THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC & INVESTMENT ENVIRONMENT AND STRATEGY October 2023

Presented by:

Roger J. Sit
CEO & Chief Investment Officer



GLOBAL ECONOMIC & INVESTMENT ENVIRONMENT

I. We expect a short, shallow recession towards the end of 2023/early 2024 with a return to growth in late 2024.

- Interest rate increases and quantitative tightening are starting to have an impact.
- More impact from earlier central bank actions still to materialize. Historically it takes 12 months for monetary policy actions to impact the economy. Material rate increases started June 2022.
- With targeted economic slowdown and decrease in inflation taking longer than central bankers would like, more accommodative monetary policies are not likely in the immediate term. We think interest rates have peaked but will stay higher for longer and thus be an ongoing headwind.
- Two U.S. bank failures and a nervous banking system will further stifle growth as lending standards tighten.
- China economic growth is struggling due to trade restrictions and structural issues.
- Material Federal debt in the U.S. and rest of the world will further limit ability to grow.
- We anticipate rate cuts in 2024 after material demand destruction and reduction in inflation.

II. Markets are likely to be volatile throughout the rest of 2023 and improve in 2024.

- Investor focus is on the health of the economy and future path of interest rates.
- The difficulty and inability in the near term to determine the strength and timing of global economic conditions, and in turn corporate business activities, are resulting in ongoing market volatility; "risk off" and "risk on" days.
- Should have more clarity on economic conditions and interest rate path by late 2023. This clarity should calm the markets.

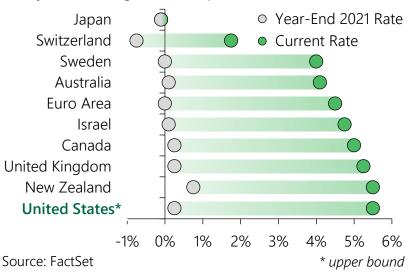
III. The markets are anticipating a lot of negative news/uncertainty and are looking past 2023 into 2024.

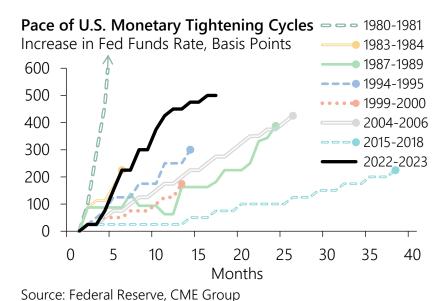
- The markets are an anticipatory (or discounting) mechanism and are focused roughly 12 months out.
- With our expected return to growth in late 2024, the stock market should move higher, and the appreciating sectors should broaden.
- Equity market valuations on consensus estimates look reasonable relative to history and expected level of interest rates.
- Material moderating inflation data, slowing economic activity, and dovish central bank monetary policies will be positive market catalysts.



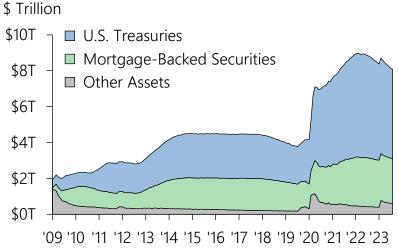
MONETARY POLICIES HAVE BEEN AGGRESSIVE TO REDUCE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Policy Rate Changes, Developed Markets





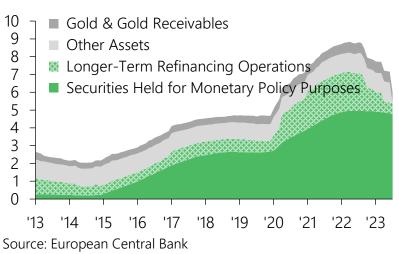
U.S. Federal Reserve Assets



Source: Federal Reserve

European Central Bank Assets

Euro, Trillion

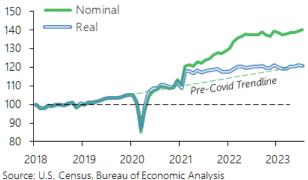


Source: Factset 9/29/23, CME Group 9/29/23, Federal Reserve 9/29/23, European Central Bank 9/29/23



U.S. CONSUMER DATA AND HOUSING SHOWING SLOWDOWN

U.S. Retail & Food Services Sales, ex. Autos Seasonally-Adjusted, January 2018 = 100



Spending per household (HH), based on BAC aggregated credit and debit card data (year-over-year (y/y) %change of the 7-day moving average (ma) of spending levels) Retail ex-auto spending was down 1.1% y/y in the week ending Sep 23



Source: BAC internal data.

U.S. Wholesale Trade Inventory-to-Sales Ratio Seasonally-Adjusted

1.7x 1.6x 1.5x 1.4x 1.3x 1.2x 1.1x

2008

2013

2018

2023

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

1998

2003

1993

U.S. Single-Family Building Permits and Housing Starts Seasonally-Adjusted Annualized Rate, Thousands



U.S. Home Sales

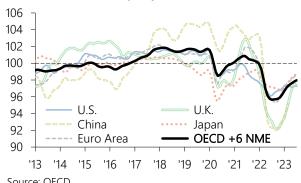
Seasonally-Adjusted Annualized Rate, Thousands



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, National Association of Realtors

Consumer Confidence

Normal = 100, Seasonally-Adjusted

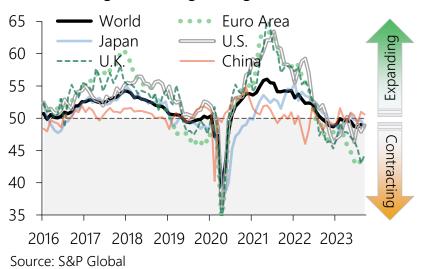


Source: OECD

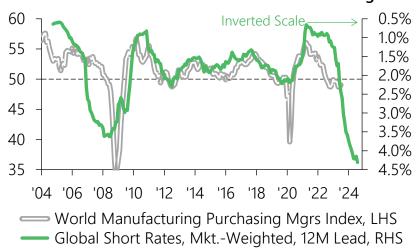


GLOBAL PURCHASING MANAGER'S INDICES SHOW SLOWING ACTIVITY

Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Indices

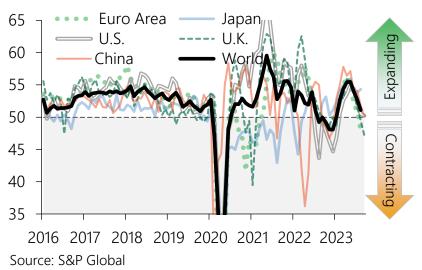


Global Short-Term Interest Rates vs Manufacturing PMI

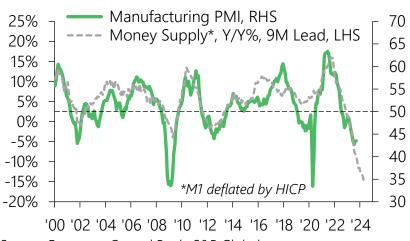


Source: S&P Global, FactSet

Services Purchasing Managers' Indices



Purchasing Managers' Index vs. Money Supply Growth Euro Area

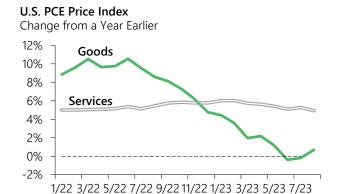


Source: European Central Bank, S&P Global

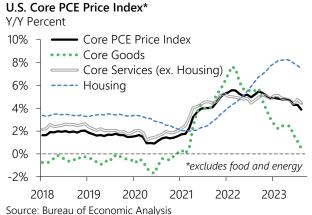


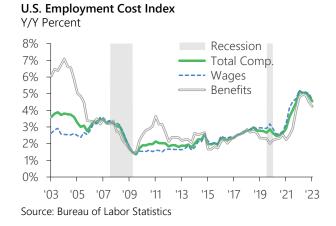
Source: S&P Global, FactSet, European Central Bank 9/29/23

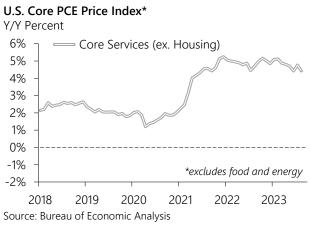
FED'S FAVORITE INFLATION GAUGES SLOWING BUT NOT FAST ENOUGH?

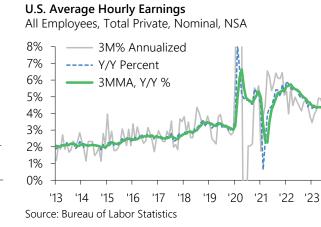


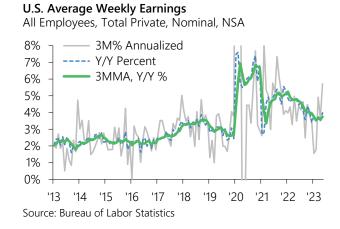
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis







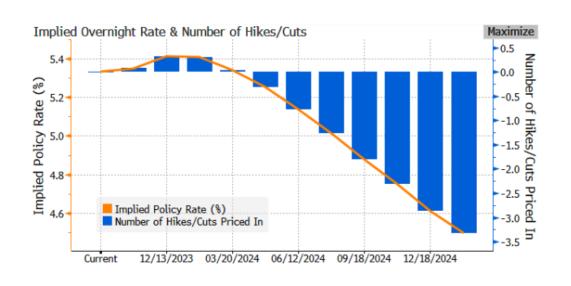




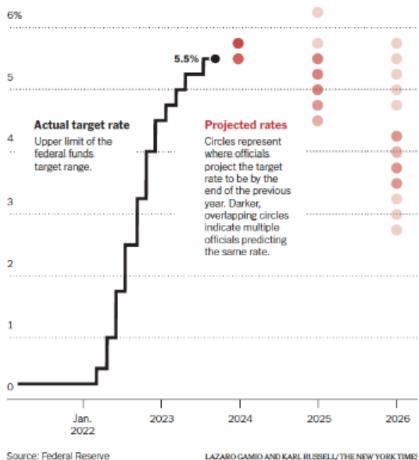


Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis 9/29/23, Bureau of Labor Statistics 9/29/23

AGGRESSIVE U.S. RATE INCREASES CLOSE TO DONE?



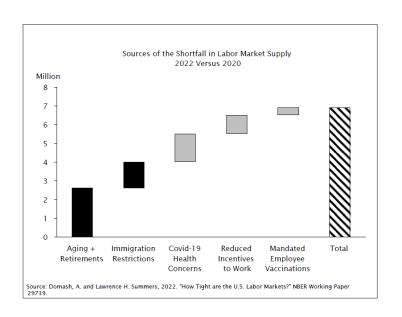
Most Fed officials expect rates to rise by the end of this year.



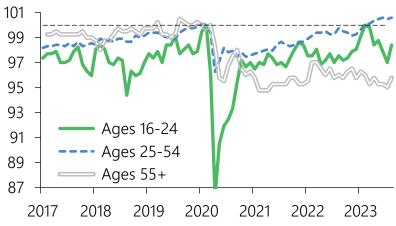
LAZARO GAMIO AND KARL RUSSELL/THE NEW YORK TIMES



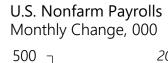
U.S. LABOR MARKET IS TIGHT, EXACERBATED BY RETIREMENTS & COVID

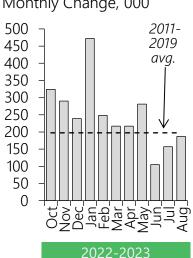




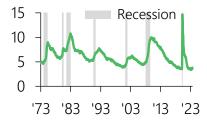


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

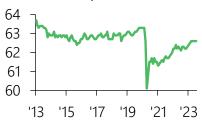




Unemployment Rate (%)

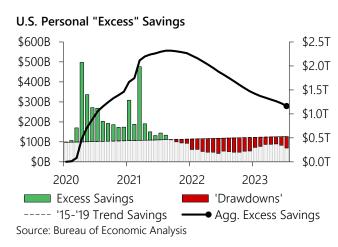


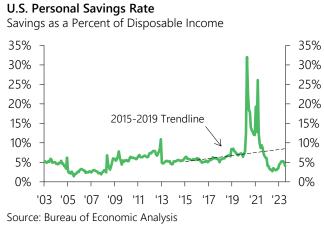
Labor Participation Rate (%)

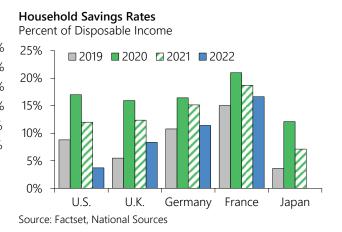


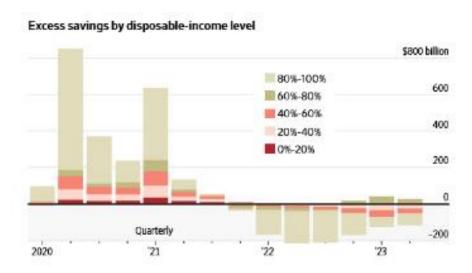


EXCESS SAVINGS REDUCED





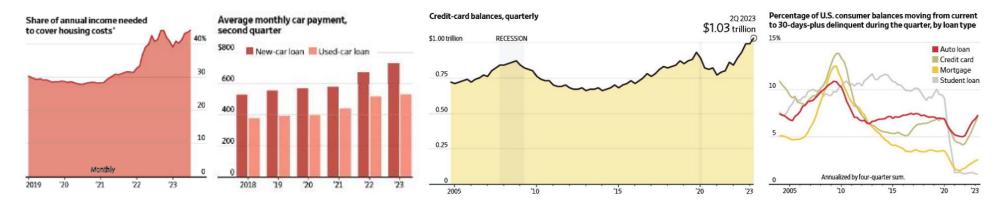




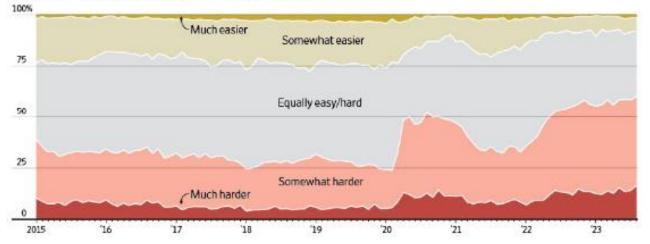


Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis 9/29/23, FactSet & National Sources 4/30/23, Wall Street Journal 9/22/23

U.S. CONSUMERS FEELING THE PAIN



What households say about obtaining credit now vs. a year ago



"Share is based on median household incomes and median home prices. "Data aren't seasonally adjusted. Consumer-price index is for urban consumers. Earnings are for employees in the private sector.

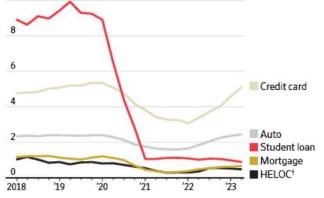
*Based on seasonally adjusted figures; all data are as of August uncept for mortgage and nonmortgage loan brokers, which is as of July. Financial activities includes benking, insurance and real estabe.

**Data covers payday or other installment loans with terms of four months or less. Buy Now Pay Later loans included.

Sources: Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta (share of annual income); Moody's Analytics (eccess savings); Labor Department via St., Louis Fed (prices and earnings); Labor Department, Moody's Analytics (employment by select industry); Experian (car payment); Intuit Credit Karma (credit-card debt); Loxis Nexis Risk Solutions (short-term loan); Federal Reserve Bank of New York (what households say)

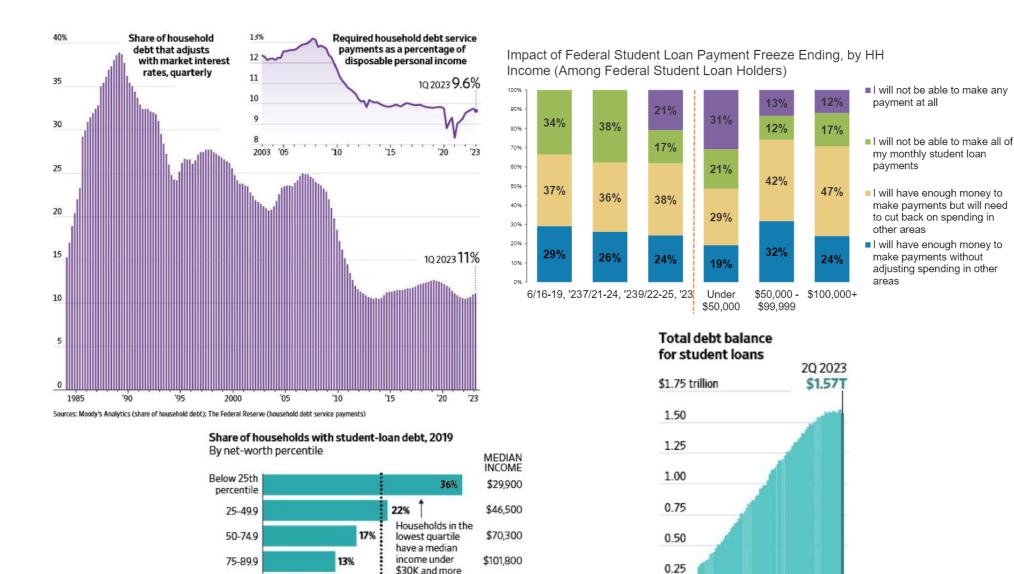
Share of loans 90 or more days delinquent by type

10%





CONSUMER DEBT HEADWINDS AHEAD



than a third have

student-loan debt

\$236,200

\$58,600



90-100

Source: Federal Reserve

All families

6%

Source: Wall Street Journal 7/28/23, 8/29/23, 9/23/23, Morgan Stanley 10/11/23

15

'20

10

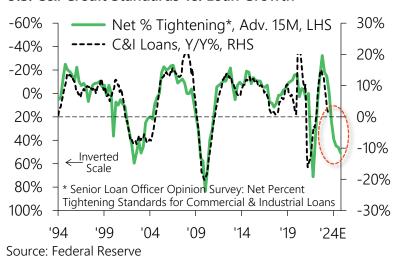
Source: Federal Reserve Bank of New York

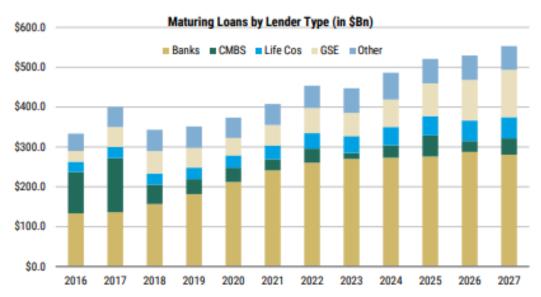
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2005

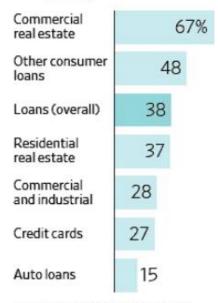
CHALLENGES FOR BANKS AND U.S. ECONOMY

U.S. C&I Credit Standards vs. Loan Growth





Small and medium-sized banks' share of all outstanding loans, by type

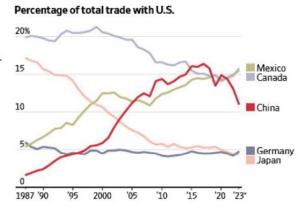


Note: Small and medium-sized banks are domestically chartered banks that are smaller than the top 25 U.S. lenders Source: Federal Reserve



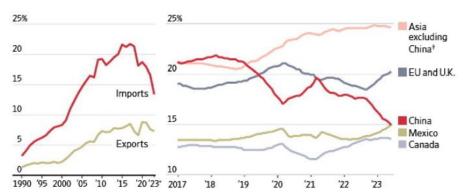
NEGATIVE ECONOMIC DATA FROM CHINA

In the first half of 2023, China's share of U.S. imports fell to its lowest level in 20 years. The U.S. has turned to Mexico, Canada, Europe and other parts of Asia to offset its decreased appetite for electronics, toys and other goods from China.

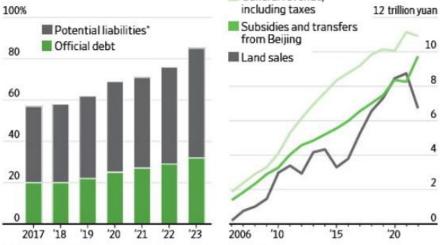


China's share of U.S. goods imports and exports

Percentage of U.S. goods imports, 12-month rolling sum







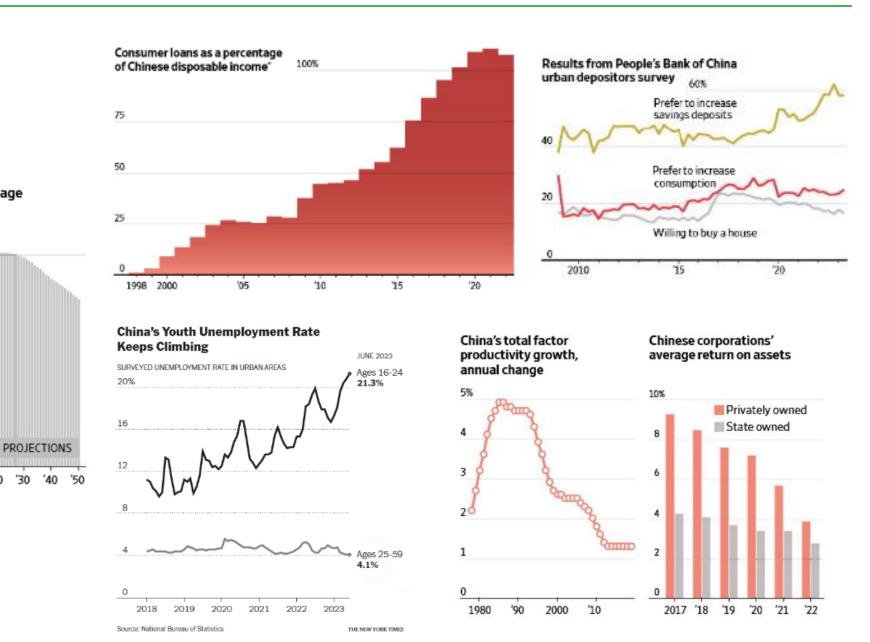
*Debts held through local government-owned corporate financing vehicles.

Note: 1 trillion yuan=\$137 billion

Sources: International Monetary Fund (government debt); CEIC (government funding)



POOR CHINA STRUCTURAL ISSUES





1990 2000 '10 '20 '30

China's working-age

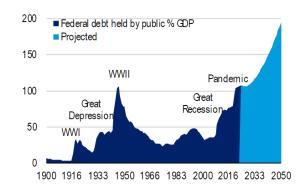
population

1 billion

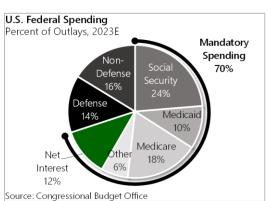
Source: Wall Street Journal 8/21/23, 8/10/23 & 8/25/23

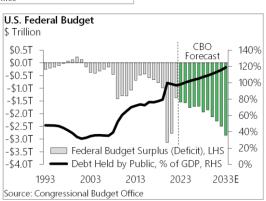
U.S. DOWNGRADE FLASHES WARNING SIGN

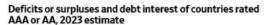
Federal debt held by US public / GDP actual, projected to 2050

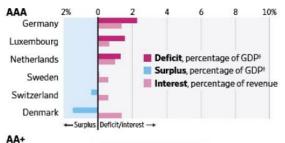


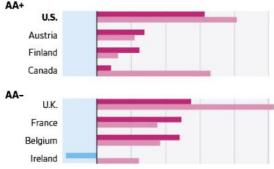
Source: BofA Research Investment Committee, Congressional Budget Office



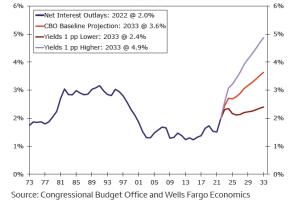


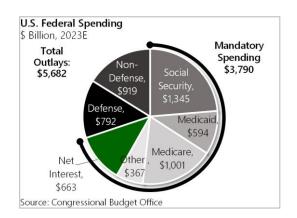


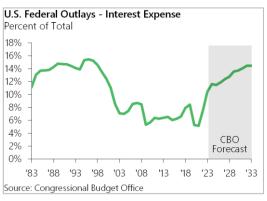




Federal Net Interest Outlays Scenario Analysis Share of GDP







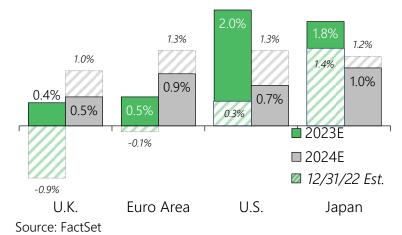




GLOBAL ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

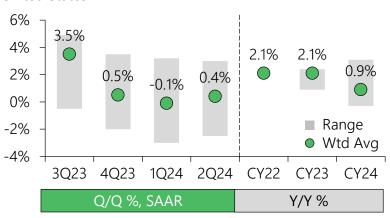
Consensus Real GDP Growth Forecast

Y/Y%, Median



Consensus Real GDP Growth Forecast

United States

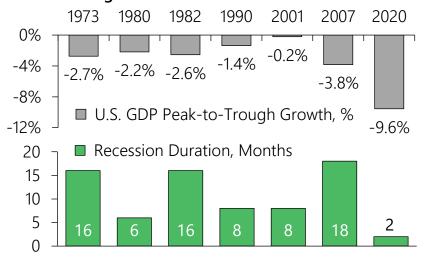


Source: Bloomberg



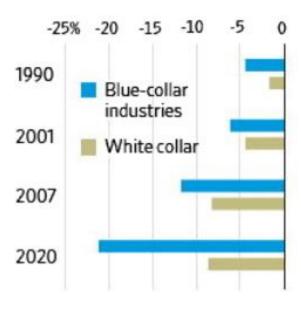
PRIOR U.S. RECESSION COMPARISONS

Peak-to-Trough GDP % & Duration of Prior Recessions



Source: FactSet, NBER

Payrolls, change from peak to trough, by recession*

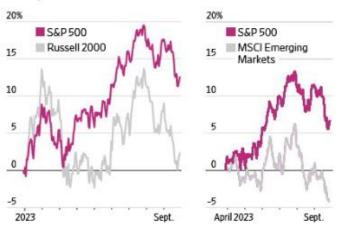


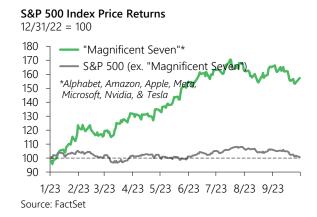
*Seasonally adjusted. Blue collar includes mining, construction, manufacturing, retail warehousing, and leisure and hospitality. White collar includes information, finance and professional and business services. Source: Labor Department.

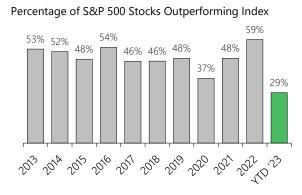


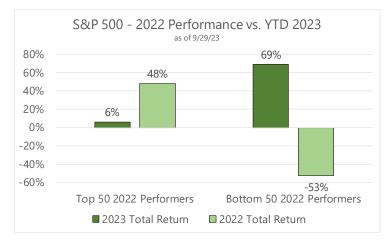
MARKETS DEFY EXPECTATIONS, BUT VERY NARROW LEADERSHIP

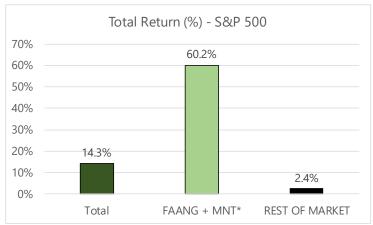
Index performance











FAANG + MNT contributed 87% of the total S&P 500 Return Year-to-Date

*FAANG + MNT includes: META, AMZN, AAPL, NFLX, GOOG/GOOGL, MSFT, NVDA, and TSLA



MULTIPLE EXPANSION ACCOUNTED FOR MARKET INCREASE SO FAR IN 2023

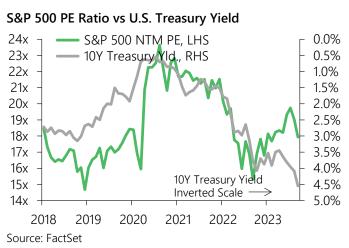
Price/Earnings Ratio ★ Earnings Price

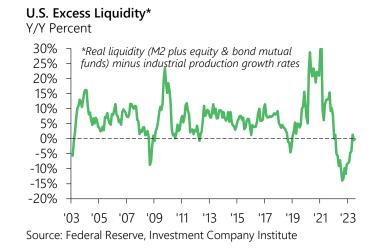
Therefore, for Price to Increase:

- Price/Earnings Ratio Has to Expand and/or
- Earnings Have to Increase

S&P 500 Price Returns, Contribution from EPS and PE



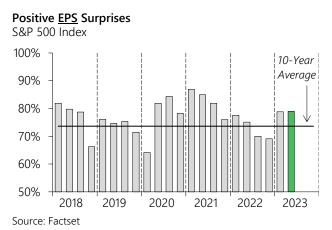


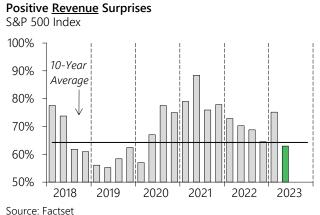




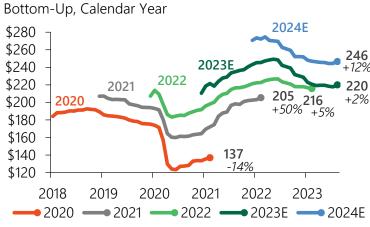


S&P 500 CONSENSUS EPS TRENDING LOWER, BUT OK





S&P 500 Consensus EPS Estimates



Beats were generally above average in both regions except for top line surprises in Europe

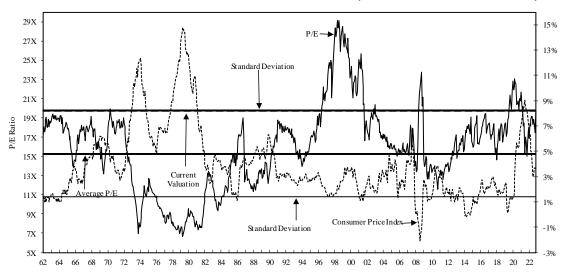




Source: FactSet

S&P 500 VALUATION TOWARDS HIGHER END OF RANGE IN 2024

(Based on 2023 Estimates)



Note: Operating EPS used to calculate P/E after 12/84; last month CPI is estimated. The current valuation of 19.7x is based on 2023 est. operating EPS of \$219.55

(Based on 2024 Estimates)

29X 15% 27X 13% 25 X Standard Deviation 23 X 21X P/E Ratio 15X Current 13X Valuation 11X 9X Consumer Price Index Standard Deviation -1% 88 90 92 94 98 00 02 04 06 08 10 12 14 16 18 20 22 62 64 66 68 70 72 74 76 78 80 82 84 86

Note: Operating EPS used to calculate P/E after 12/84; last month CPI is estimated. The current valuation of 17.7x is based on 2024 est. operating EPS of \$244.79



Source: Factset Research Systems 10/13/23

U.S. EQUITY VALUATIONS REASONABLE EXCLUDING TECHNOLOGY SECTOR

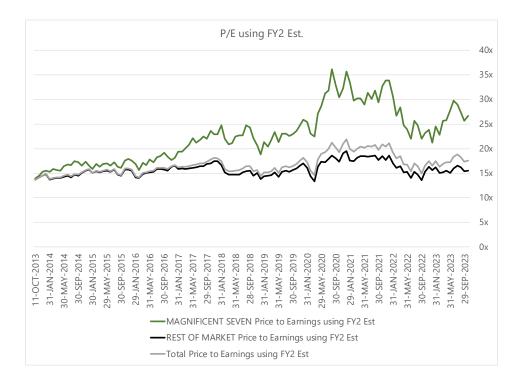
			Premium/Discount to S&P 50		S&P 500
	Current NTM P/E	20 yr avg NTM P/E	Current	20 yr avg	Spread
S&P 500	18.2x	15.8x			
S&P 500 / Information Technology -SEC	25.2x	17.1x	7.0	1.3	5.7
S&P 500 / Consumer Discretionary -SEC	24.3x	20.7x	6.1	4.9	1.2
S&P 500 / Health Care -SEC	17.0x	15.0x	-1.2	-0.8	-0.4
S&P 500 / Materials -SEC	16.8x	15.1x	-1.4	-0.6	-0.7
S&P 500 / Consumer Staples -SEC	17.9x	17.6x	-0.2	1.8	-2.0
S&P 500 / Industrials -SEC	17.7x	16.5x	-0.4	0.7	-1.1
S&P 500 / Utilities -SEC	14.9x	15.5x	-3.3	-0.3	-3.0
S&P 500 / Financials -SEC	12.9x	13.0x	-5.2	-2.8	-2.4
S&P 500 / Communication Services -SEC	17.0x	17.4x	-1.2	1.7	-2.8
S&P 500 / Energy -SEC	11.3x	15.1x	-6.9	-0.7	-6.2

			Premium/Discount to S&P 500		
	Current NTM P/E	20 yr avg NTM P/E	Current	20 yr avg	Spread
S&P 500 / Semiconductors -SUB	24.8x	17.9x	6.6	2.1	4.5
S&P 500 / Software -IND	28.4x	19.8x	10.2	4.0	6.2
S&P 500 / Technology Hardware & Equipment -IG	24.1x	16.1x	6.0	0.3	5.7



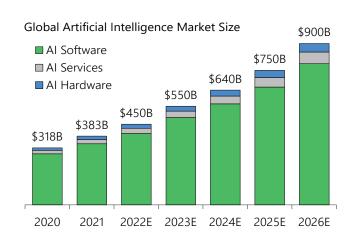
U.S. EQUITY VALUATIONS REASONABLE EXCLUDING "MAGNIFICENT SEVEN"



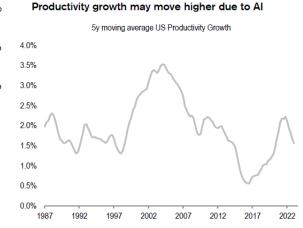


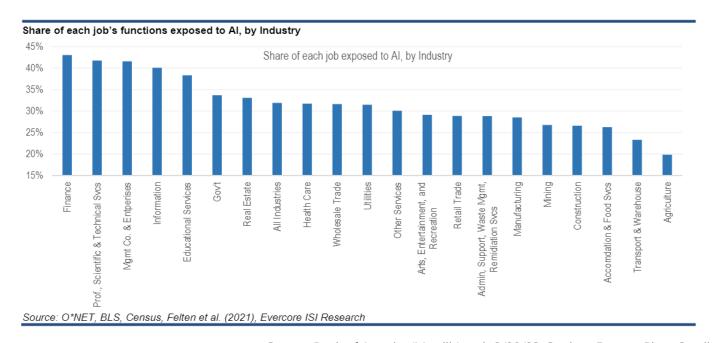


ESTIMATES FOR AI STOCKS HAVE SEEN STRONG UPWARD REVISIONS YTD



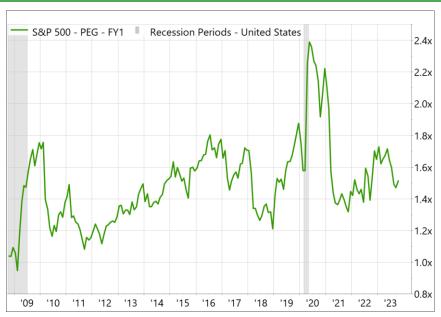


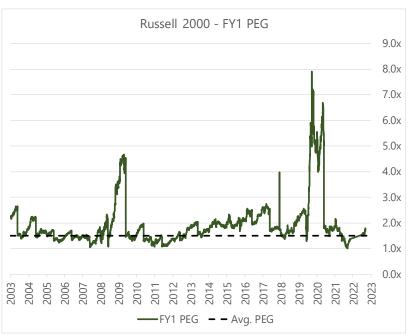


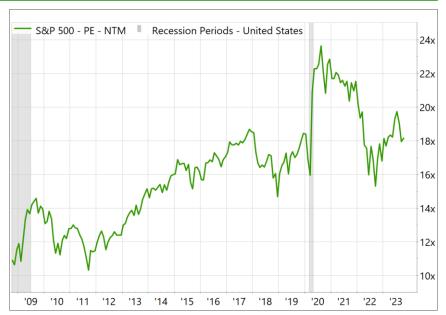


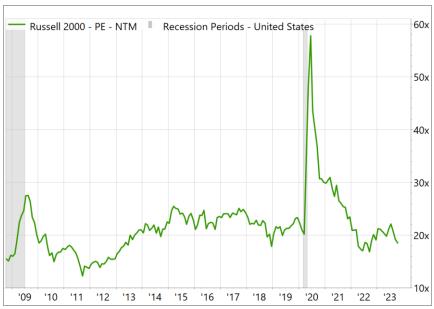


SMALL CAPS LOOK ATTRACTIVE AT CURRENT VALUATIONS





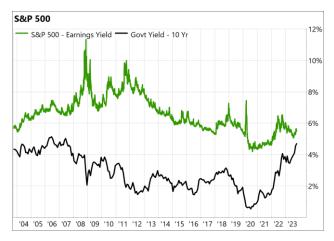




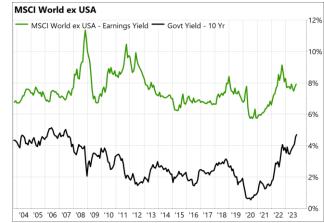


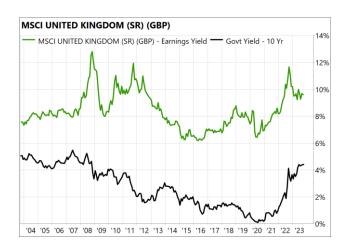


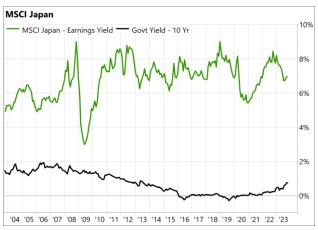
EARNINGS YIELDS HIGHER THAN BOND YIELDS GLOBALLY













Source: FactSet Research Systems 10/13/23

INVESTMENT STRATEGY: GLOBAL EQUITIES

I. We are in a stock picker's market.

- Earnings growth is key to stock price appreciation and sustaining appreciation.
- Invest in high quality companies that have unit growth in sales, pricing power and improved margins resulting from volume/efficiency scalability. This should lead to strong, more predictable earnings growth.
- Focus on companies with strong balance sheets and are cashflow generative. We want to invest in companies that can survive tough economic times.
- Prefer growth stocks that can pay an increasing dividend.
- Focus on stocks with earnings growth fundamentals that can justify valuations.

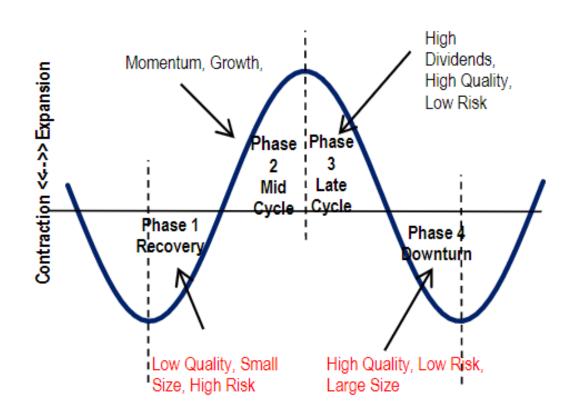
II. Invest in a diversified portfolio.

- Difficult to predict the timing and strength of economic conditions but believe economic conditions will improve in 2024.
- Seek exposure to secular growth sectors, cyclical growth sectors and defensive sectors.
 - o Secular growth sectors (technology, health technology, health services)
 - o Cyclical growth sectors (capital goods, energy, transportation)
 - o Defensive sectors (consumer non-durables, utilities)
- Secular stock growers provide ongoing growth through slow economic conditions and valuations will become more attractive in an anticipated declining interest rate environment.
- Defensive stocks should provide reduced portfolio performance volatility in the near term.
- Cyclical stock growers should appreciate in anticipation of better economic conditions in 2024. Cyclical growth sectors do best when going into the depths of the recession.



ECONOMIC CYCLE PHASES – MOST DIFFICULT PHASE TO INVEST IS BETWEEN A DOWNTURN AND AN UPTURN

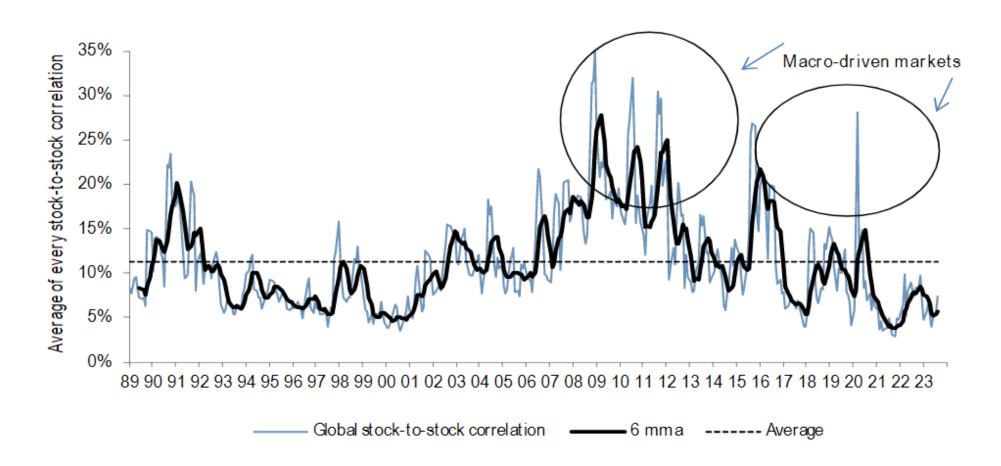
Early Cycle, Mid Cycle, Late Cycle and Recession/Downturn regimes





GLOBAL STOCK CORRELATIONS WELL BELOW AVERAGE

The trend in stock-to-stock correlations continue to remain low





EQUITY SECTOR STRATEGY – OVERWEIGHT

SECTOR	Fundamentals/Themes Within Sector	Favorite Names
TECHNOLOGY (OVERWEIGHT)	 Key themes: Al, machine learning, cybersecurity, cloud computing, e-commerce and digital payments, digital transformations & workflow automation Semiconductors benefiting from all secular themes and ever-increasing utilization in consumer and industrial products Cost reductions set stage for improved operating leverage in a cyclical recovery Favor cash flow-generating secular growers and firms where 2022's multiple contraction was far too severe relative to growth prospects 	NVDA, TSMC, GOOGL, PANW, MSFT, AMZN, BKNG, ADBE, CRM, NOW, ACN
HEALTH CARE (OVERWEIGHT)	 Demographics underpin secular growth for health care within a global economy Health care's innovation engine has never been stronger – producing curative products that improve outcomes at lower costs Valuations for the overall sector are compelling relative to other defensive/non-cyclical sectors Favor health insurers and providers bending cost-curves through efficient health delivery models, including outpatient care, telehealth, and home health Prefer medical device manufacturers addressing chronic medical needs with minimally invasive, yet powerfully effective products and tools 	ABT, ATRC, AZN, DXCM, TMO, CNC, MOH, THC, UNH
ENERGY/MATERIALS (OVERWEIGHT)	 Structural supply-side constraints suggest extended period of elevated, if volatile, energy prices – "all-of-the-above" approach needed to meet world's growing energy needs, including both fossil fuels and renewable sources Energy price-levered companies offer a hedge against inflation and heightened geopolitical risk Favor energy companies possessing advantaged assets, participating in growing markets (e.g. LNG), and/or with the capacity to sustainably increase shareholder returns Prefer materials companies with exposure to copper, a key component in renewable energy/EV transition and estimated to be in structural supply deficit 	COP, LNG, NOG, CHRD, SHEL, GLNCY, LYSDY, MP
CAPITAL GOODS (OVERWEIGHT)	 Surprising resilience in most major industrial markets, with incremental growth from infrastructure, secular growth end-markets (automation, EV's, electrification), and "near shoring" Strong pricing overcoming raw costs and supply chain pressures, with cost relief in sight for 2023 Despite geopolitical pressures, defense may lose "safe haven" status as budget impasse appears likely in 2023-2024 Selectivity is key as valuations are above historical averages; too high given likely US/European recession Investment focus on firms with visible growth in automation, aerospace, EV's, commodity capex, power/T&D 	SIEGY, PH, ETN, HON, J, HUBB
TRANSPORTATION (OVERWEIGHT)	 Post-Covid shift from goods to services negatively impacting volumes on all modes Inventory destocking hurting truckers in particular, but this should abate in 2023 Strong pricing gains and cost actions providing earnings "floor" for trucks, rail, and parcels Rail fundamentals stable given relative stability from intermodal, ag, coal, and auto Travel surge boosting airlines, but capacity uptick in 2023 warrants caution Prefer rails and parcel carriers based on valuation, strong pricing, and capital returns 	UNP, FDX, KNX, TFII, ALK



EQUITY SECTOR STRATEGY – NEUTRAL/UNDERWEIGHT

SECTOR	Fundamentals/Themes Within Sector	Favorite Names
UTILITIES (NEUTRAL)	 Absolute valuations elevated relative to history, balanced by visible rate base growth and long-term growth benefits from changing U.S. energy landscape (wind and solar powered electricity generation, gathering and processing infrastructure for shale oil and gas) Limited exposure to currency swings and inflationary cost trends Emphasis on firms with limited rate/regulatory risk and high exposure to renewables 	WEC, AES
FINANCIALS (UNDERWEIGHT)	 Peaking conditions for banks in terms of NIM, credit, and loan growth. Commercial Real Estate represents major credit risk Rate increases are causing deposit outflows and losses in investment portfolios Banks' regulatory headwinds increasing after two regional bank failures Credit risks more prevalent outside of banking system given post-GFC regulations/lending restraint Unlike 2008-2009, banks well capitalized and proactively adding to provisions P&C insurers attractive due to major pricing upcycle, with additional boost from interest income Sector valuations attractive, but catalysts are lacking - Focus on high quality, overcapitalized firms returning capital to shareholders 	JPM, CB, AMP, GS, AJG, CG, O
COMMUNICATIONS (UNDERWEIGHT)	 Capital intensity with subpar returns for traditional telecom providers Increasing competition in wireless market as penetration has peaked; Verizon and AT&T have been unable to add premium pricing for 5G service We favor the service providers that can best monetize the "wireless Internet" including the network edge compute function such as the tower stocks and data center providers Due to the limited range of 5G signals, more towers or small cells are needed for coverage thus benefitting the tower stocks - furthermore, the network edge compute function will likely be housed around the tower placements, again benefitting tower stocks 	AMT, CLLNY
RETAIL TRADE (UNDERWEIGHT)	 Inflation, higher interest rates, and peaking labor markets are fundamental headwinds Consumer spending preferences for experiences (dining out, travel) over goods (hardgoods, apparel) Covid pandemic has hastened migration to e-commerce and demise of shopping mall However, most retailers, even AMZN, are finding need to have brick & mortar presence, so are omnichannel (i.e., physical stores, online, pickup, delivery) Off-price retailers benefitting from excess channel inventory and value-seeking consumers We favor companies with visible sales outlooks, scale, and differentiated business models 	AMZN, LULU, HD, TGT, TJX, ULTA
CONSUMER NON-DURABLES (UNDERWEIGHT)	 Slow secular volume growth, due to mature developed markets Increasing competition in many categories from private label, local brands, and healthy/organic Pickup in at-home food consumption and shift to trusted name brands during Covid; these trends are beginning to wane as price increases test sustainability of market share gains for name brand manufacturers Reopening of global economies will help EL (makeup, travel) and MDLZ (emerging markets) Margin pressure from supply chain costs and higher advertising & procurement spending We favor firms with strong brands, global growth potential, and innovative new product development 	STZ, DEO, EL, MDLZ, NSRGY, PEP, PG



Source: Sit Investment Associates, Inc. 9/29/23

IMPORTANT DISCLOSURES

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