# **Mid Cap Growth**

2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2017



### **Market Review and Positioning**

#### Review

Equity Markets were reasonably strong with positive returns. (S&P +3.09%, NASDAQ +4.12%, Dow Jones + 3.95, Russell Mid Cap Growth +4.21%. Positive returns were driven by stabilizing commodities and synchronized global growth which provided a tailwind to the markets. Healthier industrial activity coupled with a weakening dollar, major emerging markets pulling out of a two year slump and the world's most powerful economies finally showing signs of escaping the remnants of the financial crisis have, at least temporarily, offset the deferral of the Trump administration's progrowth strategies. We believe the prospects of lower taxes, less regulation and increased infrastructure spending still have the complacent equity markets buoying around all-time highs. It seems worrisome to reach new heights concurrent with 1) the Federal Reserve attempting to normalize monetary policy, 2) key indicators regarding the health of housing weakening, 3) automotive and retail sectors reflecting fatigue, and 4) a buildup of emerging-market debt. With the U.S. economic expansion approaching eight years we would anticipate more market volatility. Valuations seem to be at the upper end of historical ranges and a potential change in accommodative central bank policies worldwide seem to be turning.

We believe the Midcap portfolio is well positioned in the current market environment. Contribution to active risk from retailing is being reduced as some positions are being phased out. The portfolio has a combination of high growth, high conviction companies with strong secular growth characteristics in Technology and Healthcare. Stability is being emphasized in areas of Financials, Industrials and Materials. We have been underweight Consumer Staples, Telecom Services and REITS and we anticipate

### **Portfolio Management Team**

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to be so for the near future. Overall, we are gravitating towards sectors and companies that are beneficiaries of a drawn-out business cycle. In summary, the emphasis is on Growth and Stability across the various companies within the portfolio.

#### **Outlook**

As we move into the second half of 2017, a lot of the anticipation of immediate change from the new administration has gradually dissipated. Infrastructure spending, deregulation, tax cuts and health care reform all remain possible, but they have gradually been discounted by the market for any meaningful impact in the near future. While the macro and political landscapes continue to swing, and leadership in the market reallocates between risk/risk-off and secular/cyclical growth, fundamentals have improved during the most recent quarter. Solid revenue growth and earnings growth (S&P Q1 earnings exhibited the strongest growth in almost six years) are emerging as key drivers of performance. Although we remain concerned about the narrowing of winners in this market and investor complacency as we enter the second half of 2017, we believe the economy will remain resilient as synchronized global growth typically provides a sustained moderate, but sturdy, advance. This, in turn, may allow for continued accommodative policies from central banks. There are still several risks highlight the challenging environment, such as 1) tight labor markets fueling wage inflation, 2) concern as to if (or when) higher sentiment and net worth translates into increased consumer spending, and 3) the impact of oil remaining below \$50 per barrel. We believe the length of this historic expansion still has some legs, and we will be monitoring the rise in inflation expectations and compensation growth as keys to heightened central bank actions. Coincidently, growth must accelerate to support achievable earnings momentum, and we will apply our cycle-tested investment process to balance these market undercurrents with our long-term secular views.

Past performance is not indicative of future results. Inherent in any investment is the potential for loss. All information is as of June 30, 2017 unless otherwise noted. Please see Important Disclosures on page 3.

# **Mid Cap Growth**



#### **Performance Review**

The composite's return for the 2nd quarter 2017 was 4.75% gross and 4.49% net vs. the Russell Mid Cap Growth Index return of 4.21%.

Past performance is not indicative of future results. Inherent in any investment is the potential for loss. Gross performance results are presented before management fees, but after all trading commissions. Net performance is shown after the deduction of expenses and management fees of 1.00%. Actual investment advisory fees incurred by clients may vary. Performance results include the reinvestment of dividends and interest. Dividends received from ADRs are included net of foreign withholding taxes.

# **2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Performance Drivers**

### **LEADING CONTRIBUTORS**

|                            | AVERAGE | CONTRIBUTION TO |
|----------------------------|---------|-----------------|
| STOCK                      | WEIGHT  | PERFORMANCE     |
| FibroGen Inc               | 2.93    | 0.84            |
| Align Technology Inc       | 2.68    | 0.73            |
| Weibo Corp ADR Class A     | 2.49    | 0.59            |
| Vertex Pharmaceuticals Inc | 3.09    | 0.52            |
| MercadoLibre Inc           | 3.19    | 0.52            |
| ServiceNow Inc             | 2.55    | 0.46            |
| Electronic Arts Inc        | 2.42    | 0.40            |
| Best Buy Co Inc            | 2.31    | 0.38            |
| Workday Inc Class A        | 2.55    | 0.36            |
| Arista Networks Inc        | 2.78    | 0.35            |

#### **LEADING DETRACTORS**

|                              | AVERAGE | <b>CONTRIBUTION TO</b> |
|------------------------------|---------|------------------------|
| STOCK                        | WEIGHT  | PERFORMANCE            |
| Foot Locker Inc              | 2.33    | -0.91                  |
| Superior Energy Services Inc | 1.71    | -0.56                  |
| RSP Permian Inc              | 1.81    | -0.45                  |
| Seattle Genetics Inc         | 2.41    | -0.42                  |
| The Michaels Companies Inc   | 1.69    | -0.32                  |
| Synchrony Financial          | 0.65    | -0.30                  |
| The Middleby Corp            | 1.89    | -0.22                  |
| United Rentals Inc           | 1.70    | -0.19                  |
| Consol Energy Inc            | 1.62    | -0.19                  |
| Williams-Sonoma Inc          | 1.87    | -0.18                  |

The holdings identified do not represent all of the securities purchased, sold or recommended. Information on the calculation methodology and a listing of every holding's contribution to the strategy's performance during the period is available upon request.

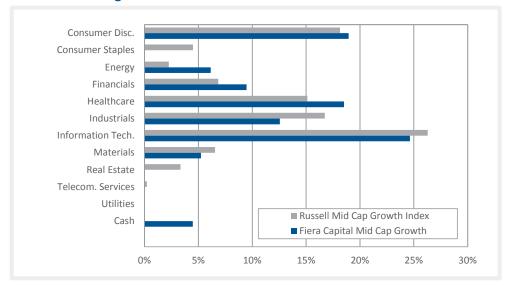
## **Positive Impacts**

• Contributing to performance for the period was stock selection in Real Estate, the overweight in Health Care and the underweight in Consumer Staples.

## **Negative Impacts**

• The largest detractors to relative performance came within Information Technology, Financials and Energy.

## **Sector Positioning**



Please contact us or visit www.fierausa.com if you have any questions.

Please see Important Disclosures on page 3.

# **Disclosures**



### **Important Disclosures**

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### **Index Definition**

The Russell Midcap Growth Index is a market capitalization weighted index representing the smallest 800 companies in the Russell 1000 Index. The average Russell Midcap Index member has a market cap of \$8 billion to \$10 billion, with a median value of \$4 billion to \$5 billion. The index is reconstituted annually so that stocks that have outgrown the index can be removed and new entries can be added. It is not possible to invest directly in an index. Investors pursuing a strategy similar to an index may experience higher or lower returns and will bear the cost of fees and expenses that will reduce returns.

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