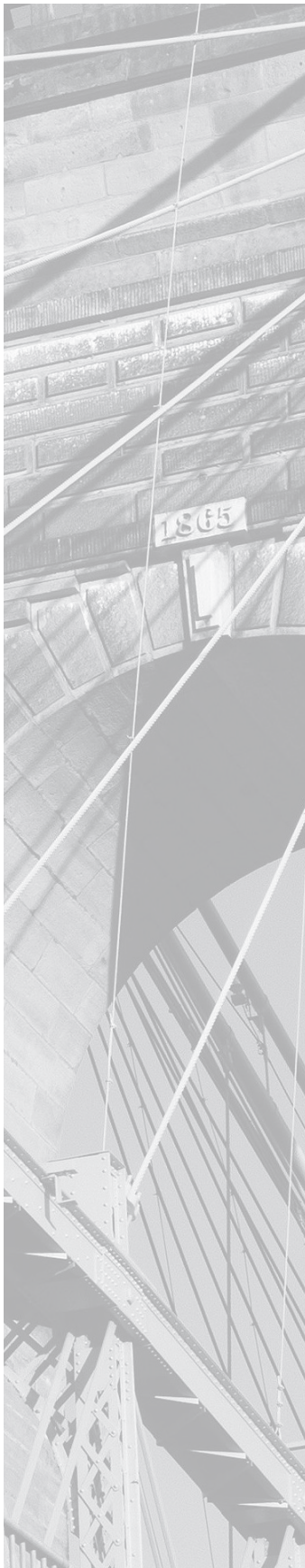


# Small Cap Growth Quarter-End Review—1Q2023



The U.S. stock market produced mostly positive returns in the first quarter, with the S&P 500 gaining for the second straight quarter and the Nasdaq seeing its best performance since the second quarter of 2020. For the quarter, the S&P 500 returned 7.5% and the Russell 2000 Growth Index returned 6.1%.

Increases in interest rates and mixed economic data led many companies to reduce their forecasts for earnings growth over the first half of this year, contributing to price weakness for many stocks. The Russell 2000 Growth Index posted a solid 6.1% gain for the quarter but trailed the S&P 500. Importantly, the Russell 2000 Growth Index outperformed its Value counterpart by over 6.7% and has now beaten the value index by a cumulative 7.3% over the last three quarters.

In March, the financial markets became focused on the banking crisis that developed after the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank (SVB). SVB was a fast-growing regional bank that started 2023 as the sixteenth-largest U.S. bank. The bank specialized in financial relationships with young and generally unprofitable technology companies, which have tended to have their own problems in recent quarters. SVB experienced a sudden surge in customer withdrawals that it was unable to accommodate, leading to a takeover by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) and, ultimately, the sale of the remains of the bank to First Citizens Bank. Fear spread through many regional banks over the possibility of facing similarly large customer withdrawals, but the FDIC and the Federal Reserve initiated actions to reinforce the overall banking sector. While the situation was much different than the broad-based crisis that affected even the largest banks during the 2008 Financial Crisis, it still raised investor anxiety and contributed to broad price weakness late in the quarter.

## SECTOR WEIGHTS & PORTFOLIO CHANGES<sup>(1)</sup>

Sector	Ending Weight <sup>(2)</sup>	Change from 12/31/2022	Small Cap Growth Additions & (Small Cap Growth Deletions) <sup>(3)</sup>
Information Technology	31.9%	-0.7%	Engagesmart, Tenable Holdings (SiTime)
Industrials	23.7%	+3.2%	Applied Industrial Technologies
Health Care	16.3%	+0.9%	Lantheus Holdings, Merit Medical Systems (Amedisys, STAAR Surgical)
Consumer Discretionary	13.5%	+1.7%	Meritage Homes (KB Home)
Financials	6.1%	-2.2%	(First Foundation)
Energy	3.2%	-3.6%	(Chord Energy)
Consumer Staples	2.0%	-0.1%	
Real Estate	1.9%	+1.9%	CareTrust REIT
Cash	1.3%	+0.2%	
Utilities	0.0%	0.0%	
Materials	0.0%	0.0%	
Communication Services	0.0%	-1.4%	(TechTarget)

<sup>(1)</sup>Based on a representative account of the strategy discussed. Portfolio characteristics (e.g., sector weights, valuation, growth rate) are based on a representative account that we believe is illustrative of the strategy. All accounts in the strategy are invested identically in the same securities unless a client has imposed restrictions. Characteristics and/or holdings on a given date may vary due to pending trades.

<sup>(2)</sup>Weights as of the end of the presentation period. Cumulative total weighting may not add up to 100% due to rounding of percentages to the nearest decimal place.

<sup>(3)</sup>Any securities referenced should not be considered a recommendation to purchase or sell a particular security. These securities represent a portion of the companies held in a representative account in this strategy as of the date stated and are intended for informational purposes only. The reader should not assume that investments in the securities identified or discussed were or will prove to be profitable. The past performance of these securities is no guarantee of future results. The specific securities identified and described may not represent all of the securities purchased, sold, or recommended for this strategy. To request a complete list of holdings recommendations for this strategy over the past year or a list showing the contribution of every holding to the performance of the representative account for the time period stated, please contact Renaissance at [compliance@reninv.com](mailto:compliance@reninv.com).

Source: Renaissance Research, FactSet

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## CONTRIBUTORS TO RETURN<sup>(1)(2)</sup>

Ticker	Company Name	Average Weight <sup>(3)</sup>	Contribution to Return
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### TOP FIVE CONTRIBUTORS—SMALL CAP GROWTH

LSCC	Lattice Semiconductor	2.72%	1.05%
AXON	Axon Enterprise	2.40%	0.77%
MPWR	Monolithic Power Systems	2.21%	0.73%
FIX	Comfort Systems USA	2.45%	0.57%
AMPH	Amphastar Pharmaceuticals	1.89%	0.56%

### BOTTOM FIVE CONTRIBUTORS—SMALL CAP GROWTH

FFWM	First Foundation	1.10%	-0.59%
AMN	AMN Healthcare Services	2.21%	-0.45%
NVEE	NV5 Global	1.86%	-0.42%
MODN	Model N	2.13%	-0.39%
PWSC	PowerSchool Holdings	2.63%	-0.38%

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<sup>(3)</sup>Average weights over the presentation period.

Sources: Renaissance Research, FactSet

Fed Chairman Jerome Powell addressed the turmoil in the U.S. banking sector, stating that the issues were limited to only a few banks and emphasizing that the broader financial system remains “sound and resilient”. The Fed raised its target for the Fed Funds rate from 4.75% to 5.00% but hinted that an end to rate hikes is near by omitting a line from its statement concerning “ongoing increases”.

**Lattice Semiconductor** (LSCC) was the top contributor to portfolio performance during the first quarter, as the maker of programmable semiconductors was not impacted by the inventory correction that has been affecting its peers. The company has seen continued strength in industrial and automotive end markets as it ramps new design wins in robotics, factory automation, and advanced driver assistance systems. The company has also launched a new product family that targets the mid-range of the market, doubling its available market opportunity.

**First Foundation** (FFWM), a regional bank based in Texas, detracted the most from performance as the closure of Silicon Valley Bank impacted the stock prices of most regional banks, regardless of their situation. First Foundation made a number of public announcements stating that it remained in a strong liquidity position as deposits had increased since the start of the year, and the bank had not drawn down any of its available credit lines. However, rising interest rates and an inverted yield curve have created a challenging operating environment, and it is likely that higher regulatory costs will be seen in the future. Due to these multiple negative developments, we exited our position.

Trading and stock movements during the quarter led to several changes in sector weights. The Industrials, Real Estate, Consumer Discretionary, and Health Care sectors all saw their weights

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increase during the quarter, while the Energy, Financials, Communication Services, Information Technology, and Consumer Staples sector weights decreased.

A new position added this quarter was **EngageSmart** (ESMT), a provider of practice management solutions and electronic bill payment platforms. Its practice management software primarily targets mental health clinicians, providing functions such as scheduling, record keeping, note taking, and payment processing. The company has close to 100,000 customers in the clinical market segment and believes that there are over 650,000 mental health clinicians in the United States. EngageSmart is looking to expand into other specialty areas such as occupational therapy and speech/language pathology. The company's solutions for electronic bill payments target underserved market segments such as utilities, government, and insurance providers. Its approach allows billers to offer a modern billing and payments platform without forcing its customers to upgrade other parts of their IT systems. They have over 3,300 customers on the platform, which improves its customers' cash flow while reducing their costs. The company still has significant room to grow market share in both areas of its business.

We exited our position in **STAAR Surgical** (STAA) as the company is ramping up its sales and marketing spending, which is depressing its profitability in the near term. Consequently, earnings estimates for this year and next were revised meaningfully lower. While the company still has attractive growth prospects, we have moved to the sidelines as we monitor whether the additional expenses can generate accelerating growth.

While the market environment remains challenging, we are encouraged that the headwind of rising interest rates may at last be slowing, if not actually reversing, over the remainder of this year. There tends to be a lag between rising interest rates and their effect on the economy, and it is likely that we will continue to see mixed economic reports over the next several quarters. However, we continue to find that shares of high-quality, financially strong companies with good growth characteristics are very attractively priced for long term investors.

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### DISCLOSURES

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The opinions stated in this presentation are those of Renaissance as of March 31, 2023 and are subject to change at any time due to changes in market or economic conditions.

### GICS SECTOR INFORMATION

Sector Listing according to MSCI and S&P Dow Jones data: MSCI and S&P Dow Jones do not make any express or implied warranties or representations and shall have no liability whatsoever with respect to any GICS data contained herein.

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*Continued*

# Small Cap Growth Quarter-End Review—1Q2023



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## REFERENCED INDICES

*(Indices are unmanaged and are not available for direct investment.)*

**Russell 2000 Growth Index**—The Russell 2000 Growth Index is composed of the smallest 2,000 of the 3,000 largest U.S. companies based on total market capitalization with higher price-to-book ratios and higher forecast growth values.

**S&P 500 Index**—The S&P 500 Stock Index is a market capitalization weighted index and consists of 500 stocks chosen for market size, liquidity and industry group representation.

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