

# Global Leaders Portfolio

## Portfolio Manager Commentary

As of 12/31/2024



### Q4 2024 Review

For the fourth quarter, the **Global Leaders Portfolio (GLP)** generated a return of 2.70% (1.91% net of maximum potential fees) versus the benchmark, the MSCI ACWI Index, which finished -0.99%. Year to date, GLP was up 27.77% (23.95% net) while the benchmark returned 17.49%. GLP's long-term performance results can be found in the table below.

For a second consecutive year, GLP posted both a high absolute and relative return following its strong return in 2023 of 38.86% (34.89% net). The explanation for this outsized performance was based on two factors. In 2022, GLP companies were deeply oversold. Once the market recognized the mispricing among many well-established growth companies, stock prices were quickly reset higher—nearer to their intrinsic value. The second reason contributing to GLP's 2023 high excess return was based on the above-average economic returns of its companies—businesses that generated high returns on capital powered by strong sales growth. As we are reminded, over time, stock prices tend to correlate to financial results.

GLP delivered a one-two punch in 2023. The repricing of the discount to intrinsic value of our companies, coupled with above-average economic returns of these same businesses, worked to produce the portfolio's highest annual performance since inception—even higher than its 2019 35.28% return (31.41% net).

In 2024, GLP again outperformed its benchmark—while not as much as in 2023, it was an exceptional return, nonetheless. Once again, GLP's companies generated above-average economic returns that served to drive stock prices higher. In addition, there were several strategic portfolio modifications that also worked to increase performance returns.

First, companies that had reached prices above our calculation of fair value were removed and the proceeds were used to add several new positions. Last quarter, we highlighted our investment in another emerging global secular growth story closely tied to the Artificial Intelligence (AI) revolution: *Electrification*—described as the rejuvenation of the worldwide electrical system, a result of the power demand required to support AI, electrical vehicles, and cryptocurrencies. For the first time in decades, global demand for electricity is far outpacing supply, thus requiring significant capital investment by electrical utilities.

As a result, GLP has added companies that provide electrical power systems, transmission lines, generators, cooling systems, and heat pumps along with investments in the discovery, production, and transportation of liquefied natural gas. We believe natural gas is a prime candidate to fill the need

### Objective

Pursues long-term capital appreciation by investing in a focused, low turnover portfolio of secularly-advantaged global growth companies

### Portfolio Management Team



**Robert G. Hagstrom, CFA**  
Chief Investment Officer  
Senior Portfolio Manager



**Lauren E. Loughlin**  
Portfolio Manager

### About EquityCompass

EquityCompass is a Baltimore-based SEC registered investment adviser offering a broad range of portfolio strategies and custom plans for individuals, financial intermediaries, and institutional clients in the U.S. Formally organized in 2008, EquityCompass provides portfolio strategies with respect to total assets of approximately \$5.2 billion as of December 31, 2024.\*

The EquityCompass team of professionals represents deep industry experience in security analysis, capital markets, and portfolio management. We are committed to a consistent investment process that relies on enduring principles, sound empirical reasoning, and the recognition of a dynamic investment environment with a global reach.

	Total Returns			Annualized Returns					Calendar-Year Returns									
	3-Mos	6-Mos	YTD	1-year	3-year	5-year	10-year	Incp.	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Gross %	2.70	8.67	27.77	27.77	8.10	14.62	12.30	11.94	-2.24	4.23	29.50	-9.64	35.28	29.98	20.51	-28.81	38.86	27.77
Benchmark %	-0.99	5.56	17.49	17.49	5.44	10.06	9.02	8.58	-2.36	7.86	23.97	-9.41	26.60	16.25	18.54	-18.36	22.20	17.49
Net %	1.91	7.03	23.95	23.95	4.91	11.27	9.23	8.67	-5.09	1.12	25.75	-12.33	31.41	26.25	17.04	-30.94	34.89	23.95

As of 12/31/2024; Inception – July 1, 2014; Benchmark = MSCI ACWI Index

Net returns reflect the deduction of the potential maximum managed account fee of 3.00% which includes the wrap sponsor fee and EquityCompass investment management fee of 0.35%. Actual fees may vary.

between growing power demand and power generation capabilities. Together, these electrification businesses helped contribute to GLP's 2024 outperformance.

This is not to say, all GLP companies outperformed in 2024. Indeed, the portfolio owned seven companies at the beginning of the year that, on a price basis, underperformed the benchmark including: Compagnie Financière Richemont S.A. (CFRHF), LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton SE (LVMUY), Uber Technologies, Inc. (UBER), ASML Holding NV (ASML), Microsoft Corp. (MSFT), TE Connectivity Plc (TEL), and QUALCOMM, Inc. (QCOM). Even though 26% of GLP companies underperformed the benchmark, the remainder achieved above-average price returns. In baseball parlance, you could say that GLP's **slugging percentage** was pretty good.

**Chart 1** illustrates GLP's annual portfolio turnover statistics between 2015 and 2024. The dark colored bars represent the total portfolio turnover ratio; the light-colored bars represent the company turnover ratios for GLP. This is a distinction that we believe is important for investors to understand.

Portfolio turnover ratio is a measure that reflects the percent of change among holdings over a specific period—typically one year. For example, a portfolio turnover ratio of 25% means that 25% of the securities within the portfolio were bought or sold during the previous year.

As you can see, GLP's total portfolio turnover ratio has customarily been less than 20%, indicating an average holding period of five years—the exception being 2024, which we will explain. However, the company portfolio turnover ratio—defined as the turnover ratio impacted when a new company enters or an older company exits the portfolio—has averaged about 7%, excluding 2024, a ratio equivalent to a 14-year holding period. From a company perspective, GLP is, and will continue to be, a strategy that seeks to buy and hold attractive companies for the long-term.

What then accounts for the higher portfolio turnover ratio? In a word, volatility. When stock prices are volatile, it creates an opportunity to optimize the portfolio's future rate of return by selling shares of a company that may be outperforming. The proceeds are used to reinvest in a company whose stock price has declined, or even lagged, the overall return of the market.

Illustratively, you can see a relationship between portfolio turnover ratio and the standard deviation of GLP's benchmark, the MSCI ACWI Index. When the standard deviation of the market is on the rise (price volatility is increasing), so too is our portfolio turnover ratio—as it should be.

GLP seeks to advantageously sell shares of a company at higher prices and use the proceeds to purchase more shares of a company that has declined in price. In other words, periodically we may trim or add to a holding without selling the entire position. Selling a company at a high price, that may have a lower future rate of return, to buy a company at a lower price, that may have a higher future rate of return is, in our opinion, good portfolio management. In a word, GLP seeks to *optimize* the future rate of return.

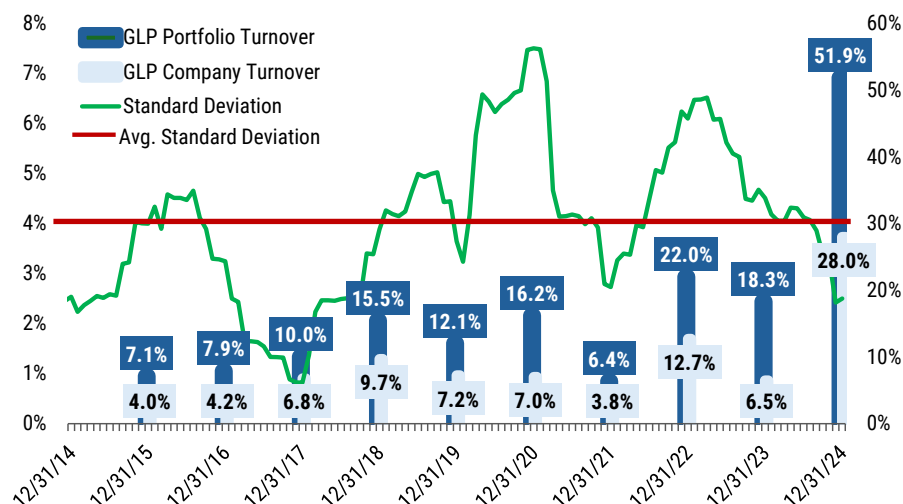
What happened in 2024? Yes, the standard deviation of the market was declining, yet both GLP's portfolio turnover ratio and company turnover ratio spiked. What gives? Even though overall market volatility was declining in 2024, GLP owned several companies that experienced high share price volatility—the good kind—when prices are rising at an above-average rate.

Specifically, NVIDIA Corp. (NVDA) was one of GLP's best performing companies in 2024. Twice, last year, NVDA exceeded GLP's 10% concentration threshold, whereby the weighting was trimmed. Similarly, the position in Amazon.com, Inc. (AMZN)

### Portfolio Turnover Amid Changing Market Volatility

7/31/2014–12/31/2024 | Source: Bloomberg Finance, LP and EquityCompass

Chart 1



was reduced when it exceeded the 10% portfolio weighting limit. While we continue to own NVDA and AMZN because of their favorable long-term prospects, in each case, we believe it was prudent to right-size our investments.

In 2024, we exited positions in Moody's Corp. (MCO) and MercadoLibre, Inc. (MELI). Despite generating above-average economic and price returns for investors, their appreciation during the year was higher than what we considered to be fair value for these businesses. While we believe it was necessary to sell these positions, we would be inclined to own them again, albeit, at lower prices.

In addition, GLP sold its investments in Adobe Inc. (ADBE), Salesforce Inc. (CRM), and ServiceNow, Inc. (NOW) to make capital available to invest in *electrification* companies, including: GE Vernova, Inc. (GEV), Cheniere Energy, Inc. (LNG), Schlumberger Ltd. (SLB), Trane Technologies Plc (TT), and Caterpillar, Inc. (CAT).

Fortunately, this repositioning did not penalize GLP's short-term performance—and instead, it was additive. More importantly, repositioning GLP not only worked to further diversify the portfolio, it also seeks to benefit in potentially improving future rates of return.

### Portfolio Outlook

In our third quarter commentary, we stated that the AI revolution, in our opinion, was still in the early innings of a long-term investment game. Nothing, thus far, has changed our mind.

It is constructive to think about the AI revolution within a three-phase framework—buildout, adoption, and transformation.<sup>1</sup> The buildout phase includes the investment in data centers, graphic processing unit (GPU) semiconductor chips, and power systems. The second phase, adoption, is centered around the development of large language models (LLMs) that make possible the analysis of mountains of data that might be missed by a human programmer. The last phase—transformation—relates to the impact that AI insights could have to improve a company's productivity, enhance business functions, and potentially contribute to higher profitability.

Thus far, much of the AI revolution has centered around the buildout phase—assembling the technological machinery necessary to run AI models including cloud computing, semiconductors, data centers, and energy support. Already, the second phase is unfolding with the adoption of new AI models—including Open AI's ChatGPT, Google's Gemini Ultra, Meta's Llama, Anthropic, Perplexity, among several others—that are making inroads.

Last quarter, we mentioned the new partnership between NVIDIA Corp. and Accenture (ACN)—a new management and consulting technology business. This new partnership is representative of the transformative phase of AI. Together, NVDA and ACN are actively working with individual companies in using AI models to assist with better decision making.

Although much attention has centered around the rapid growth of the AI buildout phase, investors should not overlook the progress that is currently underway within the adoption and transformation phases of the AI revolution.

We understand investors may be eager to see higher earnings growth rates and improved profit margins for a wide swath of companies involved in the application of AI models. The stock market, if nothing else, is impatient—which leads us to once again recall Amara's law. Roy Amara was a researcher and scientist who studied the forecasting effects of new technology. His research revealed, *"We tend to overestimate the effect of a technology in the short run and underestimate the effect in the long run."*<sup>2</sup>

We remind investors that sustainable, long-term, above-average growth is rare. But when it does occur, it often creates high excess returns as the market periodically underestimates the returns of secular growth opportunities. While some investors may have become impatient with the progress of AI, rest assured GLP does not underestimate the potential long-term economic impact of the technology on our investments.

### Valuation matters.

*"All intelligent investing is value investing,"* said Warren Buffett.<sup>3</sup>

Admittedly, growth investors are not always embraced by the value investing community. Never mind 32 years ago Warren Buffett—arguably the world's greatest value investor—sought to put to rest the ongoing debate over value versus growth investing.

(1) 2025 Global Outlook: Building the Transformation, Raffaele Savi, BlackRock Investment Institute, December 2024, p. 11.

(2) Amara, Roy and Wayne Boucher, *Business Planning for an Uncertain Future: Scenarios and Strategies*, Pergamon Press: New York, 1983.

(3) A popular Warren Buffett witticism.

In the 1992 Berkshire Hathaway Annual Report, Buffett explained “a high ratio of price to book value, a high price-earnings ratio, and a low dividend yield – are in no way inconsistent with a ‘value’ purchase.” To underscore how value should be measured, Buffett explained it is calculated by the Discounted Cash Flow (DCF) model—“The value of any stock, bond, or business today is determined by the cash inflows and outflows – discounted at an appropriate interest rate – that can be expected to occur during the remaining life of an asset.”<sup>4</sup> Value, explained Buffett, is NOT dictated by a price-earnings (P/E) ratio.

For the Global Leaders Portfolio, we build a matrix of DCF models using various earnings growth rates over several different time horizons to arrive at a central tendency of value for what we believe a business may be worth. If the stock price is below our estimation of value, we would be interested in purchasing shares of the company. We have learned that some growth stocks, by applying rational estimates of future earnings into a DCF model, can also be attractive value stocks.

It is important to understand there are **growth traders** and **growth investors**. Growth traders rely on momentum indicators and technical signals to decide when to buy or sell a stock. These methods have nothing to do with valuation. GLP is a growth investor’s portfolio. We think about valuation first, and pricing second to determine whether the stock market is overvaluing or undervaluing a company. The value approach to growth investing, we believe, allows us the opportunity to benefit from the upside potential of attractive growth companies while at the same time limiting exposure to companies that we believe may be overvalued and perhaps poised for a steep drop in share price.

Over the years, long-term GLP investors have had the opportunity to read our quarterly and annual reports. As such, they have learned our investment viewpoint as well as our attitude towards market fluctuations and the difference between **short-term quotational loss** and **permanent capital loss**. For investors who may be new to GLP, we have compiled the *Global Leaders Portfolio Business-Driven Investing Principles*, which long-term investors may find helpful as well, as it never hurts to take a refresher course on investing. These principles will be included in our future publications. (See pages 5 and 6).

A century ago, a young man asked the famous financier J.P. Morgan, “what do you think the market will do?” In what has become a classic quote among financial circles, Morgan simply replied, “it will fluctuate.”<sup>5</sup>

J.P. Morgan’s succinct answer captures a fundamental truth about markets—they are inherently unpredictable and subject to constant volatility. Prices move up and down for various reasons—some are speculative, others fundamental. Some are caused by short-term strategies, while others take the long-term route. Morgan’s profound response reminds investors of a simple stock market truth. Because of market dynamics, investors must be prepared for both rising and falling stock prices.

We don’t forecast markets. Science has revealed complex adaptive systems—like the stock market—are unforecastable. We don’t know if the stock market will finish up or down in 2025, but whatever the outcome, we seek to own attractive companies. We don’t know if inflation and interest rates will be higher or lower in 2025, but we have learned no matter the macroeconomic landscape, owning attractive companies can be a good strategy. We are also acutely aware of rising geopolitical tensions—tariffs and regional wars included. Even so, our experience has taught us, owning attractive companies during these periods has been an effective approach.

The most important lesson we have learned managing the Global Leaders Portfolio is that buying attractive companies at fair prices, no matter the environment, is a timeless investment principle.

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(4) 1992 Berkshire Hathaway Annual Report, p. 9.

(5) Often quoted by Benjamin Graham which was noted in the updated version of *The Intelligent Investor*, Harper Business Essentials, New York, 2003, p. 54 and references Jean Strouse’s book *Morgan: American Financier*, Random House: New York, 1999, p.11.

The following tenets—*business-driven investing principles*—seek to provide an understanding of the EquityCompass Global Leaders Portfolio (GLP) investment philosophy.

**1) *The investment objective of GLP is to invest in a portfolio of common stocks that seeks to provide above-average, long-term capital appreciation.***

The stock market is comprised of short-term and long-term investors. Short-term investors typically calculate progress by tabulating price changes that occur over weeks and months. While also interested in changes in stock price, long-term investors tend to measure financial progress over a period of years. GLP's investment process and portfolio strategy are specifically designed to benefit long-term investors.

**2) *GLP adheres to a business-driven investing approach in which everything from stock selection, portfolio management, and performance measurement can be seen through the lens of a business owner.***

We select stocks based on the same principles a business owner might demand when purchasing a company. Our portfolio management approach is comparable to how a business owner might manage a collection of companies. And like a business owner, we measure the economic progress of our companies since, over time, stock performance tends to reflect economic returns.

**3) *GLP seeks to invest in leading companies with above-average growth potential.***

Adopting the mindset of a business owner, our objective is to own companies that not only have a consistent operating history but also possess favorable long-term economic prospects that are generating high cash returns on capital over an extended period. To generate high returns on capital speaks to a company's business model. To generate high returns on capital for an extended period speaks to the secular growth opportunity.

**4) *The largest total addressable market is the global market. Given the choice of owning companies that only sell products and services to 346 million U.S. consumers versus companies with access to 8 billion consumers around the world—we choose the latter.***

GLP owns large cap, multinational companies that are domiciled in the United States, Canada, and Western Europe. Although our companies generate approximately 40% of their revenues inside the U.S., nearly 60% of sales are international. GLP is well positioned to benefit from the rapid spending power of the global middle-class consumer, described by McKinsey & Company as "*the biggest growth opportunity in the history of capitalism.*"<sup>1</sup>

**5) *GLP is a growth portfolio managed by a team that understands valuation.***

Even the most attractive business can prove to be a bad investment if it was purchased at an exorbitant price. Many investors tend to believe stocks with a high price-to-earnings (P/E) ratio are overvalued and those with a low P/E ratio are undervalued. But P/E ratios are NOT valuation. At best, a P/E ratio is a reflection of the market's expectations. A high P/E ratio reflects the market's optimism for a company while a low P/E ratio may signal the market is skeptical about a company's prospects.

What determines value? The value of any investment, stocks, bonds, real estate, or individual businesses is determined by the discounted present value of its future cash flows—commonly referred to as the Discounted-Cash-Flow (DCF) model.

For GLP, we build a matrix of DCF models with various earnings growth rates over different time horizons to arrive at a central tendency of value for what we believe the business may be worth. If the stock price is below our estimation of value, we are interested in purchasing shares in the company.

We have learned that some growth stocks, by applying rational estimates of future earnings into a DCF model, can also be attractive value stocks.

**6) *GLP focuses on select companies that we consider to be the most attractive investment ideas in a position to compound the intrinsic value of their businesses over many years.***

We do not sell companies simply because they have appreciated or have been owned for a long period. In fact, of the 25 companies currently owned in GLP, nearly half have been held for at least four years, while eight companies—nearly one-third of the portfolio—have been held for more than 10 years since inception.<sup>2</sup>

In managing GLP, we are quite content to hold an investment indefinitely as long as the company continues to generate high cash returns on invested capital, management rationally reinvests the cash back into the business, and the stock market does not overvalue the company.



### 7) *Understanding the difference between frequency and magnitude.*

While some portfolio managers may be content taking a short-term gain, likened to hitting a single in baseball, GLP values the extra base hits—doubles and homeruns. With long-term investing, it isn't a matter of how many times an investor beats the market minus the number of losses, but the amount of money earned outperforming the market minus the amount returned when underperforming. In baseball parlance, GLP's slugging percentage is quite high.

To illustrate, we measured GLP's relative performance across rising and declining markets. Historically, during upward stock market movement, GLP has strongly outperformed its benchmark with an up-market capture rate of 118%. However, during market declines, even though the stock prices of GLP's holdings may have also decreased, its downside performance relative to the benchmark has been muted, as measured by its down-market capture of 104%. We believe this mild down-market capture can be attributed to our valuation approach which seeks to avoid overpaying for companies.

### Global Leaders Portfolio — Frequency Vs. Magnitude

Up Market Capture: 118%	Down Market Capture: 104%
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Based on a 10-year time period using monthly returns from 1/1/2015 through 12/31/2024 versus the MSCI-ACWI Index; Source: EquityCompass

As long as the spread between up-market capture and down-market capture remains positive, GLP's long-term outperformance should continue.

### 8) *The tax benefits of owning GLP for the long-term.*<sup>3</sup>

While GLP may be owned in tax-advantaged accounts in which paying capital gains is not required, the portfolio can also be owned in taxable accounts. A significant benefit of owning a buy-and-hold portfolio in a taxable account is the opportunity to increase the value of a portfolio by compounding unrealized capital gains on a pre-tax basis.

The longer an investor owns an unrealized gain, the longer the tax-deferred gain can compound. Compounding a large number, even if it includes a temporary tax deferral, makes future returns higher.

### 9) *There are benefits in using alternative performance benchmarks, alongside price returns, to gain additional insights on the progress of GLP investments.*

Despite GLP's attractive long-term investment results, the portfolio does not outperform the market every month, every quarter, or every year. While short-term stock traders are dependent on the change in short-term pricing to tabulate their performance, business owners focus on the long-term economic progress of their underlying companies.

In managing GLP, we are keenly aware of price performance but, equally important, we also focus on profits, return on capital, and revenue growth understanding full-well that stock prices, over time, track economic progress.

### 10) *Business-driven investing is GLP's "North Star"—metaphorically symbolizing the guiding principles and core values which, in turn, work to maintain our focus amidst volatile stock market conditions.*

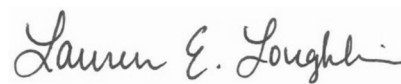
For many investors, buying attractive companies may not be as difficult as it is holding onto them. Over the last decade, we have witnessed contentious elections, geopolitical tensions, regional wars, and a COVID-19 global pandemic that caused deflation and zero percent interest rates followed by the fastest rise in both inflation and interest rates since the 1970s. Along the way we endured two bear markets in 2020 and 2022.

Still, these macro events did not nullify the long-term economic compounding that GLP's companies achieved. If anything, these macro events made it possible for us to increase our future rate of returns by taking advantage of lower prices typically associated with bear markets—an important reminder that it is never a bad time to buy more shares of a good company at great prices.

**Robert G. Hagstrom, CFA**  
Senior Portfolio Manager



**Lauren E. Loughlin**  
Portfolio Manager



(1) Atsmon, Yuval, Peter Child, Richard Dobbs, and Laxman Narasimhan, "Winning the \$30 Trillion Decathlon: Going for Gold in Emerging Markets," McKinsey & Company, August 1, 2012.

(2) As of December 31, 2024

(3) EquityCompass and its affiliates do not provide tax, legal, or accounting advice. This material has been prepared for informational purposes only, and is not intended to provide, and should not be relied on for, tax, legal, or accounting advice. You should consult your own tax, legal, and accounting advisors before engaging in any transaction.

**GLOBAL LEADERS PORTFOLIO WRAP COMPOSITE (07/01/2014 – 12/31/2023)**

Year-End	Gross-of-Fees Return*	Net-of-Fees Return**	Benchmark Return	Composite 3 Yr. Ex Post Std. Deviation	Benchmark 3 Yr. Ex Post Std. Deviation	Composite Number of Portfolios	Internal Dispersion	Portfolios With Bundled Fees	Composite Assets (USD Mil.)	Strategy Assets (USD Mil.)†	Firm & Advisory Assets (USD Mil.)
2014 §	2.4%	0.9%	-1.9%	N/A	N/A	167	N/A	100%	\$15	\$23	\$1,929
2015	-2.2%	-5.1%	-2.4%	N/A	N/A	519	0.1%	100%	\$53	\$65	\$2,217
2016	4.2%	1.1%	7.9%	N/A	N/A	539	0.1%	100%	\$72	\$76	\$2,714
2017	29.5%	25.7%	24.0%	10.1%	10.5%	<6	N/A	100%	\$6	\$110	\$3,785
2018	-9.6%	-12.3%	-9.4%	10.6%	10.6%	13	N/A	100%	\$12	\$137	\$3,831
2019	35.3%	31.4%	26.6%	13.0%	11.4%	8	0.2%	100%	\$10	\$217	\$4,294
2020	30.0%	26.2%	16.3%	19.1%	18.4%	12	0.4%	92%	\$12	\$403	\$4,012
2021	20.5%	17.0%	18.5%	17.9%	17.1%	13	0.2%	92%	\$12	\$593	\$5,038
2022	-28.8%	-30.9%	-18.4%	22.8%	20.1%	13	0.2%	86%	\$4	\$444	\$4,469
2023	38.9%	34.9%	22.2%	21.9%	16.5%	8	0.2%	88%	\$5	\$609	\$4,707

\* Supplemental information. Please see Fees section for details. \*\* Net returns are calculated by subtracting the highest applicable wrap fee (3.00% on an annual basis) from the gross composite return. † Supplemental Information. § Returns are for the period 07/01/2014 through 12/31/2014.

EquityCompass Investment Management, LLC ("EquityCompass") claims compliance with the Global Investment Performance Standards ("GIPS®") and has prepared and presented this report in compliance with the GIPS standards. EquityCompass has been independently verified for the periods 06/01/2014-12/31/2023. The verification report is available upon request. 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. Verification does not provide assurance on the accuracy of any specific performance report.

**Definition of the Firm**

EquityCompass is registered as an investment adviser with the Securities and Exchange Commission. The firm provides a broad range of investment strategies to individuals, financial intermediaries, and institutions in the United States. EquityCompass, a wholly owned subsidiary of Stifel Financial Corp., was organized as an entity in 2007, and has been registered with the SEC since May 5, 2008. SEC Registration does not imply a certain level of skill or training. Please refer to the firm's ADV Part 2 for additional disclosures regarding the firm and its practices. To obtain a GIPS Report or a list of our composite descriptions and/or policies for valuing investments, calculating performance, and preparing GIPS reports, please call (443) 224-1231 or send an e-mail to [info@equitycompass.com](mailto:info@equitycompass.com).

**Composite Description**

The performance results displayed herein represent the investment performance record for the Global Leaders Portfolio Wrap Composite. The composite includes wrap and non-wrap accounts that are invested in the composite strategy and managed on a discretionary basis by EquityCompass. Global Leaders Portfolio invests in U.S. exchange-traded equities that have global revenue exposure and the ability to create and sustain long-term competitive advantages and above-average return on capital. Stocks are purchased based on a discount to the manager's perceived intrinsic value and will own roughly 20-40 stocks across multiple economic sectors. It is available in wrap fee programs through third-party intermediaries (each, a "Sponsor") that have engaged EquityCompass to manage client accounts on a discretionary basis or to provide non-discretionary investment recommendations in the form of model portfolios. The Composite was created in January 2017 and the inception date is July 1, 2014.

**Benchmark Description**

The benchmark is the MSCI ACWI Index. The **MSCI ACWI Index** is a free float-adjusted market capitalization weighted index that is designed to measure the equity market performance of developed and emerging markets around the globe, including the United States. The benchmark returns are presented net of withholding taxes. All benchmark returns are shown on a total return basis and assume that all cash distributions, such as dividends, are reinvested. The volatility of the indices identified in this report may be materially different from the volatility of the model portfolios presented by EquityCompass. Indices are unmanaged, do not reflect fees and expenses, and are not available for direct investment.

**Fees**

Gross-of-fees returns, are gross of portfolio management fees, custody fees and withholding taxes and net of all actual transaction costs in the case of non-wrap accounts and those wrap accounts traded by EquityCompass. If the wrap account trades are executed by the Sponsor, transaction costs are bundled with the wrap fee and therefore not deducted from gross-of-fee return calculation. Net returns are calculated by subtracting the highest applicable annual wrap fee (3.00%, by deducting 0.75% quarterly) from the gross composite return. The EquityCompass management fee schedule per annum is 0.35% on up to 1,000,000, 0.32% on 1,000,000–2,500,000 million, 0.28% on 2,500,000–5,000,000, 0.25% on 5,000,000–10,000,000, and negotiable over 10,000,000. Clients are typically charged a wrap fee which includes, in addition to the manager fee, trading expenses, as well as custody and administrative fees. The wrap fee schedule varies by Sponsor and is available upon request.

**Reporting Currency**

Valuations are computed and performance reported in U.S. dollars (USD).

**Annualized Standard Deviation**

The three-year annualized ex post standard deviation measures the variability of the monthly returns of the composite (gross-of-fee) and the benchmark over the preceding 36-month period; it is not presented for periods of less than three years.

**Internal Dispersion**

Internal dispersion is calculated using the asset-weighted standard deviation of annual gross returns of all accounts that were in the composite for the entire year; it is not presented for periods less than one year or when there were fewer than five accounts in the composite for the entire year.

**Assets**

Strategy Assets include all discretionary and non-discretionary accounts invested in the Global Leaders Portfolio strategy. Accounts that are excluded from the composite because of significant cash flows or for other reasons are also included in Strategy Assets. This is presented as supplemental information.

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**Standard Deviation** is a gauge of risk which measures the spread of the difference of returns from their average. The more a portfolio's returns vary from its average, the higher the standard deviation. It is important to note that higher-than-average returns affect the standard deviation just as lower-than-average returns. Thus, it is not a measure of downside risk. Since it measures total variation of return, standard deviation is a measure of total risk, unlike beta, which measures market risk.

**Up-Market Capture Ratio** is a measure of managers' performance in up markets relative to the market itself. An up market is one in which the market's quarterly return is greater than or equal to zero. The higher the manager's up-market capture ratio, the better the manager capitalized on a rising market. For example, a value of 110 suggests that the manager captured 110% of the up market (performed 10% better than the market) when the market was up. A negative up-market capture ratio indicates that a manager's returns fell while the market rose. For example, if the market gained 8% while a manager's returns fell 2%, the up-market capture ratio would be -25%.

**Down-Market Capture Ratio** is a measure of managers' performance in down markets relative to the market itself. A down market is one in which the market's quarterly return is less than zero. The lower the manager's down-market capture ratio, the better the manager protected capital during a market decline. A value of 90 suggests that a manager's losses were only 90% of the market loss when the market was down. A negative down-market capture ratio indicates that a manager's returns rose while the market declined. For example, if the market fell 8% while the manager's returns rose 2%, the down-market capture ratio would be -25%.

\*Total assets combines both Assets Under Management and Assets Under Advisement as of December 31, 2024. Assets Under Management represents the aggregate fair value of all discretionary and non-discretionary assets, including fee paying and non-fee paying portfolios. Assets Under Advisement represent advisory-only assets where the firm provides a model portfolio and does not have trading authority over the assets.

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