

# Navigator® High Dividend Equity

Maira F. Thompson, Senior Portfolio Manager

#### Fourth Quarter 2018 - Portfolio Commentary



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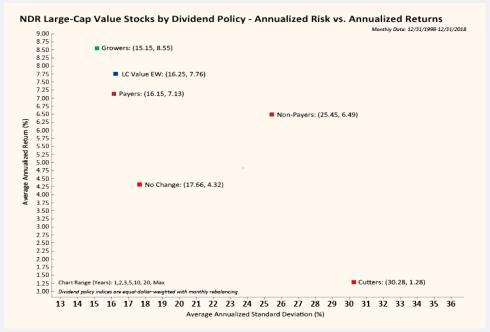
Maira is responsible for management of High Dividend Equity and customized portfolios in the Premier Portfolios group and is a member of the Clark Capital Investment Team. Her more than thirty years of investment experience included the position of Vice President and head of the Philadelphia Investment Group for Meridian Asset Management. After Delaware Trust became part of Meridian, Maira managed their Trust Investment Group in Wilmington, Delaware. In the 1980s Maira managed assets for high net worth clients and co-managed a small cap fund for Fidelity Bank in Philadelphia. She began her career as a trader with Prudential Bache Securities and a licensed broker for Legg Mason Wood Walker. Maira is a graduate of Ohio Wesleyan University and undertook additional studies in economics at the London School of Economics. She joined Clark Capital in 1997.

### A RETURN TO NORMAL VOLATILITY

U.S. equity markets experienced a broad decline on heightened concerns of slowing economic and profit growth, rising wages and tightening monetary conditions. Persistent global economic weakness, Brexit delays and the protracted U.S. and China trade negotiations contributed to the pessimism. Stocks fell into negative territory with the Russell 1000 Value Index falling 11.7% and the S&P 500 Index declining 13.5%.

In 2018, volatility returned to a more normal long-term average for the S&P 500 Index with a standard deviation of 15.8% versus an abnormally low 2017 standard deviation of 6.7%. According to Ned Davis Research, "In 2017, the Dow Industrials intraday volatility was the lowest since 1964 compared to 2018 when volatility matched the highest level since 2009."

Dividend growth stocks are often referred to as lower beta or lower volatility due to their above-average dividend yield and quality characteristics, which can be less reactive to market swings than their non-dividend counterparts. Over the long-term, lower volatility dividend growers benefited investors by outperforming stocks that have larger drawdowns and higher standard deviations (see chart below).



Source: Ned Davis Research as of December 31, 2018

The Navigator<sup>®</sup> High Dividend Equity portfolio has a historic beta of 0.76 versus the benchmark Russell 1000 Value Index of 1.0. According to Ned Davis Research, since the financial crisis in 2008, low volatility stocks' risk adjusted returns outpaced those of high volatility stocks over the short, medium and long-term.



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#### Sectors and Stock Selection

In the final quarter of the year, the best performing sectors in the Russell 1000 Value Index were mostly defensive, including the Utilities sector (+1.0%), Communications (-5.65%), and Staples (-4.16%). The weakest sectors were comprised of trade and economically sensitive industries such as Energy, which declined 24.5%, and Industrials and Basic Materials, which were down 19.3% and 14.3% respectively. Top performing stocks for the quarter were Broadcom (+4.1%), Lukoil (-4.7%) and Aflac (-2.6%). The laggards in the portfolio included Regions Financial (-26.4%), Viacom (-23.3%) and SunTrust Bank (-23.8%).

For the calendar year, the top sectors were Healthcare (+7.8%), Communications (+0.1%) and Technology (-1.4%). The worst performing sectors during 2018 were Industrials, which lost 18.9%, Energy, which lost 17.4%, and Materials, which dropped 17.1% compared to the index total return of -8.2%.

Sources: FactSet, Ned Davis, Bloomberg

Past performance is not indicative of future results. This is not a recommendation to buy or sell a particular security. Please see attached disclosures

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The S&P 500 measures the performance of the 500 leading companies in leading industries of the U.S. economy, capturing 75% of U.S. equities.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average is a stock market index that shows how 30 large publicly owned companies based in the U.S. have traded during a standard trading session in the stock market.

The MSCI EAFE Index is a free float-adjusted market capitalization index that is designed to measure the equity market performers of developed markets outside the U.S. and Canada.

The MSCI Emerging Markets Index is a freefloat-adjusted market capitalization index that is designed to measure equity market performance in the global emerging markets.

The Russell 3000B Index measures the performance of the 3,000 largest U.S. companies based on total market capitalization, which represents approximately 98% of the investable U.S. equity market.

Bloomberg Barclays Capital U.S. Government/Credit Bond Index measures the performance of U.S. dollar denominated U.S. Treasuries, government-related and investment grade U.S. corporate securities that have a remaining maturity of greater than one year.

The Russell 1000 Value Index measures the performance of the large-cap value segment of the U.S. equity universe. It includes those Russell 1000 Index companies with lower price-to-book ratios and lower forecasted growth values.

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