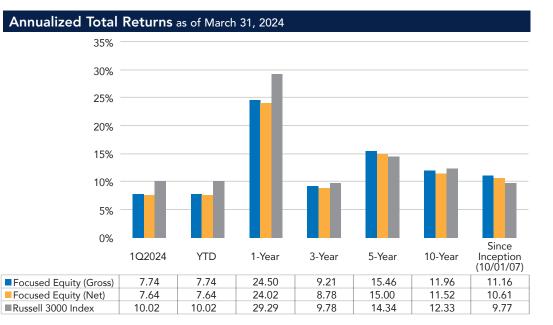


Uncompromised Focus<sup>®</sup>

# FORT WASHINGTON FOCUSED EQUITY - 1Q2024

## HIGHLIGHTS

- U.S. equities moved higher in the first quarter as economic data remained strong despite higher interest rates.
- While underperforming the index, the Focused Equity strategy returned 7.6% (net) during the quarter.



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## MARKET COMMENTARY

U.S. equities moved higher in the first quarter as economic data remained strong despite higher interest rates. The best performing benchmark sectors were Communication Services, Energy, and Information Technology. The worst performing sectors for the index were Real Estate, Utilities, and Consumer Discretionary. The Focused Equity strategy underperformed the Russell 3000 Index during the quarter.

## **PORTFOLIO ACTIVITY**

During the quarter, the team added Schwab (Charles) Corp, Becton Dickinson, and Taiwan Semiconductor to the portfolio, while Hilton Worldwide and PayPal were removed from the portfolio.

As the quarter came to a close, the strategy had an overweight in the Communication Services, Health Care, and Financials sectors and an underweight in the Information Technology, Industrials, Energy, Real Estate, and Materials sectors. The weight in the Consumer Discretionary and Consumer Staples sectors was roughly in line with that of the index. The strategy held no positions in the Utilities sector.

From a market cap perspective, the strategy ended the period with a 1.4% weight in smaller cap stocks (companies with a market cap below \$2 billion). The index weight for this segment is 2.0%. The strategy had an underweight in mid-cap businesses, which now comprise 4.7% of assets, compared to an index weight of 7.5%. Lastly, the strategy is underweight in larger cap businesses (companies with a market cap above \$10 billion). The weight in that segment is currently 90.4%, which is lower than the index weight of 90.5%. This allocation decision had a positive impact on performance during the quarter. Cash holdings ended the quarter at 3.5%.

# INVESTMENT PROFESSIONALS

#### James E. Wilhelm, Jr.

Managing Director Head of Public Equity Senior Portfolio Manager *31 Years Experience* 

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Assistant Vice President Senior Equity Research Analyst 23 Years Experience

#### Daniel T. Gibson, CFA

Vice President Portfolio Manager Alternative Assets 15 Years Experience The sectors where strategy holdings outperformed the most relative to the benchmark were Consumer Discretionary, Communication Services, and Energy. Sectors that lagged the most relative to the benchmark included Industrials, Information Technology, and Consumer Staples. Stock selection detracted 221 basis points from performance for the period. Sector allocation detracted 8 basis points during the quarter primarily due to the cash position.

The three holdings that contributed the most to performance were Meta (Communication Services), HCA Healthcare (Health Care), and Berkshire Hathaway (Financials).

Meta's stock did well due to continued strong performance of the business. Revenue growth is being driven by strong consumer engagement with Meta's services. Reels continues to grow at high rates, driving incremental engagement and monetization opportunities across Instagram and Facebook. Management's 2024 outlook suggests continued discipline in operating expenses, leading to higher expectations for operating margins.

HCA Healthcare outperformed as fourth quarter earnings beat expectations on both revenues and EBITDA, and management raised 2024 guidance. Labor expense, a key focus area over the last several quarters, was well controlled. Various surveys through Q1 suggested continued robust activity at U.S. hospitals.

| Top Ten Holdings   |                               |                |  |  |  |  |  |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| Name               | Sector                        | % of Portfolio |  |  |  |  |  |
| Microsoft          | Information Technology        | 9.0%           |  |  |  |  |  |
| Apple              | Information Technology        | 6.0%           |  |  |  |  |  |
| Meta Platforms     | <b>Communication Services</b> | 5.5%           |  |  |  |  |  |
| Alphabet           | <b>Communication Services</b> | 5.1%           |  |  |  |  |  |
| Berkshire Hathaway | Financials                    | 4.9%           |  |  |  |  |  |
| Amazon.com         | Consumer Discretionary        | 4.6%           |  |  |  |  |  |
| Salesforce         | Information Technology        | 2.7%           |  |  |  |  |  |
| UnitedHealth Group | Health Care                   | 2.7%           |  |  |  |  |  |
| Goldman Sachs      | Financials                    | 2.5%           |  |  |  |  |  |
| HCA Healthcare     | Health Care                   | 2.5%           |  |  |  |  |  |
| Total              |                               | 45.4%          |  |  |  |  |  |

Source: Fort Washington. Data as of 3/31/2024. This supplemental information complements the Focused Equity GIPS Report. For a complete listing of securities held, sold, or purchased over the last year please contact us. The securities identified do not represent all of the securities purchased, sold, or recommended; reader should not assume that investments in securities identified and discussed were or will be profitable. This is not a recommendation with respect to the purchase or sale of any of these securities. See Focused Equity GIPS Report for complete disclosure. The above data is rounded for informational purposes. Holdings subject to change at any time without notice.

Berkshire Hathaway stock benefitted from both its significant equity exposure and a better than expected fourth quarter report. The latter included higher than expected revenues, significantly higher profitability at its GEICO auto insurance subsidiary, improved margins in manufacturing, and a resumption in positive year over year BNSF rail volume growth.

The holdings that detracted the most from performance included Boeing (Industrials), UnitedHealth Group (Health Care), and BioMarin (Health Care).

Boeing underperformed in the first quarter due to an in-air incident involving a recently delivered Boeing 737 MAX-9 aircraft. Further review of the incident revealed manufacturing quality issues within its Renton facility, which ultimately led to the company slowing down production and the regulators at the FAA having a more substantial say in Boeing's operations. Within the quarter, the company also announced leadership changes, with CEO Dave Calhoun retiring at the end of the year, the board chairman choosing not to stand for election in May, and the company replacing the leader of Commercial Aerospace with the Chief Operating Officer. We anticipate all of these changes will weigh on cash flow for this year, but given the company's growing multi-year backlog, we believe this shifts the timing of cash flows from this year to a future period. The barriers to entry protecting Boeing remain in place, allowing the company to address its operational challenges.

For UnitedHealth Group, Medicare Advantage (MA) continues to present near-term challenges, as medical utilization rose through 2023, while proposed 2025 rate increases from the federal government fell below current cost trends. United and its competitors will have the opportunity to adjust their plan designs/benefits for 2025; however, given the magnitude of combined headwinds, it may take more than one year to get back to target margins in MA.

BioMarin's fourth quarter results were about as expected. Given Roctavian's disappointing early launch, BioMarin's new CEO has stopped commenting on leading indicators, and will let sales progress speak for itself. We understand the hold-ups to be primarily logistical, but see upside in the shares even if lack of demand proves to be the real issue. Voxzogo, which has exceeded launch expectations, is expected to be capacity-constrained until about mid-year. The new CEO is conducting a thorough review of the development pipeline, with commentary anticipated at an analyst meeting later in the year.

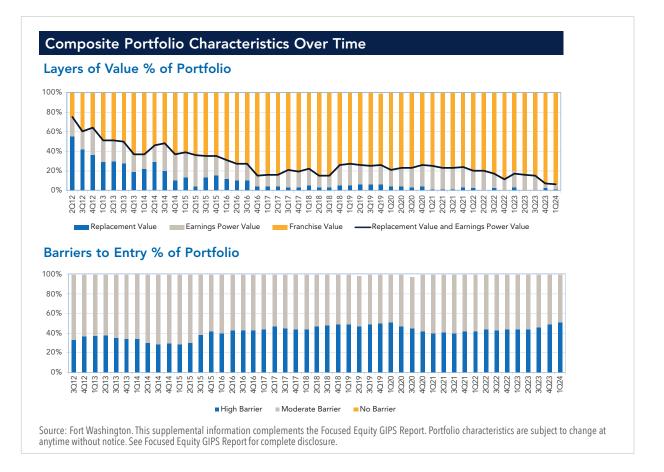
Sector Over/Underweight vs. Russell 3000 Index Sector **Portfolio Weight Communication Services** 13.0% 4.7% 10.3% **Consumer Discretionary** -0.1% **Consumer Staples** 5.6% 0% -1.9% Energy 2.1% Financials 14.8% 1.0% 15.2% 2.8% Health Care -2.9% Industrials 7.2% -3.9% Information Technology 23.7% -0.3% 2.4% Materials -0.6% **Real Estate** 2.1% -2.2% Utilities 0.0% 3.5% Cash 3.5% -3.0% -2.0% -1.0% 0.0% 1.0% 6.0% -5.0% -4 0% 2.0% 3.0% 4.0% 5.0% Max % per industry = 25%

Investments made in international companies, which comprised 3.6% of assets, underperformed the benchmark.

Source: Fort Washington. Data as of 3/31/2024. Data above includes cash. This supplemental information complements the Focused Equity GIPS Report.

| Portfolio Characteristics   |                                      |        |       |  |  |
|---|--------------------------------------|--------|-------|--|--|
| Replacement Value, Earnings Power Value, Franchise Value <sup>1</sup> | 1%                                   | 5%     | 94%   |  |  |
| Weighted average excess return on capital <sup>2</sup>                | ~1,249 bps above the cost of capital |        |       |  |  |
| Barriers to entry (none, moderate, high) <sup>1</sup>                 | 0%                                   | 49%    | 51%   |  |  |
| Price to intrinsic value (weighted average)                           |                                      | \$0.88 |       |  |  |
| Small, mid, large cap % <sup>1</sup>                                  | 1.5%                                 | 4.9%   | 93.7% |  |  |
| International %   |                                      | 3.6%   |       |  |  |
| Number of holdings  |                                      | 48     |       |  |  |
| Cash position   |                                      | 3.5%   |       |  |  |

<sup>1</sup>Excludes cash. <sup>2</sup>Returns on capital vs. cost of capital (ex financials). Source: Fort Washington. This supplemental information complements the Focused Equity GIPS Report. Portfolio characteristics are as of the reported date and are subject to change at any time without notice. See Focused Equity GIPS Report for complete disclosure.



# OUTLOOK

The U.S. equity market rallied in the first quarter of 2024 as the economy remained strong while inflation continued on a bumpy path toward the 2% target. Following a positive year in 2023, the S&P 500 Index ended the first quarter at an all-time high. March marked the fifth consecutive month of gains. Continuing the 2023 trend, index concentration remains at historically high levels despite a bit of a reprieve during the fourth quarter. The S&P 500 Index ended the first quarter with a 10.0% return.

The strong recent performance detailed above reflects investor optimism that the Federal Reserve will be able to control inflation without inducing a recession. In our view, the debate on soft landing versus hard landing will continue until we have landed. History includes many periods where talk of a soft landing occurs just before recession strikes. Therefore, we keep an open mind and watch employment, housing, manufacturing, and market breadth data among others to continually re-underwrite our view. Consistent with our approach over the past couple of years, we have maintained a high-quality portfolio with a focus on higher return on capital businesses with pricing power. One hundred percent of the portfolio, excluding cash, remains invested in companies that we believe have moderate to high barriers to entry. We believe this high-quality posture will benefit the portfolio going forward as we continue to study the Federal Reserve's effort to tame inflation.

## **COMPOSITE PERFORMANCE DISCLOSURES**

|  | 1Q2024    | 2023      | 2022      | 2021      | 2020      | 2019      | 2018      | 2017      | 2016      | 2015      | 2014      |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Focused Equity (Gross)   | 7.74%     | 26.29%    | -17.53%   | 27.91%    | 25.76%    | 28.77%    | -6.71%    | 15.20%    | 13.01%    | 4.21%     | 7.65%     |
| Focused Equity (Net)   | 7.64%     | 25.80%    | -17.85%   | 27.39%    | 25.25%    | 28.25%    | -7.08%    | 14.75%    | 12.58%    | 3.80%     | 7.22%     |
| Russell 3000 Index   | 10.02%    | 25.96%    | -19.21%   | 25.66%    | 20.89%    | 31.01%    | -5.24%    | 21.13%    | 12.74%    | 0.48%     | 12.56%    |
| Focused Equity 3-Year<br>Annual Standard<br>Deviation <sup>1</sup>     |           | 16.54%    | 20.97%    | 18.73%    | 20.23%    | 13.29%    | 10.99%    | 10.07%    | 10.87%    | 11.40%    | 10.65%    |
| Russell 3000 Index<br>3-Year Annual<br>Standard Deviation <sup>1</sup> |           | 17.46%    | 21.48%    | 17.94%    | 19.41%    | 12.21%    | 11.18%    | 10.09%    | 10.88%    | 10.58%    | 9.29%     |
| Dispersion <sup>2</sup>  | 0.19%     | 0.72%     | 0.22%     | 0.21%     | 0.25%     | 0.31%     | 0.21%     | 0.36%     | 0.55%     | 0.42%     | 0.49%     |
| Number of Accounts   | 7         | 6         | 6         | 7         | 6         | 6         | 8         | 10        | 9         | 8         | 7         |
| Composite Assets<br>(\$ millions)                                      | \$2,074.4 | \$1,407.0 | \$1,167.0 | \$1,605.1 | \$1,330.1 | \$1,187.6 | \$1,258.8 | \$1,572.9 | \$1,774.3 | \$1,538.1 | \$1,341.6 |
| Total Firm Assets<br>(\$ millions)                                     | \$75,762  | \$74,613  | \$66,365  | \$73,804  | \$65,086  | \$59,174  | \$49,225  | \$52,774  | \$45,656  | \$42,959  | \$45,002  |

Composite inception and creation date: 10/01/07. <sup>1</sup>The 3-Year annualized ex-post standard deviation is calculated using monthly gross-of-fee returns to measure the average deviations of returns from its mean. <sup>2</sup>Dispersion is not calculated for years in which the composite contains five portfolios or less. Dispersion is calculated as the equal weighted standard deviation of gross-of-fee returns for those portfolios held in the composite during the entire period. The benchmark for this composite is the Russell 3000 Index. Past performance is not indicative of future results.

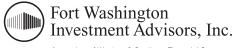
The Fort Washington Focused Equity strategy is an all-cap concentrated, value oriented strategy that invests in businesses with strong barriers to entry that have the capability of generating excess returns on capital. The strategy looks to take advantage of irrational human behavior by buying securities that have been mispriced by the market. We will invest in companies that have limited absolute downside and large margin of safety on the upside. The objective of the Focused Equity strategy is to outperform the Russell 3000 Index over a full market cycle. All fee-paying, flee-schedule is as follows: 0.75% on the first \$25 million, 0.70% on the next \$25 million, and 0.65% on additional amounts over \$50 million. The benchmark for this composite is the Russell 3000 Index. Frank Russell Company (FRC) is the source and owner of the Russell Index data contained or reflected in this material and all trademarks and copyrights related thereto. The presentation may contain confidential information pertaining to FRC and unauthorized use, disclosure, copying, dissemination, or redistribution is strictly prohibited. This is a Fort Washington Investment Advisory, Inc. presentation of the Russell Index data. Frank Russell Company is not responsible for the formatting or configuration of this material or for any inaccuracy in Fort Washington's presentation thereof. Portfolios in this composite include cash, cash equivalents, investment securities, interest, and dividends. The composite and include the reinvestment of all income. Gross returns will be reduced by investiment advisory fees and other expenses that may be incurred in the management fees and include the reinvestment of all income. Gross returns will be institute of the decount. Net of fee performance was calculated using the actual management fees draged investment advisory, faes and other expenses that may be incurred in the management fees and include the reinvestment of all income. Gross returns will be reduced by investiment advisory fees and other expenses tha

# **RISK DISCLOSURES**

Fort Washington's Focused Equity strategy invests in equities, which are subject to market volatility and loss. The strategy invests in stocks of large-cap companies which may be unable to respond quickly to new competitive challenges. The strategy invests in preferred stocks, which are relegated below bonds for payment should the issuer be liquidated. If interest rates rise, the fixed dividend on preferred stocks may be less attractive, causing their price to decline. The strategy invests in emerging markets securities, which are more likely to experience turmoil or rapid changes in market or economic conditions than developed countries. The strategy is non-diversified, which means that it may invest a greater percentage of its assets in the securities of a limited number of issuers and may be subject to greater risks.

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