



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Suzanne Bergin: 484.947.5782

VALENTINE'S ADVICE FOR SINGLE WOMEN: TREAT YOURSELF TO FINANCIAL
INDEPENDENCE

Five Easy Steps towards Attaining and Maintaining Financial Independence

Manhattan, NY. February 8, 2007 – If you are like many single women, you celebrate Valentine's Day by showing some love to number one – you get a manicure, facial, treat yourself to a movie, yoga class, or have dinner with friends and family. While these activities may be relaxing, their impact is shortlived. This year, consider giving yourself a lasting Valentine's Day gift -- financial independence.

Regardless of your particular circumstance, attaining and maintaining financial independence is something that you have to do for yourself. No matter how much someone else loves you or provides for you, they cannot grant you long-term financial independence.

“The first step to financial independence is getting it on your radar screen and committing to get started with a plan,” says Alex Levi, a financial advisor and co-founder of Element Financial Group. “It is easy to ignore your financial vulnerabilities, but they are not going to go away. In fact, they will stand in your way of finding true happiness. It is only by taking action that you will begin to feel that your hard-fought independence is secure.”

Levi recommends taking these five steps:

1. **Pay attention.** Take an interest in your finances; make them your favorite hobby instead of the dreaded or ignored chore. Be committed to improving your financial skills. Pay attention to where you are spending your money. Are there expenses that could be reduced or eliminated? What are your sources of income and are there ways to maximize those sources? You do not have to be an expert or even consult an expert to begin saving money; just pay attention.
2. **Take an inventory.** It sounds simple, and it is – once you get started. Organize your financial junk drawer. Make sure you know where everything is, the name it is held in, and the role it plays in helping you to achieve your goals. Take inventory of your savings, investments, retirement plans, assets and liabilities. Gather your wills and trusts. Record all important account numbers and store legal documents in one safe place.

3. **Set Goals.** Financial goal setting is not reserved for people entering a new life phase; it is something everyone should do. It does not have to be complicated. Simply think realistically about what it is you want out of life, in the short term as well as in the long term. Then you can begin outlining the specific steps needed to achieve those goals
4. **Feed the Money Machine.** Establish a systematic way to save by taking advantage of the tax-deferred savings opportunities available to you, such as your employer's 401(k) plan. In addition, set aside a designated amount of money from each paycheck exclusively for savings and investing for the future. Think of it as paying yourself, and expanding your options later in life.
5. **Protect What You Have.** Make sure you protect the assets you have worked hard to accumulate by buying appropriate amounts of life insurance, disability income and long-term care insurance. Also, protect your free will in the event of incapacitation by working with an attorney to draft wills, living wills, health care proxies and powers of attorney.

There are many resources available to help you sharpen your financial skills. There is no shortage of great books, websites and television talk shows dedicated to the topic. There often, however, is no substitute for talking with a professional. If you need help, talk to friends and family members about finding a reputable, experienced advisor who talks your language, makes you comfortable and gives you confidence.

For more information on attaining and maintaining financial independence, contact Alex Levi at alevi@finsvcs.com

Alex Levi is a founder of Element Financial Group a distinctive, single-source wealth management firm in Manhattan. Alex's unique background in the finance, fashion and entertainment industry, as well as her success as an entrepreneur enables her to understand the challenges faced by both business owners and successful professionals. As their "financial advocate," Levi collaborates with her clients in the formation of strategies to help create and preserve wealth. In addition, Levi serves on the Executive Committee of the Board of New York Women in Film and Television.

Levi is a Registered Representative of and offers securities and investment advisory services through MML Investors Services, Inc., Member SIPC. Supervisory Office, 150 Clove Road, Little Falls, NJ 07424. 973.237.0100. Insurance offered through Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company and other fine companies.