

NEWS

For immediate release

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E Q U I T A

FINANCIAL NETWORK

Equita Financial Network Announces New Structure for Women’s Financial Advisor Group

Industry veterans Marie Swift and Dori Thomas join team

FORT WASHINGTON, PA (January 31, 2022) – [Equita Financial Network](#) (Equita), a privately-held entity that offers a proven business platform for women-led, independently owned and operated fee-only financial planning firms, today announced a new fee structure and enhanced benefits for their member firms, plus two new additions to the team. Industry thought leader Marie Swift and colleague Dori Thomas have joined the network as collaboration partners.

An introductory webinar is scheduled for February 7, 2023 at 4:00pm Eastern Time. Equita’s co-founders will lead the group through the new options and share more of their “why story” then. They will also show off the new-and-improved member portal and introduce other Equita members who will be participating on this virtual meeting format. All who register will automatically receive the recording. Click to register: <https://equitafn.wildapricot.org/EquitaWaywebsession>

An SEC Registered Investment Advisor (RIA), Equita is the brainchild of co-founders Katie Burke and Bridget Venus Grimes. Created by these two tenured financial planning professionals in 2018, based on their own experiences working every day in the trenches as RIA business owners themselves, Equita membership is open to women who want to thrive as entrepreneurial financial planners, building their own brand but with the support of a like-minded community and specially negotiated resources that might otherwise be cost-prohibitive and/or out of reach as a solo RIA.

“Since Equita allows member firms to conduct business as a DBA, they don’t need to register with either the state or SEC. Equita does not take any equity stake in any member firm. They maintain their own independent, autonomous brand but benefit from the economies of scale that our network creates,” said Equita co-founder [Bridget Grimes, CFP®](#), Grimes, who is also the President of her own wealth management firm, WealthChoice, LLC., emphasizes that “members own their client relationships, always.”

NEW YEAR, NEW MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS

Based on current and prospective member feedback, in 2023 Equita will be shifting the way member firms are charged for services.

“We are excited to share this new structure with our current and new member firms,” stated Equita co-founder [Katie Burke, CFP®](#). “Previously, member firms were charged on a basis point agreement that had breakpoints and was tiered accordingly (range was 28%-38%). Now all members will pay the signature platform fee of \$1500/month plus 20 basis points regardless of the member firm’s individual AUM.* We want more women practitioners to join us and felt, ultimately, that this was simpler to explain and would help more women feel confident in taking next steps. As always, our platform allows members to focus on running their businesses and serving their clients, while Equita supports them in building the business they want,” said Burke, who is also President and Founder of her own fiduciary financial firm, Method Financial Planning.

NEW STRUCTURE BENEFITS MEMBERS

Equita’s signature platform includes all the necessary resources to run a comprehensive financial planning and investment management firm. The base platform fee of \$1,500 per month is charged in advance on a quarterly basis.

Equita has partnered with some of the most respected companies in the financial services industry, including Advyzon, eMoney Advisor, Markel, Dimensional Fund Advisors, East Bay Financial Services, TD Ameritrade, and Charles Schwab.

Benefits include:

- Centralized Firm Technology Hub
- IT Solution
- Financial Planning Software
- Comprehensive Insurance Coverage
- Ongoing Compliance Support
- Client Invoicing Solution
- Annual Scholarship for CFP® designation
- Investment Solutions and Practice Management Support
- Custodial Relationships
- Community Collaboration and Member Portal
- Options to secure an emergency continuity plan
- Opportunities for a possible succession plan with another Equita member firm

On top of the base platform fee, professional portfolio management resources, priced at 20 basis points of AUM (defined by assets custodied at TD Ameritrade or Schwab*) are paid on a quarterly basis in advance, and include:

- Dedicated Portfolio Management Solution including client transition planning and customized investment models
- Portfolio Implementation including account rebalancing oversight and trade execution via a dedicated trading team

“It’s like having your own CIO and a full-on trading team,” Grimes emphasized. “It is not a turnkey asset management program – or TAMP – which, we feel, is a huge benefit.”

“We are able to provide economies of scale and professional support that might otherwise be cost-prohibitive and/or out of reach for many practitioners,” Burke added. “We will be hosting more in-person events and gatherings, too, now that pandemic concerns have eased. We hope to reach more women in the financial planning profession and show them how they can experience the same types of benefits that our early member firms have enjoyed. For instance, one of our member firms, Truman Wealth Advisors, went from \$0 assets under management (AUM) to nearly \$100M AUM in under four years, thanks to Equita.”

“Of course, it’s not just about the numbers,” Grimes added. “While members love our proven resources, there is power when you participate in the right community, and our growing network will be even more helpful as Equita attracts additional motivated members.”

COMMUNITY AT THE HEART

According to the [U.S. Chamber of Commerce](#), there are a lot of advantages to being a solopreneur or small business owner. Entrepreneurs have a high level of control over their business. Solopreneurs don’t have to consult with investors or other partners, and they get to decide on their hours and working environment. But it can be stressful to run a business without a strong network of support. It’s helpful to network with other business owners. They will have shared experiences and could offer helpful suggestions along the way.

The Equita community is the foundation of support for women in the network. The robust and structured component supports collaboration across member firms, sharing of best practices and client solutions, plus advocacy, education, and virtual and in-person events.

“Fostering the exchange of information and ideas between like-minded professionals who share freely and support one another is part of the Equita promise,” said Burke. “The members-only portal allows us to share documents and a new and even more robust forum that will allow us to archive ideas and conversations between members and special guest experts is being developed now. Our powerful community of female business leaders will inspire and cheer you on, just as you inspire and cheer them on. Finding firms that have an abundance mentality is an essential part of the growth of the network.”

INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS JOIN TEAM

Joining the Equita team are two seasoned industry professionals. [Marie Swift](#), President and CEO of [Impact Communications, Inc.](#), who will serve as a goodwill ambassador for Equita Financial Network. In this role, Swift will offer strategic direction and industry connectivity. [Dori Thomas](#), formerly part of the member services team at the [Garrett Planning Network](#), will lead membership engagement initiatives and support community outreach for Equita.

“Dori and I were impressed by the vision that Katie and Bridget shared with us last fall as we began exploratory conversations,” said Swift. “They are building something special, and we think their logic is right on target. We are happy to lend a hand as they work to find more and more like-minded women who want to thrive as business owners in the financial planning profession. Equita is breaking down one barrier after another for women-led RIA firms. Having two tenured CFPs – and now the entire member network – doing the service supplier vetting, negotiations, and testing

is huge. Add to that the compliance burden relief and the power of a tight-knit community, and you have something really special.”

EQUITA FINANCIAL NETWORK = PROVEN RESOURCES + POWERFUL COMMUNITY

Equita Financial Network (Equita) provides a signature platform that includes all the necessary resources to run a comprehensive financial planning and investment management firm. In addition to providing proven resources, Equita also provides a powerful community of support for women-led, independently operated, fee-only financial planning firms.

Equita is an SEC Registered Investment Advisor (RIA) that allows Member firms to conduct business as a DBA, thereby avoiding the need for Member firms to register either with the State or SEC. Equita does not take an equity stake in any Member firm. Member firms maintain their own independent, autonomous brand. Members own their client relationships - always.

The Equita platform is intentionally priced so that women business owners can keep more of what they make. Equita provides a robust and structured network component to support collaboration across Members firms, sharing of best practices, and client solutions + advocacy, education, and succession planning options. In-person and virtual gatherings support the exchange of information and ideas between like-minded professionals who share freely and support one another. Having an abundance mentality is an essential element of success when a woman becomes a part of the Equita community.

Equita also provides the opportunity to uncover potential partners for emergency continuity planning and/or succession planning purposes. Member firms are CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ Professionals, or will commit to earning the designation.

To learn more about Equita’s powerful community and proven resources, visit: www.EquitaFN.com.

***Important Disclosures:** Registration does not imply a certain level of skill or training. Members pay to Equita an annual fee of 20 basis points, paid quarterly based on the value of all client accounts custodied at TD Ameritrade and Charles Schwab as of the last business day of the prior quarter (“AUM Fee”).

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