

**Research Findings Report**

*Industry: Wealth Management*

**2009**

*Geographic Region: Southeastern United States*

Goldline Research recently completed its annual evaluation of independent wealth management professionals in the Southeastern United States. Our research study was conducted from May 2009 through early June 2009.

Wealth management in the Southeastern United States is a study in contrasts. On one hand, the Southeastern United States is the least affluent region of all of the regions in the U.S. that we evaluate. In fact, only slightly more than 14% of the households earn \$100,000 or more per year in this region, which is a benchmark that we find helpful in evaluating the

market opportunity for wealth management in a particular region. This compares to a national average that is closer to 25%. Not surprisingly, and most likely reflective of the regional demographics, the number of certified financial planners (CFP®'s) per household in the region is much lower than the national average. On the other hand, though, firms in the region have been successful in attracting more assets per client than the national median, which suggests that those households that do leverage the services of wealth management firms have more assets to invest than the national average. While we have not seen specific data to support this, we can hypothesize that the aforementioned asset per client data is the result of a level of income equality in the region that is particularly skewed relative to national data, meaning that wealth managers in the region need to provide very high levels of client satisfaction in order to maintain the clients that they have (as identifying new clients with similar economic profiles is harder to accomplish than in other regions because of the regional demographics).

**Key Research Findings<sup>1</sup>**

- Median Years of Experience: **25 years**
- Median AUM: **\$123.0 million**
- Median Number of Investment Advisors: **4**
- Median Number of Support Staff: **8**
- Median Number of Clients: **205**
- Median Client: Advisor Ratio: **64:1**
- Median Client Retention Rate: **99.7%**
- Median Assets Managed/Client: **\$1.6 million**

<sup>1</sup>Source: Goldline Research

**Regional Demographics**

States: **AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN**

Estimated Population<sup>1</sup>: **65,500,000**

Estimated Number of Households<sup>2</sup>: **25,200,000**

Estimated Number of Households With<sup>3</sup>:

- \$100K+ Annual Income: **3,600,000**

RIA's<sup>4</sup>: **3,500**

Certified Financial Planners (CFP®)<sup>5</sup>: **6,300**

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Source: U.S. Census Bureau  
<sup>4</sup>Source: Securities and Exchange Commission  
<sup>5</sup>Source: Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards

During the course of our research, we identified more than 3,500 Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) registered investment advisors (RIA's) and more than 6,300 individuals holding the Certified Financial Planner (CFP®) designation in the region during our research process. This equates to approximately 1 CFP® for every 10,300 people and 1 CFP® for every 580 households earning at least \$100,000 per year in the region. The median years of experience in the region is 25 years and the median firm employs 4 investment advisors and 8 support staff, while managing approximately \$123.0 million in assets. The median client-to-advisor ratio in the region is approximately 64:1, with the median number of clients for each firm being 205.

For more information about Goldline Research or this research findings report, please visit our website at [www.goldlineresearch.com](http://www.goldlineresearch.com).