

# Market Commentary

## U.S. Equity

As of September 30, 2011

H O L L A N D  
C A P I T A L M A N A G E M E N T

## Portfolio Performance

### *For the Quarter*

Due to concerns about a global economic slowdown, stocks were extremely volatile during the quarter. The Russell 1000 Growth Index fell significantly in response. However, consistent with our conservative growth strategy, the portfolio performed better than the benchmark on a relative basis. Stock selection was the driver, with good selection within consumer-related sectors, energy, producer durables, and materials & processing. Sector allocation was effectively neutral; good allocation in a number of sectors was offset by unfavorable allocation in other sectors, particularly energy.

A number of consumer related holdings were top contributors to portfolio performance. In consumer staples, Hansen Natural benefited from strong revenues in the U.S. and internationally. Mead Johnson also reported good results, particularly in emerging markets. In consumer discretionary, Amazon gained on very strong top line growth and introduced its new tablet, Kindle Fire, which should facilitate traffic to its website. Costco's same-store sales have improved recently, driven by increased frequency, membership growth, and benefits from inflation.

Energy was one of the worst performing market sectors during the quarter, thus our long standing overweight in the sector acted as a drag. Energy holdings generally fell in tandem with the weakness in the sector, but turned in better relative performance overall versus similar holdings in the benchmark. In particular, one of the largest weighted positions in the portfolio, Range Resources, was the top contributor to overall portfolio performance. The company continues to make steady progress in its Marcellus property. And, despite recession worries, the fundamental bottom-up growth prospects remain strong. In

addition, M&A activity in the space has caused investors to view the company as a prime acquisition target.

In technology, American Tower held up relatively well as compared to other technology/telecom stocks with similar growth characteristics. And although Microsoft slipped during the quarter, an underweight in the position resulted in a positive relative contribution. Yet, Citrix Systems sold off of earlier in the year highs. Valuation and the lackluster end-market environment may have exacerbated the sell-off, which was prevalent during this period for a number of higher-growth technology/telecom names.

In healthcare, Hospira was punished after announcing an international growth strategy that will require investments to be made. Additionally, the company must spend more than expected to address compliance issues at one of its plants. Covidien was hurt because it garners a significant amount of sales internationally and the recent strength of the U.S. dollar, particularly against the Euro, will create a headwind for earnings in the year ahead.

No new positions were established and no holdings were sold during the quarter.

### *For the Year-to-Date*

The portfolio is ahead of the Russell 1000 Growth Index year to date. This has been due to favorable stock selection. Concerns about a global slowdown have hurt energy stocks recently and the sector is now among the worst performing in 2011. While an overweight in energy has been a drag on performance, this has been more than offset by the better relative performance of energy holdings in the portfolio versus those in the benchmark. Stock selection has also been additive

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in consumer discretionary, producer durables, materials & processing, and consumer staples. Health care and financial services holdings have shown weakness.

### Market Review

The U.S. stock market continued to trend lower during the quarter with the S&P 500 Index registering a steep -13.9%, its worst quarterly return since the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2008. The index returned -7.0% in September alone, marking its fifth consecutive month of negative returns. A confluence of economic, global, and political events and news has increased anxiety that the domestic economic recovery is in jeopardy and that the world's developed economies could slip into recession. Economic data continues to point to a U.S. economic recovery that is faltering, including a lack of job creation and still high unemployment. Signs also indicate that emerging economies, like China, may also be slowing, while financial and economic problems in Europe continue to make headlines. These concerns, combined with political wrangling and controversies around the world, have worked to increase investor uncertainty, translating into greater volatility in the equity markets over the past several months. In addition there has been a flight to safety, which has been negative for the global equity markets and for commodities as well.

During the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, stock indexes across all capitalization ranges and styles turned in negative returns. On a relative basis, large cap stocks performed better than mid and small cap stocks. Growth stocks performed better than value in the large cap space, but lagged within mid and small cap ranges. The indexes are negative across-the-board so far during 2011, with the large caps doing better on a relative basis.

### Market Outlook

Through April 2011, the S&P 500 Index had experienced eight consecutive months of positive returns as investors showed enthusiasm about an improving economy. However, since that time, the index has suffered five consecutive months of negative returns, ending the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter down about -17% from its 2011 high. Investors are concerned that the economic recovery is faltering with economic data supporting their concerns. In addition, a number of other global, political, and financial events have increased the risk to both domestic and global growth, including recent signs that emerging markets may be slowing and continued headlines about the problems in Europe. The U.S. government took a number of unprecedented actions during the financial and economic crisis in order to put the economy on a clear path to recovery. Despite these actions, job creation has been inadequate, unemployment is still high, housing weak, and debt levels remain unsustainable. One bright light is that corporate earnings have been solid. In addition, many corporations now have better balance sheets and are in a strong financial position with significant levels of cash. However, many are unwilling to spend or to hire employees given the continued uncertainties facing the economy and consumer demand. Due to the severity of the crisis and the stubborn and changing headwinds not only in the U.S. but in other economies, we do not believe that resolutions will be easy or quickly determined.

We are unable to predict the direction of the stock market, economic growth, or interest rates, nor the outcome of geopolitical events or activity. However, given the confluence of events and near-term headwinds that the economy continues to face, we believe the domestic recovery will be slow and uneven at

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best. In addition, given this dynamic, we would expect stock market action to remain reactive to financial, economic, and geopolitical news as it evolves.

Corporate profitability and earnings are affected by the pace of economic growth. Thus, we remain focused on using thorough, high quality, bottom-up research to identify companies that best meet our long-term fundamental investment criteria. We remain favorable toward companies with exposure to faster-growing products or markets, companies that are market share gainers, those with pricing power, and companies whose bottom lines can still leverage increased demand as the economy recovers. We continue to focus on high quality companies, with solid balance sheets and strong free cash flow and are committed to a portfolio positioned to participate in sustained rising market

environments and protect in extended market downturns.

In general, we believe that as the economy further recovers and corporate earnings growth normalizes, investors will become more cautious of lower quality stocks whose valuations are not supported by high quality, sustainable earnings. Rather, we expect investors to shift their focus toward stocks of high quality companies with strong balance sheets and good managements, with the ability to generate high quality, sustainable earnings with achievable estimates, metrics consistent with our bottom-up fundamental investment criteria.

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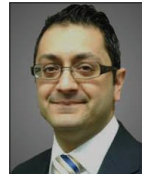
## Portfolio Managers



**Monica L. Walker, CPA**  
*Chief Executive Officer  
& Chief Investment Officer - Equity*

Ms. Walker is a founding partner of the Holland Capital Management. As Chief Executive Officer, she oversees the overall business and financial operations of the firm.

With over 30 years of financial services experience, including 23 years of investment management experience, Ms. Walker also serves as Chief Investment Officer — Equity, responsible for execution of the firm's large cap growth and mid cap growth equity strategies with a team of equity research analysts. She has worked as a member of the firm's equity team and Investment Policy Committee since the firm's inception 20 years ago. Ms. Walker received a B.B.A. in accounting from the University of Texas at Arlington in 1980 and is a CPA licensed in Texas and Illinois. She serves as a board member Chicago Children's' Choir and of Chicago United. Ms. Walker is a member of the CEO Council of Chicago United and the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans' Investment Management Committee. She is a member of the CFA Society of Chicago, the Illinois CPA Society, the Texas Society of CPAs, the American Institute of CPAs, the National Association of Securities Professionals (NASP), the Executive's Club of Chicago, Women Investment Professionals (WIP), Alliance of Business Leaders & Entrepreneurs (ABLE) and the Economic Club of Chicago. In 2011, Ms. Walker was recognized as one of Chicago United's Business Leaders of Color. In October 2011, she was named as one of Black Enterprise's "75 Most Powerful Blacks on Wall Street" and in February 2010, as one of Black Enterprise's "75 Most Powerful Women in Business." Ms. Walker was honored by the Chicago chapter of NASP in July 2008 as one of five "Chicago Women Blazing the Path to Power."



**Carl R. Bhatena**  
*Co-Portfolio Manager - Equity  
& Senior Equity Analyst (Technology)*

Mr. Bhatena is Co-Portfolio Manager of the firm's large cap and mid cap growth equity strategies. As a Senior Equity Analyst, Mr. Bhatena is responsible for fundamental research and valuation analysis within the technology and telecom sectors of the market. He joined Holland Capital in 1998 and has 18 years of industry experience. He began his career with EVEREN Securities Inc. (formerly Kemper Securities Inc.) as an associate analyst in the company's investment strategy group. Mr. Bhatena was promoted to Vice President – Investment Strategist and performed aggregate fundamental qualitative and quantitative analysis on global financial markets, sectors, industry groups, and specific companies as well as economic and interest rate forecasting. Mr. Bhatena holds a M.B.A. with honors from the University of Hartford's Beatrice Auerbach School with an investment finance concentration, and earned a B.A. in economics from Baldwin-Wallace College.