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NAFA Elects 2023 Board of Directors

Board Prepares to Build on Association's Momentum by Growing Membership, Increasing Education and Engagement

WASHINGTON (Jan. 12, 2023) — The general membership of NAFA, the National Association for Fixed Annuities, approved the slate of candidates presented for its 2023 board of directors at the association's annual meeting held recently in Santa Monica, Calif. Nominations were received from the membership at large, and candidates were vetted by the current board before being proposed during the association's 14th annual Annuity Distribution Summit.

By unanimous decision, six new members and two members re-elect will join forces with current leadership to capitalize on significant growth happening in the fixed annuity marketplace, while working to protect and promote the products and professional advice consumers need to retire more securely. The board will also work to strengthen relationships with state and federal lawmakers, including new governor and Congressional appointees, and educate stakeholders about the role of protected lifetime income in retirement planning.

Newly appointed board members include: Jeff Barnes of EquiTrust Life Insurance Company; Emily Cramer of Simplicity Group; Jason Gould of Carlton Fields; Matt Johnson of American Equity; Luke Loewen of Gradient Annuity Brokerage; and Igor Zamkovsky of BlackRock. Tad Fifer of Lincoln Financial Group and Ryan Lex of Ibexis Life & Annuity Insurance Company will each begin serving a second three-year term.

Mike Morrone of Nationwide will assume the role of chairman of the board of directors, taking over for immediate past chair Heather Kane of EquiTrust Life Insurance Company. Kevin Mechtley of North American Company will roll up to vice chair and David Wolfe of Advisors Excel to secretary, while Andrew Payne of CreativeOne was elected to join the executive operating committee as its newly appointed treasurer.

"Amid continued economic and financial uncertainty, consumers are increasingly turning to the safety, predictability and guarantees inherent in fixed and fixed index annuities. NAFA will continue to rely on our three pillars of advocacy, education and integration to underscore the value of these products in helping clients achieve their long-term planning goals," said Chuck DiVencenzo, NAFA president and CEO. "We intend to build on the work we have been doing for

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the last several years, ensuring uniform adoption of insurance rules and regulations nationwide while ushering in commonsense bipartisan retirement reform at the federal level. We'll also continue championing the celebration of June as National Annuity Awareness Month and diversifying our membership to include more stakeholders who design, distribute, sell and support fixed annuities. This board is representative of that commitment, and I'm thrilled to see what we can accomplish together."

Newly elected members join a board roster that also includes the following current members: Dan Acker of SILAC Insurance Company, Jay Brown of Delaware Life, Wes Gilbreath of Annexus Group, Maureen James of Summit Compliance Group, Brendon Kelly of Ash Brokerage, Paul Kruth of Western & Southern Financial Group Distributors, Darcy Matz of Allianz, Brian Peterson of TruChoice Financial Group, Janet Sipes of Amerilife, Tiya Stanley of F&G Life & Annuities, Eric Taylor of Corebridge Financial, Mike Tripses of Annuaprofectus and Mark Williams of Brokers International.

Of behalf of the NAFA staff, board and membership at large, DiVencenzo recognized the contributions of exiting board members Bruce Donaldson of Simplicity Group Holdings, Jason Krohnke of American Equity, Nate Lucius of Gradient Financial Group, Matt Tarkenton of Tarkenton Financial and Tamiko Toland formerly of CANNEX Financial Exchanges Ltd., who received commemorative plaques and pens in honor of their time and talent.

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About NAFA

NAFA, the National Association for Fixed Annuities, is the premier trade association exclusively dedicated to fixed annuities. Our mission is to promote the awareness and understanding of fixed annuities. We educate annuity salespeople, regulators, legislators, journalists, and industry personnel about the value of fixed annuities and their benefits to consumers. NAFA's membership represents every aspect of the fixed annuity marketplace covering fixed annuities sold by independent agents, advisors and brokers. NAFA was founded in 1998. For more information, visit www.nafa.com.