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## 2014 Market Returns (through 12/31/2014)

### Index

S&P 500	13.7%
Dow Jones Ind Avg	13.0%
Russell 2000	4.9%
MSCI EAFE (Int'l Stock Index)	-4.9%
Cohen & Steers Real Estate Index	34.6%
Emerging Market Stock Index	-2.2%
Barclays Bond Aggregate Index	6.0%
Dow Jones UBS Commodity Index	-17.1%

## Market Review & Outlook

### MARKET REVIEW & OUTLOOK

#### 2014 Review

All-in-all 2014 was another good year for the markets, with stocks (S&P 500) up 13.7% for the year. The last 3 months of the year did see a noticeable increase in volatility, which was due in large part to the global slowdown and political uncertainty. One of the big surprises for 2014 was the drop in interest rates and resulting positive performance in "safe" Government bonds. Our conservative bias served us well during 2014 and we believe will continue to be the best way to be positioned as 2015 gets underway. In Kurt's article below you can read more about 2014 as well as our outlook for 2015.

Another major news story during 2014 was the unexpected drop in oil prices of more than 50%. While most oil related stocks and investments went down with the price of oil, certain investments are more directly impacted than others. As a firm, we have maintained an overweight position to Master Limited Partnerships (MLPs) that invest in infra-

## Market Review & Outlook (continued from page 1)

structure projects in the oil and gas industry. While the MLPs have dropped in sympathy with the fall in oil prices, we continue to like the MLP structure and believe it will continue to offer attractive risk adjusted returns going forward. If you would like to read more about our specific MLP exposure and why we continue to like it, please see Drew's article below on page five.

As a firm, 2014 also saw the continued growth of ARS. This growth would not have been possible without the efforts of everyone on the ARS Team. I can say without reservation that I'm blessed to work with such a wonderful group of professionals who share a common goal of providing our clients with world class, "white glove" service. In response to the firm's continued growth and in an effort to make sure that our client service never drops, we have added two new advisors to the team. Both Jennifer Facini, MBA, CFP and Mike Murray, MBA, CFA joined the firm in recent weeks. You can learn more about Jennifer and Mike by reading their bios below.

In an effort to continuously improve the level of service we provide our clients, we are always seeking feedback on things we do well and more importantly areas we can improve. Please feel free to contact me directly at [tony.anderson@arswealth.com](mailto:tony.anderson@arswealth.com) or speak with anyone on the ARS team to share your feedback. Thank you for the continued trust you have placed in ARS.

Sincerely, Tony Anderson, President

## Welcome Jennifer Facini, MBA, CFP

Prior to joining ARS, Jennifer worked for Fidelity Investments and JPMorgan Chase in client advisory roles. Most recently, Jennifer worked in the Tampa Fidelity branch office, as an Account Executive, where she managed \$350million in client assets spanning over 400 client households. Jennifer earned her Bachelors of Business Administration in Finance and Masters of Business Administration from the University of North Florida. She currently holds her Series 7, 63, 66, and 2-15 security licenses. As a Certified Financial Planning® professional, Jennifer has extensive training in financial and estate



planning, insurance, investments, taxes, employee benefits and retirement planning, as well as CFP Board's Standards of Professional Conduct, which are rigorously enforced.

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## Welcome Mike Murray, MBA, CFA

Mike has over 17 years of investment management experience. Prior to joining ARS, he was the Chief Investment Officer at Doyle Wealth Management, overseeing more than \$550 million in assets. Before joining Doyle Wealth Management, he worked for several large investment firms and a long short equity hedge fund.

Mike earned his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of South Carolina and his Master of Business Administration from Johns Hopkins University.



## Bull Market Corrections

### 2014 – A Transition Year

Kurt Ulrich, CFA

In many ways 2014 was a transition year. It was a year in which the safer, lower-risk stocks outperformed the higher-risk, economically sensitive securities. Oil prices plummeted while the US Dollar soared causing most currencies around the globe to depreciate meaningfully. Economic growth slowed in China and most of Europe, while Japan's recession deepened. Russia attacked Ukraine, ISIS invaded Iraq and Israel attacked Syria. Needless to say, these events have led to an increase in volatility which is probably here to stay for a while.

As we enter 2015 turmoil in the international markets will most likely escalate. Thus far, the United States of America has been the clear winner. While other countries' economies weaken, the US is strengthening and appears to be the best positioned country on the globe at the present time.

The 10 year US Treasury Rate was 3% at the beginning of 2014 and ended the year at a little over 2%. Thus far in 2015 rates have fallen more, with the 10 year note now at 1.86%, not far from 2012's all-time low. While these rates are historically low, US rates remain some of the highest of the developed nations. The current 10 year rate in Germany is 0.46%, Japan is 0.24% and Switzerland is 0.11%. We do not expect US rates to rise in the near term and they may even continue downward indicating bonds should provide an attractive total return alternative to cash and CDs during 2015.

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## Bull Market Corrections (continued from page 3)

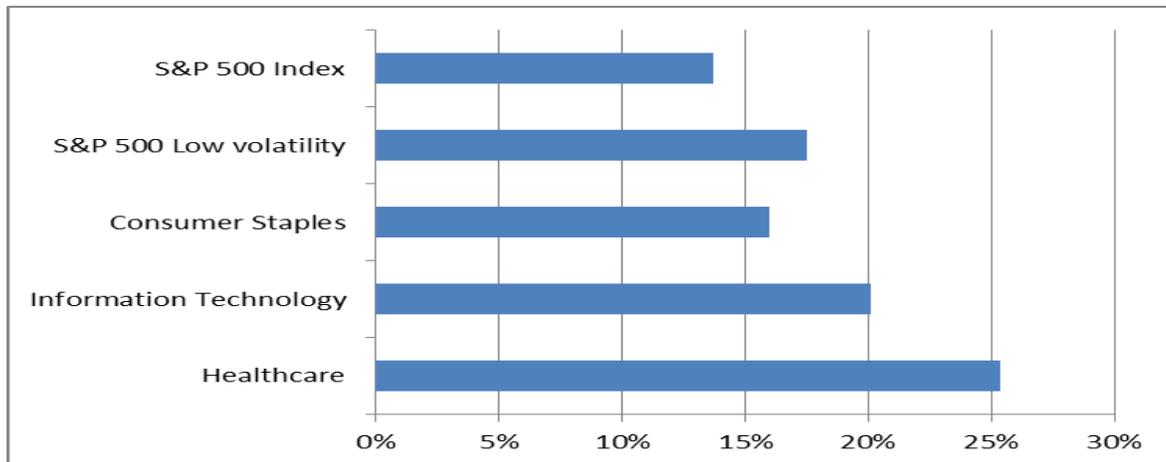
### US Ten Year Treasury Yield



With interest rates very low and falling combined with a strengthening US economy against the backdrop of global weakening, the US Stock market appears to offer an attractive place to invest. Things can change very quickly but based on many economic indicators the US remains healthy.

During 2014 ARS was overweight the Consumer Staples, Healthcare and Technology sectors of the market all of which outperformed the averages. With volatility on the increase we will continue to emphasize these areas in addition to low-volatility stocks in general. Most of these stocks are large, blue-chip companies that pay attractive dividends.

### 2014 S&P 500 Sector Returns



Based on historical data we are in the latter innings of this bull market that began in March of 2009 which currently stands as the fourth longest running bull market over the past 85 years. We will continue to give it the benefit of the doubt and remain invested in the more defensive sectors that should provide attractive, relative returns.

## Investment Spotlight

### What happened to MLPI? - Drew Swenson

Many of our clients own MLPI, the UBS ETRACS Alerian MLP Infrastructure Index ETN, which is a basket of Master Limited Partnerships (MLP's). MLPI is structured as an Exchange Traded Note (ETN) and because of this structure MLPI holders do not receive K-1's and are not subject to additional IRS reporting each year as would be the case if they simply owned the underlying MLP's.

The price of MLPI has declined 17% since September 30, 2014 in partial sympathy with the approximate 50% decline in the price of oil. Some have asked why we haven't sold MLPI. We believe the decline in MLPI is way over done for a few reasons.

Firstly, all the MLP's in MLPI are energy infrastructure companies (midstream companies), meaning they do not explore for or produce oil and or gas. They process and transport oil and gas. Think of these companies more as a toll road, the person driving a Ferrari pays the same toll as the Ford driver, the toll road operator is indifferent as to the value of the vehicle – he only cares about the volume of cars on his road. In the same manner, the member components of MLPI (Enterprise Products Partners, Kinder Morgan, Plains All American Pipeline, Magellan Midstream Partners, Energy Transfer Partners and eighteen others) are mostly agnostic as to the price of the oil and gas; they are primarily concerned about the volumes of oil, natural gas and respective derivative products they are transporting and processing. With the booming energy sector, these volumes are increasing. The drastic decline in oil prices will result in slowing volume growth but it is likely growth will continue.

Secondly, we have seen this type of knee jerk reaction before as it pertains to MLP valuations. When oil fell from \$150 barrel to \$50 in 2008 to 2009, MLP's valuations were severely impacted as well. However, during that period all but one midstream MLP maintained or increased its dividend. When investors realized the midstream companies were likely to continue to grow, MLP's were up 80% in 2009 following the wash out in the prior year.

Lastly, because MLP's are required to distribute their cash flow to investors, they need to borrow money to expand operations. There has never been a better time than now to be a borrower with interest rates at historic lows.

Thus, we have elected to hold our position in MLPI. We may change our mind but currently our expectation is for the underlying MLP's to continue grow their dividend payouts through this period of volatile oil prices.

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# ARS Wealth Advisors

## Mission Statement

*To focus solely on meeting the unique needs of our clients and to help them prepare for life's most important financial decisions, by providing objective advice, free from conflicts of interest, based on time-tested, proven strategies. To give our clients peace of mind by placing their best interest first and always acting in a fiduciary capacity.*

## ARS Team

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If you would like a copy of the most recent version of our Form ADV Part II, one is always available to you upon written request

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