

# Portfolio Commentary

# Small Cap Value

## Market Review

We are entering a new economic era just two years after Covid began. Trends and practices espoused for decades such as globalization and lean manufacturing have lost their luster. Vestiges of the 1970's have returned to awaken dormant fears about energy prices and nuclear threats. Our digital economy is now facing analog threats - inflation, shortages, and war. The short-term effects are unnerving, but our economy retains momentum.

Investors are grappling with repercussions of an unjust war in Ukraine and an economy experiencing a rash of recent "high-water mark" readings in metrics long dismissed as fleeting, such as inflation and energy prices. This is not the 1970's, however. Our economy is more efficient and stronger. By and large, companies are better at adapting to new challenges. Entrepreneurship blossomed over the past two years. Still, the economic outlook is murkier than it was last year.

The uncertainty was reflected during the first quarter's price action for both stocks and bonds. The S&P 500 gyrated throughout the quarter, rallying in late March to close down over 4% for the period. Interest rates as measured by the U.S. Treasury 10-year note rose to 2.4%, driving bond prices down.

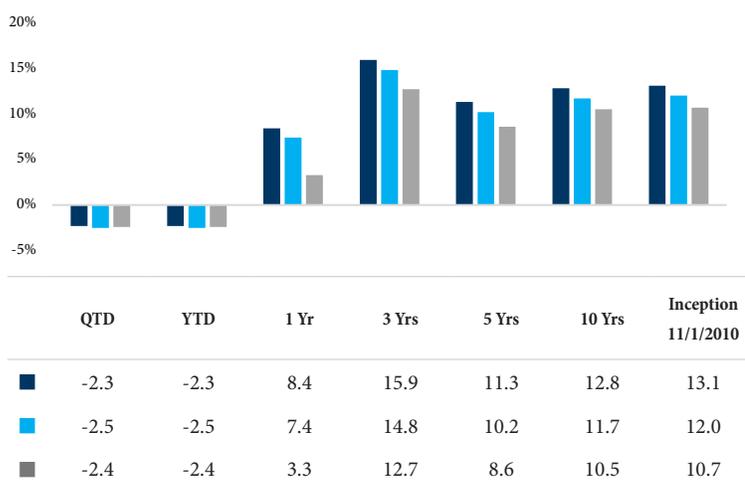
## Performance Overview

The Small Cap Value Portfolio ("the Portfolio") returned -2.3% (gross of fees) during the quarter, while the Russell 2000 Value Index ("The Index") returned -2.4%.

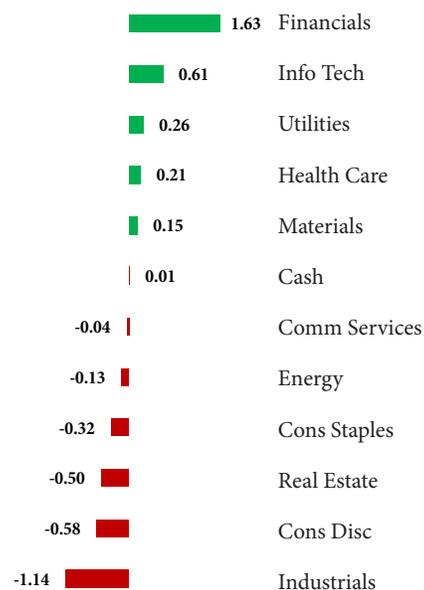
The Portfolio benefited from security selection in Financials, Information Technology, and Utilities in addition to an underweight allocation to Health Care. However, security selection in Industrials, Real Estate, Consumer Discretionary, and Consumer Staples detracted from performance during the quarter.

## Average Annualized Performance % as of 3/31/2022

## % Total Effect Portfolio vs. Index<sup>1</sup> (12/31/2021 - 3/31/2022)



Performance is preliminary and subject to change at any time



Information is as of 3/31/2022. Sources: Congress Asset Management, FactSet, Russell Investments and Morningstar Direct. The information throughout this presentation is for illustrative purposes and is subject to change at any time. Holdings and sector weightings throughout this presentation are subject to change and should not be considered investment advice or a recommendation to buy or sell a particular security. Actual holdings may vary by client. Past performance does not guarantee future results. Gross performance shown does not reflect the deduction of investment management fees and certain transaction costs, which will reduce investment performance. **This information is supplemental to the GIPS Report.** Performance returns of less than one year are not annualized. Frank Russell Company ("Russell") is the source and owner of the trademarks, service marks and copyrights related to the Russell Indexes. Neither Russell nor its licensors accept any liability for any errors or omissions in the Russell Indexes and/or underlying data contained in this communication. No further distribution of Russell data is permitted without Russell's express written consent. Russell does not promote, sponsor or endorse the content of this communication. <sup>1</sup>The information shown is for a representative account as of 3/31/2022. Actual client account holdings and sector allocations may vary.

## 1Q 2022 Attribution Highlights

### Overall Contributors

- Security selection in Financials, Information Technology & Utilities
- Underweight allocation to Health Care

### Overall Detractors

- Security selection in Industrials, Real Estate, Consumer Discretionary & Consumer Staples

## Top 5 Stock Contributors and Detractors

### Contributors

STOCK	AVG. WEIGHT%	CONTRIBUTION%
Range Resources Corporation	1.51	0.84
Alcoa Corporation	1.28	0.67
Matador Resources Company	1.92	0.65
Virtu Financial, Inc. Class A	2.02	0.54
CNX Resources Corporation	1.03	0.43

**Range Resources Corporation (RRC)** is an independent oil and gas company that explores and develops oil and gas properties and has benefitted from increased demand for oil and gas as the economy ramps up again. In this environment, the price of natural gas (futures contract / MCFE) increased from \$2.61 to \$5.64.

**Alcoa Corporation (AA)** produces and sells bauxite, alumina, and aluminum products and is benefitting from increased demand for base metals as the economy recovers from the COVID-related slowdown. In this environment, the price of an Aluminum futures contract has increased from \$2,194 to \$3,484 over the past year.

**Matador Resources Company (MTDR)** is an independent energy company engaged in the exploration, development, and production of oil and natural gas resources. The company has benefitted from increased demand for oil and gas as the economy recovers from the pandemic slowdown and the price of oil (West Texas Intermediate) has risen from \$59 to \$100 over the past year.

### Detractors

STOCK	AVG. WEIGHT%	DETRACTION%
Shyft Group, Inc.	2.48	-0.77
LCI Industries	1.68	-0.66
Summit Materials, Inc. Class A	2.35	-0.63
M/I Homes, Inc.	1.73	-0.58
Cross Country Healthcare, Inc.	1.96	-0.48

**Shyft Group, Inc. (SHYF)** makes truck chassis trailers, and other related products focusing on the electric vehicle market. In the first quarter, concerns about the availability of parts dampened investor enthusiasm regarding the rate at which Shyft would be able to meet investor demand.

**LCI Industries (LCII)** makes recreational vehicles and equipment. During the first quarter, investor enthusiasm waned from concerns that LCII would experience disruptions in its supply chain, making it difficult to meet customer expectations.

**Summit Materials, Inc. (SUM)** provides construction materials such as cement, asphalt, and ready-mix concrete. Investor optimism regarding the rate at which the infrastructure bill, "Build Back Better" would benefit earnings contrasted with concerns about Summit's ability to pass through increasing input costs.

### Purchased

- Arthrocare Corp. (ARTC) - Health Care

### Sold

- Kennametal, Inc. (KMT) - Industrials

## Economic Outlook

Since 1998 and the Long-Term Capital Management hedge fund crisis, investors have become reliant on the Federal Reserve (Fed) to act aggressively to stabilize the markets. Then, the Fed obliged markets and employed quantitative easing for the first time in response to the Great Financial Crisis of 2008-2009. In that case, the Fed was successful in righting the ship, avoiding what could have been an outright depression.

The Fed's response to the onset of the pandemic in 2020 has largely been seen as successful. That recession, while very sharp, lasted less than two quarters. In hindsight, the Fed may have been too aggressive, or at a minimum did not react quickly enough when it was clear the economy was booming. Policy reversal is never an easy feat, as such timing and magnitude will be key components for the Fed going forward.

Inflationary pressures continue to rise on many fronts. Pandemic-induced supply constraints are not easing as much as hoped and have been further complicated by the war. Relief may be further delayed by China's staggered shut down of Shanghai, a city of 25 million people and a vital cog in global commerce. Employment costs continue to rise as a dearth of workers pressures employers of every stripe. Mortgage rates have risen to over 4.6%, making home ownership more expensive. Commodity prices have popped, led by oil and gas. Inflation now acts like a tax, forcing consumers to choose essentials over desires. Longer-term, inflation expectations can have a negative impact on psyche and sentiment.

Aside from inflation, Russia's attack on Ukraine is causing the world to reassess its priorities, with European nations threatened by proximity and trading ties. Europe had become reliant on Russia for much of its energy, importing vast amounts of natural gas out of expediency and to satisfy environmental goals. Regardless of the duration or outcome of Russia's war in Ukraine, Europe will need to shift its spending priorities. Spending on energy production and defense will increase. Europe's trading patterns will favor European and western allies that do not pose an existential threat to their existence.

The domestic impact of the Russian attack is far less stark. Russia's share of the global economy is about 3% and direct trade with the U.S. is inconsequential. Many U.S. companies ceased Russian activities early on. Instead, our most immediate financial challenges are domestic and revolve around inflation, interest rates, and consumer spending.

Inflation remains elevated, alarmingly so. Investors' confidence that the Fed can engineer a soft landing (a period of slower growth without a recession) while also lowering inflation, is being tested. The Fed has gradually become more "hawkish," forecasting more and larger hikes in the overnight lending rate. Yet, the Fed continued to purchase government bonds into March, expanding its balance sheet further and pumping even more cash into a strong economy. The Fed's current goal of damping inflation without causing a recession may be more difficult than the challenges offered by the pandemic or the Great Financial Crisis.

The Fed's forthcoming rate increases are unlikely to materially hinder domestic growth, at least in the intermediate term. The Omicron variant has passed for now and the shock of Russia's initial attacks on Ukraine has waned, restoring consumer confidence. Importantly, there are over 11 million job openings. As people return to the work force, they will find ample opportunities with good wages. Filling those jobs should help solidify growth, increase spending, and, perhaps, soften inflationary impacts.

The pandemic and related supply issues have laid bare the need for a

renaissance in U.S. productive capacity. Supply chains need to shorten and inventory levels need to rise. While subtle, satisfying these needs will increase capital expenditures over the next few years. The housing market remains strong and the desire for hybrid work environments is forcing employers to upgrade technology systems and software.

Fortunately, funding for capital projects is ample and supportive of continued growth. Domestic commercial banks have \$18 trillion in deposits, a record high, much of it available to loan. The corporate bond market is also vibrant, indicating companies' willingness to invest and investors' willingness to lend.

The economy can withstand the Fed's proposed rate hikes. How successful the Fed will be in containing inflation remains unknown. The deleterious effects of inflation compound over time and can weaken an economy's foundation to its core. By adopting a more aggressive tone, the Fed is implicitly acknowledging this risk.

In spite of the challenges, corporate earnings should increase about 10% in 2022. While not advancing at the heady pace of 2021, it should be enough to support stocks as the year progresses. Bonds offer more favorable yields than a year ago and provide a level of safety during these more uncertain times.

## Congress Asset Management Co. Small Cap Value Composite 1/1/2011 - 12/31/2020

Year	Total Return Gross of Fees %	Total Return Net of Fees %	Russell 2000 Value Return % (dividends reinvested)	Composite Gross 3-Yr an- nualized ex-post St Dev (%)	Russell 2000 Value 3-Yr an- nualized ex-post St Dev (%)	Number of Portfolios	Gross Disper- sion %	Total Composite Assets End of Period (\$ millions)	Total Firm Discretionary Assets End of Period (\$ millions)	Total Firm Advisory-On- ly Assets End of Period (\$ millions)	Total Firm Assets End of Period # (\$ millions)
2020	8.8	7.8	4.6	27.1	26.1	≤5	n/a	197	10,746	5,523	16,269
2019	26.2	25.1	22.4	16.5	15.7	≤5	n/a	185	8,445	4,083	12,528
2018	-15.5	-16.3	-12.9	15.7	15.8	≤5	n/a	235	7,102	3,132	10,234
2017	16.9	15.8	7.8	13.9	14.0	≤5	n/a	244	7,272	3,274	10,546
2016	18.4	17.2	31.7	15.4	15.7	≤5	n/a	283	n/a	n/a	n/a
2015	-7.6	-8.4	-7.5	13.6	13.7	≤5	n/a	266	n/a	n/a	n/a
2014	6.2	5.2	4.2	12.5	13.0	≤5	n/a	0.4	n/a	n/a	n/a
2013	45.5	44.1	34.5	15.9	16.1	≤5	n/a	0.1	n/a	n/a	n/a
2012	27.4	26.2	18.1	n/a	n/a	≤5	n/a	17	n/a	n/a	n/a
2011	-4.1	-5.0	-5.5	n/a	n/a	≤5	n/a	14	n/a	n/a	n/a

#The "Total Firm Assets" column includes unified managed account (UMA) assets

Congress Asset Management claims compliance with the Global Investment Performance Standards (GIPS®) and has prepared and presented this report in compliance with the GIPS standards. Congress Asset Management has been independently verified for the periods 1/1/96 – 12/31/20. The verification reports(s) is/are available upon request. A firm that claims compliance with the GIPS standards must establish policies and procedure 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.

**Firm Information:** Congress Asset Management Co. (CAM) is an investment advisor registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940. Registration does not imply a certain level of skill or training. CAM manages a variety of public equity, private equity, fixed income and ETF managed portfolios for private and institutional clients. CAM acquired Prelude Asset Management, LLC on March 15, 2010. CAM merged with Congress Capital Partners, LLP on June 30, 2015. CAM acquired certain strategies of Century Capital Management, LLC on September 15, 2017.

**Composite Characteristics:** The Small Cap Value Composite was created on March 31, 2014 and the inception date is November 1, 2010. Performance prior to September 15, 2017 was generated by Century Capital Management, LLC. Performance prior to March 1, 2014 was generated before the Portfolio Manager became affiliated with Century Capital Management, LLC. The Portfolio Manager was the only individual responsible for selecting securities to buy and sell and the investment decision-making process remained intact. Accordingly, composite performance is linked to performance generated prior to March 1, 2014. Because CAM acquired certain strategies of Century Capital Management, LLC on September 15, 2017 Total Firm Assets are shown as n/a for periods prior to the acquisition date. All portability requirements with respect to GIPS have been met. The composite includes all fully discretionary portfolios with a value over \$100 thousand (US dollars) managed in the small cap value style for a minimum of one full month. The small cap value strategy generally invests in the equity of companies with market capitalizations between \$50 million and \$5 billion or that are within the range of the Russell 2000 Value Index (at the time of purchase) that trade at a discount to intrinsic value or whose earnings growth is under appreciated by the street. Prior to October 1, 2017 there was no minimum value for inclusion. The composite contained proprietary non-fee paying assets which represented 100% of total composite assets as of December 31, 2014 and 0.14% of composite assets as of December 31, 2015 and 0.17% as of December 31, 2016. The benchmark is the Russell 2000 Value Index. The benchmark returns are not covered by the report of independent verifiers. Closed account data is included in the composite as mandated by the standards in order to eliminate a survivorship bias. A list of composite descriptions and a list of broad distribution pooled funds are available upon request.

**Calculation Methodology:** Valuations and returns are computed and stated in U.S. dollars. Gross of fees returns are calculated gross of management and custodial fees and net of transaction costs. Net of fees returns are calculated by reducing monthly gross returns by 1/12th of the maximum applicable annual management fee, which is 0.95%. For periods ended on or before March 31, 2011, the maximum applicable management fee was 1% on the first \$50 million. For periods beginning after March 31, 2011, the maximum applicable management fee is 0.95% on the first \$50 million of assets. The composite results portrayed reflect the reinvestment of dividends, capital gains, and other earnings when appropriate. Accruals for equity securities are included in calculations. Internal dispersion is calculated using the asset-weighted standard deviation of annual gross-of-fees returns of those portfolios that were included in the composite for the entire year. For those years when less than six portfolios were included in the composite for the full year, no dispersion measure is presented. The three-year annualized ex-post standard deviation measures the variability of the composite and the benchmark returns over the preceding 36-month period. It is not presented for 2011 and 2012 because 36-month returns were not available.

**Fee Schedule:** The firms' individual account fee schedule is as follows: 1.00% for first \$1 million, 0.80% for next \$4 million, 0.60% for next \$5 million. Management fees for individual accounts with assets under management exceeding \$10 million, and for institutional accounts are negotiated. The individual account fee schedule may be subject to negotiation where circumstances warrant. As fees are typically deducted quarterly, the compounding effect will increase the impact of the fees by an amount directly related to the gross account performance. For example, an account earning a 10% annual gross return with a 1% annual fee deducted quarterly would earn an 8.9% annual net return due to compounding.

**Other Disclosures:** Policies for valuing investments, calculating performance, and preparing GIPS Reports are available upon request. Past performance does not guarantee future results. This performance report should not be construed as a recommendation to purchase or sell any particular securities held in composite accounts. Market conditions can vary widely over time and can result in a loss of portfolio value. GIPS® is a registered trademark of CFA Institute. CFA Institute does not endorse or promote this organization, nor does it warrant the accuracy or quality of the content contained herein.