

## US Growth Equity

### Strategy Overview

Nicholas Investment Partners US Growth Equity offers investors attractive opportunities to diversify and capture the appreciation potential in one of the best performing segments of US equity markets over the long-term. Mid-cap companies typically enjoy the growth potential of smaller companies with greater global market penetration, more experienced management and stronger financial resources. The strategy capitalizes on a disciplined and forward-looking investment process to invest in successful, growing companies—those that manage change advantageously and are poised to exceed expectations.

- Over 30 years of experience investing in dynamic growth companies whose revenues and earnings are catalyzed by positive change
- Specialists in small- to mid-cap companies
- Invest in both equities and convertibles
- Edge comes from combining global fundamental equity and credit research with objectivity and efficiency of quantitative tools

### Objective

Seeks long-term capital appreciation

### Benchmark

Russell Midcap Growth

### Vehicles

Separately managed account

### Portfolio Construction

Portfolios are actively managed to continually drive to the strongest investment ideas. Position sizes are based on the conviction in the investment thesis of each company relative to other portfolio holdings and risk exposures. Early warnings signs that suggest deterioration in company fundamentals or earnings strength lead to timely sell decisions. When constructing portfolios, the portfolio manager will typically adhere to the following general guidelines under normal market conditions:

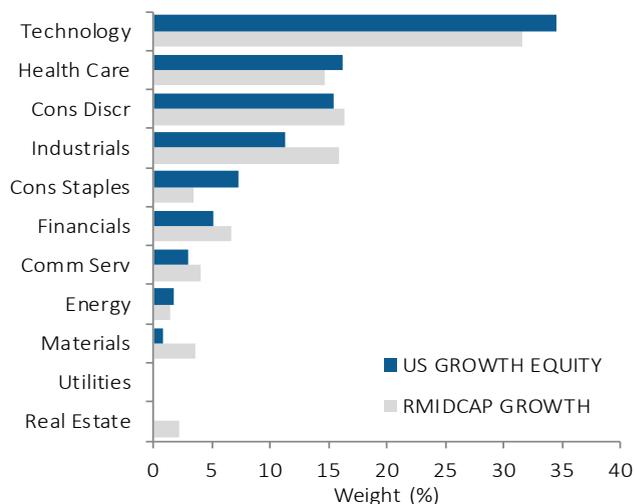
- Number of Positions: 75–100
- Geography: US-listed public equities
- Capitalization: \$2B to 2x max of Russell Midcap Growth
- Security Max: 5%
- Sector Max: 35% or 2x max of Russell Midcap Growth
- Cash: Transactional, typically <5%

CHARACTERISTICS	US GROWTH EQUITY	RMIDCAP GROWTH
Number of Securities	78	418
Active Share	80.3%	---
Off-Benchmark Weight	26.6%	---
Market Cap (wtd. avg.)	\$13.8 B	\$14.5 B
Market Cap (median)	\$9.5 B	\$7.4 B
P/E* (FY2)	16.5 x	16.4 x
P/B*	3.8 x	4.7 x
EPS Growth (FY1/FY2 wtd. avg.)	13.8%	11.7%

\*Weighted harmonic average.

TOP 10 POSITIONS (% weight)	US GROWTH EQUITY	RMIDCAP GROWTH	ACTIVE WEIGHT
Burlington Stores, Inc.	2.9	0.4	2.5
ABIOMED, Inc.	2.7	0.5	2.2
Illumina, Inc.	2.5	0.0	2.5
Archer-Daniels-Midland	2.5	0.0	2.5
Keurig Dr Pepper Inc.	2.4	0.2	2.2
Nomad Foods Ltd.	2.4	0.0	2.4
Keysight Technologies Inc	2.0	0.0	2.0
EPAM Systems, Inc.	2.0	0.2	1.8
FLIR Systems, Inc.	2.0	0.0	2.0
Kemper Corporation	1.9	0.0	1.9

### SECTOR EXPOSURE (%)



MARKET CAP DISTRIBUTION	US GROWTH EQUITY (%)	RMIDCAP GROWTH (%)
>\$30 Billion	13.6	6.2
\$15 – \$30 Billion	11.2	37.6
\$7.5 – \$15 Billion	42.1	31.5
\$4.5 – \$7.5 Billion	22.3	18.6
\$1.5 – \$4.5 Billion	10.9	6.1
<\$1.5 Billion	0.0	0.0

Specific securities identified do not represent all securities purchased, sold or recommended to advisory clients. It should not be assumed investments in these securities were or will be profitable.

**Firm Overview**

Nicholas Investment Partners is an independent, employee-owned and majority women-owned investment boutique focused on investing in dynamic, less efficient markets such as US small- and mid-cap equities and convertible bonds. We believe—and our principals’ 30+ years of experience has confirmed—that investing in companies catalyzed by positive change, whose revenues and earnings are accelerating and poised to exceed expectations, has the potential to result in outstanding capital appreciation. We believe our edge comes from combining the objectivity and efficiency of quantitative tools with global fundamental equity and credit research insights.

**Key Highlights**

- 100% employee owned
- Majority women owned
- Founded in 2006
- Headquartered in San Diego County, CA
- \$1.1 billion firm AUM

**Investment Capabilities**

**Equity**

- US Small Cap
- US SMID Cap Growth
- US Growth Equity

**Opportunistic**

- US Equity Opportunities
- Healthcare Opportunities

**Convertibles**

- Convertibles
- Convertibles Plus
- Convertible Arbitrage

PERFORMANCE (%)	US GROWTH EQUITY (GROSS)	US GROWTH EQUITY (NET)	RMIDCAP GROWTH
QTD	-19.6	-19.7	-16.0
YTD	-5.7	-6.4	-4.8
1 YEAR	-5.7	-6.4	-4.8
3 YEAR	7.1	6.2	8.6
5 YEAR	5.5	4.6	7.4
7 YEAR	10.6	9.7	12.3
10 YEAR	15.1	14.1	15.1
ITD*	8.3	7.4	7.4

*\*Composite inception date: 7/1/2007. Returns over one year are annualized. See performance disclosure for additional information. Past performance is no guarantee of future results.*

**36 MONTH ROLLING STYLE MAPS (7/1/2007 to 12/31/2018)**



**PORTFOLIO MANAGERS**

**Catherine Nicholas, Managing Partner/CIO**



Catherine Nicholas has over 30 years of investment experience. Prior to co-founding Nicholas Investment Partners in 2006, she was the Global Chief Investment Officer of Nicholas-Applegate, a \$40 billion investment firm, and former portfolio manager for Global, Small Cap and Micro Cap products. Catherine earned her B.S. in Business Administration, cum laude, and her M.B.A. in Finance from the University of Southern California. She currently serves on the advisory board of the USC Marshall School of Business.

**John Wylie, Partner/Portfolio Manager**



John Wylie has over 35 years of investment experience. Prior to joining Nicholas Investment Partners in 2007, he was co-founder and Co-Chief Investment Officer of CapitalWorks Investment Partners where he was the lead portfolio manager for Convertible Arbitrage and Micro Cap strategies. He also worked with Catherine Nicholas for ten years at Nicholas-Applegate, where he headed credit strategies including Convertibles and High Yield. John earned his B.A. in American Studies, cum laude, from Amherst College.

Nicholas Investment Partners, L.P. ("Nicholas") is an independent investment adviser registered with the SEC. Registration with the SEC does not imply a certain level of skill or training. The firm maintains a complete list and description of performance composites, which is available upon request. Policies for valuing portfolios, calculating performance, and preparing presentations are available upon request. **Past performance is no guarantee of future results. Current performance may be lower or higher than the performance presented. This information is intended for institutions, consultants and qualified investors only.** No part of this material may be copied or duplicated, or distributed to any third party without written consent.

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Performance contribution/attribution, characteristics and portfolio risk statistics information is from a representative account for the strategy composite. The representative account was chosen based on non-performance criteria such as account size, cash flows and the level of account restrictions. While Nicholas believes the information is representative of other accounts in the strategy, specific information for other accounts may differ from the representative account. Nicholas used third-party information in the preparation of the characteristics and/or market environment charts. While Nicholas believes the third-party information was obtained from reliable sources, we cannot guarantee the accuracy, adequacy or completeness of the information obtained from these sources.

Index returns are provided as a general indicator of the investment environment existing during the time periods shown and are provided for comparison purposes only. The returns for the index do not include any transaction costs, management fees or other costs. Investors may not make direct investments into any index. Investors should consider comparing the performance of any potential investment to other benchmarks and indices that are representative of their particular investment objectives, horizons and risk tolerances.

Specific securities identified do not represent all securities purchased, sold or recommended to advisory clients and represent the largest positions by portfolio weight. It should not be assumed that investments in these, or any other portfolio securities, were or will be profitable in the future. For a complete list of all securities held during the period or additional information related to this presentation please email [info@nicpartners.com](mailto:info@nicpartners.com).

Gross and net returns, presented within were calculated in US dollars on a time-weighted, total return basis, including reinvestment of all dividends, interest and income, realized and unrealized gains or losses and are net of brokerage commissions, execution costs, and any applicable foreign taxes. Accrual accounting was used for dividend income recognition. Securities transactions are accounted for on trade date. Cash and cash equivalents are included in the performance returns. The gross returns do not give effect to investment advisory fees which would reduce gross returns. The deduction of investment advisory fees will reduce gross returns and are subject to compounding. The composite results include all actual, fee paying fully discretionary accounts under management by Nicholas after one full calendar month that have substantially the same investment objectives, policies and restrictions. Unless otherwise noted the returns reflect the performance of the product composite. Performance and incentive based fees will have similar, yet often larger, impacts to performance and account values than standard management fees. Please see Nicholas' ADV Part 2A for a complete description of investment advisory fees.

**Net returns reflect the deduction of the highest investment management fee for the product, which was 0.85% from inception through December 31, 2016 and 0.80% thereafter.** Actual fees charged may vary by portfolio due to various conditions such as account size, client relationship, complexity, etc. Client's accounts may also be subject to additional fees unrelated to Nicholas such as custodial and administration fees, among others. Standard Management fee schedule: First \$25M 0.80%, Next \$25M 0.75%, Next \$50M 0.65%, Thereafter 0.55%.

The Russell Midcap Growth Index measures the performance of the mid-cap growth segment of the US equity universe. It includes those Russell Midcap Index companies with higher price-to-book ratios and higher forecasted growth values. The Russell Midcap Growth Index is constructed to provide a comprehensive and unbiased barometer of the mid-cap growth market. The Index is completely reconstituted annually to ensure larger stocks do not distort the performance and characteristics of the true mid-cap growth market. Index returns include the effect of dividends and income which are reinvested daily.

eVestment is an investment manager database where investment managers populate investment returns and other information which allows managers to run various reports including peer universe reports. eVestment performance figures shown are gross of fees and do not consider advisory fees which will reduce actual returns. The peer group performance figures have been reported solely for informational purposes and have been provided by the separate account managers. No representation is given with respect to their accuracy or completeness, nor that the figures are necessarily GIPS compliant.

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