

# NFJ Small-Cap Value Wrap Strategy

## Market Overview

U.S. equities surged in the first quarter as the highest momentum names posted one of the strongest quarters in over two decades, possibly due to the return of investors who had moved to the sidelines in 2023. Additionally, sticky inflation concerns pushed back investor expectations for the timing and number of interest rate cuts, negatively impacting more rate-sensitive areas of the market. Within the benchmark Russell 2000® Value Index, energy rose double digits, followed by strength across the health care, industrials, and materials sectors. In contrast, the communication services, financials, consumer staples, real estate, and utilities sectors slumped into negative territory.

## Portfolio Overview

The NFJ Small-Cap Value Wrap Strategy underperformed the Russell 2000 Value benchmark Index over the quarter due to negative stock selection while sector allocation modestly contributed.

More specifically, the Strategy experienced a challenging 1Q24 coming off a strong 2023. Those stocks that worked toward the end of 2023 failed to participate in the recent quarter's market gains, when an extreme momentum trade reached levels last seen almost 25 years ago and the Strategy's holdings failed to participate in the runup. Importantly, the reversals coming out of past momentum blowoffs have been swift and we believe NFJ is uniquely prepared for this shift.

## Portfolio Contributors

Stock selection was positive across the energy and real estate sectors. Overweight exposures in the materials and industrials sectors also contributed. **Armstrong World Industries** and **Medpace** were the strongest absolute contributors.

Wall- and ceiling-systems manufacturer **Armstrong World Industries** exceeded 4Q adjusted EPS expectations and issued ahead of consensus 2024 sales guidance.

Over the course of three decades, NFJ Investment Group's commitment to value has remained steadfast. Our investment process – built upon the principles of Benjamin Graham, the father of value investing – has stayed true to the philosophy of the firm's founders while continuing to evolve in the hands of their successors through the integration of new technological capabilities and advanced analytics methods that enhance the research process.

## INVESTMENT TEAM

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### Kris P. Marca

Director, Portfolio Manager/Analyst

## Performance Data as of March 31, 2024

Annualized Returns (%) <sup>1</sup>	QTD	YTD	1 Year	3 Year	5 Year	10 Year	Since Inception
NFJ Small-Cap Value Wrap Composite (gross)	0.09	0.09	15.76	4.41	6.60x	7.49	8.12
NFJ Small-Cap Value Wrap Composite (net)	-0.66	-0.66	12.37	1.32	3.45	4.33	4.94
Russell 2000 Value Index	2.90	2.90	18.75	2.22	8.17	6.87	8.56

1. Annualized for periods greater than one year.

Composite inception January 1, 2011. Composite results. Individual accounts will vary. **Past performance is no guarantee of future results.** The performance shown includes historical performance information from the sub-advisor. Please see Important Information at the end of this presentation for details regarding NFJ and subadvisor performance. Performance is calculated on a total return basis, assuming reinvestment of dividends and interest. Results include accrued income as well as realized and unrealized gains and losses, but do not include the effect of taxes. Gross of fee returns show performance before the deduction of advisory and Sponsor fees (including trading and custodial fees). Net returns presented include the maximum fee associated with the portfolio (fees deducted month after each quarter end for an annual fee of 3% for equity portfolios). Actual fees will vary by client. Please see the GIPS Report on page 4.

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## Portfolio Contributors, cont.

Outsourced clinical development services provider **Medpace** released solid quarterly results, with EPS that bested the Street's expectations, and FY2024 EPS guidance was ahead of consensus estimates.

Top Absolute Contributors	Avg Weight (%)
Armstrong World Industries	1.6
Medpace	1.0
MonotaRO	3.2
MKS Instruments	1.1
Kaiser Aluminum	1.0

## Portfolio Detractors

Stock picking was negative in the financials and consumer discretionary sectors. An underweight in energy and overweight in utilities also detracted. **Columbia Banking System** and **MarketAxess** were the strongest absolute detractors.

Quarterly operating earnings for **Columbia Banking System** fell short of Wall Street's expectations, due in part to the bank holding company's lower net interest income (NII) and higher expenses.

Though electronic trading platform operator **MarketAxess** recorded an EPS beat and hiked its quarterly dividend by 2.8%, comments from management that market share may come under pressure amid near-term challenges disappointed investors.

Top Absolute Detractors	Avg Weight (%)
Columbia Banking System	1.7
MarketAxess	2.0
Fox Factory	1.3
Walker & Dunlop	1.1
Enterprise Financial Services	3.0

## Outlook

For the past year, inflation readings and their perceived impact on the Federal Reserve's (Fed) interest rate policy have been a primary driver of equity price performance. So far, inflation has disappointed in 2024 as prices continue to

Dividends reflect past performance and there is no guarantee they will continue to be paid. Managed accounts are available exclusively through financial professionals. Managed accounts have a minimum asset level and may not be suitable for all investors. Financial professionals seeking more information should contact their managed accounts department or call their NFJ representative. Accounts are managed by NFJ. For certain sponsor firm accounts, NFJ provides the model to the sponsor or the sponsor's designee for discretionary implementation.

**Risk Considerations: Market Volatility:** The value of the securities in the portfolio may go up or down in response to the prospects of individual companies and/or general economic conditions. Local, regional, or global events such as war, terrorism, pandemic, or recession could impact the portfolio, including hampering the ability of the portfolio's manager(s) to invest its assets as intended. **Issuer Risk:** The portfolio will be affected by factors specific to the issuers of securities and other instruments in which the portfolio invests, including actual or perceived changes in the financial condition or business prospects of such issuers.

**Equity Securities:** The market price of equity securities may be adversely affected by financial market, industry, or issuer-specific events. Focus on a particular style or on small, medium, or large-sized companies may enhance that risk.

trend downward, though at a stubbornly slow pace. Markets began the year factoring in five to six quarter-point rate cuts from the Fed over the course of the year. Three months in, markets are wondering when the Fed might be able to ease, if at all. Yet stocks have continued their ascent despite these headwinds, suggesting recent gains have their foundation in solid economic growth and positive earnings results.

If the economy does experience a soft landing and avoids a recession this year, the S&P 500® Index could grow earnings by double digits in 2024 and 2025, providing support for a broader range of sectors. Importantly, we believe this broadening of returns could have positive impacts for equities outside of the Magnificent Seven (Alphabet, Amazon.com, Apple, Meta, Microsoft, NVIDIA, Tesla), including mid- and small-cap names, as well as certain cyclical sectors such as energy, industrials, and financials.

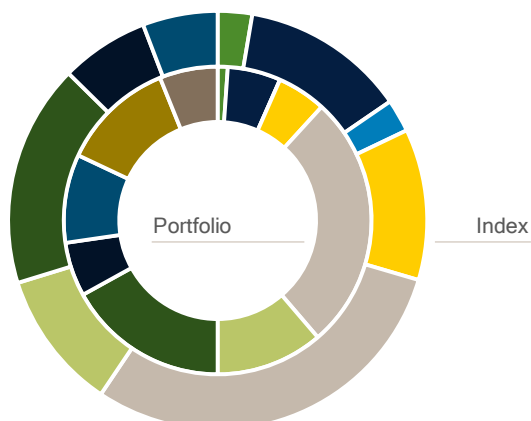
While inflation continues to trend downward, economic growth remains stable, and earnings growth has held, lofty stock valuations have discounted the good news and then some. The S&P 500 now trades at 22 times forward earnings and offers a paltry 1.4% dividend yield. While the stock market appears rich, it is also a broader "market of stocks," providing opportunity for active investors to take advantage of specific areas and sectors that appear historically attractive. For example, the Russell 1000 Value Index lagged its growth counterpart by 31 percentage points last year.

Historically, coming out of years when growth has outperformed value by more than 25%, value went on to outperform growth by 16% the following year. This comes on the heels of a years-long cycle in which value has trailed growth for the past five- and ten-year periods. Further, while the Fed may eventually loosen monetary policy, bond yields are not expected to return to the ultra-low rates of years past. Without the tailwinds that have supported longer-duration growth stocks in the years since the 2008 global financial crisis, relative valuations may compress, offering a potential catalyst for the value investing style.

# NFJ Small-Cap Value Wrap Strategy

Portfolio Statistics as of March 31, 2024

## Sector Allocation (%)



	Portfolio	Russell 2000 Value
■ Communication Services	1.0	2.3
■ Consumer Discretionary	5.3	11.0
■ Consumer Staples	0.0	2.2
■ Energy	4.9	10.1
■ Financials	25.5	25.8
■ Health Care	10.7	9.3
■ Industrials	16.1	14.9
■ Information Technology	5.4	5.9
■ Materials	8.8	5.0
■ Real Estate	11.3	9.7
■ Utilities	5.8	3.7

Characteristic	Portfolio	Russell 2000 Value
Price-to-Earnings (next 12Mos.)	15.1x	12.3x
Price-to-Earnings (trailing 1YR)	20.7x	68.0x
Dividend Yield (trailing 1YR, %)	2.4	2.1
Dividend Growth (5YR wtd avg, %)	11.0	4.7
Return on Equity (%)	11.9	5.1
Return on Assets (%)	4.7	3.3
Earnings Growth (trailing 5YR avg)	6.1	9.3
Earnings Growth (estimated 3-5YR)	8.6	7.3
Market Cap (wtd avg, \$ bn)	5.8	2.9
Number of Holdings	76	1,419

Top Ten Positions	Portfolio Weight (%)
Enterprise Financial Services	3.0
MonotaRO	3.0
Terreno Realty Corporation	3.0
Walker & Dunlop	3.0
Commerce Bancshares	2.0
Community Bank System	2.0
Equity LifeStyle Properties	2.0
First Financial Bankshares	2.0
Glacier Bancorp	2.0
Globus Medical	2.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23.7</b>

The information is historical and may not reflect current or future characteristics and may vary among individual accounts depending on a variety of factors, including portfolio size, specific investment guidelines and inception dates of individual accounts. Certain projected characteristics (such as the forward P/E ratio) of the model portfolio and indices shown have been estimated in this material. Estimated data reflect subjective judgments and assumptions and unexpected events may occur. Therefore, there can be no assurance that developments will transpire as forecasted. The forward P/E ratio shown uses funds from operations, instead of earnings, for REITs.

**Portfolio Information:** All portfolio statistics represent a model portfolio of this strategy currently managed by NFJ. Individual account holdings will vary depending on the size of an account, cash flows, and account restrictions. These statistics are representative of how the portfolios in the composite are invested as of the indicated date. Portfolio holdings are subject to change daily. This material is not an offer or solicitation for the purchase or sale of any financial instrument. It is presented only to provide information on investment strategies and opportunities. Statements concerning financial market trends are based on assessments of current market conditions, which will fluctuate. References to specific securities and issuers are for illustrative purposes only and are not intended to be, and should not be interpreted as, recommendations to purchase or sell such securities.

The information presented in this material has been developed internally and/or obtained from sources which NFJ believes to be reliable; however we do not guarantee the accuracy, adequacy or completeness of such information nor do we guarantee the appropriateness of any strategy referred to for any particular investor. **Past performance is not indicative of future results.** Source: Virtus Performance & Analytics, FactSet, Russell Investments.

# NFJ Small-Cap Value Wrap GIPS Composite Report

Schedule of composite performance results as of December 31, 2022

Year	Composite Return Gross (%)	Composite Return Net (%)	Russell 2000 Value Index Returns (%)	Composite 3-Yr St. Dev. (%)	Benchmark 3-Yr St. Dev. (%)	Internal Dispersion	# of Portfolios in the Composite at Period End	Composite Total Assets at Period End (USD \$ M)	Total Firm Assets (USD \$ M)
2022	-17.5	-20.0	-14.5	22.1	27.3	0.2	27	13	4,217
2021	27.8	24.1	28.3	20.2	25.0	0.2	32	17	5,923
2020	-2.5	-5.4	4.6	21.7	26.1	0.3	35	15	*
2019	28.2	24.5	22.4	15.5	15.7	0.4	44	22	*
2018	-12.6	-15.2	-12.9	14.3	15.8	0.3	44	19	*
2017	14.8	11.5	7.8	11.4	14.0	0.3	54	26	*
2016	23.8	20.2	31.7	12.3	15.5	0.4	59	34	*
2015	3.5	0.5	-7.5	10.7	13.5	0.3	68	30	*
2014	1.0	-1.9	4.2	10.7	12.8	0.3	75	31	*
2013	31.4	27.6	34.5	14.1	15.8	0.4	157	67	*

\*Prior to February 1, 2021, NFJ was part of Allianz Global Investors LLC.

**The Firm:** The firm is defined as NFJ Investment Group, LLC ("NFJ"), a Registered Investment Advisor with the SEC. NFJ is an affiliated investment manager of Virtus Investment Partners, Inc. ("Virtus"). NFJ was founded in February 1989 with funding from Pacific Financial Asset Management Corp ("PFAMCo"). In 1994 PFAMCo merged with Thomson Advisory Group LP and became PIMCO Advisors. In 2000 Allianz AG acquired PIMCO Advisors, including NFJ. In 2010, Allianz Global Investors US LLC was formed, including NFJ. In July 2017 NFJ rolled up their RIA designation within Allianz Global Investors US LLC. At this time NFJ became a division of Allianz Global Investors LLC ("AllianzGI") and was no longer independently registered with the SEC. Effective February 1, 2021, in connection with a strategic partnership between Virtus and AllianzGI, NFJ moved from AllianzGI and registered with the SEC as a newly established investment advisory subsidiary of Virtus. The firm definition includes all investment portfolios managed directly or indirectly by NFJ including institutional, pooled fund and wrap fee accounts.

NFJ claims compliance with the Global Investment Performance Standards (GIPS®) and has prepared and presented this report in compliance with the GIPS standards. NFJ has been independently verified for the periods February 1, 2021 to December 31, 2022. A firm that claims compliance with the GIPS standards must establish policies and procedures for complying with all the applicable requirements of the GIPS standards. Verification provides assurance on whether the firm's policies and procedures related to composite and pooled fund maintenance, as well as the calculation, presentation, and distribution of performance, have been designed in compliance with the GIPS standards and have been implemented on a firm-wide basis. The NFJ Small Cap Value Wrap Composite has had a performance examination for the periods February 1, 2021 to December 31, 2022. The verification and performance examination reports are available upon request.

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**The Composite:** The NFJ Small Cap Value Wrap Composite (the "Composite") consists of portfolios that invest in a diversified group of small capitalization stocks considered to have attractive valuations and return value to shareholders. Each company typically has a minimum market capitalization of at least \$100 million at purchase. The Composite was created February 1, 2021 and has a performance inception date of January 1, 2011. Composite performance is linked to composite performance generated at a prior firm for all periods prior to the composite creation date. The Composite includes all discretionary wrap fee portfolios with comparable investment objectives and risks, managed by NFJ for at least one full month. The Composite can include both tax-exempt and taxable accounts. No leverage has been used in the accounts included in the Composite. The Composite includes only wrap fee accounts.

A list of composite descriptions is available upon request. Policies for valuing investments, calculating performance, and preparing GIPS Reports are available upon request.

**Portfolio Returns:** Returns are calculated on a total return basis, including all dividends and interest, accrued income, realized and unrealized gains or losses and reinvestment of dividends and other earnings. Performance results are expressed in U.S. dollars. Returns are presented gross and net of fees. Gross of fees performance results are "pure" gross and are provided as supplemental information, as results have not been reduced by advisory and sponsor fees (including trading and custodial fees). Net of fee returns have been reduced by the highest applicable managed account fee of 3.00% applied on a monthly basis.

**Fees:** The managed account fee is a bundled fee (3.00%) inclusive of advisory, trading, custodial and administrative fees. There are no fees charged to clients at the commingled level; sponsor and advisory fees apply to the account as a whole. Actual fees incurred by client accounts may vary. Individual results may vary as a result of market conditions, trading costs and other factors, which may be unique to each account. NFJ's compensation from the Program Sponsors vary, but it is generally between 0.33% and 0.50% of assets under management.

**Index:** The Russell 2000 Value Index measures the performance of the 2,000 smallest companies in the Russell 3000 Index with lower price-to-book ratios and lower forecasted growth values. The Russell 3000 Index measures the performance of the 3,000 largest U.S. companies based on total market capitalization. This unmanaged market index is provided to represent the investment environment existing during the time periods shown. The index is referred to for comparative purposes only and is not intended to parallel the risk or investment style of the portfolios in the Composite. For comparison purposes, the index is fully invested, which includes reinvestment of income. The returns for this unmanaged index do not include any transaction costs, management fees or other costs. An investor may not invest directly in any index. All returns presented are calculated using U.S. dollars. The portfolios within this composite may and do invest in non-benchmark securities. Further information is available upon request.

**Internal Dispersion:** The internal dispersion statistic is the asset weighted standard deviation calculation using beginning of period market values and pure gross of fee performance returns for the portfolios in the composite for the full period. For periods where there were 5 or fewer portfolios in the composite for the full period the internal dispersion statistic is not meaningful and is shown as "NA". **Past performance is not indicative of future results.**