

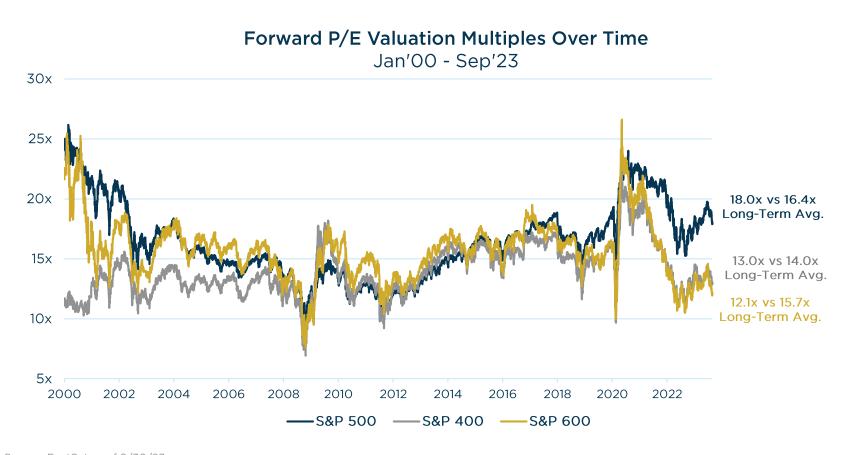
# A Time for Quality in SMID Cap

As of September 30, 2023



### Observations Down the Market Cap Spectrum

Valuations for Small & Mid cap stocks trade at notable relative discounts to Large Caps and their respective historical averages, presenting an attractive opportunity for long-term investors.



Source: FactSet as of 9/30/23



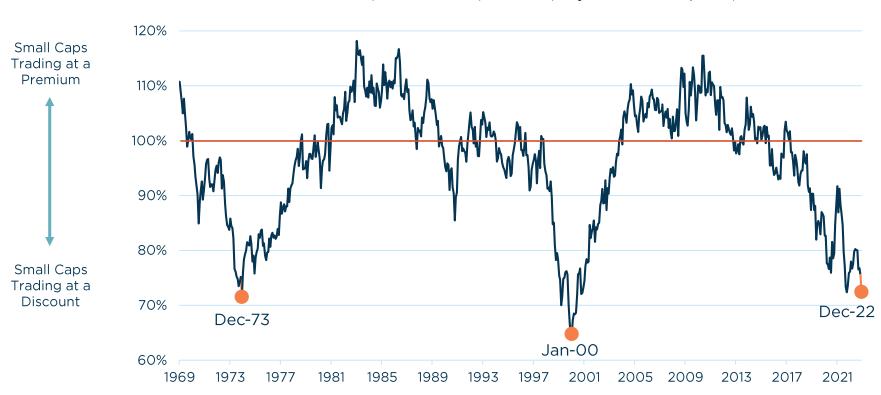
### The Good News

### **Small Cap Valuations Appear Attractive**

Looking back over the past 50+ years, valuations of Small Cap stocks relative to Large Caps are historically attractive and at levels not seen since early 2000.

#### Small Cap / Large Cap Relative Valuation

Median LTM P/E Russell 2000/S&P 500 (Only Profitable Companies)



Source: Furey Research Partners as of 12/31/22



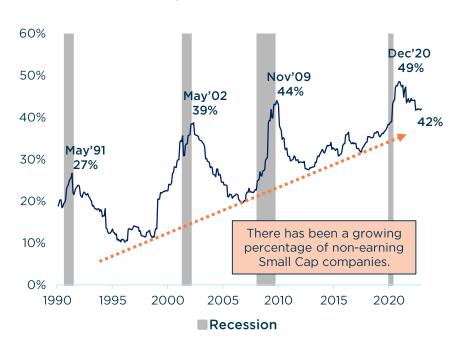
### BUT...

### There are significant challenges & key considerations

The percent of Russell 2000 companies with no earnings has risen significantly over the last decade. Additionally, quality has deteriorated, as leverage ratios have been increasing.

#### Percent of Russell 2000 Non-Earners

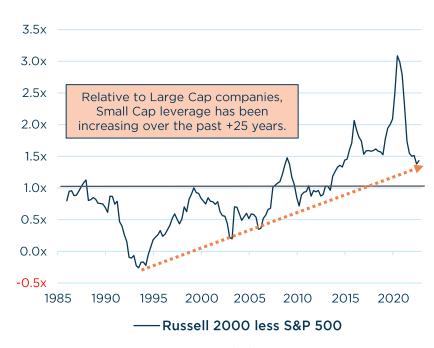
(based on companies with available data)



Source: Strategas as of 12/31/2022

#### Leverage Ratio Spread

Small Caps less Large (ex. Financials)



Source: Furey Research Partners as of 12/31/2022 The leverage ratio represents Net Debt/EBITDA



## Cost of Capital in Perspective

### **Historical Influence & Implications Moving Forward**

Over the past 10+ years, abundant access to cheap debt largely eliminated any performance differential between high and low quality Small Cap companies. That may be set to change.

### Russell 2000: Profitable / Unprofitable

Relative Performance Index (Log Scale)



Source: Furey Research Partners as of 12/31/2022

#### S&P 500 WAVG Cost of Capital (WACC)



Source: Goldman Sachs as 12/31/2022

Now that the decade of abnormally suppressed interest rates is over, the cost of capital is on the rise <u>AND</u> nearly 50% of S&P 1500 debt matures in the next five years when refinancing will be much more expensive.



# Why The London Company for SMID Cap?

- We believe the SMID portfolio is well positioned to capitalize on attractive relative valuations while avoiding the pitfalls associated with low-quality, smaller cap companies.
  - Companies with sustainably high and improving returns on capital provide downside protection and have outperformed over the long term.
  - Attributes like a strong balance sheet and the ability to self-finance operations are poised to stand out as tangible competitive advantages in a higher cost of capital environment.
  - Pricing power allows companies to pass through inflationary costs

As of 9/30/2023	on Capital	Sheets	Valuation
	Pre-Tax Return on Invested Capital	Net Debt/EBITDA	Ent Value/EBITDA
SMID Cap	15.5%	2.7x	15.2x
Russell 2500	8.5%	3.1x	11.7x

Source: Factset

Quality Dortfolio Motrice



## Benefits of Down Cap Quality Over Time



Source: Piper Sandler as of 09/30/23



## A Quality Value Approach to Small & Mid Cap Investing

# High-Quality Companies

100% Bottom-Up Approach to Find Quality, Sustainable Businesses

with durable competitive advantages, consistently high and improving returns on capital and cash flow.

# Balance Sheet Optimization

#### A Novel Approach to Valuation

that assesses strength and flexibility of the balance sheet to create a more concrete margin of safety.

### Minimizing Risk:

- Bottom-Up Search for High Quality
- Focus on the Balance Sheet

# Focused Portfolio Construction

### Solving the Problem of Over-Diversification

by targeting 25-35 high-conviction, long-term holdings resulting in high active share and low turnover.

### Sell Discipline

### Help Avoid Large Losses to Maximize Return

by selling when fundamentals deteriorate and not averaging down, reinforced by a quantitative soft stop-loss.

#### **Maximizing Return:**

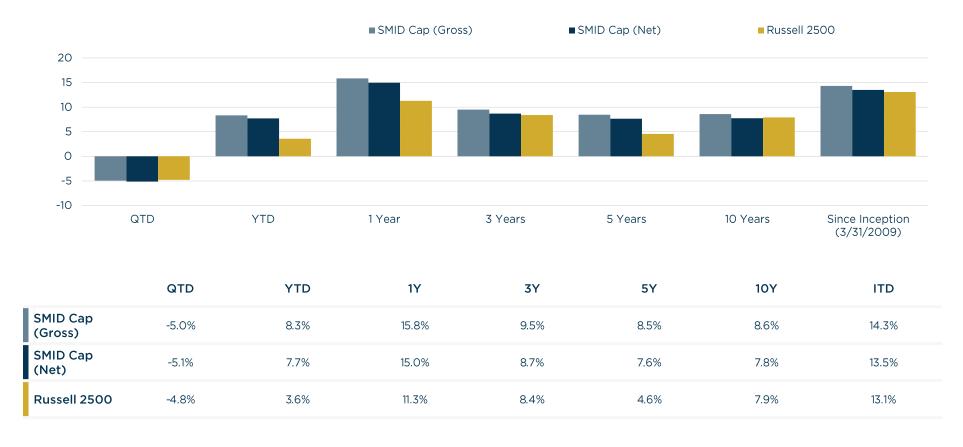
- Avoiding Over-Diversification
- Helping Prevent Large Losses



## SMID Cap Performance Review

#### **Annualized Returns (%)**

As of 9/30/2023





### Important Disclosures

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Performance and Fees: Gross of fee returns are calculated gross of management and custodian fees and net of transaction costs. Net of fee returns are calculated net of actual management fees and transaction costs and gross of custodian and other fees. Returns may be net of miscellaneous fund expenses. The gross figures do not reflect the deduction of investment advisory fees. Returns are calculated and stated in US dollars. Returns are calculated gross of withholding taxes on foreign dividends and interest. Dividends are reinvested.

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