Recent Investment Performance

The University of Colorado Foundation’s Long Term Investment Pool (LTIP)—which includes endowments the Foundation holds for the benefit of the University of Colorado—generated strong fiscal year performance. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2018, the LTIP returned +11.07% compared to +8.48% for our policy benchmark.

As of June 30, 2018, the LTIP was valued at $1.67 billion. The value of endowments invested for the benefit of CU is a subset of the LTIP, totaling $1.36 billion.

The LTIP’s longer-term results show a consistent track record of investment success, in line with the Foundation’s goal of maximizing returns over an extended time period while effectively managing risk. Achieving this objective is critical given CU’s long-term educational mission. Faculty, students and programs on all four university campuses rely on consistent funding streams from the LTIP for years to come. As of June 30, 2018, the LTIP’s 3-year annualized investment performance was +7.54%, its 5-year performance was +8.93% and its 10-year performance was +6.44%.

Long Term Investment Pool

Value

Annualized Investment Performance

Totals expressed in millions, and reflect value as of 6/30 for each year. (Note: Increases/decreases of these funds over time do not precisely mirror investment performance, due to variable fundraising inflows/outflows to university programs.)

*The Policy Benchmark, effective FY 2018, is a blend of 80% MSCI ACWI (equities) and 20% Barclays US Aggregate Bond Index (fixed income). Depending on the return period presented, historical benchmarks of 40% Russell 3000, 40% MSCI EAFE and 20% Barclays US Agg (FY 2009 – 2017) and 50% Russell 3000, 30% Barclays US Agg and 20% MSCI EAFE (fund inception – FY 2008) are components of the policy benchmark as applicable.
Investment Portfolio Composition

The LTIP is structured to maintain a level of volatility below that of the domestic and international equity markets in aggregate. Portfolio managers maintain asset allocations within the target ranges established and monitored by the Foundation’s Investment Policy Committee, which reports to the Foundation’s Board of Directors.

While the LTIP has a material stake in public equity markets, 47% of its holdings are invested in private capital, real assets, and hedge funds—enabling the Foundation’s investment manager to assemble a portfolio that is geared to long-term performance. Meanwhile, the LTIP’s current 4% weighting in cash and fixed income provides a buffer against volatility and allows timely response to investment opportunities.

Near-Term Investment Outlook

According to Chris Bittman, partner at asset management firm Perella Weinberg Partners (PWP) and investment manager of the LTIP:

“The current economic expansion is the second-longest of the post-war era at roughly 108 months. There are reasons to believe that the expansion could continue, including strong U.S. employment, increasing corporate capital expenditures, and solid corporate and consumer sentiment.

Nevertheless, investor sentiment appears challenged. Fears of peak earnings growth, a collapse in trade negotiations, record corporate borrowing, and less accommodative central banks control the narrative. Following the exceptionally strong total and risk-adjusted returns of mid-2016 through 2017, markets have more recently been having difficulty sustaining positive trends. Going forward, we may be in a period in which the global economy outperforms financial markets.

As such, later-cycle positioning seems appropriate. In an environment of increased volatility, alternative investments such as hedge funds and private capital play an important role in portfolio construction. We continue to seek out relative value opportunities offering strong risk-adjusted return potential across the capital markets.”

We can answer your questions.

As gifts and distributions from endowments continue to be key long-term funding components for CU, it’s crucial that members of the CU family have full confidence in and understanding of our investment activities. We are available to answer your questions, and can make presentations to constituents on our investment model, performance and outlook.

Thank you for continued confidence in our efforts on behalf of the University of Colorado.

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University of Colorado Foundation