

# Mid Cap Growth Portfolio

First Quarter 2024

## **Portfolio Overview**

The Mid Cap Growth portfolio underperformed the Russell Midcap Growth Index in the first quarter. Poor stock selection and an underweight in financials and poor stock selection in consumer discretionary detracted from performance. Good stock selection in consumer staples and energy contributed positively to performance.

The biggest contributors to performance during the quarter were Celsius and Diamondback Energy. Celsius's distribution agreement with another well-known soft drink company aided performance along with its branding execution and innovation. The company's new beverage line geared for the fitness community is also achieving sales results. In addition, international product launches are strong through a distribution partner in the United Kingdom, France, Australia, and New Zealand. During the quarter, Diamondback Energy announced a new acquisition which we believe is a strong new asset. The deal makes the company a top producer with a high-quality asset base and a track record of strong operational execution. Other top contributors included Amphenol, Freshpet, and Fair Isaac.

The biggest detractors to performance during the quarter were MarketAxess Holdings and Goosehead Insurance. Over the last few years, we believe MarketAxess's competitive advantage has deteriorated. The company's gains in fixed income trading appear to be more cyclical than durable. As a result, we sold our position. In February, Goosehead Insurance reported a sharp deceleration in revenue. Shares continued to fall in March after the National Association of Realtors reached a settlement agreement that prohibits buyer broker compensation information on the MLS and requires buyers to sign an agreement with their realtor. Buyer's agents typically play a large role in recommending insurance and are targeted by Goosehead for referrals. In places like Australia, where buyer agents are very lightly used, buyers rely more on direct carrier relationships. However, with only a small percentage of total revenue exposed to new premiums from new mortgages, we believe this change should be manageable. However, what we believe is more important to monitor is, the once-in-a-decade premium increases pushed through by carriers over the last 12 months that flowed through to the company's income statement. Other bottom contributors included Zoetis, BILL Holdings, and MongoDB.

# **Outlook**

One large challenge coming out of the pandemic is trying to parse the underlying strength in the economy. Our supply chains were whipsawed, our employment patterns changed dramatically, and we saw unprecedented monetary and fiscal support. Given these factors, it is hard to gauge how much of the strength in the U.S. economy is due to fundamentals versus other exogenous effects. And while interest rates have increased materially in a short period of time, they are only modestly restrictive compared to the long-run average. As a result of low rates and strong government support during the pandemic, we believe the tide lifted all companies and made it easier for everyone to prosper. However, without this assistance, we expect that more fundamental factors will drive corporate profits and thus equity performance going forward. Assuming less exogenous support, we believe companies who are competitively advantaged with better profitability, cash flow, as well as lower leverage will be able to better distinguish themselves going forward.

# **Purchases and Sales**

New Purchases	Complete Sales
Monolithic Power Systems	BILL Holdings
PTC	Brown-Forman
TopBuild	MarketAxess Holdings
	McCormick & Co.
	T. Rowe Price

# **Portfolio Highlights**

Style: Mid Cap Sub-Style: Growth Index: Russell Midcap® Growth Portfolio Assets: \$2,076.3 M\* Portfolio Turnover: 25%–35%

# **Investment Management Team**

	earch Date
Chris Armbruster, CFA Portfolio Manager + Senior Research Analyst	2005
<b>Noran Eid</b> Portfolio Manager + Senior Research Analyst	2012
<b>Douglas S. Foreman, CFA</b> Portfolio Manager	1986
<b>Richard Sherry, CFA</b> Senior Research Analyst	1998
Katie Advena Research Analyst	2011
<b>Luke Longinotti, CFA</b> ESG Research Analyst	2020
<b>Clarissa Ali</b> Associate Research Analyst	2023

# **Top Five Holdings**

As of March 31, 2024

Company	Percent of equity (%)
Celsius Holdings	9.4
Fair Isaac	6.6
Gartner	5.7
Amphenol	4.1
MercadoLibre	3.7
Total	29.4

<sup>\*</sup> Figures in USD

This report is based on the assumptions and analysis made and believed to be reasonable by Advisor. However, no assurance can be given that Advisor's opinions or expectations will be correct. This report is intended for informational purposes only and should be not considered a recommendation or solicitation to purchase securities. Holdings are subject to change. Holdings and weightings are based on a representative portfolio. Individual Investors' holdings may differ slightly. Data is obtained by FactSet Research Systems and is assumed to be reliable. Numbers may not always add up due to rounding. Past performance is no guarantee of future results.





# **Investment Process:** Discovering Quality



Development of KAR High-Quality

#### **Qualitative Methods**

- Investment conferences
- Meetings with companies
- Industry reviews
- Research on existing portfolio holdings
- Third-party research

## **Quantitative Screens**

- High return on capital over a full economic cycle
- Earnings surprise
- Long and resilient earnings history
- High return on net operating assets
- Minimal debt



Fundamental Research

## **Qualitative Analysis**

 Evaluate sustainability of business model and assess management's ability to direct capital where it can create further control of its market

#### **Financial Analysis**

 Evaluate basis for profitability, long-term growth potential, and ability to allocate capital appropriately

## **Valuation Analysis**

 Determine the current and potential value of the business



## Portfolio Construction

## **Position Weights**

- Maximum initial position size is 5% (at cost)
- Maximum position size is 10% (at market)

#### **Sector Tolerances**

• Seek broad diversification, but no sector constraints

#### **Holding Period**

- Typically 3-to-5 years, but is often longer
- Portfolio turnover is typically 25% to 35%

#### **Cash Levels**

 Typically will not exceed 10% once a portfolio is fully invested; review by CIO triggered if over 10%



Sell Discipline

Negative Company or Industry Changes

Portfolio Upgrade

**Acquisition Activity** 

**Extended Valuation** 

**Higher Quality** 

Stronger, More Consistent Growth

## **Portfolio Characteristics**

As of March 31, 2024

	KAR Mid Cap Growth	Russell Midcap® Growth Index
Quality		
Return on Equity—Past 5 Years	17.9%	20.9%
Debt/EBITDA*	1.1 x	1.4 x
Earnings Variability—Past 10 Years	55.1%	55.8%
Growth		
Sales Per Share Growth—Past 5 Years	15.7%	14.6%
Earnings Per Share Growth—Past 5 Years	24.9%	18.4%
Earnings Per Share Growth—Past 10 Years	19.3%	15.7%
Value		
P/E Ratio—Trailing 12 Months	47.7 x	36.8 x
P/E Ratio—1 Year Forecast FY EPS	35.9 x	26.8 x
Free Cash Flow Yield <sup>†</sup>	2.5%	3.1%
Market Characteristics		
\$ Weighted Average Market Cap	\$30.4 B	\$32.3 B
Largest Market Cap	\$78.3 B	\$89.0 B

<sup>\*</sup>KAR utilizes the interquartile method when calculating Debt/EBITDA. The interquartile method excludes outliers from an aggregate statistic such as weighted average. The interquartile method does not assume that data from the top or bottom of the distribution are outliers—only the extreme ends are excluded—and that it can be applied consistently as a quantitative method for most fundamental characteristics. Debt/EBITDA utilizes net debt for the calculation.

Data is obtained from FactSet Research Systems and BNY Mellon and is assumed to be reliable. Other principal consultant firms may use different algorithms to calculate selected statistics. Estimates are based on certain assumptions and historical information. **Past performance is no guarantee of future results.** 

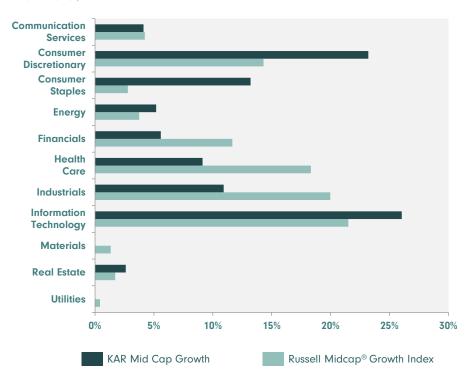
<sup>†</sup>Free cash flow data is as of December 31, 2023. Prices are as of March 31, 2024. Excludes financials.

# Mid Cap Growth Portfolio

First Quarter 2024

# **Sector Diversification**

As of March 31, 2024

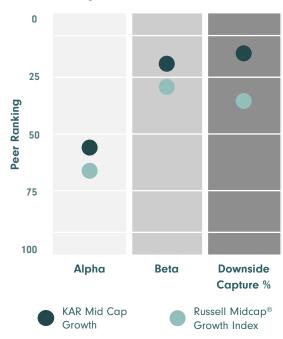


# **Historical Returns**

	KAR Mid Cap Growth (gross)	KAR Mid Cap Growth (net) <sup>‡</sup>	Russell Midcap® Growth Index	
Annualized Returns (%)† As of March 31, 2024				
1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	8.63	8.43	9.50	
One Year	26.24	25.32	26.28	
Three Years	(1.05)	(1.80)	4.62	
Five Years	12.51	11.68	11.82	
Seven Years	16.72	15.86	12.87	
Ten Years	14.20	13.36	11.35	
Inception*	14.71	13.86	13.47	
Annual Returns (%)				
2023	23.32	22.41	25.87	
2022	(32.45)	(32.97)	(26.72)	
2021	2.40	1.64	12.73	
2020	67.52	66.32	35.59	
2019	44.29	43.25	35.47	
2018	9.04	8.23	(4.75)	
2017	35.26	34.28	25.27	
2016	3.27	2.50	7.33	
2015	4.06	3.29	(0.20)	
2014	4.98	4.20	11.90	
2013	26.46	25.53	35.74	
2012	13.97	13.13	15.81	

# Peer Comparison Chart

Five Years Ending March 31, 2024



The eVestment Mid Cap Growth Universe includes 80 managers categorized in the mid cap growth asset class by eVestment. KAR does not pay any fees to be included in the eVestment Mid Cap Growth Universe or for the ranking itself. KAR does pay fees for the use of certain products and services provided by eVestment. eVestment rankings are based on gross of fee returns. Gross of fee returns will be reduced by investment management fees and other expenses that may be incurred in the management of the account. Management fees are described in KAR's Form ADV Part 2A, which is available upon request and can also be found at https://kayne.com/wp-content/uploads/ADV-Part-2A.pdf. Returns could be reduced or losses incurred due to currency fluctuations. Past performance is no guarantee of future results.

# **Performance Statistics**

Inception\* to March 31, 2024

	KAR Mid Cap Growth (gross)	KAR Mid Cap Growth (net)	Russell Midcap® Growth Index
Alpha	1.14	0.38	0.00
Sharpe Ratio	0.74	0.69	0.73
Information Ratio	0.19	0.06	N/A
Beta	1.02	1.02	1.00
Downside Capture	104.58	106.35	100.00
Tracking Error	6.43	6.43	N/A

Disclosure page could vary from the assumed fee in the net-or-fee calculation, as actual fees paid by a particular client account differ depending on a variety of factors including, but not limited to, business unit and size of mandate. The fee used on the Disclosure page utilizes an assumed maximum fee across the firm's business units, which is further detailed on that page.

This material is deemed supplemental and complements the performance and disclosure at the end of this presentation. Returns of the Kayne Anderson Rudnick composite are final. For further details on the composite, please see the disclosure statement in this presentation. Holdings are subject to change. Holdings and weightings are based on a representative portfolio. Individual Investors' holdings may differ slightly. The sector information represented above is based on GICS sector classifications. Data is obtained from FactSet Research Systems and is assumed to be reliable. **Past performance is no guarantee of future results.** 

<sup>\*</sup>January 1, 2012

<sup>†</sup>All periods less than one year are total returns and are not annualized. Returns are final. Returns could be reduced, or losses incurred, due to currency fluctuations.

†Net of all fees and expenses. Assumes a 0.75% annual fee. Fees presented on the Disclosure page could vary from the assumed fee in the net-of-fee calculation, as actual



# **Mid Cap Growth Composite**

First Quarter 2024

# **Disclosure**

Year	Composite Gross Return (%)	Composite Net Return (%)	Russell Midcap <sup>®</sup> Growth Index Return (%)	Composite 3-Yr Std Dev (%)	Benchmark 3-Yr Std Dev (%)	Number of Accounts	Internal Dispersion (%)	Composite Assets (\$ Millions)	Firm Assets (\$ Millions)
2014	4.98	3.63	11.90	11.25	11.02	< 5	N/A	90	7,989
2015	4.06	2.72	(0.20)	13.28	11.47	< 5	N/A	88	8,095
2016	3.27	1.94	7.33	14.38	12.35	< 5	N/A	83	9,989
2017	35.26	33.56	25.27	13.14	11.04	< 5	N/A	98	14,609
2018	9.04	7.63	(4.75)	14.52	13.00	7	N/A	172	17,840
2019	44.29	42.48	35.47	15.87	14.07	38	0.19	688	25,685
2020	67.52	65.44	35.59	22.29	21.75	203	1.41	3,513	39,582
2021	2.40	1.08	12.73	21.64	20.47	278	0.38	3,461	47,269
2022	(32.45)	(33.36)	(26.72)	26.48	24.87	248	0.31	1,785	33,531
2023	23.32	21.75	25.87	23.17	21.36	229	0.48	1,971	41,186

The Russell Midcap® Growth Index and Russell 1000® Index are trademarks/service marks of Frank Russell Company. Russell® is a trademark of Frank Russell Company.

KAR (as defined below) claims compliance with the Global Investment Performance Standards (GIPS®) and has prepared and presented this report in compliance with the GIPS® standards. KAR has been independently verified for the period from January 1, 1999 through December 31, 2023.

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, 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 Mid Cap Growth Composite has had a performance examination for the period from January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2023. The verification and performance examination reports are available upon request.

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Kayne Anderson Rudnick Investment Management, LLC ("KAR"), a wholly owned subsidiary of Virtus Investment Partners, Inc., is a registered investment advisor under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940. Registration of an Investment Advisor does not imply any level of skill or training. KAR manages a variety of equity and fixed-income strategies focusing exclusively on securities the firm defines as high quality.

The composite includes all fully discretionary institutional and pooled Mid Cap Growth Portfolios. Mid Cap Growth Portfolios are invested in equity securities with market capitalizations consistent with the Russell Midcap® Growth Index, that have market control, rising free cash flow, shareholder-oriented management, strong consistent profit growth and low debt balance sheets. For comparison purposes, the composite is measured against the Russell Midcap® Growth Index. The Russell Midcap® Growth Index is a market capitalization-weighted index of growth-oriented stocks of the 800 smallest companies in the Russell 1000® Index, which comprises the 1,000 largest U.S. companies. The index is calculated on a total-return basis with dividends reinvested. Benchmark returns are not covered by the report of the independent verifiers. The inception date of the composite is January 2012. The composite was created in January 2012. Prior to April 2024, the name of the composite was the Mid Cap Sustainable Growth Composite. Policies for valuing investments, calculating performance, and preparing GIPS Reports are available upon request. The firm's list of composite descriptions, list of broad distribution pooled fund and the list of limited distribution pooled funds descriptions are available upon request.

The model management fee used for the net returns in this table is 1.30% for all periods presented. The standard Institutional management fee schedule currently in effect is as follows: 0.75% for the first \$25 million; 0.65% on the next \$25 million; 0.55% on the next \$50 million; 0.50% on the balance. The maximum Wealth Advisory Services Fee in effect is 1.30% for all assets, which breaks out as follows: 1.00% for the first

\$3 million; 0.80% on the next \$2 million; 0.70% on the next \$5 million; 0.60% on the balance; with an additional 0.30% for any assets invested in separately managed accounts strategies. The standard investment advisory fee schedule currently in effect for clients not engaging in Wealth Advisory Services is 1.00%. Actual management fees charged may vary depending on applicable fee schedules and portfolio size, among other things. Additional information may be found in Part 2A of Form ADV, which is available on request. The performance information is supplied for reference. Past performance is no guarantee of future results. Results will vary among accounts. The U.S. dollar is the currency used to express performance. Returns are presented gross of management fees and withholding taxes and net of transaction fees and include the reinvestment of all income. Gross returns will be reduced by investment management fees and other expenses that may be incurred in the management of the account. Model net returns have been calculated by deducting 1/12th of the highest tier of the standard management fee schedule in effect for the respective period from the gross composite returns on a monthly

Internal dispersion is calculated using the assetweighted standard deviation of annual gross returns for accounts in the composite for the entire year. For those years when less than five accounts were included for the full year, no dispersion measure is presented. The three-year annualized ex-post standard deviation measures the variability of the composite (using gross returns) and the benchmark for the 36-month period.

## GLOSSARY

Alpha: A risk-adjusted measure of an investment's excess return relative to a benchmark. Beta: A quantitative measure of the volatility, or systematic risk, of a security or a portfolio in comparison to the market as a whole. R2: A measure that represents the percentage of a fund or security's movements that can be explained by movements in a benchmark index. Sharpe Ratio: A risk-adjusted measure calculated using standard deviation and excess return to determine reward per unit of risk. Standard Deviation: Measures variability of returns around the average return for an investment portfolio. Higher standard deviation suggests greater risk.

# INDEX DEFINITION

The Russell Midcap® Growth Index is a market capitalization-weighted index of medium-capitalization, growth-oriented stocks of U.S. companies. The index is calculated on a total return basis with dividends reinvested. The index is unmanaged, its returns do not reflect any fees, expenses, or sales charges, and is not available for direct investment.