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Printable PDF

October 27, 2021

The Gold standard: my529 praised for best practices

Utah's educational savings plan earns top rating, is one of nation's best 529 plans

(Salt Lake City) Once again, my529 is pleased to announce its standing as one of the top 529 plans in the country. my529 has earned this honor for 11 consecutive years, a feat unmatched across the 529 industry.

In a report released Tuesday, Morningstar named my529 as one of three plans to receive the celebrated Analyst Rating™ of Gold. Morningstar Research Services LLC, a leading provider of independent investment research, is a subsidiary of Morningstar, Inc.

Analysts reviewed 62 plans by the following metrics: underlying investment quality and selection process, asset allocation methodology, investment option offerings, fees, and oversight.

Calling the Gold-rated plans “Summa Cum Laude,” and the “best and the brightest,” Morningstar noted that their stewardship and outstanding investments not only distinguished them from their peers, but also set the standard. The report suggested that the top-rated plans would appeal to both residents and nonresidents.

“Utah's my529 plan is the only 529 plan that's consistently received a Gold rating since we debuted our ratings in 2012,” said Morningstar analysts Adam Millson and Hyunmin Kim, in their report.

my529 has received Morningstar's top rating for 11 years, and this is the plan's 10th Gold since Morningstar began evaluating 529s as Gold, Silver, Bronze, Neutral, or Negative in 2012. Previously, Morningstar assessed 529 plans using different criteria.

Morningstar praised my529's continuous efforts to enhance the plan for account owners, singling out the July 2021 transition from Age-Based to Enrollment Date investment option structure—a progressive glide path they view as “industry best practice.” They also remarked on how my529 utilized “participant data and asset allocation research” within the Enrollment Date glide path construction, supporting “set-it-and-forget-it savers.”

my529's Customized Age-Based investment option also received a mention, with Morningstar highlighting the “unique” option as a way for savvy investors to take a “more hands-on approach” by designing their own portfolio.

A separate, state-specific plan breakdown commended the plan's low costs, noting my529's average investment option fee was “cheaper than 90% of 529 plans.”

The state analysis emphasized stewardship and a robust menu of underlying funds. Morningstar indicated that the efforts of my529's “dedicated team,” as well as the plan's resources—including consultants—contribute to the plan's success.

Morningstar also cited my529's state and national initiatives to support educational savings and awareness, drawing attention to the nonprofit partnerships that seek to foster savings within low- and middle-income populations, as well as plan-sponsored scholarship opportunities.

"Education makes a difference in people's lives and in our communities. my529 is proud to provide a high-quality, low-cost vehicle that helps people invest for college, university, trade and technical schools, and even K-12 tuition expenses," said Richard Ellis, my529 executive director.

"We at my529 appreciate Morningstar's ongoing recognition of our team and our efforts to deliver a meaningful educational savings plan."

Please read Morningstar's analysis of 529 plans at <https://www.morningstar.com/articles/1062917/the-top-529-education-savings-plans-of-2021>.

About my529

my529 is Utah's official 529 educational savings plan.

Accounts are free to open, and my529 requires no minimum deposit or account balance. my529's user-friendly website, my529.org, makes it easy to open, manage, and contribute to an account online.

To learn more, visit my529.org, call toll-free at 800.418.2551, or email info@my529.org.

Important Legal Notice

Investing is an important decision. The investments in your account may vary with market conditions and could lose value. Carefully read the Program Description in its entirety for more information and consider all investment objectives, risks, charges and expenses before investing. For a copy of the Program Description, call 800.418.2551 or visit my529.org.

Investments in my529 are not insured or guaranteed by my529, the Utah Board of Higher Education, the Utah Higher Education Assistance Authority Board of Directors, any other state or federal agency, or any third party. However, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) insurance is provided for the FDIC-Insured investment option. In addition, my529 offers investment options that are partially insured for the portion of the respective investment option that includes FDIC-insured accounts as an underlying investment.

The state in which you or your beneficiary pay taxes or live may offer a 529 plan that provides state tax or other benefits, such as financial aid, scholarship funds and protection from creditors, not otherwise available to you by investing in my529. You should consider such benefits, if any, before investing in my529.

my529 does not provide legal, financial, investment or tax advice. You should consult your own tax or legal advisor to determine the effect of federal and state tax laws on your particular situation.

my529 was rated "Gold" or its equivalent by Morningstar 2004-2007, 2009, and 2011-2021; rated "Silver" or its equivalent in 2008 and 2010. The Morningstar Analyst Rating™ for 529 college savings plans is not a credit or risk rating. To determine an analyst rating, Morningstar's analysts consider four factors: the plan's strategy and investment process (process); an assessment of the individuals managing the plan's investment options (people); the stewardship practices of the plan's administration and parent firm (together, parent); and whether the plan's investment options are a good value proposition compared to its peers (price). Plans are

then assigned forward-looking ratings of "Gold," "Silver," "Bronze," "Neutral," and "Negative." The top three ratings (Gold, Silver, and Bronze) indicate that Morningstar's analysts think highly of a 529 plan; the differences correspond to the level of analyst conviction in the ability of a plan's investment options to collectively outperform their respective benchmarks and peers through time, within the context of the level of risk taken. Morningstar does not rate all 529s every year; it rated just 62 of 93 plans in 2021.

Analyst ratings are subjective in nature and should not be used as the sole basis for investment decisions. Analyst ratings are based on Morningstar analysts' current expectations about future events and therefore involve unknown risks and uncertainties that may cause Morningstar's expectations not to occur or to differ significantly from what was expected. Morningstar does not represent its analyst ratings to be guarantees.

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