

4Q 2017 Update

William Blair Emerging Markets Leaders Fund

OBJECTIVE

Capital Appreciation

CHARACTERISTICS

The Fund seeks to invest in emerging markets companies with above-average returns on equity, strong balance sheets and consistent, above-average earnings growth, resulting in a focused portfolio of leading companies.

WHY CONSIDER THIS FUND?

- Provides focused investments in leading companies in terms of products, services, and execution
- Historically consumer-focused, reflecting a growing opportunity set
- Managed by a seasoned team with decades of emerging markets experience

EXPENSE RATIOS (%)

| | Gross Expense | Net Expense |
|---------|---------------|-------------|
| Class I | 1.54 | 1.40 |
| Class N | 1.81 | 1.65 |

Expenses shown are as of the most recent prospectus. The Fund's Adviser has contractually agreed to waive fees and/or reimburse expenses to limit fund operating expenses until 4/30/18.

FUND FACTS AND STATISTICS¹

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Total Net Assets (\$MM) | \$478 |
| Number of Holdings | 56 |
| Wgtd Avg Mkt Cap (\$BB) | \$76.0 |
| Unwgtd Median Mkt Cap (\$BB) | \$10.2 |
| P/E Ratio (Next 12 Months) | 16.9 |
| EPS Growth (Long-Term Projected) | 21.6 |
| Trailing 1-Year Turnover (%) | 59.1 |
| Cash (%)** | 1.9 |
| Standard Deviation (% Since Incep.) | |
| Fund - Class I | 21.95 |
| Index ² | 22.46 |

** Cash represents cash and any short-term or overnight investments held by the Fund.

INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE % (as of 12/31/17)

| | QTR | YTD | 1Y | 3Y | 5Y | Since Incep. |
|---|------|-------|-------|------|------|--------------|
| Class I (SI: 03/26/08) | 6.45 | 41.89 | 41.89 | 7.35 | 4.76 | 2.71 |
| Class N (SI: 05/03/10) | 6.50 | 41.68 | 41.68 | 7.08 | 4.48 | 4.75 |
| MSCI Emerging Markets Index (net) ² | 7.44 | 37.28 | 37.28 | 9.10 | 4.35 | — |
| Morningstar Diversified Emerging Mkts Category ³ | 6.27 | 34.17 | 34.17 | 7.95 | 4.09 | — |

CALENDAR YEAR PERFORMANCE %

| | 2017 | 2016 | 2015 | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 | 2011 | 2010†† | 2009 | 2008† |
|--|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| Class I (SI: 03/26/08) | 41.89 | 1.82 | -14.37 | 2.62 | -0.60 | 20.64 | -19.34 | 23.70 | 78.38 | -52.09 |
| Class N (SI: 05/03/10) | 41.68 | 1.42 | -14.56 | 2.17 | -0.74 | 20.37 | -19.55 | 18.43 | — | — |
| MSCI Emerging Markets Index (net) ² | 37.28 | 11.19 | -14.92 | -2.19 | -2.60 | 18.22 | -17.65 | 15.64 | 75.92 | -47.28 |

† Since Fund's inception on 3/26/08 through 12/31/08. †† Since Inception of Class N shares on 5/3/10 through 12/31/10.

Performance cited represents past performance. Past performance does not guarantee future results and current performance may be lower or higher than the data quoted. Returns shown assume reinvestment of dividends and capital gains. Investment returns and principal will fluctuate with market and economic conditions and you may have a gain or loss when you sell shares. For the most current month-end performance information, please call +1 800 742 7272, or visit our Web site at www.williamblairfunds.com. Class N shares are available to the general public without a sales load. Class I shares are available only to investors who meet certain eligibility requirements.

MORNINGSTAR RATINGS AND RANKINGS*

| | Overall | 1Y | 3Y | 5Y | 10Y |
|----------------------------|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Class I Rating | ★★★ | — | ★★★ | ★★★ | — |
| Class N Rating | ★★★ | — | ★★ | ★★★ | — |
| Class I Percentile Ranking | | 15 | 65 | 36 | — |
| Class N Percentile Ranking | | 15 | 67 | 42 | — |
| # of Funds in Category | | 806 | 647 | 467 | — |

***Morningstar Rating**³: The Morningstar Rating for funds, or "star rating", is calculated for managed products (including mutual funds, variable annuity and variable life subaccounts, exchange-traded funds, closed-end funds, and separate accounts) with at least a three-year history. Exchange-traded funds and open-ended mutual funds are considered a single population for comparative purposes. It is calculated based on a Morningstar Risk-Adjusted Return measure that accounts for variation in a managed product's monthly excess performance, placing more emphasis on downward variations and rewarding consistent performance. The top 10% of products in each product category receive 5 stars, the next 22.5% receive 4 stars, the next 35% receive 3 stars, the next 22.5% receive 2 stars, and the bottom 10% receive 1 star. The Overall Morningstar Rating for a managed product is derived from a weighted average of the performance figures associated with its three-, five-, and 10-year (if applicable) Morningstar Rating metrics. The weights are: 100% three-year rating for 36-59 months of total returns, 60% five-year rating/40% three-year rating for 60-119 months of total returns, and 50% 10-year rating/30% five-year rating/20% three-year rating for 120 or more months of total returns. While the 10-year overall star rating formula seems to give the most weight to the 10-year period, the most recent three-year period actually has the greatest impact because it is included in all three rating periods. **Morningstar Ranking**: Morningstar Percentile Rankings are based on the Fund's total return (excluding sales charge) relative to all the funds in the same Morningstar category, where 1 is the highest and 100 is the lowest percentile rank. Ratings and rankings are one measure of performance. Some of our Funds have experienced negative performance for the time periods shown. For the most current performance, please visit williamblairfunds.com.

TOP TEN HOLDINGS (%)^{4,5}

| Company | Industry | Country | % of Fund |
|--|--|--------------|-------------|
| Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd. | Technology Hardware & Equipment | Korea | 5.8 |
| Tencent Holdings Limited | Internet Software & Services | China | 5.6 |
| Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company, Ltd. | Semiconductors & Semiconductor Equipment | Taiwan | 5.3 |
| Alibaba Group Holding Limited | Internet Software & Services | China | 4.6 |
| Ping An Insurance (Group) Company of China, Ltd. | Insurance | China | 3.5 |
| Naspers Limited | Media | South Africa | 3.3 |
| Housing Development Finance Corporation Limited | Thriffs & Mortgage Finance | India | 2.6 |
| Maruti Suzuki India Limited | Automobiles | India | 2.4 |
| Petroleo Brasileiro S.A. - Petrobras | Oil, Gas & Consumable Fuels | Brazil | 2.4 |
| Airports of Thailand Public Company Limited | Transportation Infrastructure | Thailand | 2.1 |
| Total Top 10 | | | 37.6 |

SECTOR DIVERSIFICATION (%)^{4,5}

| Sector Type | Fund | Index ² |
|----------------------------|------|--------------------|
| Information Technology | 26.0 | 27.6 |
| Financials | 25.1 | 23.5 |
| Consumer Discretionary | 18.7 | 10.2 |
| Consumer Staples | 9.4 | 6.6 |
| Industrials | 7.2 | 5.2 |
| Materials | 4.5 | 7.4 |
| Telecommunication Services | 3.5 | 4.8 |
| Energy | 3.3 | 6.8 |
| Health Care | 1.4 | 2.7 |
| Real Estate | 0.9 | 2.8 |
| Utilities | 0.0 | 2.4 |

GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSIFICATION (%)^{4,5}

| Region | Fund | Index ² |
|-----------------------------------|------|--------------------|
| Emerging Asia | 66.6 | 73.2 |
| Emerging Europe, Mid-East, Africa | 15.5 | 15.0 |
| Emerging Latin America | 17.9 | 11.8 |

PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT



Todd McClone, CFA
Started in Industry: 1992
Education: B.A., Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison



Jeff Urbina, CFA
Started in Industry: 1985
Education: M.M., Northwestern Univ.; B.A., Northwestern Univ.



Jack Murphy, CFA
Started in Industry: 1996
Education: B.A., Villanova University

MARKET CAP DIVERSIFICATION (%)^{4,5*}

| Market Cap | Fund | Index ² |
|------------------|------|--------------------|
| > \$15.0B | 51.6 | 45.6 |
| \$4.0B - \$15.0B | 41.7 | 33.8 |
| < \$4.0B | 6.7 | 20.6 |

* These amounts are calculated using float-adjusted market capitalizations

- 1 Weighted Average Market Capitalization:** The Weighted Average Market Capitalization for a portfolio is calculated as the average market capitalization of the stocks within the portfolio, weighted by the amount of each stock owned. **Unweighted Median Market Capitalization:** This calculation represents the median market capitalization of the stocks in the portfolio, regardless of the amount of each stock owned. **P/E (Price/Earnings) Ratio:** A stock with a higher P/E ratio would be considered more expensive relative to another stock with a lower P/E. An investor may pay a higher P/E for a stock for several reasons including, but not limited to, an expectation that the company possesses higher returns on invested capital, less economic sensitivity, higher consistency of earnings and/or higher earnings growth potential. **EPS Growth (Long-Term Projected):** This measure represents the weighted average of forecasted growth in earnings expected to be experienced by stocks within the portfolio over the next 3-5 years. This projected earnings growth should not be considered an indication of future fund performance. **Trailing 1-Year Turnover:** This figure reflects the portfolio's trading activity by calculating the amount of the portfolio's holdings bought or sold over the prior year, expressed as a percentage of the portfolio's average market value. Turnover figures may be related to the amount of trading costs experienced by the portfolio. **Standard Deviation:** A higher standard deviation represents a greater dispersion of returns, and thus, a greater amount of risk. Standard deviation returns shown are annualized and calculated using monthly returns. Funds without a 10-year history are reported against the Fund's inception date. If the Fund's inception date does not fall on the first day of a given month, the annualized standard deviation is calculated based on the first day of the month following the Fund's inception date.
- 2** The Morgan Stanley Capital International (MSCI) Emerging Markets Index (net) is a free float-adjusted market-capitalization-weighted index that is designed to measure equity market performance of emerging markets. It is not possible to directly invest in an unmanaged index.
- 3** The Morningstar Diversified Emerging Markets Category represents the average annual composite performance of all mutual funds listed in the Diversified Emerging Markets Category by Morningstar.
- 4** Top ten holdings are shown as % of total net assets. Sector, Market Cap, and Geographic Diversification charts show % of investments for the Fund and its benchmark Index and exclude cash equivalents.
- 5** Information about the Fund's holdings should not be considered investment advice. There is no guarantee that the Fund will continue to hold any one particular security or stay invested in any one particular sector. Holdings are subject to change at any time.

Risks: The Fund involves a high level of risk and may not be appropriate for everyone. You should only consider it for the aggressive portion of your portfolio. The Fund's returns will vary, and you could lose money by investing in the Fund. The Fund holds equities which may decline in value due to both real and perceived general market, economic, and industry conditions. Investing in securities of smaller companies tends to be more volatile and less liquid than securities of larger companies. International investing involves special risk considerations, including currency fluctuations, higher volatility, lower liquidity, economic and political risk. Investing in emerging markets can increase these risks. The securities of emerging market companies may be subject to greater volatility and less liquidity than companies in more developed markets. Individual securities may not perform as expected or a strategy used by the Adviser may fail to produce its intended result. Currency rates may fluctuate significantly over short periods of time and may reduce the returns of a portfolio. Convertible securities may be called before intended, which may have an adverse effect on investment objectives.

Please carefully consider the Fund's investment objective, risks, charges, and expenses before investing. This and other information is contained in the Fund's prospectus, which you may obtain by calling +1 800 742 7272. Read it carefully before you invest or send money. Investing includes the risk of loss.

This content is for informational and educational purposes only and not intended as investment advice or a recommendation to buy or sell any security. Investment advice and recommendations can be provided only after careful consideration of an investor's objectives, guidelines, and restrictions.

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