



## **A Message From Mary Sterk**

Happy Spring from Sterk Financial! As snow turns to rain, here are a few 1<sup>st</sup> quarter economic observations:

- The DOW ended the quarter at record highs – almost hitting the 40,000 mark! \*
- The tech sector has been volatile. The Magnificent Seven has been re-dubbed the “core-four” as Microsoft, Nvidia, Meta and Amazon continue to perform.
- Inflation does not seem to be going away. The expected rate drops have not happened yet, and we continue to hope and wait.
- Economists are seeing signs that indicate a “soft landing,” in which inflation moderates but the economy avoids a severe downturn.

We are getting a lot of questions about how the upcoming election may influence the markets. If we look at the S&P 500 returns over the last eight decades of presidential elections, the average full election year return has been 10.7%. \* Interestingly, there is very little difference in market performance related to who wins. Historically, the market returns post-election are the highest when a divided congress is the outcome. Of course, past performance does not guarantee future results, yet it does give us something to consider.

Our big news around the home office is that we celebrated our 20-year anniversary on February 16<sup>th</sup>. What a wonderful milestone for our team to have achieved. We recently sent out invites to our upcoming party, so please rsvp to [rosecolella@sterkfinancialservices.com](mailto:rosecolella@sterkfinancialservices.com) if you can join us for the fun and festivities!

We are also pleased to share that we were awarded another Forbes award – Best in State Women in Wealth - #1 spot for South Dakota! We are honored to secure a spot on these lists now for 7 years in a row. This is truly a testament to the wonderful team here and their dedication to our clients.

A little housekeeping. In the past you may have received an email that your quarterly One View reports were ready to view. There will be no more emails announcing this, but of course you certainly have access to view your accounts electronically at any time. Please contact our office if you need any help with on-line access.

Finally, do not forget that when it comes to investing, there are some key principles that remain true no matter what the markets are doing. Diversification is crucial. The timeframe in which you intend to use your money should drive your portfolio risk levels. Consistently buy

low and sell high. We continue to review portfolio quality each quarter, ensuring that you are positioned effectively for your risk levels. As always, please reach out at any time with questions.

Thank you,  
Mary Sterk, CFP ®, CEO & Founder

*Sources – \*Marketwatch No investment strategy can guarantee positive results. Past performance is not a guarantee of future results. Forbes Best in State Wealth Advisors list includes ten recipients per state. The award is based on qualitative and quantitative data, rating thousands of wealth advisors with a minimum of seven years of experience and weighing factors like revenue trends, assets under management, compliance records, industry experience and best practices. The award is not based on portfolio performance or client reviews. There is no fee in exchange for rankings. Third-party rankings and recognitions are no guarantee of future investment success and do not ensure that a client or prospective client will experience a higher level of performance or results. These ratings should not be construed as an endorsement of the advisor by any client nor are they representative of any one client's evaluation.*