# **Statement of Additional Information**

Dated July 30, 2008



This Statement of Additional Information ("SAI") provides general information about the Vice Fund (the "Fund"), a series of USA MUTUALS. This SAI is not a prospectus and should be read in conjunction with the Fund's current Prospectus dated July 30, 2008, as supplemented and amended from time to time, which is incorporated herein by reference. To obtain a copy of the Prospectus, please write or call the Fund at the address or telephone number below.

You should rely only on the information contained in this SAI and the Prospectus dated July 30, 2008. USA MUTUALS has not authorized others to provide additional information. This SAI is not an offer to sell securities in any state or jurisdiction where the offering cannot legally be made.

The Fund's audited financial statements and notes thereto for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2008 are incorporated herein by reference to the Fund's 2008 Annual Report. A copy of the Annual Report may be obtained without charge by calling the Fund at 1-866-264-8783.

1-866-264-8783 Web: <u>www.VICEFUND.com</u>



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# Organization of the Trust and the Fund

USA MUTUALS (the "Trust") is a management investment company organized as a Delaware business trust on March 20, 2001. The Trust's Declaration of Trust permits the Trust to offer separate series of units of beneficial interest and separate classes. The Fund is currently one of two series of the Trust (the other series or fund is discussed in a separate SAI) and currently consists of a single class of shares of beneficial interest. The Fund is a non-diversified series and has its own investment objective and policies. The Trust may start more series and offer shares of a new fund under the Trust at any time. On July 30, 2007, the Trust changed its name to "USA MUTUALS." Before that time, the Trust was known as "MUTUALS.com."

The Trust is authorized to issue an unlimited number of interests (or shares) at \$0.001 par value. Shares of each series have equal voting rights and liquidation rights, and are voted in the aggregate and not by the series except in matters where a separate vote is required by the Investment Company Act of 1940 (the "1940 Act") or when the matter affects only the interest of a particular Fund. When matters are submitted to shareholders for a vote, each shareholder is entitled to one vote for each full share owned and fractional votes for fractional shares owned. The Trust does not normally hold annual meetings of shareholders. The Board of Trustees of the Trust (the "Trustees") shall promptly call and give notice of a special meeting of shareholders upon the written request of shareholders owning 10% or more of the Fund's outstanding shares, and as required under Delaware law. The Trust will comply with the provisions of Section 16(c) of the 1940 Act in order to facilitate communications among shareholders.

Each share of the Fund represents an equal proportionate interest in the assets and liabilities belonging to the Fund and is entitled to such dividends and distributions out of the income belonging to the Fund as are declared by the Trustees. The shares do not have cumulative voting rights or any preemptive or conversion rights, and the Trustees have the authority from time to time to divide or combine the shares of the Fund into a greater or lesser number of shares of the Fund so long as the proportionate beneficial interests in the assets belonging to the Fund and the rights of shares of any other fund are in no way affected. In the case of any liquidation of the Fund, the holders of shares of the Fund will be entitled to receive as a class a distribution out of the assets, net of the liabilities, belonging to the Fund. Expenses attributable to any fund are borne by that fund. Any general assets, liabilities and expenses of the Trust not readily identifiable as belonging to a particular fund are allocated to one or more series of the Trust by or under the direction of the Trustees in accordance with the Trust's Bylaws. No shareholder is liable to further calls or to assessment by the Trust without his or her express consent.

Mutuals Advisors, Inc. (the "Advisor"), formerly known as MUTUALS.com, Inc., serves as the investment advisor to the Fund. Pursuant to a subadvisory agreement with the Advisor, GNI Capital, Inc. ("GNI") serves as the Fund's subadvisor and manages its portfolio, subject to oversight and review by the Advisor.

### **Description of the Fund**

The Fund is an open-end, non-diversified investment company, or mutual fund, with an investment objective of long term growth of capital. The Fund seeks to achieve its objective by investing in companies within industries that are likely to grow, in terms of revenue and earnings, independently of economic cycles. The Fund seeks economically independent growth by investing in companies that produce products such as tobacco, gaming, alcoholic beverages and defense/aerospace.

Investment Policies, Strategies and Associated Risks

The following discussion supplements the description of the Fund's investment objective and strategies set forth in the Fund's Prospectus. Except for the fundamental investment limitations listed below (see "Fundamental Investment Limitations" on page 22 of this SAI) and the Fund's investment objective, the Fund's investment strategies and policies are not fundamental and may be changed by sole action of the Trustees without shareholder approval. While the Fund is permitted to hold securities and engage in various strategies as described hereafter, the Fund is not obligated to do so.

Whenever an investment policy or limitation states a maximum percentage of the Fund's assets that may be invested in any security or other asset, or sets forth a policy regarding quality standards, such standard or percentage limitation will be determined immediately after and as a result of the Fund's acquisition of such security or other asset. Accordingly, any subsequent change in values, net assets or other circumstances will not be considered when determining whether an investment complies with the Fund's investment policies and limitations. In addition, if a bankruptcy or other extraordinary event occurs concerning a particular investment by the Fund, the Fund may receive stock, real estate or other investments that the Fund would not, or could not, buy. If this happens, the Fund intends to sell such investments as soon as practicable while trying to maximize the return to its shareholders.

#### **Other Investment Companies**

The Fund currently intends to limit its investments in securities issued by other investment companies, including exchange traded funds ("ETFs") so that not more than 3% of the outstanding voting stock of any one investment company will be owned by the Fund. As a shareholder of another investment company, the Fund bears, along with other shareholders, its pro rata portion of the other investment company's expenses, including advisory fees, and such fees and other expenses will be borne indirectly by the Fund's shareholders. These expenses will be in addition to the advisory and other expenses that the Fund bears directly in connection with its own operations.

### Equity Securities

The Fund intends to invest in equity securities consistent with its investment objective and strategies. Common stocks and preferred stocks are examples of equity securities. Equity securities, such as common stocks, represent shares of ownership of a corporation. Preferred stocks are equity securities that often pay dividends at a specific rate and have a preference over common stocks in dividend payments and liquidation of assets. Some preferred stocks may be convertible into common stock. Convertible securities are securities (such as debt securities or preferred stock) that may be converted into or exchanged for a specified amount of common stock of the same or different issuer within a particular period of time at a specified price or formula. Please see "Debt Securities" below.

To the extent the Fund invests in the equity securities of small or medium-size companies, it will be exposed to the risks of smaller sized companies. Small and medium-size companies often have narrower markets for their goods and/or services and more limited managerial and financial resources than larger, more established companies. Furthermore, those companies often have limited product lines, services, markets or financial resources, or are dependent on a small management group. In addition, because these stocks are not well-known to the investing public, do not have significant institutional ownership and are followed by relatively few security analysts, there will normally be less publicly available information concerning these securities compared to what is available for the securities of larger companies. Adverse publicity and investor perceptions can decrease the value and liquidity of the securities. As a result, their performance can be more volatile, and they face greater risk of business failure, which could increase the volatility of the Fund's portfolio.

#### **Debt** Securities

Although there is no current intention to do so, the Fund may invest in debt securities consistent with its investment objective and strategies. Debt securities purchased by the Fund may consist of obligations of any rating. Debt securities in the lowest investment grade categories have speculative characteristics, with changes in the economy or other circumstances more likely to lead to a weakened capacity of the issuer of the securities to make principal and interest payments than would occur with securities rated in higher categories. Securities referred to as "high-risk" securities generally lack characteristics of a desirable investment, and are deemed speculative with respect to the issuer's capacity to pay interest and repay principal over a long period of time. The Fund may invest in high yield debt securities or "junk bonds" that are considered high risk. Special tax considerations are associated with investing in high-yield securities such as zero coupon or "pay-in-kind" securities.

The payment of principal and interest on most debt securities purchased by the Fund will depend upon the ability of the issuers to meet their obligations. An issuer's obligations under its debt securities are subject to the provisions of bankruptcy, insolvency and other laws affecting the rights and remedies of creditors, such as the Federal Bankruptcy Code, and laws, if any, that may be enacted by federal or state legislatures extending the time for payment of principal or interest, or both, or imposing other constraints upon enforcement of such obligations. The power or ability of an issuer to meet its obligations for the payment of interest on, and principal of, its debt securities may be materially adversely affected by litigation or other conditions.

The ratings of Standard & Poor's, Moody's and other nationally recognized rating agencies represent their opinions as to the quality of debt securities. It should be emphasized, however, that ratings are general and are not absolute standards of quality, and debt securities with the same maturity, interest rate and rating may have different yields while debt securities of the same maturity and interest rate with different ratings may have the same yield. For a more detailed description of ratings, please see Appendix A.

Although there is no current intention to do so, the Fund may invest in residential and commercial mortgage-backed as well as other asset-backed securities (collectively called "asset-backed securities"). These securities are secured or backed by automobile loans, installment sale contracts, credit card receivables or other assets and are issued by entities such as Government National Mortgage Association ("GNMA"), Federal National Mortgage Association ("FNMA"), Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation ("FHLMC"), commercial banks, trusts, financial companies, finance subsidiaries of industrial companies, savings and loan associations, mortgage banks and investment banks. These securities represent interests in pools of assets in which periodic payments of interest and/or principal on the securities are made, thus, in effect passing through periodic payments made by the individual borrowers on the assets that underlie the securities, net of any fees paid to the issuer or guarantor of the securities.

The average life of these securities varies with the maturities and the prepayment experience of the underlying instruments. The average life of a mortgage-backed instrument may be substantially less than the original maturity of the mortgages underlying the securities as the result of scheduled principal payments and mortgage prepayments. The rate of such mortgage prepayments, and hence the life of the certificates, will be a function of current market rates and current conditions in the relevant housing and commercial markets. In periods of falling interest rates, the rate of mortgage prepayments tends to increase. During such periods, the reinvestment

of prepayment proceeds by the Fund will generally be at lower rates than the rates that were carried by the obligations that have been prepaid. As a result, the relationship between mortgage prepayments and interest rates may give some high-yielding mortgage-related securities less potential for growth in value than non-callable bonds with comparable maturities. In calculating the average-weighted maturity of the Fund, the maturity of asset-backed securities will be based on estimates of average life. There can be no assurance that these estimates will be accurate.

There are a number of important differences among the agencies and instrumentalities of the U.S. Government that issue mortgage-backed securities and among the securities that they issue. Mortgage-backed securities guaranteed by GNMA include GNMA Mortgage Pass-Through Certificates (also known as "Ginnie Maes") which are guaranteed as to the timely payment of principal and interest by GNMA and such guarantee is backed by the full faith and credit of the United States. GNMA is a wholly owned U.S. Government corporation within the Department of Housing and Urban Development. GNMA certificates also are supported by the authority of GNMA to borrow funds from the U.S. Treasury to make payments under its guarantee. Mortgage-backed securities issued by FNMA include FNMA Guaranteed Mortgage Pass-Through Certificates (also known as "Fannie Maes") which are solely the obligations of FNMA and are not backed by or entitled to the full faith and credit of the United States, but are supported by the right of the issuer to borrow from the U.S. Treasury. FNMA is a government-sponsored organization owned entirely by private stockholders. Fannie Maes are guaranteed as to timely payment of the principal and interest by FNMA. Mortgage-backed securities issued by the FHLMC include FHLMC Mortgage Participation Certificates (also known as "Freddie Macs" or "PCs"). FHLMC is a corporate instrumentality of the United States, created pursuant to an Act of Congress. Freddie Macs are not guaranteed by the United States or by any Federal Home Loan Bank and do not constitute a debt or obligation of the United States or of any Federal Home Loan Bank. Freddie Macs entitle the holder to timely payment of interest, which is guaranteed by the FHLMC. FHLMC guarantees either ultimate collection or timely payment of all principal payments on the underlying mortgage loans. When FHLMC does not guarantee timely payment of principal, FHLMC may remit the amount due on account of its guarantee of ultimate payment of principal at any time after default on an underlying mortgage, but in no event later than one year after it becomes payable.

Mortgage-backed securities such as collateralized mortgage obligations ("CMOs") may also be purchased. There are several types of mortgage-backed securities which provide the holder with a pro rata interest in the underlying mortgages, and CMOs which provide the holder with a specified interest in the cash flow of a pool of underlying mortgages or other mortgage-backed securities. CMOs are issued in multiple classes and their relative payment rights may be structured in many ways. In many cases, however, payments of principal are applied to the CMO classes in order of their respective maturities, so that no principal payments will be made on a CMO class until all other classes having an earlier maturity date are paid in full. The classes may include accrual certificates (also known as "Z-Bonds"), which do not accrue interest at a specified rate until other specified classes have been retired and are converted thereafter to interest-paying securities. They may also include planned amortization classes ("PACs") which generally require, within certain limits, that specified amounts of principal be applied to each payment date, and generally exhibit less yield and market volatility than other classes. Investments in CMO certificates can expose a fund to greater volatility and interest rate risk than other types of mortgage-backed obligations. Prepayments on mortgage-backed securities generally increase with falling interest rates and decrease with rising interest rates; furthermore, prepayment rates are influenced by a variety of economic and social factors.

The yield characteristics of asset-backed securities differ from traditional debt securities. A major difference is that the principal amount of the obligations may be prepaid at any time because the underlying assets (i.e. loans) generally may be prepaid at any time. As a result, if an asset-backed security is purchased at a premium, a prepayment rate that is faster than expected may reduce yield to maturity, while a prepayment rate that is slower than expected may have the opposite effect of increasing yield to maturity. Conversely, if an asset-backed security is purchased at a discount, faster than expected prepayments may increase, while slower than expected prepayments may decrease, yield to maturity. Moreover, asset-backed securities may involve certain risks that are not presented by mortgage-backed securities arising primarily from the nature of the underlying assets (i.e. credit card and automobile loan receivables as opposed to real estate mortgages). For example, credit card receivables are generally unsecured and may require the repossession of personal property upon the default of the debtor, which may be difficult or impracticable in some cases.

Asset-backed securities may be subject to greater risk of default during periods of economic downturn than other instruments. Also, while the secondary market for asset-backed securities is ordinarily quite liquid, in times of financial stress the secondary market may not be as liquid as the market for other types of securities, which could result in the Fund experiencing difficulty in valuing, or liquidating such securities.

In general, the collateral supporting non-mortgage asset-backed securities is of shorter maturity than mortgage loans. Like other fixed-income securities, when interest rates rise, the value of an asset-backed security generally will decline; however, when interest rates decline, the value of an asset-backed security with prepayment features may not increase as much as that of other fixed-income securities.

Non-mortgage asset-backed securities do not have the benefit of the same security in the collateral as mortgage-backed securities. Credit card receivables are generally unsecured and the debtors are entitled to the protection of a number of state and federal consumer credit laws, many of which have given debtors the right to reduce the balance due on the credit cards. Most issuers of automobile receivables permit the servicer to retain possession of the underlying obligations. If the servicer were to sell these obligations to another party, there is the risk that the purchaser would acquire an interest superior to that of the holders of related automobile receivables. In addition, because of the large number of vehicles involved in a typical issuance and technical requirements under state laws, the trustee for the holders of the automobile receivables may not have an effective security interest in all of the obligations backing such receivables. Therefore, there is a possibility that payments on the receivables together with recoveries on repossessed collateral may not, in some cases, be able to support payments on these securities.

#### Municipal Securities

Although there is no current intention to do so, the Fund may invest in municipal securities. Municipal securities are debt obligations issued by or on behalf of states, territories and possessions of the United States, including the District of Columbia, and any political subdivisions or financing authority of any of these, the income from which is, in the opinion of qualified legal counsel, exempt from regular federal income tax ("Municipal Securities").

Municipal Securities are generally issued to finance public works such as airports, bridges, highways, housing, hospitals, mass transportation projects, schools, streets and water and sewer works. They are also issued to repay outstanding obligations, to raise funds for general operating expenses and to make loans to other public institutions and facilities. Municipal Securities include industrial development bonds issued by or on behalf of public authorities to provide

financing aid to acquire sites or construct and equip facilities for privately or publicly owned corporations. The availability of this financing encourages these corporations to locate within the sponsoring communities and thereby increases local employment.

The two principal classifications of Municipal Securities are "general obligation" and "revenue" bonds. General obligation bonds are secured by the issuer's pledge of its full faith and credit and taxing power for the payment of principal and interest. Interest on and principal of revenue bonds, however, are payable only from the revenue generated by the facility financed by the bond or other specified sources of revenue. Revenue bonds do not represent a pledge of credit or create any debt of or charge against the general revenues of a municipality or public authority. Industrial development bonds are typically classified as revenue bonds.

Types of Municipal Securities include, but are not limited to: industrial development bonds; municipal notes and bonds; serial notes and bonds sold with a series of maturity dates; tax anticipation notes and bonds sold to finance working capital needs of municipalities in anticipation of receiving taxes at a later date; bond anticipation notes sold in anticipation of the issuance of longer-term bonds in the future; pre-refunded municipal bonds refundable at a later date (payment of principal and interest on pre-refunded bonds are assured through the first call date by the deposit in escrow of U.S. Government securities); and general obligation bonds secured by a municipality's pledge of taxation. There are no restrictions on the maturity of Municipal Securities in which the Fund may invest. The Fund will seek to invest in Municipal Securities of such maturities as the Advisor believes will produce current income.

The Fund may also purchase some Municipal Securities with variable interest rates. Variable interest rates are ordinarily stated as a percentage of the prime rate of a bank or some similar standard, such as the 91-day U.S. Treasury bill rate. Variable interest rates are adjusted on a periodic basis (e.g. every 30 days). Many variable rate Municipal Securities are subject to payment of principal on demand, usually in not more than seven days. If a variable rate Municipal Security does not have this demand feature, or the demand feature extends beyond seven days and the Advisor believes the security cannot be sold within seven days, the Advisor may consider the security to be illiquid. Variable interest rates generally reduce changes in the market value of Municipal Securities from their original purchase prices. Accordingly, as interest rates decrease or increase, the potential for capital appreciation or depreciation is less for variable rate demand instruments require payment of principal and accrued interest from the issuer of the municipal obligations, the issuer of the participation interests or a guarantor of either issuer.

Yields on Municipal Securities depend on a variety of factors, including: the general conditions of the money market and the taxable and Municipal Securities markets; the size of the particular offering; the maturity of the obligations; and the credit quality of the issue. The Fund's return on its investments in Municipal Securities will depend on the continuing ability of the issuers of Municipal Securities to meet their obligations for the payment of interest and principal when due. Any adverse economic conditions or developments affecting the states or municipalities could affect the Fund's portfolio.

#### U.S. Government Obligations

Although there is no current intention to do so, the Fund may invest in U.S. Government obligations. U.S. Government obligations include securities issued or guaranteed as to principal and interest by the U.S. Government, its agencies or instrumentalities. U.S. Treasury obligations differ mainly in the length of their maturity. Treasury bills, the most frequently issued marketable government securities, have a maturity of up to one year and are issued on a discount

basis. U.S. Government obligations also include securities issued or guaranteed by federal agencies or instrumentalities, including government-sponsored enterprises.

Payment of principal and interest on U.S. Government obligations may be backed by the full faith and credit of the United States or may be backed solely by the issuing or guaranteeing agency or instrumentality itself. In the latter case, the investor must look principally to the agency or instrumentality issuing or guaranteeing the obligation for ultimate repayment, which agency or instrumentality may be privately owned. There can be no assurance that the U.S. Government would provide financial support to its agencies or instrumentalities (including governmentsponsored enterprises) where it is not obligated to do so. In addition, U.S. Government obligations are subject to fluctuations in market value due to fluctuations in market interest rates. As a general matter, the value of debt instruments, including U.S. Government obligations, declines when market interest rates increase and rises when market interest rates decrease. Certain types of U.S. Government obligations are subject to fluctuations in yield or value due to their structure or contract terms.

The Fund may also have the ability to purchase participations in trusts that hold U.S. Treasury and agency securities (such as TIGRs and CATs) and also may purchase Treasury receipts and other "stripped" securities that evidence ownership in either the future interest payments or the future principal payments of U.S. Government obligations. These participations are issued at a discount to their "face value," and may (particularly in the case of stripped mortgage-backed securities) exhibit greater price volatility than ordinary debt securities because of the manner in which their principal and interest are returned to investors.

#### Non-Diversification of Investments

The Fund is non-diversified under the 1940 Act. This means that under the 1940 Act, there is no restriction as to how much the Fund may invest in the securities of any one issuer. However, to qualify for tax treatment as a regulated investment company under the Internal Revenue Code ("Code"), the Fund intends to comply, as of the end of each taxable quarter, with certain diversification requirements imposed by the Code. Pursuant to these requirements, at the end of each taxable quarter, the Fund, among other things, will not have investments in the securities of any one issuer (other than U.S. Government securities or securities of other regulated investment companies) of more than 25% of the value of the Fund's total assets. In addition, the Fund, with respect to 50% of its total assets, will not have investments in the securities of any issuer equal to 5% of the Fund's total assets, and will not purchase more than 10% of the outstanding voting securities of any one issuer. As a non-diversified investment company, the Fund may be subject to greater risks than a diversified company because of the larger impact of fluctuation in the values of securities of fewer issues.

#### **Borrowings**

The Fund may borrow funds to meet redemptions, for other emergency purposes or to increase its portfolio holdings of securities. Such borrowings may be on a secured or unsecured basis at fixed or variable rates of interest. The 1940 Act requires the Fund to maintain continuous asset coverage of not less than 300% with respect to all borrowings. This allows the Fund to borrow for such purposes an amount (when taken together with any borrowings for temporary or emergency purposes as described below) equal to as much as 50% of the value of its net assets (not including such borrowings). If such asset coverage should decline to less than 300% due to market fluctuations or other reasons, the Fund may be required to dispose of some of its portfolio holdings within three days in order to reduce the Fund's debt and restore the 300% asset coverage, even though it may be disadvantageous from an investment standpoint to dispose of assets at that time.

Conversely, if the income from the assets retained with borrowed funds is not sufficient to cover the cost of borrowing, the net income of the Fund will be less than if borrowing were not used, and, therefore, the amount available for distribution to shareholders as dividends will be reduced. The Fund also may be required to maintain minimum average balances in connection with such borrowing or to pay a commitment or other fee to maintain a line of credit; either of these requirements would increase the cost of borrowing over the stated interest rate.

Borrowing by the Fund creates an opportunity for increased net income, but at the same time, creates special risk considerations. For example, leveraging may exaggerate the effect on net asset value of any increase or decrease in the market value of the Fund's portfolio. To the extent the income derived from securities purchased with borrowed funds exceeds the interest the Fund will have to pay, the Fund's net income will be greater than if borrowing were not used.

#### Securities Lending

The Fund may lend securities from its portfolio to brokers, dealers and financial institutions (but not individuals) in order to increase the return on its portfolio. The value of the loaned securities may not exceed one-third of the Fund's total net assets and loans of portfolio securities are fully collateralized based on values that are marked-to-market daily. The Fund will not enter into any portfolio security lending arrangement having a duration of longer than one year. The principal risk of portfolio lending is potential default or insolvency of the borrower. In either of these cases, the Fund could experience delays in recovering securities or collateral or could lose all or part of the value of the loaned securities. The Fund may pay reasonable administrative and custodial fees in connection with loans of portfolio securities and may pay a portion of the interest or fee earned thereon to the borrower or a placing broker.

In determining whether or not to lend a security to a particular broker, dealer or financial institution, the Advisor considers all relevant facts and circumstances, including the size, creditworthiness and reputation of the broker, dealer or financial institution. Any securities that the Fund may receive as collateral will not become part of the Fund's investment portfolio at the time of the loan and, in the event of a default by the borrower, the Fund will, if permitted by law, dispose of such collateral except for such part thereof that is a security in which the Fund is permitted to invest. During the time securities are on loan, the borrower will pay the Fund any accrued income on those securities, and the Fund may invest the cash collateral and earn income or receive an agreed-upon fee from a borrower that has delivered cash-equivalent collateral. While the Fund does not have the right to vote securities on loan, it would terminate the loan and regain the right to vote if that were considered important with respect to the investment.

### **Restricted and Illiquid Securities**

The Fund may invest up to 15% of its net assets in securities that are illiquid at the time of purchase, which means that there may be legal or contractual restrictions on their disposition, or that there are no readily available market quotations for such a security. Illiquid securities present the risks that the Fund may have difficulty valuing these holdings and/or may be unable to sell these holdings at the time or price desired. There are generally no restrictions on the Fund's ability to invest in restricted securities (that is, securities that are not registered pursuant to the Securities Act of 1933), except to the extent such securities may be considered illiquid. Securities issued pursuant to Rule 144A of the Securities Act of 1933 will be considered liquid if determined to be so under procedures adopted by the Board of Trustees.

#### Securities of Foreign Issuers

The Fund may invest up to 33 1/3% of its total assets in the securities. Investments in the securities of foreign issuers involve special risks that differ from those associated with investments in domestic issuers. The risks associated with investments in the securities of foreign securities issuers relate to political and economic developments abroad, as well as those that result from the differences between the regulation of domestic securities and issuers and foreign securities and issuers. These risks may include, but are not limited to, expropriation, confiscatory taxation, withholding taxes on interest, limitations on the use or transfer of Fund assets, political or social instability and adverse diplomatic developments.

In addition, there are restrictions on foreign investments in other jurisdictions and there tends to be difficulty in obtaining judgments from abroad and effecting repatriation of capital invested abroad. Delays could occur in settlement of foreign transactions, which could adversely affect shareholder equity. Moreover, individual foreign economies may differ favorably or unfavorably from the domestic economy in such respects as growth of gross national product, the rate of inflation, capital reinvestment, resource self-sufficiency and balance of payments position.

Furthermore, investing in the securities of foreign issuers can carry higher risks than those associated with domestic investments. Foreign securities may be denominated in foreign currencies. Therefore, the value in U.S. dollars of the Fund's net assets and income may be affected by changes in exchange rates and regulations.

The internal politics of certain foreign countries may not be as stable as that of the United States. Governments in certain foreign countries also continue to participate to a significant degree, through ownership interest or regulation, in their respective economies. Action by these governments could include restrictions on foreign investment, nationalization, expropriation of goods or imposition of taxes, and could have a significant effect on market prices of securities and payment of interest. The economies of many foreign countries are heavily dependent upon international trade and are accordingly affected by the trade policies and economic conditions of their trading partners. Enactment by these trading partners of protectionist trade legislation, or economic recessions or slow downs of those partners could have a significant adverse effect upon the securities markets of such countries.

A change in the value of any foreign currency against the U.S. dollar will result in a corresponding change in the U.S. dollar value of securities held by the Fund, denominated in that currency. Furthermore, the interest and dividends payable on certain foreign securities may be subject to foreign withholding taxes, thus reducing the net amount of income to be paid to the Fund and that may ultimately be available for distribution to the Fund's shareholders.

Other differences between investing in foreign companies and in U.S. domiciled companies include:

- information is less publicly available;
- there is a lack of uniform financial accounting standards applicable to foreign companies;
- market quotations are less readily available;
- there are differences in government regulation and supervision of foreign securities exchanges, brokers, listed companies and banks;
- there is generally a lower foreign securities market volume;
- it is likely that foreign securities may be less liquid and/or more volatile;
- there are generally higher foreign brokerage commissions;
- there may be difficulties in enforcing contractual obligations or obtaining court judgments

abroad because of differences in the legal systems; and

• the mail service between countries may be unreliable.

Foreign securities holdings may, from time to time, include investments in the securities of emerging market countries or developing countries. Developing countries may impose restrictions on the Fund's ability to repatriate investment income or capital. Even where there is no outright restriction on repatriation of investment income or capital, the mechanics of repatriation may affect certain aspects of the operations of the Fund. For example, funds may be withdrawn from the People's Republic of China only in U.S. or Hong Kong dollars and only at an exchange rate established by the government once each week. Furthermore, some of the currencies in emerging markets have experienced de-valuations relative to the U.S. dollar, and major adjustments have been made periodically in certain of such currencies. Certain developing countries face serious exchange constraints.

Governments of some developing countries exercise substantial influence over many aspects of the private sector. In some countries, the government owns or controls many companies, including the largest in the country. As such, government actions in the future could have a significant effect on economic conditions in developing countries in these regions, which could affect private sector companies, a portfolio and the value of its securities. Furthermore, certain developing countries are among the largest debtors to commercial banks and foreign governments. Trading in debt obligations issued or guaranteed by such governments or their agencies and instrumentalities involves a high degree of risk.

#### Derivatives

The Fund may invest up to 15% of its total assets in derivative securities. The Fund may invest in a wide range of derivatives, including call and put options, futures and forward contracts, for hedging purposes as well as direct investment.

*Buying Call and Put Options.* The Fund will invest in call and put options as part of its overall portfolio management strategy. Call and put options may be entered into in order to limit the risk of a substantial increase in the market price of the security that the Fund intends to purchase. Prior to its expiration, a call option may be sold in a closing sale transaction. Any profit or loss from the sale will depend on whether the amount received is more or less than the premium paid for the call option plus the related transaction cost. By buying a put, the Fund has the right to sell the security until the put expires. The amount of any appreciation in the value of the underlying security will be partially offset by the amount of the premium paid for the cost. Prior to its expiration cost. Prior to its expiration and any related transaction cost. Prior to its expiration in a closing sale transaction and any profit or loss from the sale will depend on whether the amount of the premium paid for the security will be partially offset by the amount of the premium paid for the cost in a closing sale transaction and any profit or loss from the sale will depend on whether the amount received is more or less than the premium paid for the put option and any related transaction cost. Prior to its expiration, a put option may be sold in a closing sale transaction and any profit or loss from the sale will depend on whether the amount received is more or less than the premium paid for the put option plus the related transaction costs.

*Writing (Selling) Call and Put Options.* The Fund has the ability to write covered options on equity and debt securities and indices. This means that, in the case of call options, so long as the Fund is obligated as the writer of a call option, it will own the underlying security subject to the option and, in the case of put options, it will, through its custodian, deposit and maintain either cash or securities with a market value equal to or greater than the exercise price of the option.

Covered call options written by the Fund give the holder the right to buy the underlying securities from the Fund at a stated exercise price. A call option written by the Fund is "covered" if the Fund owns the underlying security that is subject to the call or has an absolute and immediate

right to acquire that security without additional cash consideration (or for additional cash consideration held in a segregated account by its custodian bank) upon conversion or exchange of other securities held in its portfolio. A call option is also covered if the Fund holds a call on the same security and in the same principal amount as the call written where the exercise price of the call held (a) is equal to or less than the exercise price of the call written or (b) is greater than the exercise price of the call written if the difference is maintained by the Fund in cash and high grade debt securities in a segregated account with its custodian bank. The Fund may purchase securities that may be covered with call options solely on the basis of considerations consistent with the investment objective and policies of the Fund. The Fund's turnover may increase through the exercise of a call option. This will generally occur if the market value of a "covered" security increases, and the Fund has not entered into a closing purchase transaction.

As a writer of an option, the Fund receives a premium less a commission, and in exchange foregoes the opportunity to profit from any increase in the market value of the security exceeding the call option price. The premium serves to mitigate the effect of any depreciation in the market value of the security. The premium paid by the buyer of an option will reflect, among other things, the relationship of the exercise price to the market price, the volatility of the underlying security, the remaining term of the option, the existing supply and demand and the interest rates.

The writer of a call option may have no control over when the underlying securities must be sold because the writer may be assigned an exercise notice at any time prior to the termination of the obligation. Exercise of a call option by the purchaser will cause the Fund to forego future appreciation of the securities covered by the option. Whether or not an option expires unexercised, the writer retains the amount of the premium. This amount may, in the case of a covered call option, be offset by a decline in the market value of the underlying security during the option period. If a call option is exercised, the writer experiences a profit or loss from the sale of the underlying security. Thus during the option period, the writer of a call option gives up the opportunity for appreciation in the market value of the underlying security or currency above the exercise price. It retains the risk of the loss should the price of the underlying security or foreign currency decline. Writing call options also involves risks relating to the Fund's ability to close out the option it has written.

The Fund may write exchange-traded call options on its securities. Call options may be written on portfolio securities, indices or foreign currencies. With respect to securities and foreign currencies, the Fund may write call and put options on an exchange or over-the-counter. Call options on portfolio securities will be covered since the Fund will own the underlying securities. Call options on securities indices will be written only to hedge in an economically appropriate way portfolio securities that are not otherwise hedged with options or financial futures contracts and will be "covered" by identifying the specific portfolio securities being hedged. Options on foreign currencies will be covered by securities that substantially replicate the movement of the index.

A put option on a security, security index or foreign currency gives the purchaser of the option, in return for the premium paid to the writer (seller), the right to sell the underlying security, index or foreign currency at the exercise price at any time during the option period. When the Fund writes a secured put option, it will gain a profit in the amount of the premium, less a commission, so long as the price of the underlying security remains above the exercise price. However, the Fund remains obligated to purchase the underlying security from the buyer of the put option (usually in the event the price of the security falls belows the exercise price) at any time during the option period. If the price of the underlying security falls below the exercise price, the Fund may realize

a loss in the amount of the difference between the exercise price and the sale price of the security, less the premium received. Upon exercise by the purchaser, the writer of a put option has the obligation to purchase the underlying security or foreign currency at the exercise price. A put option on a securities index is similar to a put option on an individual security, except that the value of the option depends on the weighted value of the group of securities comprising the index and all settlements are made in cash.

During the option period, the writer of a put option has assumed the risk that the price of the underlying security or foreign currency will decline below the exercise price. However, the writer of the put option has retained the opportunity for an appreciated price above the exercise price should the market price of the underlying security or foreign currency increase. Writing put options also involves risks relating to the Fund's ability to close out the option that it has written.

The writer of an option who wishes to terminate its obligation may effect a "closing purchase transaction" by buying an option on the same securities as the option previously written. The effect of the purchase is that the clearing corporation will cancel the writer's position. However, a writer may not effect a closing purchase transaction after being notified of the exercise of an option. There is also no guarantee that the Fund will be able to effect a closing purchase transaction for the options it has written.

Effecting a closing purchase transaction in the case of a written call option will permit the Fund to write another call option on the underlying security with a different exercise price, expiration date or both. Effecting a closing purchase transaction will also permit the Fund to use cash or proceeds from the investments. If the Fund desires to sell a particular security from its portfolio on which it has written a call option, it will effect a closing purchase transaction before or at the same time as the sale of the security.

The Fund will realize profits from closing purchase transactions if the price of the transaction is less than the premium received from writing the option. Likewise, the Fund will realize a loss from a closing purchase transaction if the price of the transaction is more than the premium received from writing the option. Because increases in the market price of a call option will generally reflect increases in the market price of the underlying security, any loss resulting from the repurchase of a call option is likely to be offset in whole or in part by appreciation of the underlying security.

*Writing Over-the-Counter ("OTC") Options.* The Fund has the ability to engage in options transactions that trade on the OTC market to the same extent that it intends to engage in exchange traded options. Just as with exchange traded options, OTC options give the holder the right to buy an underlying security from, or sell an underlying security to, an option writer at a stated exercise price. However, OTC options differ from exchange traded options in certain material respects.

OTC options are arranged directly with dealers and not, as is the case with exchange traded options, through a clearing corporation. Thus, there is a risk of non-performance by the dealer. Because there is no exchange, pricing is typically done by reference to information obtained from market makers. Since OTC options are available for a greater variety of securities and in a wider range of expiration dates and exercise prices, the writer of an OTC option is paid the premium in advance by the dealer.

A writer or purchaser of a put or call option can terminate it voluntarily only by entering into a closing transaction. There can be no assurance that a continuously liquid secondary market will

exist for any particular option at any specific time. Consequently, the Fund may be able to realize the value of an OTC option it has purchased only by exercising it or entering into a closing sale transaction with the dealer that issued it. Similarly, when the Fund writes an OTC option, it generally can close out that option prior to its expiration only by entering into a closing purchase transaction with the dealer to which it originally wrote the option. If a covered call option writer cannot effect a closing transaction, it cannot sell the underlying security or foreign currency until the option expires or the option is exercised. Therefore, the writer of a covered OTC call option may not be able to sell an underlying security even though it might otherwise be advantageous to do so. Likewise, the writer of a secured OTC put option may be unable to sell the securities pledged to secure the put for other investment purposes while it is obligated as a put writer. Similarly, a purchaser of an OTC put or call option might also find it difficult to terminate its position on a timely basis in the absence of a secondary market.

*Futures Contracts.* The Fund has the ability to buy and sell stock index futures contracts traded on domestic futures exchanges to hedge the value of its portfolio against changes in market conditions. A stock index futures contract is an agreement between two parties to take or make delivery of an amount of cash equal to a specified dollar amount, times the difference between the stock index value at the close of the last trading day of the contract and the price at which the futures contract is originally struck. A stock index futures contract does not involve the physical delivery of the underlying stocks in the index. Although stock index futures contracts call for the actual taking or delivery of cash, in most cases the Fund expects to liquidate its stock index futures positions through offsetting transactions, which may result in a gain or a loss, before cash settlement is required.

The Fund will incur brokerage fees when it purchases and sells stock index futures contracts, and at the time the Fund purchases or sells a stock index futures contract, it must make a good faith deposit known as the "initial margin." Thereafter, the Fund may need to make subsequent deposits, known as "variation margin," to reflect changes in the level of the stock index.

The Fund may, in addition to bona fide hedging transactions, use futures and options on futures transactions if the aggregate initial margin and premiums required to establish such positions, less the amount by which any such options positions are in the money (within the meaning of the Commodity Exchange Act), do not exceed 5% of the Fund's net assets.

*Risks Associated With Options and Futures.* Although the Fund may write covered call options and purchase and sell stock index futures contracts to hedge against declines in the market value of its portfolio securities, the use of these instruments involves certain risks. As the writer of covered call options, the Fund receives a premium but loses any opportunity to profit from an increase in the market price if the underlying securities appreciate, though the premium received may partially offset such loss.

Although stock index futures contracts may be useful in hedging against adverse changes in the value of the Fund's investment securities, they are derivative instruments that are subject to a number of risks. During certain market conditions, purchases and sales of stock index futures contracts may not completely offset a decline or rise in the value of the Fund's investments. In the futures markets, it may not always be possible to execute a buy or sell order at the desired price, or to close out an open position due to market conditions, limits on open positions and/or daily price fluctuations. Changes in the market value of the Fund's investment securities may differ substantially from the changes anticipated by the Fund when it established its hedged positions, and unanticipated price movements in a futures contract may result in a loss substantially greater than the Fund's initial investment in such a contract.

The Commodity Futures Trading Commission ("CFTC") and the various exchanges have established limits referred to as "speculative position limits" on the maximum net long or net short position that any person may hold or control in a particular futures contract. Trading limits are imposed on the number of contracts that any person may trade on a particular trading day. An exchange may order the liquidation of positions found to be in violation of these limits and it may impose sanctions or restrictions. These trading and positions limits will not have an adverse impact on the Fund's strategies for hedging its securities.

Often, futures purchased or sold by the Fund will be traded on foreign securities exchanges. Participation in foreign futures and foreign options transactions involves the execution and clearing of trades on or subject to the rules of a foreign board of trade. Neither the National Futures Association nor any domestic exchange regulates activities of any foreign boards of trade, including the execution, delivery and clearing of transactions, or has the power to compel enforcement of the rules of a foreign board of trade or any applicable foreign law. This is true even if the exchange is formally linked to a domestic market so that a position taken on the market may be liquidated by a transaction on another market. Moreover, such laws or regulations will vary depending on the foreign country in which the foreign futures or foreign options transaction occurs.

For these reasons, customers who trade foreign futures or foreign options contracts may not be afforded certain of the protective measures provided by the CFTC regulations and the rules of the National Futures Association and any domestic exchange, including the right to use reparations proceedings before the CFTC and arbitration proceedings provided by the National Futures Association or any domestic futures exchange. The Fund's investments in foreign futures or foreign options transactions may not be provided the same protections as transactions on United States futures exchanges. In addition, the price of any foreign futures or foreign options contract and, therefore, the potential profit and loss thereon, may be affected by any variance in the foreign exchange rate between the time an order is placed and the time it is liquidated, offset or exercised.

### When-Issued Purchases, Delayed Delivery and Forward Commitments

The Fund may purchase or sell particular securities with payment and delivery taking place at a later date. The price or yield obtained in a transaction may be less favorable than the price or yield available in the market when the securities delivery takes place. When the Fund agrees to purchase securities on a when-issued or delayed delivery basis or enter into a forward commitment to purchase securities, its custodian will set aside cash or liquid high grade debt securities equal to the amount of the commitment in a segregated account. Normally, the custodian will set aside portfolio securities to satisfy a purchase commitment, and in such a case the Fund may be required subsequently to place additional assets in the segregated account in order to ensure that the value of the account remains equal to the amount of the Fund's commitments. It may be expected that the market value of the Fund's net assets will fluctuate to a greater degree when it sets aside portfolio securities to cover such purchase commitments than when it sets aside cash.

When-issued and forward commitment transactions involve the risk that the price or yield obtained in a transaction (and therefore the value of a security) may be less favorable than the price or yield (and therefore the value of a security) available in the market when the securities delivery takes place. In addition, when the Fund engages in when-issued, delayed delivery and forward commitment transactions, it relies on the other party to consummate the trade. Failure of such party to do so may result in the Fund incurring a loss or missing an opportunity to obtain a price considered advantageous.

The market value of the securities underlying a when-issued purchase or a forward commitment to purchase securities, and any subsequent fluctuations in their market value, are taken into account when determining the net asset value of the Fund starting on the day the Fund agrees to purchase the securities. The Fund does not earn interest on the securities it has committed to purchase until they are paid for and delivered on the settlement date. When the Fund makes a forward commitment to sell securities it owns, the proceeds to be received upon settlement are included in the Fund's assets. Fluctuations in the market value of the underlying securities are not reflected in the Fund's net asset value as long as the commitment remains in effect.

#### Short Sales

The Fund will utilize short sales as part of its overall portfolio management strategy. Short sales are transactions where the Fund sells securities it does not own in anticipation of a decline in the market value of the securities. The Fund must borrow the security to deliver it to the buyer. The Fund is then obligated to replace the security borrowed at the market price at the time of replacement. Until the security is replaced, the Fund is required to pay the lender any dividends or interest which accrue on the security during the loan period. To borrow the security sold. To the extent necessary to meet margin requirements, the broker will retain proceeds of the short sale until the short position is closed out. GNI anticipates that the frequency of short sales will vary substantially under different market conditions.

Short sales involve selling a security that the Fund borrows and does not own. The Fund may sell securities short only on a fully collateralized basis, as permitted by SEC interpretations. At the time of a short sale, the Fund will establish and maintain a segregated account consisting of liquid assets equal in value to the purchase price due on the settlement date under the short sale period. The value of the liquid assets will be marked to market daily. The Fund may engage in short sales if GNI anticipates that the security's market purchase price will be less than its borrowing price. Short sales carry significant risk, including the risk of loss if the value of a security sold short increases prior to the scheduled delivery date, since the Fund must pay more for the security than it has received from the purchaser in the short sale.

#### Warrants

The Fund has the ability to purchase warrants and similar rights, which are privileges issued by corporations enabling the owners to subscribe to and purchase a specified number of shares of the corporation at the specified price during a specified period of time. Warrants basically are options to purchase equity securities at a specific price valid for a specific period of time. They do not represent ownership of the securities, but only the right to buy them. They have no voting rights, pay no dividends and have no rights with respect to the assets of the company issuing them. Warrants differ from call options in that warrants are issued by the issuer of the security that may be purchased on their exercise, whereas call options may be written or issued by anyone. The prices of warrants do not necessarily move parallel to the prices of the underlying securities.

The purchase of warrants involves the risk that the Fund could lose the purchase value of a warrant if the right to subscribe to additional shares is not exercised prior to the warrant's expiration. Also, the purchase of warrants involves the risk that the effective price paid for the warrant added to the subscription price of the related security may exceed the value of the subscribed security's market price, such as when there is no movement in the price level of the underlying security.

#### Repurchase Agreements

The Fund may have a portion of its net assets in cash or cash equivalents for a variety of reasons, including waiting for a suitable investment opportunity or taking a defensive position. To earn income on this portion of its net assets, the Fund may enter into repurchase agreements. Under a repurchase agreement, the Fund agrees to buy securities guaranteed as to payment of principal and interest by the U.S. Government or its agencies from a qualified bank or broker-dealer and then to sell the securities back to the bank or broker-dealer after a short period of time (generally, less than seven days) at a higher price. The bank or broker-dealer must transfer to the Fund's custodian securities with an initial market value of at least 100% of the dollar amount invested by the Fund in each repurchase agreement. GNI will monitor the value of such securities daily to determine that the value equals or exceeds the repurchase price.

Repurchase agreements may involve risks in the event of default or insolvency of the bank or broker-dealer, including possible delays or restrictions upon the Fund's ability to sell the underlying securities. The Fund will enter into repurchase agreements only with parties who meet certain creditworthiness standards, i.e. banks or broker-dealers that GNI has determined present no serious risk of becoming involved in bankruptcy proceedings within the time frame contemplated by the repurchase transaction.

The Fund may also enter into reverse repurchase agreements. Under a reverse repurchase agreement, the Fund agrees to sell a security in its portfolio and then to repurchase the security at an agreed-upon price, date and interest payment. The Fund will maintain cash or high-grade liquid debt securities with a value equal to the value of the Fund's obligation under the agreement, including accrued interest, in a segregated account with the Fund's custodian bank. The securities subject to the reverse repurchase agreement will be marked-to-market daily.

The use of repurchase agreements by the Fund involves certain risks. For example, if the other party to a repurchase agreement defaults on its obligation to repurchase the underlying security at a time when the value of the security has declined, the Fund may incur a loss upon disposition of the security. If the other party to the agreement becomes insolvent and subject to liquidation or reorganization under the bankruptcy code or other laws, a court may determine that the underlying security is collateral for the loan by the Fund not within the control of the Fund, and therefore the realization by the Fund on the collateral may be automatically stayed. Finally, it is possible that the Fund may not be able to substantiate its interest in the underlying security and may be deemed an unsecured creditor of the other party to the agreement.

### Sector/Industry Concentration

The Fund may, from time to time, have greater than 25%, but no more than 80%, of its assets in one market sector or industry. To the extent that the Fund concentrates in one or more sectors or industries, it may be subject to the risks affecting that sector or industry more than would a more broadly diversified fund. The Advisor believes that the industries and sectors currently most attractive for the Fund include those in the tobacco, alcoholic beverage, defense/aerospace and gaming areas, though these may, and likely will, change over time. Some industries are described below.

*Leisure:* companies in this category include companies which engage in the following: television and radio broadcast manufacture (including cable television); motion pictures and photography, recordings and musical instruments; publishing, including newspapers and magazines; sporting goods and camping and recreational equipment; and sports arenas. Other goods and services may include toys and games (including video and other electronic games), amusement and theme

parks, travel and travel-related services, advertising, hotels and motels, leisure apparel or footwear, fast food, beverages, restaurants, alcohol, tobacco products and gaming casinos.

Securities of companies in the leisure industries may be considered speculative. Companies engaged in entertainment, gaming, broadcasting, cable television and cellular communications, for example, have unpredictable earnings, due in part to changing consumer tastes and intense competition. Securities of companies in the leisure industries generally exhibit greater volatility than the overall market. The market has been known to react strongly to technological developments and to the specter of government regulation in the leisure industries.

*Multimedia:* companies engaged in the development, production, sale and distribution of goods or services used in the broadcast and media industries. Business activities of companies in which the Fund may invest include: ownership, operation or broadcast of free or pay television, radio or cable stations; publication and sale of newspapers, magazines, books or video products; and distribution of data-based information. The Fund may also invest in companies involved in the development, syndication and transmission of the following products: television and movie programming; pay-per-view television; advertising; cellular communications; and emerging technology for the broadcast and media industries.

Some of the companies in the broadcast and media industries are undergoing significant change because of federal deregulation of cable and broadcasting. As a result, competitive pressures are intense, and the stocks are subject to increased price volatility. FCC rules govern the concentration of investment in AM, FM or TV stations, limiting investment alternatives.

*Retailing:* companies engaged in merchandising finished goods and services primarily to individual consumers. Companies in which the Fund may invest may include: general merchandise retailers; department stores; food retailers; drug stores; and any specialty retailers selling a single category of merchandise such as apparel, toys, guns, dealers, consumer electronics, or home improvement products. The Fund may also invest in companies engaged in selling goods and services through alternative means such as direct telephone marketing, mail order, membership warehouse clubs, computer or video based electronic systems.

The success of retailing companies is closely tied to consumer spending, which in turn, is affected by general economic conditions and consumer confidence levels. The retailing industry is highly competitive, and a company's success is often tied to its ability to anticipate changing consumer tastes.

*Software and Computer Services:* companies engaged in research, design, production or distribution of products or processes that relate to software or information-based services. The Fund may invest in companies that provide systems-level software (designed to run the basic functions of a computer) or applications software (designed for one type of work) directed at either horizontal (general use) or vertical (certain industries or groups) markets, time-sharing services, information-based services, computer consulting, communications software and data communications services.

Competitive pressures may have a significant effect on the financial condition of companies in the software and computer services sector. For example, if technology continues to advance at an accelerated rate, and the number of companies and product offerings continue to expand, these companies could become increasingly sensitive to short product cycles and aggressive pricing.

*Technology:* companies that the Advisor believes have, or will develop, products, processes or services that will provide or will benefit significantly from technological advances and improvements. These may include companies that develop, produce or distribute products or services in the computer, semi-conductor, electronics, communications, health care and biotechnology sectors.

Competitive pressures may have a significant effect on the financial condition of companies in the technology sector. If technology continues to advance at an accelerated rate, and the number of companies and product offerings continues to expand, these companies could become increasingly sensitive to short product cycles and aggressive pricing.

*Telecommunications:* companies engaged in the development, manufacture or sale of communications services or communications equipment. Companies in the telecommunications field offer a variety of services and products, including: local and long-distance telephone service; cellular, paging, local and wide area product networks; satellite, microwave and cable television; and equipment used to provide these products and services. Long-distance telephone companies may also have interests in new technologies, such as fiber optics and data transmission.

Telephone operating companies are subject to both federal and state regulations governing rates of return and services that may be offered. Telephone companies usually pay an above-average dividend. Certain types of companies in which the Fund may invest when investing in these sectors are engaged in fierce competition for a share of the market for their products. In recent years, these companies have been providing goods or services such as private and local area networks, or engaged in the sale of telephone set equipment.

*Transportation:* companies engaged in providing transportation services or companies engaged in the design, manufacture, distribution or sale of transportation equipment. Transportation services may include companies involved in the movement of freight or people such as airline, railroad, ship, truck and bus companies. Other service companies include those that provide automobiles, trucks, autos, planes, containers, rail cars or any other mode of transportation and their related products. In addition, the Fund may invest in companies that sell fuel-saving devices to the transportation industries and those that sell insurance and software developed primarily for transportation companies.

Risk factors that affect transportation stocks include the state of the economy, fuel prices, labor agreements and insurance costs. Transportation stocks are cyclical and have occasional sharp price movements, which may result from changes in the economy, fuel prices, labor agreements and insurance costs. The U.S. trend has been to deregulate these industries, which could have a favorable long-term effect, but future government decisions may adversely affect these companies.

*Defense and Aerospace:* companies engaged in the development, manufacture or sale of aerospace equipment and defense weapons. Aerospace equipment may include companies involved in the development of gas turbine engines, multi-band filter and power amplifiers for airborne applications, aircraft electrical power distribution systems, airborne laser mine detection, helicopters, air-launched theater missile defense, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) and flight simulators.

Risk factors or challenges that face the industry include the fact that procurement cycles can be as long as ten years and the rate of growth in defense spending may soon slow down. Some defense contractors are trading at discounts due to their exposure to aircraft and automobile

manufacturing while many others face enormous underfunded pensions. Finally, significant defense budget reductions internationally are shrinking the export opportunities for American defense companies.

*Consumer Products:* companies that manufacture, wholesale or retail non-durable goods such as alcoholic beverage and tobacco products. To the extent that the Fund's investments are concentrated in issuers conducting business in the same economic sector, the Fund is subject to legislative or regulatory changes, adverse market conditions and/or increased competition affecting that economic sector. The performance of consumer products companies has historically been closely tied to the performance of the overall economy, and is also affected by interest rates, competition, consumer confidence and relative levels of disposable household income and seasonal consumer spending. Changes in demographics and consumer tastes can also affect the demand for, and success of, consumer products in the marketplace.

There is substantial litigation related to tobacco products in the United States and certain foreign jurisdictions, and damages claimed in some of the tobacco-related litigation range into the billions of dollars. The present litigation environment is substantially uncertain, and it is possible that companies with exposure to the tobacco industries could be materially affected by an unfavorable outcome of pending litigation. The tobacco industry faces significant governmental action aimed at reducing the incidence of smoking and seeking to hold tobacco companies responsible for the adverse health effects associated with both smoking and exposure to environmental tobacco smoke. Governmental actions, combined with the diminishing social acceptance of smoking and private actions to restrict smoking, have resulted in reduced industry volume and may affect the performance of companies in the tobacco industry.

The success of alcoholic beverage companies depends on satisfying consumer tastes and preferences. Consumer preferences can change in unpredictable ways, and consumers may begin to prefer the products of competitors. In order to respond to changes in consumer preferences, alcoholic beverage companies may need to increase and enhance the marketing of existing products, change the pricing of existing products or introduce new products and services. Each response might affect financial results. In addition, brewers and distilled spirits manufacturers have been sued in several courts regarding advertising practices and underage consumption, and are subject to extensive regulation at the federal, state and local levels. Compliance with these laws and regulations can be costly.

*Gaming:* Companies in the gaming, casino and related industries are highly regulated, and state and Federal legislative changes can significantly impact the profitability of companies in those industries. Companies in the same industry often face similar obstacles, issues and regulatory burdens. As a result, the securities of gaming-related companies owned by the Fund may react similarly to, and move in unison with, one another. The gaming industry may also be negatively affected by changes in economic conditions as well as changes in consumer tastes.

### **Temporary Investments**

Under normal market conditions, the Fund will stay fully invested according to its principal investment strategies as noted above. The Fund, however, may temporarily depart from its principal investment strategies by making short-term investments in cash, cash equivalents, and high-quality, short-term debt securities and money market instruments for temporary defensive purposes in response to adverse market, economic or political conditions. This may result in the Fund not achieving its investment objectives during that period.

For longer periods of time, the Fund may hold a substantial cash position. If the market advances during periods when the Fund is holding a large cash position, the Fund may not participate to the extent it would have if the Fund had been more fully invested. To the extent that the Fund uses a money market fund for its cash position, there will be some duplication of expenses because the Fund would bear its pro rata portion of such money market fund's advisory fees and operational expenses.

### **Portfolio Turnover**

The Fund is actively managed and has no restrictions upon portfolio turnover. The Fund's rate of portfolio turnover may be greater than that of many other mutual funds. A 100% annual portfolio turnover rate would be achieved if each security in the Fund's portfolio (other than securities with less than one year remaining to maturity) were replaced once during the year. Trading also may result in realization of capital gains that would not otherwise be realized, and shareholders are taxed on such gains, whether reinvested or otherwise. The following are the portfolio turnover rates for the Fund for the fiscal years ended March 31, 2008 and 2007:

	For the Fiscal Years Ended March 31		
Portfolio Turnover Rates			
	2008	2007	
Vice Fund	36.40%	44.44%	

### **Fundamental Investment Limitations**

The Fund has adopted the following fundamental investment limitations. The following restrictions may only be changed if the change is approved by holders of a majority of the Fund's outstanding voting securities. As used in this SAI, "a majority of the Fund's outstanding voting securities" means (i) more than 50% of the Fund's outstanding voting shares or (ii) 67% or more of the Fund's voting shares present at a shareholder meeting if more than 50% of the Fund's outstanding voting shares are represented at the meeting in person or by proxy, whichever is less.

The Fund may not:

- 1. Purchase or otherwise acquire interests in real estate, real estate mortgage loans or interests therein, except that the Fund may purchase securities issued by issuers, including real estate investment trusts, that invest in real estate or interests therein.
- 2. Make loans if, as a result, more than 33 1/3% of the Fund's total assets would be loaned to other parties, except that the Fund may: (i) purchase or hold debt instruments in accordance with its investment objective and policies; (ii) enter into repurchase agreements; (iii) lend its securities; and (iv) loan money to other funds within the Trust in accordance with the terms of any applicable rule or regulation or exemptive order pursuant to the 1940 Act.
- 3. Act as an underwriter, except to the extent the Fund may be deemed to be an underwriter when disposing of securities it owns or when selling its own shares.
- 4. Issue senior securities to the Fund's presently authorized shares of beneficial interest, except that this restriction shall not be deemed to prohibit the Fund from: (i) making any permitted borrowings, loans, mortgages or pledges; (ii) entering into options, futures contracts, forward contracts, repurchase transactions or reverse repurchase transactions;

or (iii) making short sales of securities to the extent permitted by the 1940 Act and any rule or order thereunder, or Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") staff interpretations thereof.

- 5. Borrow money in an amount exceeding 33 1/3% of the value of the Fund's total assets, provided that the Fund may borrow money from other funds within the Trust in accordance with the terms of any applicable rule or regulation or exemptive order pursuant to the1940 Act.
- 6. Concentrate its investments in any one industry or sector if, as a result, more than 80% of the Fund's assets will be invested in such industry or sector. This restriction, however, does not prohibit the Fund from investing in obligations issued or guaranteed by the U.S. Government, or its agencies or instrumentalities. The Fund has adopted policies of concentrating in securities issued by companies within a wide range of industries and sectors consisting of all categories, the selection of which will vary at any given time. For a description of many, if not most, of the sectors in which the Fund may be invested, please see "Sector/Industry Concentration" of this SAI.
- 7. Invest in other investment companies, except as permitted by the 1940 Act.

# **Portfolio Holdings Information**

The Advisor, GNI and the Fund are subject to portfolio holdings disclosure policies. These policies govern the timing and circumstances of disclosure to shareholders and third parties about the portfolio investments that the Fund holds. These portfolio holdings disclosure policies have been approved by the Trust's Board of Trustees. The Fund discloses its portfolio holdings at the same time to all persons. Everyone has the same timely disclosure of the holdings with respect to any other person.

Disclosure of the Fund's complete holdings is required to be made quarterly within 60 days of the end of each fiscal quarter in the Annual Report and Semi-Annual Report to Fund shareholders and in the quarterly holdings report on Form N-Q. These reports are available, free of charge, on the EDGAR database on the SEC's website at www.sec.gov. The Fund also reports its top ten portfolio holdings as of each month end on its website at www.VICEFUND.com. All holdings are placed on the website within 10 days of the quarter-end. Holdings are placed on the website prior to their release to the rating agencies. This policy is consistent with the Fund's intent that the public have full disclosure of the holdings at the same time or prior to other persons.

To the extent the Fund's service providers have access to its holdings; they are bound by confidentiality agreements or professional standards to maintain the confidentiality of the holdings. Service providers include, without limitation, fund administrator, custodian, fund accounting agent, accountants and legal counsel.

# Management of the Fund

### **Board of Trustees and Officers**

The management and affairs of the Fund are supervised by the Trustees. The Board of Trustees consists of three individuals, two of whom are not "interested persons" of the Trust as that term is defined in the 1940 Act (the "Independent Trustees"). The Trustees are fiduciaries for the Fund's shareholders and are governed by the laws of the State of Delaware in this regard. The Trustees establish policies for the operation of the Fund and appoint the officers who conduct the daily business of the Fund. The Trustees, as well as the officers of the Trust, are listed below with their addresses, present positions with the Trust and principal occupations over at least the last five years.

### Independent Trustees

Name, Address and Age as of March 31, 2008	Position Held with Fund	Term of Office and Length of Time Served	Principal Occupation(s) During Past Five Years	# of Portfolios in Fund Complex Overseen by Trustee	Other Trusteeships Held by Trustee
Dr. Michael D. Akers 615 E. Michigan Street Milwaukee, WI 53202 Age: 53	Independent Trustee	Indefinite Term; Since 2001	Professor and Chair, Department of Accounting, Marquette University (2004 – present); Associate Professor, Marquette University (1996—2004).	2	Independent Trustee, Trust for Professional Managers(an open-end investment company)
Gary A. Drska 615 E. Michigan Street Milwaukee, WI 53202 Age: 51	Independent Trustee	Indefinite Term; Since 2001	Captain, Midwest Airlines (Airline Company) (1985—present); Director—Flight Standards & Training (July 1990—December 1999).	2	Independent Trustee, Trust for Professional Managers (an open-end investment company)

### Interested Trustee\* and Officers

Name, Address and Age as of March 31, 2008	Position(s) Held with Fund	Term of Office and Length of Time Served	Principal Occupation(s) During Past Five Years	# of Portfolios in Fund Complex Overseen by Trustee	Other Trusteeships Held by Trustee
Joseph C. Neuberger* 615 E. Michigan Street Milwaukee, WI 53202 Age: 46	Trustee and Chairperson	Indefinite Term; Since 2001	Executive Vice President, U.S. Bancorp Fund Services, LLC (1994— present).	2	Trustee, Trust for Professional Managers (an open-end investment company); Director/Trust ee, Buffalo Funds (an open-end investment company)

Name, Address and Age as of March 31, 2008	Position(s) Held with Fund	Term of Office and Length of Time Served	Principal Occupation(s) During Past Five Years	# of Portfolios in Fund Complex Overseen by Trustee	Other Trusteeships Held by Trustee
Laurie P. Roberts Plaza of the Americas 700 North Pearl Street, Suite 900 Dallas, TX 75201 Age: 42	President and Treasurer	Indefinite Term; Since February 2007	President, Mutuals Advisors, inc. (2007- present); Executive Vice President and Chief Compliance Officer, Douglas Scott Securities, Inc. (1995-January 2007); Chief Executive Officer, LPCR Consulting Inc., (2002 – October 2007) a broker-dealer compliance practice.	N/A	N/A
Rachel A. Spearo 615 E. Michigan Street Milwaukee, WI 53202 Age: 28	Secretary	Indefinite Term; Since 2005	Counsel, Fund Administration and Compliance, U.S. Bancorp Fund Services, LLC (September 2004-present)	N/A	N/A
David E. Scott 521 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1700 New York, NY 10175 Age: 37	Chief Compliance Officer	Indefinite Term; Since April 1, 2007	Managing Member, D.E. Scott & Associates, LLC (December 2005-present); CCO, Strategic Value Partners, LLC (August 2004 -December 2005); Managing Director, IMRC Group (August 2003- August 2004); Director, of Fund Compliance, US Trust Company (August 2001-August 2003), a national wealth management organization.	N/A	N/A

\*This Trustee is considered an "interested person" as defined in the 1940 Act because of his affiliation with U.S. Bancorp Fund Services, LLC and U.S. Bank, N.A., which provide fund accounting, administration, transfer agency and custodian services to the Fund.

### **Board Committees**

The Board of Trustees has three standing committees as described below:

<u>Audit Committee</u>. The Audit Committee is responsible for advising the full Board with respect to accounting, auditing and financial matters affecting the Trust and meets at least once annually. During the fiscal year ended March 31, 2008, the Audit Committee met two times. Both Independent Trustees (Dr. Akers and Mr. Drska) comprise the Audit Committee.

<u>Nominating Committee</u>. The Nominating Committee is responsible for seeking and reviewing candidates for consideration as nominees for trustee as is considered necessary from time to time and meets only as necessary. During the fiscal year ended March 31, 2008, the Nominating Committee did not meet. Both Independent Trustees (Dr. Akers and Mr. Drska) comprise the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee will consider trustee nominees recommended by shareholders. However, there are no policies in place regarding nominees recommended by shareholders.

<u>Valuation Committee</u>. The Valuation Committee is responsible for (1) monitoring the valuation of Fund securities and other investments; and (2) as required, when the full Board is not in

session, determining the fair value of illiquid and other holdings after consideration of all relevant factors, which determinations are reported to the full Board. The Valuation Committee meets as necessary when a price is not readily available. During the fiscal year ended March 31, 2008, the Valuation Committee did not meet. Mr. Neuberger and Dr. Akers comprise the Valuation Committee.

### **Board Compensation**

For their service as Trustees of the Trust, the Independent Trustees receive a retainer fee of \$5,000 per year and \$750 per meeting attended, as well as reimbursement for expenses incurred in connection with attendance at such meetings. Trustees who are not Independent Trustees receive no compensation for their services as such. Neither the Trust nor the Fund maintains any deferred compensation, pension or retirement plans, and no pension or retirement benefits are accrued as part of Trust or Fund expenses. The following table shows the fees received by the Trustees for their services as such for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2008.

Name of Person/Position	Aggregate Compensation from Fund	Aggregate Compensation from Trust Paid to Trustees
Joseph C. Neuberger, Chairperson and Trustee	\$0	\$0
Dr. Michael D. Akers, Trustee	\$4,125	\$8,250
Gary A. Drska, Trustee	\$4,125	\$8,250

### **Board Interest in the Fund**

The following table sets forth the dollar range of Fund shares beneficially owned by each Trustee as of December 31, 2007, stated using the following ranges:

Key	Y
A.	\$1-\$10,000
B.	\$10,001-\$50,000
C.	\$50,001-\$100,000
D.	over \$100,000

### Dollar Range of Equity Securities Beneficially Owned<sup>(1)</sup>

Name of Trustee	Vice Fund	Aggregate Dollar Range of Equity Securities Beneficially Owned in All Registered Investment Companies Overseen by Trustee in Family of Investment Companies <sup>(2)</sup>
Dr. Michael D. Akers, Independent Trustee	None	None
Gary A. Drska, Independent Trustee	None	None
Joseph C. Neuberger, Interested Trustee	None	None

<sup>(1)</sup> Beneficial ownership is determined in accordance with Rule 16a-1(a)(2) under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended.

<sup>(2)</sup> Please note that there is one other fund within the Trust that is discussed in a separate Statement of Additional Information.

### **Control Persons, Principal Shareholders and Management Ownership**

As of June 30, 2008 the following persons owned of record or are known by the Fund to own beneficially 5% or more of the Fund's outstanding shares:

Name and Address	No. of Shares	Percentage
National Financial Services LLC	2,138,601	26.01%
For the Exclusive Benefit of Custodian		
200 Liberty Street		
New York, NY 10281-1003		
Charles Schwab & Co., Inc.	1,387,456	16.88%
F/B/O Customers		
101 Montgomery St.		
San Francisco, CA 94104-4151		
Ameritrade Inc.	702,385	8.54%
F/B/O Customers		
PO Box 2226		
Omaha, NE 68103-2226		

Control persons are persons deemed to control the Fund because they own beneficially over 25% of the Fund's outstanding securities. National Financial Services LLC is deemed a control person because it owns over 25% of the Fund's shares. Control persons could affect the outcome of proxy voting or the direction of management of the Fund. As of June 30, 2008, all Trustees and officers as a group owned beneficially (as the term is defined in Section 13(d) under the Securities and Exchange Act of 1934) less than 1% of the shares of the Fund.

### **Investment Advisor**

Mutuals Advisors, Inc., located at 700 North Pearl Street, Suite 900, Dallas Texas 75201 and formerly known as MUTUALS.com, Inc., is a Texas corporation that serves as the investment advisor to the Fund. The Advisor is an SEC-registered investment advisor. Mutuals Advisors, Inc. is wholly-owned by Mutual Capital Alliance, Inc. (formerly known as Mutuals.com Holdings Corp.) As of June 30, 2008, the Advisor had approximately \$187.5 million in assets under management.

Under the Investment Advisory Agreement between the Trust and the Advisor, dated May 21, 2002 (the "Agreement"), the Advisor serves as the investment advisor to the Fund, and supervises the management of the Fund's investments and business affairs, subject to the oversight and review of the Trust's Board of Trustees. For its services, the Advisor is entitled to an annual advisory fee of 0.95% of the Fund's average daily net assets. The advisory fee is payable to the Advisor monthly based on the average daily net assets of the Fund for the month involved. In addition to the services provided by the Advisor pursuant to the Agreement, the Advisor may, from time to time, provide the Fund with office space for managing its affairs, with the services of required personnel and with certain clerical services and facilities. These services are provided without reimbursement by the Fund for any costs incurred.

Pursuant to the Expense Waiver and Reimbursement Agreement between the Advisor and the Trust, on behalf of the Fund, the Advisor has contractually agreed to waive its management fee and/or reimburse the Fund to ensure that the total operating expenses for the Fund, as a percentage of the average daily net assets is 1.75%. Under the Expense Waiver and Reimbursement Agreement, the Advisor may recapture waived or reimbursed expenses for a three-year period as long as the expenses and reimbursements do not exceed the expense cap. This agreement was renewed by the Board of Trustees at the May 30, 2008 Board meeting and is in effect for an additional ten-year period expiring on July 31, 2018.

For the fiscal periods ended March 31, 2008, 2007 and 2006, the Fund paid the following advisory fees to the Advisor under the Agreement, of which the Advisor waived the following amounts:

<u>Fiscal Year Ended</u>	Advisory Fee	<u>Recoup/Waiver</u>	Advisory Fee <u>After</u> <u>Recoup/Waiver</u>
March 31, 2008	\$1,415,870	\$248,912	\$1,664,782
March 31, 2007	\$626,468	(\$95,868)	\$530,600
March 31, 2006	\$417,316	(\$196,862)	\$220,454

### **Investment Subadvisor**

The Advisor has entered into a subadvisory agreement with GNI under which GNI serves as the subadvisor to the Fund and, subject to oversight and review by the Advisor, manages the Fund's

portfolio assets. Under the subadvisory agreement, GNI receives compensation from the Advisor for its subadvisory services to the Fund at the annual rate of 0.20% of the Fund's average daily net assets. GNI is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Centillion Partners, Inc., a financial services holding company. Charles L. Norton, CFA, is a Principal and Director of GNI, with responsibility for portfolio management and research. Allen R. Gillespie, CFA, is a Principal and Director of GNI, with responsibility for portfolio management and research. Philip H. Brice is a Principal and Director of GNI, with responsibility for client relations. Ken J. Vilcheck is a Principal and Director of GNI, with responsibility for client relations. David Dameron is a Managing Director of GNI with responsibility for compliance. Mr. Norton, Mr. Gillespie, Mr. Brice, Mr. Vilcheck and Mr. Dameron are each considered a control person of GNI due to their ownership of and/or their position with GNI. Subject to the oversight and review of the Advisor, Mr. Norton and Mr. Gillespie serve as co-portfolio managers of the Fund.

### Potential Conflicts of Interest by GNI

GNI's individual portfolio managers advise multiple accounts for numerous clients. In addition to the Fund, these accounts may include other mutual funds, separate accounts and private investment vehicles.

GNI has established policies in areas such as personal trading and trade allocation and aggregation to prevent potential conflicts in connection with any portfolio manager's management of the Fund and the management of any other accounts. GNI's compliance department regularly reviews and monitors these policies.

### **Portfolio Managers**

#### Other Accounts Managed by Portfolio Managers.

The following provides information regarding other accounts managed by Messrs. Norton and Gillespie as of March 31, 2008. Mr. Norton and Mr. Gillespie are jointly responsible for the day-to-day management of the Fund, and unless otherwise indicated, each is solely responsible for the day-to-day management of the other accounts set forth in the following table.

Category of Account Charles L. Norton, CFA	Total Number of Accounts Managed	Total Assets in Accounts Managed	Number of Accounts for which Advisory Fee is Based on Performance	Assets in Accounts for which Advisory Fee is Based on Performance
Other Registered Investment Companies	1	\$36.5 million	0	\$0
Other Pooled Investment Vehicles	3	\$5.6 million	0	\$0
Other Accounts	153	\$243.4 million	0	\$0

Category of Account	Total Number of Accounts Managed	Total Assets in Accounts Managed	Number of Accounts for which Advisory Fee is Based on Performance	Assets in Accounts for which Advisory Fee is Based on Performance
Allen R. Gillespie, CFA				
Other Registered Investment Companies	1	\$36.5 million	0	\$0
Other Pooled Investment Vehicles	3	\$5.6 million	0	\$0
Other Accounts	153	\$243.4 million	0	\$0

#### Compensation of Portfolio Managers

The portfolio managers of the Fund are paid a flat base salary that is not based on Fund performance. The portfolio managers do not receive a bonus tied to performance of the Fund or to its asset base. GNI does not offer a deferred compensation plan nor does it sponsor a retirement plan as part of the portfolio managers' compensation. GNI is a wholly owned subsidiary of Centillion Partners. As each portfolio manager has an ownership stake in Centillion Partners, they share in its profits.

### Ownership of Fund Shares by Portfolio Managers

The following table sets forth the dollar range of Fund shares beneficially owned by each portfolio manager as of June 30, 2008, stated using the following ranges: None, \$1-\$10,000, \$10,001-\$50,000, \$50,001-\$1,000,000 or over \$1,000,000.

	Dollar Range of Shares		
Vice Fund	Owned		
Charles L. Norton, CFA	None		
Allen R. Gillespie, CFA	None		

### **Conclusion of Legal Proceedings Involving Former Advisor**

On September 26, 2007, the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") entered an Order Instituting Administrative and Cease-and-Desist Proceedings, Making Findings and Imposing Remedial Sanctions and Cease-and-Desist Orders (the "Order") against Mutuals.com, Inc., a registered broker-dealer and the previous investment advisor to the Funds (the "Prior Advisor"), two affiliated broker-dealers, and certain individuals, including Richard Sapio, the former Chief Executive Officer of the Prior Advisor (collectively, "Respondents.") The Order was entered pursuant to an Offer of Settlement made by the Respondents, dated June 19, 2007. Without admitting or denying the findings in the Order, the Respondents agreed to certain remedial sanctions and cease and desist orders imposed by the SEC. The SEC found in the Order that Respondents acted prior to September 2003 to facilitate improper trading practices known as "market timing" and "late trading" by institutional hedge funds with respect to certain mutual fund companies unaffiliated with the Funds. The SEC did not make any allegations or findings of wrongdoing against the Funds, the Advisor or GNI, nor did the SEC require any actions or undertakings by the Funds, the Advisor or GNI. Concurrently with the entry of the Order, a civil action that the SEC filed against Respondents on December 4, 2003, in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas was dismissed.

The Respondents have no current role or affiliation with the Advisor, GNI or the Funds. Mr. Sapio, however, controls Mutual Capital Alliance, Inc. ("MCA"), the parent company of the Advisor. The SEC Order bars Mr. Sapio from association with any broker, dealer or investment advisor and prohibits him from serving or acting as an employee, officer, director, member of an advisory board, investment advisor or depositor of, or principal underwriter for, a registered investment company or affiliated person of such investment advisor, depositor or principal underwriter. Mr. Sapio may reapply to the SEC to serve in such capacities after five years from the date of the Order. The SEC Order permits Mr. Sapio to continue to serve as an officer and/or director of MCA provided that: (a) MCA does not, during the five-year period commencing on the date of the Order, acquire any interest in, form, or operate a broker-dealer; (b) Mr. Sapio does not receive any income, dividend, distribution or operating profits of any investment advisor owned by, or affiliated with, MCA during the five-year period commencing on the date of the Order; and (c) Mr. Sapio shall not possess or exercise voting control with respect to his MCA shares concerning the operations of any investment advisor owned by, or affiliated with, MCA during the five-year period with, mCA during such five-year period.

## **Distribution and Shareholder Servicing**

### Distributor

Quasar Distributors, LLC, 615 E. Michigan Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202 (the "Distributor"), a Delaware limited liability company, is the distributor for the shares of the Fund pursuant to a Distribution Agreement (the "Agreement"), among the Trust, Advisor and Distributor dated May 21, 2002. The Agreement was initially approved by the Board of Trustees on May 21, 2002 and was renewed by the Board of Trustees at the board meeting on May 30, 2008. The Distributor is a registered broker-dealer and member of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc. Shares of the Fund are offered on a continuous basis. The Agreement provides that the Distributor, as agent in connection with the distribution of Fund shares, will use its best efforts to distribute the Fund's shares. The Distributor is compensated only from the Plan, as described and defined below.

### **Distribution Plan**

The Fund has adopted a Distribution Plan (the "Plan") pursuant to Rule 12b-1 under the 1940 Act. The Plan authorizes payments by the Fund in connection with the distribution of shares at an annual rate of 0.25% of the Fund's average daily net asset value. Payments may be made by the Fund under the Plan for the purpose of financing any activity primarily intended to result in the sale of shares of the Fund, as determined by the Board. Such activities typically include: advertising; marketing; compensation for sales and sales marketing activities of financial service agents and others, such as dealers or distributors; shareholder account servicing; production and dissemination of prospectuses and sales and marketing materials; and capital or other expenses of associated equipment, rent, salaries, bonuses, interest and other overhead. To the extent any activity is one which the Fund may finance without the Plan, the Fund may also make payments to finance such activity outside of the Plan and not subject to its limitations. Payments under the Plan are based upon a percentage of average daily net assets attributable to the Fund regardless of the amounts actually paid or expenses actually incurred by the Distributor. However, in no event, may such payments exceed the maximum allowable fee. It is, therefore, possible that the Distributor may realize a profit in a particular year as a result of these payments. The Plan increases the Fund's expenses from what they would otherwise be.

Administration of the Plan is regulated by Rule 12b-1 under the 1940 Act, which requires that the Board receive and review at least quarterly reports concerning the nature and qualification of expenses that are incurred, that the Board, including a majority of the Independent Trustees, approve all agreements implementing the Plan and that the Plan may be continued from year-to-year only if the Board, including a majority of the Independent Trustees, concludes at least annually that continuation of the Plan is likely to benefit shareholders.

The 12b-1 expenses paid by the Fund during the fiscal year ended March 31, 2008 were distributed as follows:

Advertising/Marketing	\$140,501
Payment to distributor	<u>\$219,849</u>
Total	<u>\$360,350</u>

### **Shareholder Servicing Agents**

The Fund may enter into agreements with certain organizations that provide various services to Fund shareholders. Pursuant to such agreements, organizations that provide shareholder services may be entitled to receive fees from the Fund at an annual rate of up to 0.25% of the average daily net assets of the shares covered by their respective agreements for shareholder support. Such support may include, among other things, assisting investors in processing their purchase, exchange or redemption requests, or processing dividend and distribution payments.

The Fund terminated its sole shareholder servicing agreement effective February, 2006. Shareholder servicing fees paid by the Fund for the fiscal years ended March 31, 2008, 2007 and 2006 were as follows:

	Durir	During the Fiscal Years Ended March 31		
Shareholder Servicing Fees Paid				
	2008	2007	2006	
Vice Fund	\$0	\$0	\$90,736	

### **Service Providers**

The Trust has entered into a series of agreements whereby certain parties will provide various services to the Fund.

U.S. Bancorp Fund Services, LLC ("USBFS") will provide accounting and administrative services and act as transfer agent to the Fund. USBFS's address is 615 E. Michigan Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202. The services to be provided by the transfer agent include, either by USBFS or another party pursuant to an agreement with USBFS, processing purchase and redemption transactions, establishing and maintaining shareholder accounts and records, disbursing dividends declared by the Fund, day-to-day administration of matters related to the corporate existence of the Fund (other than rendering investment advice), maintenance of its records and preparation, mailing and filing of reports, assistance in monitoring the total number of shares sold in each state for "blue sky" purposes and assistance in the preparation of the Fund's registration statement under federal and state securities laws.

U.S. Bank, National Association, an affiliate of USBFS (the "Custodian"), is the custodian of the assets of the Fund pursuant to a custody agreement between the Custodian and the Trust, whereby the Custodian charges fees on a transactional basis plus out-of-pocket expenses. The Custodian's address is 1555 N. River Center Drive, Suite 302, Milwaukee, WI 53212. The Custodian does not participate in decisions relating to the purchase and sale of securities by the Fund. U.S. Bank, N.A. and its affiliates may participate in revenue sharing arrangements with service providers of mutual funds in which the Fund may invest.

Pursuant to a Fund Administration Servicing Agreement and a Fund Accounting Servicing Agreement, each between USBFS and the Trust dated May 21, 2002, USBFS also performs certain administrative, accounting and tax reporting functions for the Fund, including the preparation and filing of federal and state tax returns, preparing and filing securities registration compliance forms with various states, compiling data for and preparing notices to the Commission, preparing financial statements for the Annual and Semi-Annual Reports to the Commission and current investors, monitoring the Fund's expense accruals and performing securities valuations and, from time to time, monitoring the Fund's compliance with its investment objective and restrictions. Pursuant to the Fund's Administration Servicing Agreement, USBFS is entitled to receive from the Trust a fee, computed daily and payable monthly, in a minimum annual amount of \$100,000 from which a portion is allocated to the Fund and the remaining portion is allocated to the other series of the Trust.

For the fiscal periods ended March 31, 2008, 2007 and 2006, the following administrative fees were paid by the Fund:

	During the Fiscal Years Ended March 31			
Administrative Fees Paid				
	2008	2007	2006	
Vice Fund	\$159,811	\$74,926	\$59,467	

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# **Code of Ethics**

The Trust and the Advisor have adopted Codes of Ethics that govern the conduct of all employees and other supervised persons of the Trust and the Advisor. The Codes recognize that such persons owe a fiduciary duty to the Fund's shareholders and must place the interests of shareholders ahead of their own interests. The Codes address compliance with federal securities laws, personal trading and reporting requirements.

Among other things, the Codes require: pre-clearance of certain personal securities transactions; certain blackout periods for personal trading of securities which may be considered for purchase or sale by the Fund; annual and quarterly reporting of personal securities holdings; and limitations on personal trading of initial public offerings and limited (private placement) offerings. Violations of the Codes are subject to review by the Trustees and may result in severe penalties.

GNI has adopted a Code of Ethics that governs all directors and officers of GNI, as well as certain employees and control persons who have access to information regarding the purchase or sale of securities by GNI ("GNI Access Persons") for or on behalf of its clients. The GNI Code of Ethics permits GNI Access Persons to invest in securities, subject to certain restrictions, and GNI Access Persons must preclear most transactions. The Code of Ethics also creates a black-out period whereby GNI access Persons may not execute personal securities transactions within specified periods before or after any GNI client portfolio trades in a security. In addition, the GNI Code of Ethics prohibits access persons from profiting from the purchase and sale, or sale and purchase, of the same (or equivalent) security within 60 calendar days. Any profits from violations of the black-out provision or the short-term trading provision are subject to disgorgement and possibly other disciplinary actions.. The GNI Code of Ethics requires GNI Access Persons to submit initial and annual securities holdings reports and quarterly transaction reports. The Code of Ethics places other limitations on the acquisition of securities by GNI Access Persons, such as prohibiting the purchase of securities in an initial public offering and restricting the purchase of private placement securities.

# **Proxy Voting Guidelines**

The Trustees have adopted proxy voting procedures that delegate to the Advisor the authority to vote proxies, subject to the supervision of the Board. The Trustees also authorized the Advisor to delegate its authority to vote proxies to GNI, pursuant to the subadvisory agreement, if the Advisor believes that the subadviser is in the best position to make voting decisions on behalf of the Fund. In addition, the Trustees authorized the Advisor and GNI to retain a third party voting service to provide recommendations on proxy votes or vote proxies on the Fund's behalf. The Trust's proxy voting procedures provide that, in the event of a conflict between the interests of the Advisor or GNI and the Fund with regard to a proxy vote, a majority of the Independent Trustees will be responsible for resolving the conflict.

GNI's proxy voting policies generally provide that GNI will decide how to vote proxies on various issues on a case-by-case basis, with the intention being to vote proxies in the best interest of client

accounts. GNI has adopted proxy voting guidelines that may be employed when considering how to vote proxies. Proxy solicitations that might involve a conflict of interest between GNI and client interests will be handled in one of the following ways:

- Vote the securities based on a pre-determined voting policy if the application of the policy to the matter presented involves little discretion on GNI's part;
- Vote the securities in accordance with a pre-determined policy based upon the recommendations of an independent third party, such as a proxy voting service;
- Refer the proxy to the client or to a fiduciary of the client for voting purposes;
- Suggest that the client engage another party to determine how the proxy should be voted; or
- Disclose the conflict to the client or, with respect to the Fund, the Trustees (or their delegate), and obtain the client's or Trustees' direction to vote the proxies.

Information regarding how the Fund voted proxies relating to portfolio securities during the most recent 12 month period ended June 30 is available without charge, upon request by calling toll-free, 1-866-264-8783, by accessing the Fund's website at *www.VICEFUND.com* and by accessing the SEC's website at *www.sec.gov*. The Fund will send a description of its proxy voting policies and procedures within three business days of receipt of a request.

# **Anti-Money Laundering Program**

The Trust has established an Anti-Money Laundering Compliance Program (the "Program") as required by the Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act of 2001 ("USA PATRIOT Act"). In order to ensure compliance with this law, the Trust's Program provides for the development of internal practices, procedures and controls, designation of anti-money laundering compliance officers, an ongoing training program and an independent audit function to determine the effectiveness of the Program.

Procedures to implement the Program include, but are not limited to, determining that the Fund's Distributor and Transfer Agent have established proper anti-money laundering procedures, reporting suspicious and/or fraudulent activity and a complete and thorough review of all new opening account applications. The Trust will not transact business with any person or entity whose identity cannot be adequately verified under the provisions of the USA PATRIOT Act.

# Valuation of Shares

Shares of the Fund are sold on a continual basis at the NAV per share next computed following acceptance of an order by the Fund. The Fund's NAV per share for the purpose of pricing purchase and redemption orders is determined at the close of normal trading (currently 4:00 p.m. Eastern time) on each day the New York Stock Exchange ("NYSE") is open for trading. The NYSE is closed on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, President's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. For a description of the methods used to determine the share price, see "Valuation of Fund Shares" in the Fund's Prospectus.

# **Purchase and Redemption of Shares**

Detailed information on the purchase and redemption of shares is included in the Prospectus. Shares of the Fund are sold without a sales charge at the next price calculated after receipt of an order for purchase. In order to purchase shares of the Fund, you must invest the initial minimum investment, which ordinarily must be at least 4,000. However, the Trust reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to waive the minimum initial investment amount for certain investors, or to waive or reduce the minimum initial investment for 401(k)'s or other tax-deferred retirement plans. You may purchase shares on any day that the NYSE is open for business by placing an order with the Fund.

The Fund reserves the right in its sole and absolute discretion to refuse any purchase requests, particularly those that might not be in the best interests of the Fund or its shareholders or adversely affect the Fund or its operations. This policy applies to any person or group who, in the Fund's view, is likely to engage in or has a history of excessive trading irrespective of whether the redemption fee applies. Furthermore, the Fund may suspend the right to redeem its shares or postpone the date of payment upon redemption for more than three business days: (i) for any period during which the NYSE is closed (other than customary weekend or holiday closings) or trading on the NYSE is restricted; (ii) for any period during which an emergency exists as a result of which disposal by the Fund of securities owned by it is not reasonably practicable or it is not reasonably practicable for the Fund fairly to determine the value of its net assets; or (iii) for such other periods as the SEC may permit for the protection of the Fund's shareholders. The Fund charges a 1.00% redemption fee on shares redeemed within 60 days of purchase. The Fund, however, reserves the right to lower or waive the amount of this fee.

### Redemption-In-Kind

The Fund does not intend to redeem shares in any form except cash. The Trust, however, has filed a notice of election under Rule 18f-1 of the 1940 Act that allows the Fund to redeem in-kind redemption requests of a certain amount. Under unusual conditions that make the payment of cash unwise (and for the protection of the Fund's remaining shareholders), the Fund reserves the right to make a "redemption-in-kind" (a payment in portfolio securities rather than cash) if the amount redeemed is in excess of the lesser of (i) \$250,000 or (ii) 1% of the Fund's assets. In such cases, brokerage costs may be incurred by a shareholder in converting these securities to cash.

# **Portfolio Transactions and Brokerage**

Assets of the Fund are invested by GNI in a manner consistent with its investment objective, strategies, policies and restrictions and with any instructions the Trustees may issue from time to time. Within this framework, GNI is responsible for making all determinations as to the purchase and sale of portfolio securities and for taking all steps necessary to implement securities transactions on behalf of the Fund.

In connection with its duties to arrange for the purchase and sale of portfolio securities, GNI will select such broker-dealers who will, in GNI's judgment, implement the Fund's policy to achieve best qualitative execution. GNI will allocate transactions to such broker-dealers only when it reasonably believes that the commissions and transaction quality are comparable to that available from other qualified broker-dealers, subject to seeking the best available price and execution and such other policies as the Trustees may determine.

When allocating transactions to broker-dealers, GNI is authorized to consider, in determining whether a particular broker-dealer will provide the best qualitative execution, the broker-dealer's reliability, integrity, financial condition and risk in positioning the securities involved, as well as

the difficulty of the transaction in question. Further, GNI need not pay the lowest spread or commission available if GNI determines in good faith that the amount of commission is reasonable in relation to the value of the brokerage and research services provided by the broker-dealer, viewed either in terms of the particular transaction or GNI's overall responsibilities as to the accounts as to which it exercises investment discretion. If, on the foregoing basis, the transaction in question could be allocated to two or more broker-dealers, GNI is authorized in making such allocation, to consider whether a broker-dealer has provided research services.

Research obtained using Fund commissions may be in written form or through direct contact with individuals. Such research may include, but is not necessary limited to: quotations on portfolio securities and information on particular issuers and industries; other financial, news and other data relating to specific issues or industries; data relating to general market, economic or institutional activities; comparisons of the performance of the Fund to the performance of various indices and investments for which reliable performance data is available, and similar information. Further, the aforementioned research may be provided through the use of third-party information services, such as electronic information platforms and recognized mutual fund statistical services. The Fund recognizes that such research services may or may not be useful to the Fund or other accounts of GNI, and that such research received by such other accounts may or may not be useful to the Fund.

GNI will cause the Fund to deal directly with the selling or purchasing principal or market maker without incurring brokerage commissions unless GNI determines that a better price or execution may be obtained by paying such commissions. Purchases from underwriters include a commission or concession paid by the issuer to the underwriter and principal transactions placed through broker-dealers include a spread between the bid and asked prices.

Under the 1940 Act, the Fund may not purchase portfolio securities from any underwriting syndicate of which the Distributor, as principal, is a member except under certain limited circumstances set forth in Rule 10f-3 thereunder. These conditions relate, among other things, to the reasonableness of the broker-dealer spread, the amount of securities that may be purchased from any one issuer, and the amount of the Fund's assets that may be invested in a particular issue. The rule also requires that any purchase made subject to its provisions be reviewed at least quarterly by the Trustees, including a majority of the Independent Trustees.

The following table shows the aggregate amount of brokerage commissions paid by the Fund for the fiscal years ended March 31, 2008, 2007 and 2006. The reason for the growth in brokerage commissions from 2007 to 2008 is due to substantial growth in assets of the Fund.

	<b>Brokerage commissions paid</b>
Fiscal year ended March 31, 2008	\$334,650
Fiscal year ended March 31, 2007	\$126,231
Fiscal year ended March 31, 2006	\$9,619

The Fund did not acquire securities of its regular brokers or dealers or their parents during fiscal 2008.

The same security may be suitable for the Fund, another series of the Trust, or another account managed by GNI. If and when the Fund and another account simultaneously purchase or sell the same security, the transactions will be allocated as to price and amount in accordance with arrangements equitable to the Fund and the other account. The simultaneous purchase or sale of the same securities by another fund and other account may have a detrimental effect on the Fund, as this may affect the price paid or received by the Fund or the size of the position obtainable or able to be sold by the Fund.

GNI may enter into such relationships that provide the least overall costs to the portfolio without considering each transaction. GNI may determine to enter into a flat charge per transaction with one broker-dealer if it determines such arrangement is likely to result in the least transaction and related costs to the Fund.

The Trustees will review quarterly GNI's performance of its responsibilities in connection with the placement of portfolio transactions on behalf of the Fund. Such review is conducted for the purpose of determining if the markups and commissions, if any, paid by the Fund are reasonable in relation to the benefits received by the Fund taking into account the competitive practices in the industry.

# **Tax Considerations**

The following is a summary of certain tax considerations generally affecting the Fund and its shareholders. No attempt is made to present a detailed explanation of the tax treatment of the Fund or its shareholders, and the discussions here are not intended as substitutes for careful tax planning. You should consult your personal tax advisor to determine the consequences of state and local taxes, and for a more detailed assessment of federal tax consequences for your particular circumstances.

## Distributions of Net Investment Income

The Fund receives income generally in the form of dividends and interest on its investments. This income, less expenses incurred in the operation of the Fund, constitutes the Fund's net investment income from which dividends may be paid to you. Any distributions by the Fund from such income will be taxable to you as ordinary income, whether you receive them in cash or in additional shares.

#### Distributions of Capital Gain

The Fund may derive capital gain or loss in connection with sales or other dispositions of securities. Distributions of net short-term capital gain will be taxable to you as ordinary income. Distributions from net long-term capital gain will be taxable to you as long-term capital gain, regardless of how long you have held your shares in the Fund. Any net capital gain realized by the Fund generally will be distributed once each year, and may be distributed more frequently, if necessary, to reduce or eliminate excise or income taxes on the Fund.

#### Information on the Tax Character of Distributions

The Fund will inform you of the amount of your ordinary income and capital gain dividends at the time they are paid, and will advise you of their tax status for federal income tax purposes shortly after the close of each calendar year. If you have not held Fund shares for a full year, the Fund may designate and distribute to you, as ordinary income or capital gain, a percentage of income that is not equal to the actual amount of such income earned during the period of your investment in the Fund.

#### Election to be Taxed as a Regulated Investment Company

The Fund elected to be treated as a regulated investment company under Subchapter M of the Internal Revenue Code (the "Code") and intends to so qualify during the current fiscal year. As a regulated investment company, the Fund generally pays no federal income tax on the income and gain it distributes to you. The Board of Trustees reserves the right not to maintain the qualification of the Fund as a regulated investment company if it determines such course of action to be beneficial to shareholders. In such case, the Fund will be subject to federal, and possibly state, corporate taxes on its taxable income and gain, and any distributions that it makes would not qualify for the dividends paid deduction.

#### Excise Tax Distribution Requirements

To avoid federal excise taxes, the Code requires the Fund to distribute to you by December 31 of each year, at a minimum, the following amounts: 98% of its taxable ordinary income earned during the calendar year; 98% of its capital gain net income earned during the twelve-month period ending October 31; and 100% of any undistributed amounts from the prior year. The Fund intends to declare and pay these distributions in December (or to pay them in January, in which case you must treat them as if received in December) but can give no assurances that its distributions will be sufficient to eliminate all taxes.

#### **Redemption of Fund Shares**

Redemptions (including redemptions "in-kind") and exchanges of Fund shares are taxable transactions for federal and state income tax purposes. If you redeem your Fund shares, or exchange your Fund shares for shares of a different fund, the IRS will require that you report any gain or loss on your redemption or exchange. If you hold your shares as a capital asset, the gain or loss that you realize will be capital gain or loss and will be long-term or short-term, generally depending on how long you hold your shares.

Any loss incurred on the redemption or exchange of shares held for six months or less will be treated as long-term capital loss to the extent of any long-term capital gain distributed to you by the Fund on those shares. All or a portion of any loss that you realize upon the redemption of your Fund shares will be disallowed to the extent that you buy other shares in such Fund (through reinvestment of dividends or otherwise) within 30 days before or after your share redemption. Any loss disallowed under these rules will be added to your tax basis in the new shares you buy.

#### U.S. Government Securities

Some states grant tax-free status to dividends paid to you from interest earned on certain U.S. Government securities, subject in some states to minimum investment or reporting requirements that must be met by a fund. Investments in Government National Mortgage Association or Federal National Mortgage Association securities, bankers' acceptances, commercial paper and repurchase agreements collateralized by U.S. Government securities generally do not qualify for tax-free treatment. The rules on exclusion of this income are different for corporations.

#### **Dividends-Received Deduction for Corporations**

If you are a corporate shareholder, you should note that it is expected that a portion of the dividends paid by the Fund will qualify for the dividends-received deduction. You may be allowed to deduct these qualified dividends, thereby reducing the tax that you would otherwise be required to pay on these dividends. The dividends-received deduction will be available only with respect to dividends designated by the Fund as eligible for such treatment. All dividends (including the deducted portion) must be included in your alternative minimum taxable income calculation.

#### Investment in Complex Securities

The Fund may invest in complex securities that may be subject to numerous special and complex tax rules. These rules could affect whether gain or loss recognized by the Fund is treated as ordinary or capital, or as interest or dividend income. These rules could also accelerate the recognition of income to the Fund (possibly causing the Fund to sell securities to raise the cash for necessary distributions) and/or defer the Fund's ability to recognize a loss, and, in limited cases, subject the Fund to U.S. federal income tax on income from certain foreign securities. These rules could therefore affect the amount, timing or character of the income distributed to you by the Fund.

# Counsel

Godfrey & Kahn, S.C., 780 N. Water Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202, serves as counsel to the Trust and has passed upon the legality of the shares offered by the Fund's Prospectus.

# **Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm**

Tait, Weller & Baker LLP, 1818 Market Street, Suite 2400, Philadelphia, PA 19103, has been selected as the independent registered public accounting firm of the Trust. As such, it is responsible for auditing the financial statements of the Fund.

# **Financial Statements**

The Fund's audited financial statements and notes thereto are incorporated by reference to the Fund's Annual Report for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2008 as filed with the SEC on June 9, 2008.

# **APPENDIX A – SHORT-TERM RATINGS**

#### Standard & Poor's Short-Term Issue Credit Ratings

A Standard & Poor's issue credit rating is a current opinion of the creditworthiness of an obligor with respect to a specific financial obligation, a specific class of financial obligations, or a specific financial program (including ratings on medium-term note programs and commercial paper programs). It takes into consideration the creditworthiness of guarantors, insurers, or other forms of credit enhancement on the obligation and takes into account the currency in which the obligation is denominated. The opinion evaluates the obligor's capacity and willingness to meet its financial commitments as they come due, and may assess terms, such as collateral security and subordination, which could affect ultimate payment in the event of default. The issue credit rating is not a recommendation to purchase, sell, or hold a financial obligation, inasmuch as it does not comment as to market price or suitability for a particular investor.

Issue credit ratings are based on current information furnished by the obligors or obtained by Standard & Poor's from other sources it considers reliable. Standard & Poor's does not perform an audit in connection with any credit rating and may, on occasion, rely on unaudited financial information. Credit ratings may be changed, suspended, or withdrawn as a result of changes in, or unavailability of, such information, or based on other circumstances.

Issue credit ratings can be either long term or short term. Short-term ratings are generally assigned to those obligations considered short-term in the relevant market. In the U.S., for example, that means obligations with an original maturity of no more than 365 days including commercial paper. Short-term ratings are also used to indicate the creditworthiness of an obligor with respect to put features on long-term obligations. The result is a dual rating, in which the short-term rating addresses the put feature, in addition to the usual long-term rating. Medium-term notes are assigned long-term ratings.

#### Short-Term Issue Credit Ratings

#### A-1

A short-term obligation rated 'A-1' is rated in the highest category by Standard & Poor's. The obligor's capacity to meet its financial commitment on the obligation is strong. Within this category, certain obligations are designated with a plus sign (+). This indicates that the obligor's capacity to meet its financial commitment on these obligations is extremely strong.

#### A-2

A short-term obligation rated 'A-2' is somewhat more susceptible to the adverse effects of changes in circumstances and economic conditions than obligations in higher rating categories. However, the obligor's capacity to meet its financial commitment on the obligation is satisfactory.

# A-3

A short-term obligation rated 'A-3' exhibits adequate protection parameters. However, adverse economic conditions or changing circumstances are more likely to lead to a weakened capacity of the obligor to meet its financial commitment on the obligation.

# В

A short-term obligation rated 'B' is regarded as having significant speculative characteristics. Ratings of 'B-1', 'B-2', and 'B-3' may be assigned to indicate finer distinctions within the 'B' category. The obligor currently has the capacity to meet its financial commitment on the obligation; however, it faces major ongoing uncertainties which could lead to the obligor's inadequate capacity to meet its financial commitment on the obligation.

## B-1

A short-term obligation rated 'B-1' is regarded as having significant speculative characteristics, but the obligor has a relatively stronger capacity to meet its financial commitments over the short-term compared to other speculative-grade obligors.

## B-2

A short-term obligation rated 'B-2' is regarded as having significant speculative characteristics, and the obligor has an average speculative-grade capacity to meet its financial commitments over the short-term compared to other speculative-grade obligors.

## B-3

A short-term obligation rated 'B-3' is regarded as having significant speculative characteristics, and the obligor has a relatively weaker capacity to meet its financial commitments over the short-term compared to other speculative-grade obligors.

## С

A short-term obligation rated 'C' is currently vulnerable to nonpayment and is dependent upon favorable business, financial, and economic conditions for the obligor to meet its financial commitment on the obligation.

## D

A short-term obligation rated 'D' is in payment default. The 'D' rating category is used when payments on an obligation are not made on the date due even if the applicable grace period has not expired, unless Standard & Poor's believes that such payments will be made during such grace period. The 'D' rating also will be used upon the filing of a bankruptcy petition or the taking of a similar action if payments on an obligation are jeopardized.

#### **Dual Ratings**

Standard & Poor's assigns "dual" ratings to all debt issues that have a put option or demand feature as part of their structure. The first rating addresses the likelihood of repayment of principal and interest as due, and the second rating addresses only the demand feature. The long-term rating symbols are used for bonds to denote the long-term maturity and the short-term rating symbols for the put option (for example, 'AAA/A-1+'). With U.S. municipal short-term demand debt, note rating symbols are used with the short-term issue credit rating symbols (for example, 'SP-1+/A-1+').

#### Active Qualifiers (Currently applied and/or outstanding)

#### i

This subscript is used for issues in which the credit factors, terms, or both, that determine the likelihood of receipt of payment of interest are different from the credit factors, terms or both that determine the likelihood of receipt of principal on the obligation. The 'i' subscript indicates that the rating addresses the interest portion of the obligation only. The 'i' subscript will always be used in conjunction with the 'p' subscript, which addresses likelihood of receipt of principal. For example, a rated obligation could be assigned ratings of "AAAp N.R.i" indicating that the principal portion is rated "AAA" and the interest portion of the obligation is not rated.

#### L

Ratings qualified with 'L' apply only to amounts invested up to federal deposit insurance limits.

#### р

This subscript is used for issues in which the credit factors, the terms, or both, that determine the likelihood of receipt of payment of principal are different from the credit factors, terms or both that determine the likelihood of receipt of interest on the obligation. The 'p' subscript indicates that the rating addresses the principal portion of the obligation only. The 'p' subscript will always be used in conjunction with the 'i' subscript, which addresses likelihood of receipt of interest. For example, a rated obligation could be assigned ratings of "AAAp N.R.i" indicating that the principal portion is rated "AAA" and the interest portion of the obligation is not rated.

#### pi

Ratings with a 'pi' subscript are based on an analysis of an issuer's published financial information, as well as additional information in the public domain. They do not, however, reflect in-depth meetings with an issuer's management and are therefore based on less comprehensive information than ratings without a 'pi' subscript. Ratings with a 'pi' subscript are reviewed annually based on a new year's financial statements, but may be reviewed on an interim basis if a major event occurs that may affect the issuer's credit quality.

The letters 'pr' indicate that the rating is provisional. A provisional rating assumes the successful completion of the project financed by the debt being rated and indicates that payment of debt service requirements is largely or entirely dependent upon the successful, timely completion of the project. This rating, however, while addressing credit quality subsequent to completion of the project, makes no comment on the likelihood of or the risk of default upon failure of such completion. The investor should exercise his own judgment with respect to such likelihood and risk.

#### preliminary

Preliminary ratings are assigned to issues, including financial programs, in the following circumstances.

- Preliminary ratings may be assigned to obligations, most commonly structured and project finance issues, pending receipt of final documentation and legal opinions. Assignment of a final rating is conditional on the receipt and approval by Standard & Poor's of appropriate documentation. Changes in the information provided to Standard & Poor's could result in the assignment of a different rating. In addition, Standard & Poor's reserves the right not to issue a final rating.
- Preliminary ratings are assigned to Rule 415 Shelf Registrations. As specific issues, with defined terms, are offered from the master registration, a final rating may be assigned to them in accordance with Standard & Poor's policies. The final rating may differ from the preliminary rating.

#### t

This symbol indicates termination structures that are designed to honor their contracts to full maturity or, should certain events occur, to terminate and cash settle all their contracts before their final maturity date.

#### unsolicited

Unsolicited ratings are those credit ratings assigned at the initiative of Standard & Poor's and not at the request of the issuer or its agents.

Inactive Qualifiers (No longer applied or outstanding)

\*

с

This symbol indicated continuance of the ratings is contingent upon Standard & Poor's receipt of an executed copy of the escrow agreement or closing documentation confirming investments and cash flows. Discontinued use in August 1998.

#### pr

This qualifier was used to provide additional information to investors that the bank may terminate its obligation to purchase tendered bonds if the long-term credit rating of the issuer is below an investment-grade level and/or the issuer's bonds are deemed taxable. Discontinued use in January 2001.

#### q

A 'q' subscript indicates that the rating is based solely on quantitative analysis of publicly available information. Discontinued use in April 2001.

#### r

The 'r' modifier was assigned to securities containing extraordinary risks, particularly market risks, that are not covered in the credit rating. The absence of an 'r' modifier should not be taken as an indication that an obligation will not exhibit extraordinary non-credit related risks. Standard & Poor's discontinued the use of the 'r' modifier for most obligations in June 2000 and for the balance of obligations (mainly structured finance transactions) in November 2002.

#### Local Currency and Foreign Currency Risks

Country risk considerations are a standard part of Standard & Poor's analysis for credit ratings on any issuer or issue. Currency of repayment is a key factor in this analysis. An obligor's capacity to repay foreign currency obligations may be lower than its capacity to repay obligations in its local currency due to the sovereign government's own relatively lower capacity to repay external versus domestic debt. These sovereign risk considerations are incorporated in the debt ratings assigned to specific issues. Foreign currency issuer ratings are also distinguished from local currency issuer ratings to identify those instances where sovereign risks make them different for the same issuer.

#### Moody's Short-Term Debt Ratings

#### Short-Term Ratings

Moody's short-term ratings are opinions of the ability of issuers to honor short-term financial obligations. Ratings may be assigned to issuers, short-term programs or to individual short-term debt instruments. Such obligations generally have an original maturity not exceeding thirteen months, unless explicitly noted.

Moody's employs the following designations to indicate the relative repayment ability of rated issuers:

## **P-1**

Issuers (or supporting institutions) rated Prime-1 have a superior ability to repay short-term debt obligations.

#### **P-2**

Issuers (or supporting institutions) rated Prime-2 have a strong ability to repay short-term debt obligations.

# **P-3**

Issuers (or supporting institutions) rated Prime-3 have an acceptable ability to repay short-term obligations.

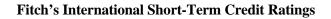
# NP

Issuers (or supporting institutions) rated Not Prime do not fall within any of the Prime rating categories.

**Note:** Canadian issuers rated P-1 or P-2 have their short-term ratings enhanced by the senior-most long-term rating of the issuer, its guarantor or support-provider.

#### Long Term Short Term Aaa In vestment Grade Aal Aa2 Aa3 Prime-1 **A1** A2 **A**3 Prime-2 Baal Baa2 Prime-3 Baa3 Bal Ba2 **Speculative Grade** Ba3 BL **B**2 Not Prime **B**3 Caal Caa2 Caa3 Ca С

# Short-term vs. Long-term Ratings



The following ratings scale applies to foreign currency and local currency ratings. A Short-term rating has a time horizon of less than 13 months for most obligations, or up to three years for US public finance, in line with industry standards, to reflect unique risk characteristics of bond, tax, and revenue anticipation notes that are commonly issued with terms up to three years. Short-term ratings thus place greater emphasis on the liquidity necessary to meet financial commitments in a timely manner.

**F1 Highest credit quality**. Indicates the Strongest capacity for timely payment of financial commitments; may have an added "+" to denote any exceptionally strong credit feature.

- **F2 Good credit quality.** A satisfactory capacity for timely payment of financial commitments, but the margin of safety is not as great as in the case of the higher ratings.
- **F3** Fair credit quality. The capacity for timely payment of financial commitments is adequate; however, near-term adverse changes could result in a reduction to non-investment grade.
- **B Speculative**. Minimal capacity for timely payment of financial commitments, plus vulnerability to near-term adverse changes in financial and economic conditions.
- C High default risk. Default is a real possibility. Capacity for meeting financial commitments is solely reliant upon a sustained, favorable business and economic environment.
- **D** Indicates an entity or sovereign that has defaulted on all of its financial obligations.

#### Notes to International Long-Term and Short-Term ratings:

The modifiers "+" or "-" may be appended to a rating to denote relative status within major rating categories. Such suffixes are not added to the 'AAA' Long-term rating category, to categories below 'CCC', or to Short-term ratings other than 'F1'. (The +/- modifiers are only used to denote issues within the CCC category, whereas issuers are only rated CCC without the use of modifiers.)

Rating Watch: Ratings are placed on Rating Watch to notify investors that there is a reasonable probability of a rating change and the likely direction of such change. These are designated as "Positive", indicating a potential upgrade, "Negative", for a potential downgrade, or "Evolving", if ratings may be raised, lowered or maintained. Rating Watch is typically resolved over a relatively short period.

Rating Outlook: An Outlook indicates the direction a rating is likely to move over a one to twoyear period. Outlooks may be positive, stable or negative. A positive or negative Rating Outlook does not imply a rating change is inevitable. Similarly, ratings for which outlooks are 'stable' could be upgraded or downgraded before an outlook moves to positive or negative if circumstances warrant such an action. Occasionally, Fitch Ratings may be unable to identify the fundamental trend. In these cases, the Rating Outlook may be described as evolving.

Program ratings (such as the those assigned to MTN shelf registrations) relate only to standard issues made under the program concerned; it should not be assumed that these ratings apply to every issue made under the program. In particular, in the case of non-standard issues, i.e. those that are linked to the credit of a third party or linked to the performance of an index, ratings of these issues may deviate from the applicable program rating.

Variable rate demand obligations and other securities which contain a short-term 'put' or other similar demand feature will have a dual rating, such as AAA/F1+. The first rating reflects the ability to meet long-term principal and interest payments, whereas the second rating reflects the ability to honor the demand feature in full and on time.

Fitch's ratings on U.S. public finance debt securities measure credit quality relative of other U.S. public finance debt securities. Loss rates of most Fitch-rated U.S. public finance debt securities have historically been significantly lower, and are expected to continue to be significantly lower, than other debt instruments rated comparably by Fitch.

#### Interest Only

Interest Only ratings are assigned to interest strips. These ratings do not address the possibility that a security holder might fail to recover some or all of its initial investment due to voluntary or involuntary principal repayments.

#### Principal Only

Principal Only ratings address the likelihood that a security holder will receive their initial principal investment either before or by the scheduled maturity date.

#### Rate of Return

Ratings also may be assigned to gauge the likelihood of an investor receiving a certain predetermined internal rate of return without regard to the precise timing of any cash flows.

#### 'PIF'

The tranche has reached maturity and has been "paid-in-full", regardless of whether it was amortized or called early. As the issue no longer exists, it is therefore no longer rated.

'NR' denotes that Fitch Ratings does not publicly rate the associated issuer or issuer.

## 'WD'

Indicates that the rating has been withdrawn and is no longer maintained by Fitch.

## Fitch Ratings ("Fitch") National Short-Term Credit Ratings

National Ratings are an assessment of credit quality relative to the rating of the "best" credit risk in a country. This "best" risk will normally, although not always, be assigned to all financial commitments issued or guaranteed by the sovereign state.

A special identifier for the country concerned will be added at the end of all national ratings. For illustrative purposes, (xxx) has been used, in the table below.

- F1(xxx) Indicates the strongest capacity for timely payment of financial commitments relative to other issuers or issues in the same country. Under their national rating scale, this rating is assigned to the "best" credit risk relative to all others in the same country and is normally assigned to all financial commitments issued or guaranteed by the sovereign state. Where the credit risk is particularly strong, a "+" is added to the assigned rating.
- F2(xxx) Indicates a satisfactory capacity for timely payment of financial commitments relative to other issuers or issues in the same country. However, the margin of safety is not as great as in the case of the higher ratings.

- F3(xxx) Indicates an adequate capacity for timely payment of financial commitments relative to other issuers or issues in the same country. However, such capacity is more susceptible to near-term adverse changes than for financial commitments in higher rated categories.
- B (xxx) Indicates an uncertain capacity for timely payment of financial commitments relative to other issuers or issues in the same country. Such capacity is highly susceptible to near-term adverse changes in financial and economic conditions.
- C (xxx) Indicates a highly uncertain capacity for timely payment of financial commitments relative to other issuers or issues in the same country. Capacity or meeting financial commitments is solely reliant upon a sustained, favorable business and economic environment.
- D (xxx) Indicates actual or imminent payment default.

#### Note to National Short-Term ratings:

In certain countries, regulators have established credit rating scales, to be used within their domestic markets, using specific nomenclature. In these countries, our National Short-Term Ratings definitions for F1+(xxx), F1(xxx), F2(xxx) and F3(xxx) may be substituted by those regulatory scales, e.g. A1+, A1, A2 and A3.

## LONG-TERM RATINGS

#### Standard & Poor's Long-Term Issue Credit Ratings

#### Long-Term Issue Credit Ratings

Issue credit ratings are based, in varying degrees, on the following considerations:

- Likelihood of payment capacity and willingness of the obligor to meet its financial commitment on an obligation in accordance with the terms of the obligation;
- Nature of and provisions of the obligation;
- Protection afforded by, and relative position of, the obligation in the event of bankruptcy, reorganization, or other arrangement under the laws of bankruptcy and other laws affecting creditors' rights.

Issue ratings are an assessment of default risk, but may incorporate an assessment of relative seniority or ultimate recovery in the event of default. Junior obligations are typically rated lower than senior obligations, to reflect the lower priority in bankruptcy, as noted above. (Such differentiation may apply when an entity has both senior and subordinated obligations, secured and unsecured obligations, or operating company and holding company obligations.)

#### AAA

An obligation rated 'AAA' has the highest rating assigned by Standard & Poor's. The obligor's capacity to meet its financial commitment on the obligation is extremely strong.

## AA

An obligation rated 'AA' differs from the highest-rated obligations only to a small degree. The obligor's capacity to meet its financial commitment on the obligation is very strong.

#### A

An obligation rated 'A' is somewhat more susceptible to the adverse effects of changes in circumstances and economic conditions than obligations in higher-rated categories. However, the obligor's capacity to meet its financial commitment on the obligation is still strong.

#### BBB

An obligation rated 'BBB' exhibits adequate protection parameters. However, adverse economic conditions or changing circumstances are more likely to lead to a weakened capacity of the obligor to meet its financial commitment on the obligation.

BB, B, CCC, CC, and C

Obligations rated 'BB', 'B', 'CCC', 'CC', and 'C' are regarded as having significant speculative characteristics. 'BB' indicates the least degree of speculation and 'C' the highest. While such obligations will likely have some quality and protective characteristics, these may be outweighed by large uncertainties or major exposures to adverse conditions.

#### BB

An obligation rated 'BB' is less vulnerable to nonpayment than other speculative issues. However, it faces major ongoing uncertainties or exposure to adverse business, financial, or economic conditions which could lead to the obligor's inadequate capacity to meet its financial commitment on the obligation.

#### В

An obligation rated 'B' is more vulnerable to nonpayment than obligations rated 'BB', but the obligor currently has the capacity to meet its financial commitment on the obligation. Adverse business, financial, or economic conditions will likely impair the obligor's capacity or willingness to meet its financial commitment on the obligation.

#### CCC

An obligation rated 'CCC' is currently vulnerable to nonpayment, and is dependent upon favorable business, financial, and economic conditions for the obligor to meet its financial commitment on the obligation. In the event of adverse business, financial, or economic conditions, the obligor is not likely to have the capacity to meet its financial commitment on the obligation.

## CC

An obligation rated 'CC' is currently highly vulnerable to nonpayment.

## С

A subordinated debt or preferred stock obligation rated 'C' is currently highly vulnerable to nonpayment. The 'C' rating may be used to cover a situation where a bankruptcy petition has been filed or similar action taken, but payments on this obligation are being continued. A 'C' also will be assigned to a preferred stock issue in arrears on dividends or sinking fund payments, but that is currently paying.

An obligation rated 'D' is in payment default. The 'D' rating category is used when payments on an obligation are not made on the date due even if the applicable grace period has not expired, unless Standard & Poor's believes that such payments will be made during such grace period. The 'D' rating also will be used upon the filing of a bankruptcy petition or the taking of a similar action if payments on an obligation are jeopardized.

Plus (+) or minus (-)

The ratings from 'AA' to 'CCC' may be modified by the addition of a plus (+) or minus (-) sign to show relative standing within the major rating categories.

#### N.R.

This indicates that no rating has been requested, that there is insufficient information on which to base a rating, or that Standard & Poor's does not rate a particular obligation as a matter of policy.

#### Active Qualifiers (Currently applied and/or outstanding)

i

This subscript is used for issues in which the credit factors, terms, or both, that determine the likelihood of receipt of payment of interest are different from the credit factors, terms or both that determine the likelihood of receipt of principal on the obligation. The 'i' subscript indicates that the rating addresses the interest portion of the obligation only. The 'i' subscript will always be used in conjunction with the 'p' subscript, which addresses likelihood of receipt of principal. For example, a rated obligation could be assigned ratings of "AAAp N.R.i" indicating that the principal portion is rated "AAA" and the interest portion of the obligation is not rated.

L

Ratings qualified with 'L' apply only to amounts invested up to federal deposit insurance limits.

This subscript is used for issues in which the credit factors, the terms, or both, that determine the likelihood of receipt of payment of principal are different from the credit factors, terms or both

likelihood of receipt of payment of principal are different from the credit factors, terms or both that determine the likelihood of receipt of interest on the obligation. The 'p' subscript indicates that the rating addresses the principal portion of the obligation only. The 'p' subscript will always be used in conjunction with the 'i' subscript, which addresses likelihood of receipt of interest. For example, a rated obligation could be assigned ratings of "AAAp N.R.i" indicating that the principal portion is rated "AAA" and the interest portion of the obligation is not rated.

#### pi

р

Ratings with a 'pi' subscript are based on an analysis of an issuer's published financial information, as well as additional information in the public domain. They do not, however, reflect in-depth meetings with an issuer's management and are therefore based on less comprehensive information than ratings without a 'pi' subscript. Ratings with a 'pi' subscript are reviewed annually based on a new year's financial statements, but may be reviewed on an interim basis if a major event occurs that may affect the issuer's credit quality.

## pr

The letters 'pr' indicate that the rating is provisional. A provisional rating assumes the successful completion of the project financed by the debt being rated and indicates that payment of debt service requirements is largely or entirely dependent upon the successful, timely completion of the project. This rating, however, while addressing credit quality subsequent to completion of the project, makes no comment on the likelihood of or the risk of default upon failure of such completion. The investor should exercise his own judgment with respect to such likelihood and risk.

## preliminary

Preliminary ratings are assigned to issues, including financial programs, in the following circumstances.

- Preliminary ratings may be assigned to obligations, most commonly structured and project finance issues, pending receipt of final documentation and legal opinions. Assignment of a final rating is conditional on the receipt and approval by Standard & Poor's of appropriate documentation. Changes in the information provided to Standard & Poor's could result in the assignment of a different rating. In addition, Standard & Poor's reserves the right not to issue a final rating.
- Preliminary ratings are assigned to Rule 415 Shelf Registrations. As specific issues, with defined terms, are offered from the master registration, a final rating may be assigned to them in accordance with Standard & Poor's policies. The final rating may differ from the preliminary rating.

t

This symbol indicates termination structures that are designed to honor their contracts to full maturity or, should certain events occur, to terminate and cash settle all their contracts before their final maturity date.

#### unsolicited

Unsolicited ratings are those credit ratings assigned at the initiative of Standard & Poor's and not at the request of the issuer or its agents.

#### Inactive Qualifiers (No longer applied or outstanding)

\*

This symbol indicated continuance of the ratings is contingent upon Standard & Poor's receipt of an executed copy of the escrow agreement or closing documentation confirming investments and cash flows. Discontinued use in August 1998.

c

This qualifier was used to provide additional information to investors that the bank may terminate its obligation to purchase tendered bonds if the long-term credit rating of the issuer is below an investment-grade level and/or the issuer's bonds are deemed taxable. Discontinued use in January 2001.

#### q

A 'q' subscript indicates that the rating is based solely on quantitative analysis of publicly available information. Discontinued use in April 2001.

r

The 'r' modifier was assigned to securities containing extraordinary risks, particularly market risks, that are not covered in the credit rating. The absence of an 'r' modifier should not be taken as an indication that an obligation will not exhibit extraordinary non-credit related risks. Standard & Poor's discontinued the use of the 'r' modifier for most obligations in June 2000 and for the balance of obligations (mainly structured finance transactions) in November 2002.

Local Currency and Foreign Currency Risks

Country risk considerations are a standard part of Standard & Poor's analysis for credit ratings on any issuer or issue. Currency of repayment is a key factor in this analysis. An obligor's capacity to repay foreign currency obligations may be lower than its capacity to repay obligations in its local currency due to the sovereign government's own relatively lower capacity to repay external versus domestic debt. These sovereign risk considerations are incorporated in the debt ratings assigned to specific issues. Foreign currency issuer ratings are also distinguished from local currency issuer ratings to identify those instances where sovereign risks make them different for the same issuer.

# Moody's Long-Term Debt Ratings

# Long-Term Obligation Ratings

Moody's long-term obligation ratings are opinions of the relative credit risk of fixed-income obligations with an original maturity of one year or more. They address the possibility that a financial obligation will not be honored as promised. Such ratings reflect both the likelihood of default and any financial loss suffered in the event of default.

# Moody's Long-Term Rating Definitions:

## Aaa

Obligations rated Aaa are judged to be of the highest quality, with minimal credit risk.

# Aa

Obligations rated Aa are judged to be of high quality and are subject to very low credit risk.

# A

Obligations rated A are considered upper-medium grade and are subject to low credit risk.

# Baa

Obligations rated Baa are subject to moderate credit risk. They are considered medium-grade and as such may possess certain speculative characteristics.

# Ba

Obligations rated Ba are judged to have speculative elements and are subject to substantial credit risk.

# B

Obligations rated B are considered speculative and are subject to high credit risk.

# Caa

Obligations rated Caa are judged to be of poor standing and are subject to very high credit risk.

# Ca

Obligations rated Ca are highly speculative and are likely in, or very near, default, with some prospect of recovery of principal and interest.

С

Obligations rated C are the lowest rated class of bonds and are typically in default, with little prospect for recovery of principal or interest.

**Note:** Moody's appends numerical modifiers 1, 2, and 3 to each generic rating classification from Aa through Caa. The modifier 1 indicates that the obligation ranks in the higher end of its generic rating category; the modifier 2 indicates a mid-range ranking; and the modifier 3 indicates a ranking in the lower end of that generic rating category.

#### Fitch's International Long-Term Credit Ratings

International Long-Term Credit Ratings (LTCR) may also be referred to as Long-Term Ratings. When assigned to most issuers, it is used as a benchmark measure of probability of default and is formally described as an Issuer Default Rating (IDR). The major exception is within Public Finance, where IDRs will not be assigned as market convention has always focused on timeliness and does not draw analytical distinctions between issuers and their underlying obligations. When applied to issues or securities, the LTCR may be higher or lower than the issuer rating (IDR) to reflect relative differences in recovery expectations.

The following rating scale applies to foreign currency and local currency ratings:

#### **Investment Grade**

AAA	<b>Highest credit quality</b> . 'AAA' ratings denote the lowest expectation of credit risk. They are assigned only in case of exceptionally strong capacity for payment of financial commitments. This capacity is highly unlikely to be adversely affected by foreseeable events.
AA	<b>Very high credit quality</b> . 'AA' ratings denote expectations of low credit risk. They indicate very strong capacity for timely payment of financial commitments. This capacity is not significantly vulnerable to foreseeable events.
Α	<b>High credit quality</b> . 'A' ratings denote expectations of low credit risk. The capacity for payment of financial commitments is considered strong. This capacity may, nevertheless, be more vulnerable to changes in circumstances or in economic conditions than is the case for higher ratings.
BBB	<b>Good credit quality</b> . 'BBB' ratings indicate that there is currently expectations of low credit risk. The capacity for payment of financial commitments is considered adequate, but adverse changes in circumstances and economic conditions are more likely to impair this capacity. This is the lowest investment-grade category.
Speculative Grade	

**BB** Speculative. 'BB' ratings indicate that there is a possibility of credit risk developing, particularly as the result of adverse economic change over time; however, business or financial alternatives may be available to allow financial commitments to be met. Securities rated in this category are not investment grade.

В

# Highly speculative.

	• For issuers and performing obligations, 'B' ratings indicate that significant credit risk is present, but a limited margin of safety remains. Financial commitments are currently being met; however, capacity for continued payment is contingent upon a sustained, favorable business and economic environment.
	• For individual obligations, may indicate distressed or defaulted obligations with potential for extremely high recoveries. Such obligations would possess a Recovery Rating of 'RR1' (outstanding).
CCC	
	• For issuers and performing obligations, default is a real possibility. Capacity for meeting financial commitments is solely reliant upon sustained, favorable business or economic conditions.
	• For individual obligations, may indicate distressed or defaulted obligations with potential for average to superior levels of recovery. Differences in credit quality may be denoted by plus/minus distinctions. Such obligations typically would possess a Recovery Rating of 'RR2' (superior), or 'RR3' (good) or 'RR4' (average).
CC	• For issuers and performing obligations, default of some kind appears probable.
	• For individual obligations, may indicate distressed or defaulted obligations with a Recovery Rating of 'RR4' (average) or 'RR5' (below average).
С	
	• For issuers and performing obligations, default is imminent.
	• For individual obligations, may indicate distressed or defaulted obligations with potential for below-average to poor recoveries. Such obligations would possess a Recovery Rating of 'RR6' (poor).
RD	
	Indicates an entity that has failed to make due payments (within the

applicable grace period) on some but not all material financial obligations, but continues to honor other classes of obligations.

Indicates an entity or sovereign that has defaulted on all of its financial obligations. Default generally is defined as one of the following:

- failure of an obligor to make timely payment of principal and/or interest under the contractual terms of any financial obligation;
- the bankruptcy filings, administration, receivership, liquidation or other winding-up or cessation of business of an obligor;
- the distressed or other coercive exchange of an obligation, where creditors were offered securities with diminished structural or economic terms compared with the existing obligation.

Default ratings are not assigned prospectively; within this context, nonpayment on an instrument that contains a deferral feature or grace period will not be considered a default until after the expiration of the deferral or grace period.

Issuers will be rated 'D' upon a default. Defaulted and distressed obligations typically are rated along the continuum of 'C' to 'B' ratings categories, depending upon their recovery prospects and other relevant characteristics. Additionally, in structured finance transactions, where analysis indicates that an instrument is irrevocably impaired such that it is not expected to meet pay interest and/or principal in full in accordance with the terms of the obligation's documentation during the life of the transaction, but where no payment default in accordance with the terms of the documentation is imminent, the obligation may be rated in the 'B' or 'CCC-C' categories.

Default is determined by reference to the terms of the obligations' documentation. Fitch will assign default ratings where it has reasonably determined that payment has not been made on a material obligation in accordance with the requirements of the obligation's documentation, or where it believes that default ratings consistent with Fitch's published definition of default are the most appropriate ratings to assign.

#### Notes to International Long-Term and Short-Term ratings

The modifiers "+" or "-" may be appended to a rating to denote relative status within major rating categories. Such suffixes are not added to the 'AAA' Long-term rating category, to categories below 'CCC', or to Short-term ratings other than 'F1'. (The +/- modifiers are only used to denote issues within the CCC category, whereas issuers are only rated CCC without the use of modifiers.)

Rating Watch: Ratings are placed on Rating Watch to notify investors that there is a reasonable probability of a rating change and the likely direction of such change. These are designated as "Positive", indicating a potential upgrade, "Negative", for a potential downgrade, or "Evolving", if ratings may be raised, lowered or maintained. Rating Watch is typically resolved over a relatively short period.

Rating Outlook: An Outlook indicates the direction a rating is likely to move over a one to twoyear period. Outlooks may be positive, stable or negative. A positive or negative Rating Outlook does not imply a rating change is inevitable. Similarly, ratings for which outlooks are 'stable' could be upgraded or downgraded before an outlook moves to positive or negative if circumstances warrant such an action. Occasionally, Fitch Ratings may be unable to identify the fundamental trend. In these cases, the Rating Outlook may be described as evolving.

Program ratings (such as the those assigned to MTN shelf registrations) relate only to standard issues made under the program concerned; it should not be assumed that these ratings apply to every issue made under the program. In particular, in the case of non-standard issues, i.e. those that are linked to the credit of a third party or linked to the performance of an index, ratings of these issues may deviate from the applicable program rating.

Variable rate demand obligations and other securities which contain a short-term 'put' or other similar demand feature will have a dual rating, such as AAA/F1+. The first rating reflects the ability to meet long-term principal and interest payments, whereas the second rating reflects the ability to honor the demand feature in full and on time.

Fitch's ratings on U.S. public finance debt securities measure credit quality relative of other U.S. public finance debt securities. Loss rates of most Fitch-rated U.S. public finance debt securities have historically been significantly lower, and are expected to continue to be significantly lower, than other debt instruments rated comparably by Fitch.

#### Interest Only

Interest Only ratings are assigned to interest strips. These ratings do not address the possibility that a security holder might fail to recover some or all of its initial investment due to voluntary or involuntary principal repayments.

#### Principal Only

Principal Only ratings address the likelihood that a security holder will receive their initial principal investment either before or by the scheduled maturity date.

#### Rate of Return

Ratings also may be assigned to gauge the likelihood of an investor receiving a certain predetermined internal rate of return without regard to the precise timing of any cash flows.

#### 'PIF'

The tranche has reached maturity and has been "paid-in-full", regardless of whether it was amortized or called early. As the issue no longer exists, it is therefore no longer rated.

#### 'NR'

Denotes that Fitch Ratings does not publicly rate the associated issue or issuer.

#### 'WD'

Indicates that the rating has been withdrawn and is no longer maintained by Fitch.

#### Fitch's National Long-Term Credit Ratings

National Ratings are an assessment of credit quality relative to the rating of the "best" credit risk in a country. This "best" risk will normally, although not always, be assigned to all financial commitments issued or guaranteed by the sovereign state.

A special identifier for the country concerned will be added at the end of all national ratings. For illustrative purposes, (xxx) has been used, in the table below.

- AAA(xxx) 'AAA' national ratings denote the highest rating assigned in its national rating scale for that country. This rating is assigned to the "best" credit risk relative to all other issuers or issues in the same country and will normally be assigned to all financial commitments issued or guaranteed by the sovereign state.
- AA(xxx) 'AA' national ratings denote a very strong credit risk relative to other issuers or issues in the same country. The credit risk inherent in these financial commitments differs only slightly from the country's highest rated issuers or issues.
- A (xxx) 'A' national ratings denote a strong credit risk relative to other issuers or issues in the same country. However, changes in circumstances or economic conditions may affect the capacity for timely repayment of these financial commitments to a greater degree than for financial commitments denoted by a higher rated category.
- BBB(xxx) 'BBB' national ratings denote an adequate credit risk relative to other issuers or issues in the same country. However, changes in circumstances or economic conditions are more likely to affect the capacity for timely repayment of these financial commitments than for financial commitments denoted by a higher rated category.
- BB(xxx) 'BB' national ratings denote a fairly weak credit risk relative to other issuers or issues in the same country. Within the context of the country, payment of these financial commitments is uncertain to some degree and capacity for timely repayment remains more vulnerable to adverse economic change over time.
- B (xxx) 'B' national ratings denote a significantly weak credit risk relative to other issuers or issues in the same country. Financial commitments are currently being met but a limited margin of safety remains and capacity for continued timely payments is contingent upon a sustained, favorable business and economic environment.

#### CCC(xxx), CC(xxx), C(xxx)

These categories of national ratings denote an extremely weak credit risk relative to other issuers or issues in the same country. Capacity for meeting

financial commitments is solely reliant upon sustained, favorable business or economic developments.

#### DDD(xxx), DD(xxx), D(xxx)

These categories of national ratings are assigned to entities or financial commitments which are currently in default.

E(xxx)

Adequate information is not available to meet the obligations of the rating. This category is used as a downgrade when the previous rating is suspended due to a lack of documentation from the issuer necessary to continue surveillance and maintain the rating.

## MUNICIPAL NOTE RATINGS

#### **Standard & Poor's Note Ratings**

#### **Short-Term Notes**

A Standard & Poor's U.S. municipal note rating reflects the liquidity factors and market access risks unique to notes. Notes due in three years or less will likely receive a note rating. Notes maturing beyond three years will most likely receive a long-term debt rating. The following criteria will be used in making that assessment:

- Amortization schedule the larger the final maturity relative to other maturities, the more likely it will be treated as a note; and
- Source of payment the more dependent the issue is on the market for its refinancing, the more likely it will be treated as a note.

Note rating symbols are as follows:

SP-1

Strong capacity to pay principal and interest. An issue determined to possess a very strong capacity to pay debt service is given a plus (+) designation.

#### **SP-2**

Satisfactory capacity to pay principal and interest, with some vulnerability to adverse financial and economic changes over the term of the notes.

#### SP-3

Speculative capacity to pay principal and interest.

#### Moody's MIG/VMIG Ratings U.S. Short-Term Ratings

#### **US Municipal Short-Term Debt And Demand Obligation Ratings**

#### **Short-Term Debt Ratings**

There are three rating categories for short-term municipal obligations that are considered investment grade. These ratings are designated as Municipal Investment Grade (MIG) and are divided into three levels -- MIG 1 through MIG 3. In addition, those short-term obligations that are of speculative quality are designated SG, or speculative grade. MIG ratings expire at the maturity of the obligation.

#### MIG 1

This designation denotes superior credit quality. Excellent protection is afforded by established cash flows, highly reliable liquidity support, or demonstrated broad-based access to the market for refinancing.

#### MIG 2

This designation denotes strong credit quality. Margins of protection are ample, although not as large as in the preceding group.

#### MIG 3

This designation denotes acceptable credit quality. Liquidity and cash-flow protection may be narrow, and market access for refinancing is likely to be less well-established.

#### SG

This designation denotes speculative-grade credit quality. Debt instruments in this category may lack sufficient margins of protection.

#### **Demand Obligation Ratings**

In the case of variable rate demand obligations (VRDOs), a two-component rating is assigned; a long or short-term debt rating and a demand obligation rating. The first element represents Moody's evaluation of the degree of risk associated with scheduled principal and interest payments. The second element represents Moody's evaluation of the degree of risk associated with the ability to receive purchase price upon demand ("demand feature"), using a variation of the MIG rating scale, the Variable Municipal Investment Grade or VMIG rating.

When either the long- or short-term aspect of a VRDO is not rated, that piece is designated NR, e.g., Aaa/NR or NR/VMIG 1.

VMIG rating expirations are a function of each issue's specific structural or credit features.

# VMIG 1

This designation denotes superior credit quality. Excellent protection is afforded by the superior short-term credit strength of the liquidity provider and structural and legal protections that ensure the timely payment of purchase price upon demand.

# VMIG 2

This designation denotes strong credit quality. Good protection is afforded by the strong shortterm credit strength of the liquidity provider and structural and legal protections that ensure the timely payment of purchase price upon demand.

## VMIG 3

This designation denotes acceptable credit quality. Adequate protection is afforded by the satisfactory short-term credit strength of the liquidity provider and structural and legal protections that ensure the timely payment of purchase price upon demand.

#### SG

This designation denotes speculative-grade credit quality. Demand features rated in this category may be supported by a liquidity provider that does not have an investment grade short-term rating or may lack the structural and/or legal protections necessary to ensure the timely payment of purchase price upon demand.