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## Letter from the Managing Director Leonard Alsfeld



The creation of AGESS Wealth Advisors was motivated by a desire to bring the best lessons of our Wall Street experiences, matched by the reputation and opportunities offered by Raymond James.

Our guiding mantra is introduced whenever a contact with our team occurs. *Accountability. Ethics. Guidance. Solutions. Service.* By holding to these principles, we hope that your experience with our team leads to a greater understanding of the opportunities existing on Wall Street, coupled with our fiduciary responsibilities. A visit to our website, [www.AgessWealth.com](http://www.AgessWealth.com), will provide investors with a wealth of topics designed to entertain and educate our clientele.

We know that the Wall Street environment has many differing and conflicting opinions. It is our hope that a well-informed and educated public will develop the skills necessary to make a prudent decision on the proper direction for their financial goals. We hope that together, we can meet or exceed your expectations.

Welcome to the AGESS model.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Agess Wealth offers more than just basic investment services! Here is a comprehensive list of our offered services:

- ❖ Banking & Lending Solutions
- ❖ Education Planning
- ❖ Financial Planning
- ❖ Fixed Income Services
- ❖ Investment Banking
- ❖ Investment Strategies
- ❖ Retirement Planning
- ❖ Risk Management
- ❖ Sustainable Investing

For detailed information on these services, please follow this link:

<https://www.raymondjames.com/agesswealth/services/services>

Why Women Are a Game Changer for Economic Growth

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The Economy is Just Fine: 10 Years of Growth

[WATCH VIDEO](#)



# Where and How to Spend Your Money: Needs vs. Wants

## *The New Food Revolution in America: Going Back to Our Roots*

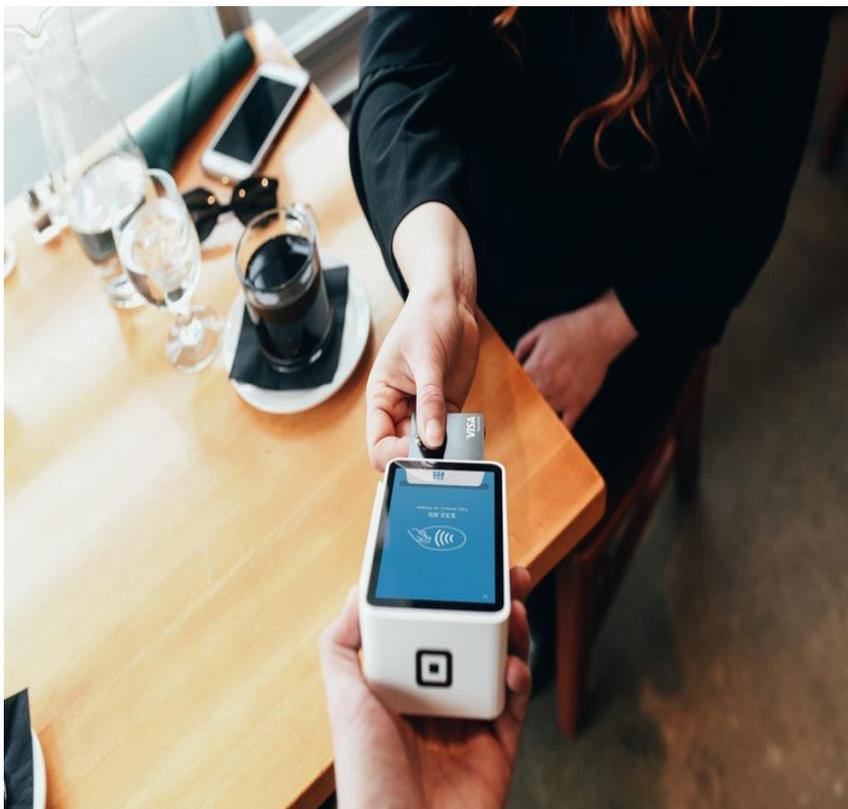
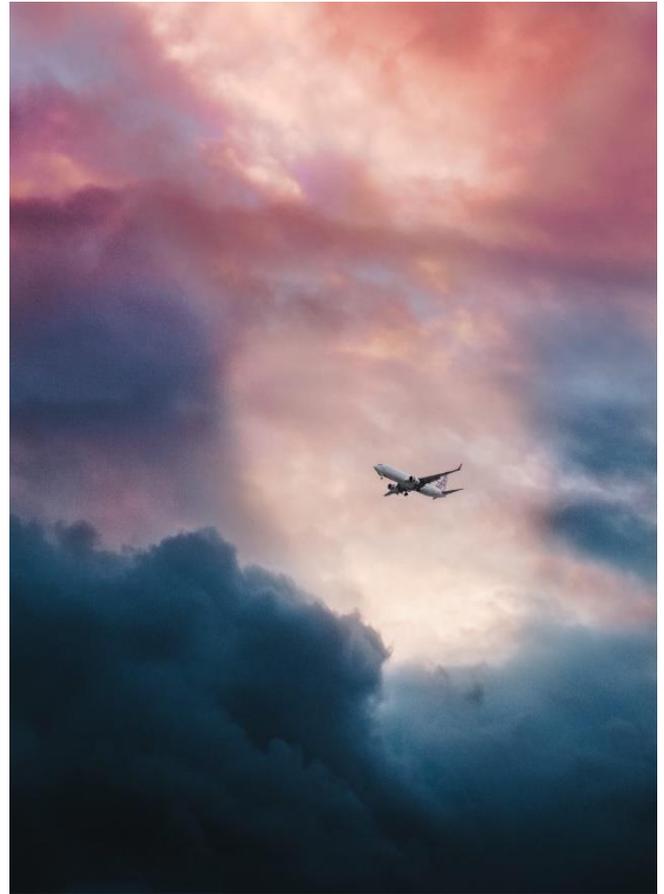
The initial revolution of the food economy in America has shifted consumer preference to convenience over quality. However, thanks to meal delivery services such as Home Chef and Blue Apron, cooking at home has never been more convenient. Interestingly enough, these meal delivery services are poised to send American food culture back to the pre-supermarket era. Before the rise of large supermarket chains, people had neighborhood corner stores, where they would shop every day for what they needed for dinner that night. With the rise and success of big box stores like Walmart, the trend has shifted to consumers buying what they need for the week, which in many cases, causes massive amounts of food to be wasted. Meal delivery services work in almost the same way as neighborhood corner stores, except online. You can order fresh, healthy ingredients at low cost and have them delivered within hours, saving trips to the supermarket, diminishing the need to stock large quantities of goods, and replacing hours in preparing menus. Often times, the preparation and cleaning that come with cooking extend late into the night, competing with family time. Pre-delivered meals, on the other hand, can fit nicely into a routine allowing the family schedule to be better managed.

One of the greatest contributors to the growing problem of obesity in the United States is calorie dense fast food drive through outlets like McDonalds and KFC. People are consuming fast food at ever increasing levels because American life has become more complicated. Most people struggle to find the time to cook a daily meal and to share dinner time with family, often fueling an unhealthy diet, which is a leading cause of diabetes. According to family therapist Anne Fishel, [family dinner time](#) contributes to a healthy brain and body, as well as lower rates of depression and risky behaviors in teenagers and children. With the availability of convenient and cheap meal delivery services, time for family dinner in America is becoming a much more realistic option. Cooking at home or having prepared meals delivered provides benefits that can leave a lasting impression on the physical and mental wellbeing of the family unit.



# Traveling Smart: Understanding How the Travel Industry Functions

With the summer season upon us, travel plans go into full effect as families look to take a much-anticipated vacation. Traveling can be one of the most expensive activities that tax the budget, so it is important to set aside these expenses and budget them into your financial planning. Credit cards are the most common method of paying for these trips. When deciding upon a credit card, the card that carries the most benefits tends to be the preferred choice. One of the most popular benefits being offered by credit card companies today is the “point” system. When you sign up for a card, you can receive “points” for certain purchases made with the card. These points can be used to pay for things such as lodging, airfare, and rental cars. Many families use these points to afford the vacations that they take. Although the purchasing power of points is different for every industry and company, the best way to think about the value of points is in terms of their dollar value.



Airlines and hotels use points as an incentive for consumers to buy their products and services. Companies have generated sizable budgets for these programs, meaning they are willing to invest millions of dollars to expand their customer base. For example, Southwest Airlines put aside [\\$2.6 million dollars](#) in revenue to cover their point redemption program in 2019. These loyalty programs have become a heavy incentive for consumers when deciding on hotel, airfare, and other travel expenses.

We advise that consumers research credit cards that offer attractive points programs that allow you to maximize your spending options.

# Budgeting to Enjoy your Home Life

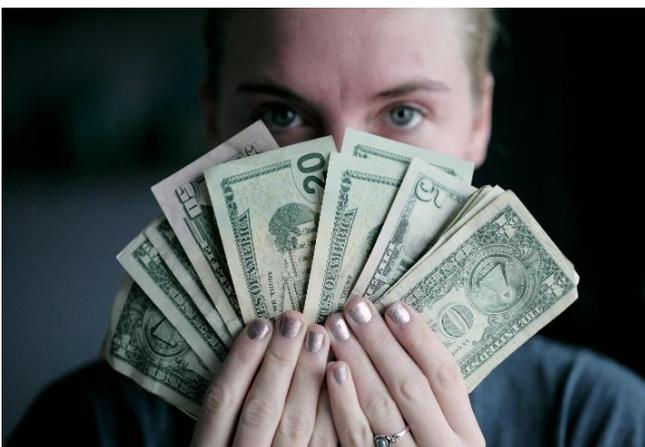


Home expenses including the standard mortgage and rent costs are a constant struggle for families with average spending running about [\\$17,148 for a year](#). This amount covers the utilities and unpredictable expenses when things break. While these costs may appear to be something that's difficult to plan for, there are simple things that you can do to help protect your budget that are not difficult to do. A first step might be to start with something simple such as caulking or weather stripping windows and doors. Heating and cooling costs can be cut drastically by this simple exercise. By limiting air loss through these small openings experts claim you can save up to 30% on energy costs.

Another avenue to control expenses is to review your insurance coverage and shop around for lower costs. The insurance industry is insanely competitive, often insurance companies are willing to offer reduced rates in order to keep your business. For example, All-State offers a program where you can reduce your insurance rates if you are a safe driver. Also, a greater deductible will reduce monthly premiums.



Summertime can be seen as a good time to review and re-evaluate things such as landscaping costs, internet, cable, or alarm services. Cable is losing viewership to inexpensive alternatives such as the Amazon Firestick, Google Chromecast, and Roku, which allow users to stream content to their TV. The price conscious public can see a benefits from streaming content from the internet rather than paying a large and ever-increasing fee for cable. Additionally, by coupling internet and phone, you could save additional dollars.



Perhaps consider expanding your dialogue with your financial advisor to identify additional benefits beyond the investment advice you may already receive. This expanded advice might unearth things such as the method from refinancing your mortgage to rolling accumulated credit card debt.

# Education: Degrees of Saving

One of the most difficult dilemmas facing families is how to pay for the ever increasing cost of higher education. There are 2 attractive vehicles available for covering these skyrocketing costs, 529 plans and UGMA (Uniform Gift to Minors Act) / UTMA (Uniform Transfer to Minors Act).

Opening a 529 education savings account or opening a UTMA/UGMA can be used to protect assets while growing their value to cover higher education costs.



529 education plans can be used for any student; whether it's for college expenses or tuition for elementary and secondary schools. 529 plans are created by all 50 states individually. Each investment account plan varies relative to the funds preselected by each state. In Louisiana, the [START](#) program can cover K12 and elementary expenses but there is a limit of \$10,000 withdrawals annually. For college, there is no limit. Contributions to a plan are tax deductible up to \$2,400 a year per account. These funds can include housing, computer purchasing, and a variety of other college expenses.

UTMA/UGMA plans can be funded at \$13,000 per parent per year per child and can be used to protect funding for the child or minor until they reach the age of majority (usually 18.) While the contributions do not afford the granter a tax deduction, the custodian does not have to pay tax on the gift. Any annual gains generated in the account above \$1,800 will be taxed at the at the custodian's marginal tax rate. An account can include stock, mutual funds, and other liquid investments. UTMA/UGMA accounts will also be considered your child's asset when being assessed for financial aid. Take advantage of the financial tools at your disposal and secure your children's education.



# AGESS Wealth Staff Smoothie

Try out this summer smoothie recipe made from the favorite fruits of the AGESS Wealth Team!



## Ingredient List:

- 1/4 cup Ice
- 1 Banana
- 1/2 cup Strawberries
- 1/2 cup Blueberries
- 4 oz Plain Yogurt
- 1/4 cup Passionfruit Juice

\*Scoop of protein powder if desired.

## Directions:

- Wash all fruit.
- Remove hulls from strawberries.
- Combine ingredients and blend until smooth.

# Hurricane Checklist: Are You Prepared?

## Flood Insurance: Investment into Peace of Mind

Floods are one of the most quickly occurring natural disasters in existence. Even if you live in an area with higher elevation, there is always a chance of flooding. Flood insurance is relatively low cost, considering that it insures not only your home but also your possessions (for a small extra cost). Flood insurance has a low cost *because* of the partnership between FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) and insurance companies. Especially if you live in flood-prone states (most of the Gulf Coast), the most financially sound decisions you can make is to protect your assets with flood insurance. For more information on your available options, visit

<https://www.floodsmart.gov/>.

In the event of a full-blown natural disaster, AGESS Wealth's business continuity plan would be exercised. Here are some resources to take advantage if this ever does occur:

Client Services: 800-647-7378

Client Access Support: 877-752-2237

For more information on hurricane preparedness, please see the following website:

<https://www.ready.gov/hurricanes>

## Basic Supply Checklist

- ❖ Week supply of water
- ❖ Week supply of (nonperishable) food.
- ❖ Charge all electrical devices
- ❖ Clean and fill bathtub with water for cooking/cleaning/flushing toilets
- ❖ Flashlight with extra batteries
- ❖ Battery powered or hand cranked radio
- ❖ First aid kit
- ❖ Seven day supply of all medical supplies
- ❖ Multi-purpose tool
- ❖ Sanitation and personal hygiene items
- ❖ Copies of personal documents (think pertinent medical information, lease to home, passports, driver's license, and birth certificates)
- ❖ Cell phone with portable chargers
- ❖ Family and emergency contact info
- ❖ Extra cash
- ❖ Emergency blanket
- ❖ Map(s) of local area
- ❖ Baby supplies
- ❖ Pet supplies
- ❖ Tools/supplies to secure your home
- ❖ Extra clothing
- ❖ Rain gear
- ❖ Insect repellent and sunscreen

## AGESS in the Community

From cheering on the New Orleans Pelicans to attending the Catholic Community Foundation Women's Giving Circle luncheon and mass, the AGESS Wealth Advisors of Raymond James had a busy quarter!

Congratulations to our Managing Director Lenny Alsfeld on receiving the "Exemplary Citizenship Award" from Providence College for "a life of example ... including laudable philanthropy, church and community leadership, and modeling a life that children and others will strive to emulate."



Click the icons to follow us on social media!



Investing involves risk and you may incur a profit or loss regardless of strategy selected, including diversification and asset allocation.

Keep in mind that there is no assurance that any strategy will ultimately be successful or profitable nor protect against a loss.

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Any opinions are those of Leonard Alsfeld and not necessarily those of Raymond James. The foregoing information has been obtained from sources considered to be reliable, but we do not guarantee that it is accurate or complete. Expressions of opinion are as of this date and are subject to change without notice.

As with other investments, there are generally fees and expenses associated with participation in a 529 plan. There is also a risk that these plans may lose money or not perform well enough to cover college costs as anticipated. Most states offer their own 529 programs, which may provide advantages and benefits exclusively for their residents. The tax implications can vary significantly from state to state.

This information was developed by First Trust, an independent third party. The opinions of Brian S. Wesbury are independent from and not necessarily those of RJFS or Raymond James.

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