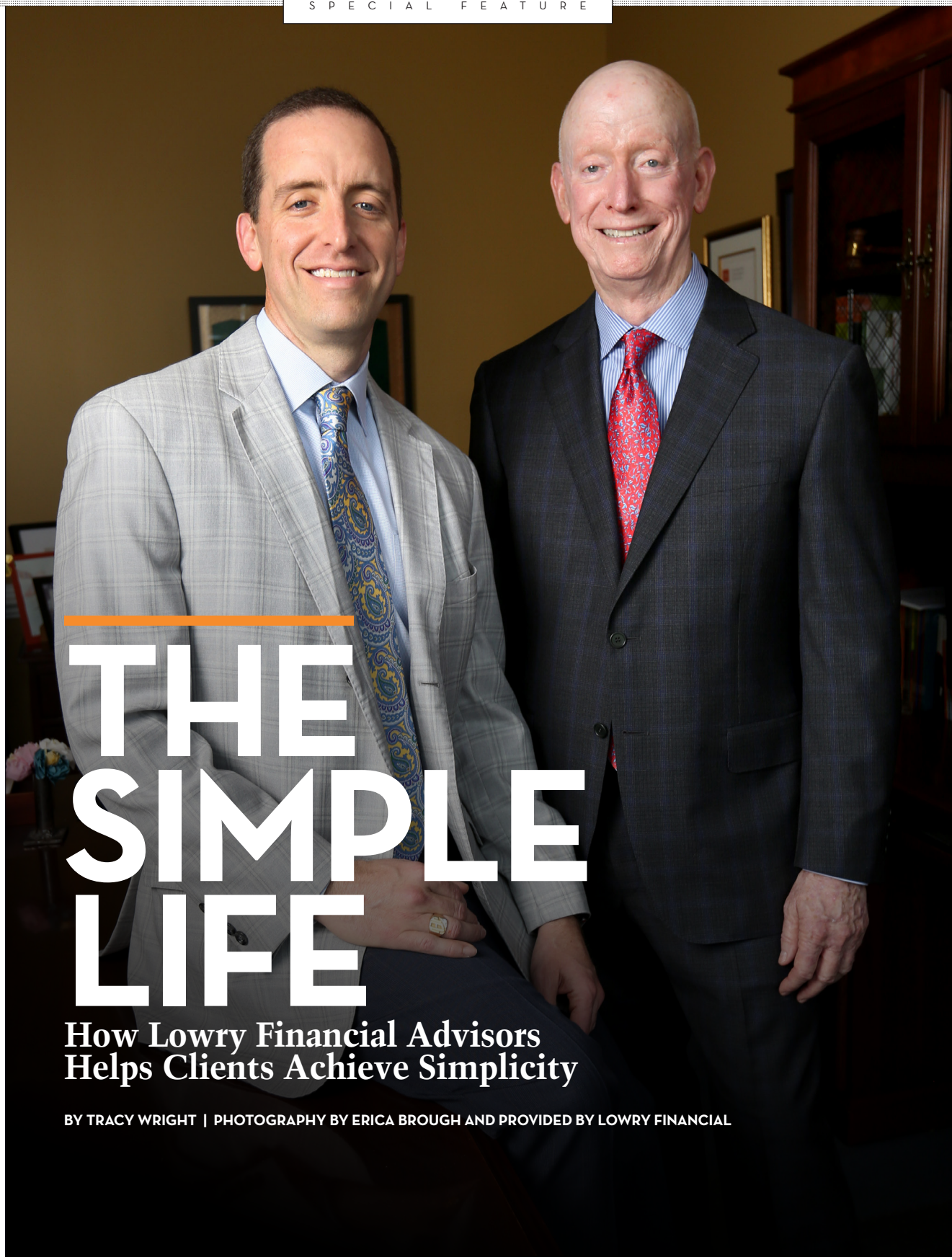

THE SIMPLE LIFE

How Lowry Financial Advisors Helps Clients Achieve Simplicity

BY TRACY WRIGHT | PHOTOGRAPHY BY ERICA BROUGH AND PROVIDED BY LOWRY FINANCIAL

Achieving Simplicity®.

THIS MOTTO IS AT THE HEART OF LOWRY Financial Advisors, a Greater Gainesville advisory firm whose Senior Partner has been active in the business for more than 40 years. Joe Lowry Sr. and his son, Joe Jr., see themselves as partners with their clients who make financial planning easier for them.

Their approach is to engage in meaningful interactions about what is most important to each individual.

"When I started this business, my mantra was, and continues to be, 'if it's important to you, then it's important to us,'" Joe Sr. said. "We want to help our clients overcome big challenges that may involve increasing complexity and technicality. By helping them to achieve simplicity, we can lighten their load and meet their needs."

Lowry Financial Advisors is an independent Registered Investment Adviser, meaning they make recommendations based on the best interests of their clients. They act as fiduciaries, a standard of care that puts them on the same side as their clients.

"We take a very personalized approach based on a great deal of empathy," Joe Jr. said. "We want our clients to achieve success as they see it, not as others may define it."

CONSISTENT, PERSONALIZED FINANCIAL ADVICE

Lowry Financial Advisors assists with financial, estate, and business planning. They help individuals analyze risk and determine their insurance needs, develop retirement plans, and get a second opinion on their portfolios.

Whether it is preparing for retirement or achieving a greater sense of financial freedom, the Lowrys are invested in their clients' goals.

"We provide an outside perspective that is trustworthy," Joe Sr. said. "We are here to see them through their challenges and most pressing times and to celebrate their wins and accomplishments."

The Lowry Financial Advisors team goes beyond father and son. It includes Client Relationship manager Bea Caldwell, Paraplanner Nicole Hadley, and CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ professional Cale Flage. Cale specializes in advising construction companies and other small businesses.

The team spans multiple generations.

"We work with a growing number of young professionals in their 30s and 40s. They are concerned about making smart financial choices at an earlier age," Joe Jr. said. "As with all clients, this requires us to spend a lot of time managing expectations about investing and risk and maintaining a long-term focus.

Lowry Financial Advisors aspires to help their clients find greater confidence and clarity.

"We see clients who are very well prepared for retirement but don't know it," Joe Jr. said. "We listen to people's worries and inform them about what is actually worthy of concern. I recently worked with a couple who was not sure that they were ready to retire. It was incredibly gratifying to sit with them and help them realize that they were on target to achieve their goal."

Communicating with clients is important to the company. The Lowrys and their staff are always ready to take a call or answer a question.

Clients have ready access to their accounts through the Investor360°® platform, which gives detailed account information and reporting, as well as secure messaging. They author a weekly email, The Lowry Letter®, where they share interesting articles, book recommendations, and market insights.

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—JOE LOWRY JR.

A HISTORY OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP WITH INTEGRITY

Joe Sr. comes from a long line of Florida entrepreneurs dating back to the 1920s. Both of his grandfathers owned their own businesses and that streak runs strong. He wanted to be an entrepreneur for a variety of reasons—not only for the flexibility it would give him and his family, but also because he could choose who he worked with.

He started his investment advisory firm in Miami in 1978. He and his wife, Gladys, had three children, daughter Gladys, and sons Joe Jr. and Christopher. When he and his wife had grown tired of Miami's traffic and growing size, they spent about a year selecting their next home.

They had benchmarks that needed to be met, including excellent schools and health care, and a positive business community. While returning from a trip with their family, they stopped in Gainesville for the night and immediately had a good feeling about the community. In 1989, they moved and "never looked back," Joe Sr. said.

From the time he founded his business, it was extremely important for Joe Sr. to offer the best and most ethical service. The fee-based structure of Lowry Financial Advisors means they never have an expectation for their clients to open an account or buy a product.

"We have never had a relationship with a vendor that puts us in a complicated position. We want to be as unencumbered as possible to offer good service," Joe Sr. said. "It may mean we give up potential profit, but it is worth it to us to maintain our ethics and transparency to our clients."

Their approach to the clients is always planning-driven.

"Plans are products of goals and dreams," Joe Sr. said. "When we speak to our clients, we ask them what things they need to feel progress in their lives. We take a holistic approach to working with our clients.

"We have referred our clients to family counselors or personal trainers, if that is what they need to move forward. Those are the kinds of relationships we forge with our clients. I have had clients with me for more than 40 years. It is more than just a business."

Besides many customers in the greater Gainesville area, Lowry Financial Advisors has clients across the country, including around Florida and in many other states. Both Joe Sr. and Jr. regularly travel around the country to visit clients.

A COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY AND FAMILY

When you talk to either father or son about what is at the heart of their firm, it's very apparent: people. These people


Lowry family on vacation in North Carolina

include the clients they work with, the employees in their practice, and their community at large.

The Lowrys' commitment to service stems from their strong involvement in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, for which both have completed mission work. In fact, it was missionary service in Central America and Southern California that allowed both Joe Sr. and Jr. to become fluent in Spanish, which is a great asset for them with clients.

Locally, Lowry Financial Advisors is involved with many charitable organizations. Joe Jr. teaches financial literacy at Buchholz High School through Junior Achievement, and the company's employees have been involved with organizations like Rotary, The United Way, the American Heart Association, and the University of Florida Performing Arts.

As entrepreneurs, the Lowrys enjoy flexibility in being a part of their families' lives. You can sometimes find Joe Jr.'s three children at the business office, and Joe Sr. is proud to have been present for most of his children's special events and milestones.

"I was able to attend field trips, sports games, performances and graduations, and I am proud of that accomplishment," he said.

That family emphasis extends to their office environment. Not only does the business feel like a family, but it is also structured so that staff can have balanced, healthy lives. The company provides "free days," which the team can use at its discretion.

"We have a real family environment in the office and feel very comfortable with each other," Joe Jr. said. "It's a very wholesome environment."


Joe, Lacy, and kids (Joseph, Millie and Isaac) on a hike.

THE FUTURE

Lowry Financial Advisors shows no signs of slowing down. It is dedicated to continuing to serve and grow its client base. Joe Sr. demonstrates this commitment.

When he picked up Joe Jr. from Brigham Young University after his sophomore year of college, his son turned to him and said he wanted to join him in business after he graduated. Joe Sr. was happy with his son's decision but told him one thing: "I have no intention of ever retiring."

Now more than 40 years after starting his business, that statement could not be more true. B

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—JOE LOWRY SR.

ABOUT THE WRITER

TRACY WRIGHT is a local freelance writer and editor who has more than 20 years of experience in communications. She received her bachelor's degree in public relations and a master's degree in mass communications, both from the University of Florida.