

THE RISING STARS OF MUTUAL FUNDS

With the industry's help, *Fund Directions* and *Fund Action* have continued our long tradition of identifying the up-and-comers deserving of recognition for their early-career contributions to the mutual fund space. The following 13 rising stars were nominated by their peers, mentors and colleagues, with additional research and determination by the staff, based on their demonstration of the following criteria:

- Leadership in their profession, firm and/or industry
- Outstanding contributions to innovations, product development, client service, sales and/or growth in assets or returns
- Recognition by their firm and/or industry groups
- Active contribution to the broader mutual fund community
- Spending fewer than 15 years working in the mutual fund industry
- Other quantifiable contributions to profession, firm, clients and/or industry



RENEE BAKER

CLOSED-END FUNDS MARKETING AND INVESTOR RELATIONS **ABERDEEN ASSET MANAGEMENT**

Education: Rutgers University, BS, Penn State University, MBA, Wilmington University Ph.D.

Mentors: Rennie McConnochie, Global Head of Banks with Aberdeen Asset Management; Ruth Norman, Dissertation Chair and Doctoral Advisor at Wilmington University

Renee Baker always wanted to be an astronaut. She even attended space camp, but after the Challenger disaster, Baker changed trajectories. Still, she is somewhat of a pioneer in her Salem County, NJ, family as the first to earn MBA and Ph.D., degrees.

She started her career in the Cayman Islands working as the head of marketing — a position that was created for her — at the hedge fund-focused law firm Walkers Global.

When she returned to the US, she began a job with OppenheimerFunds to head up their institutional efforts and launch the OFI Global brand. Baker's boss at Oppenheimer connected her with her current boss at Aberdeen to work in a field "I knew nothing about other than seeing it in some exam. ... I came into close-end funds completely blind," Baker said.

Her marketing strategy experience propelled her in her new role. After speaking with clients and learning more about the business, Baker helped structure Aberdeen's marketing focus into what it is today. The program focuses on investor outreach, shifting the marketing strategy to reach a specific

audience and aligning the messaging. "The team grew from a team of 'me' to three and we were able to add additional resources," she said. Baker works with six fund boards overseeing 13 closed-end funds.

Currently Baker is working on "Financial Explorers: Open the World," a campaign to shed some new light on closed-end funds through discussion and working with advisers looking for opportunities for their clients.

Baker is dedicated to teaching military officers at McGuire Air Force Base marketing skills and still manages to spend time with her three daughters.



RALPH BASSETT

DEPUTY HEAD OF NORTH AMERICAN EQUITIES, **ABERDEEN ASSET MANAGEMENT**

Education: Villanova University, BS

Mentors: Paul Atkinson, formerly with Aberdeen Asset Management

After briefly entertaining aspirations for a career in medicine, Ralph Bassett knew he would embark on a career in finance or business. As a student, Bassett interned with local investment banking firms and later with JP Morgan Chase. Following a short stint as a management consultant after school, asset management emerged as an area of interest.

His first job in asset management was as an investment

analyst on the North American equity team at Aberdeen Asset Management, where he still works today. “I started out meeting with management teams, looking at both qualitative and quantitative analysis, and feeding that back into the investment effort,” Bassett said.

Bassett had a front row seat to the financial crisis. “You get to learn a lot pretty quickly,” he says. “Because either the businesses are on the brink of catastrophe or business model catastrophe.”

In the following years he shifted into the role of assistant investment manager, where he had more input in portfolio decisions and client interaction. The position of portfolio manager was next, which later grew to include managing a team of 13 investment professionals overseeing \$2.5bn in direct equity assets.

Today operations make up a growing part of Bassett’s responsibilities. Recently he was put in charge of structuring teams based in Philadelphia, London and Singapore, and tasked with making sure internal architecture is relevant and is useful. Some of that includes providing more secure remote access and efforts to go paperless, for example.

For fun, Bassett is into CrossFit and skiing. He also works closely with the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southeastern Pennsylvania.



MATTHEW BROWN
EXECUTIVE MANAGING DIRECTOR
AND CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER,
VIRTUS ETF SOLUTIONS
Education: Boston College, BA

Right after Matthew Brown finished his economics degree from Boston College he went to work for State Street Research when it was still part of MetLife. He started on the ground floor as a broker’s representative. “It’s relevant only because I’m finishing where I began, with a mutual fund company,” Brown explained.

Perhaps because his father was a professor in economics, Brown says he found economics and social science the most interesting lens and set of tools for the way he looks at the world. “That is to say analytically and evidence based. I guess I’m lucky in a sense because that viewpoint has really risen in popularity,” Brown said.

A year after State Street, Brown moved over to the American Stock Exchange around 2003 as an analyst in the options division and worked there for about four years. He explains that the AmEx community was his introduction to the markets and finance, and he used his schooling to become a “market structure nerd.” Some of his exposure to exchange-traded funds at the AmEx led to his next job

with LaBranche Structured Products trading and making markets in ETFs in both the US and UK.

It wasn’t until later when he was hired at Factor Advisors that he met his partner William Smalley. “Factor is where we worked together and immediately had a shared vision for where these things needed to go to bring some different products to market.” It didn’t take long for them to set out on what is now Virtus ETF Solutions.

Brown notes that both he and his partner Smalley were victims of a process where a single-purpose issuer would bring an ETF product to market and because of lack of growth would fail even though a lot of back office infrastructure was being built or being outsourced. “We saw this as a problem, which was they were outsourcing a lot of the infrastructure to different vendors and there was not a lot of expertise around ... and so we had a vision to combine a few of these third-party services we could create a platform to launch ETFs at a lower cost,” Brown said.

At the beginning, Brown noted, they operated as a true startup. They would move from one office to another before they had space of their own. “They would welcome you and say, ‘Here’s the WiFi password and there’s the telephone,’ and off you’d go.”

Brown is more than happy to share credit with his partner for having started a seed-stage company four years ago and now being in a position where they are looking at the \$1bn milestone.



ALEX BRYAN
MANAGER RESEARCH ANALYST,
MORNINGSTAR
Education: Washington University at St. Louis, B.A., University of Chicago, M.B.A.

Mentors: Ben Johnson, director of global ETF research at Morningstar, and John Rong, senior vice president, global alternative business, Morningstar

From an early age, Alex Bryan recalls sitting around the dinner table listening to his mother discuss her investments, her rationale for why she invested the way she had, and her interest in watching CNBC.

At Washington University, Bryan interned with Lehman Brothers in London, where he cultivated an interest in investment research, with a front row-seat of the financial crisis. He remembers feeling disappointed at not landing a full-time job with Lehman at the time, but muses at his luck in retrospect.

He worked part-time at Morningstar while getting his MBA through the Chicago Business Fellows Program at the University of Chicago. He started out in sales on a software platform catering to registered investment advisers.

A year later, in Morningstar's data department, he operated as a point person between sales and US clients with developers in Morningstar's Hong Kong office, customizing solutions for clients and providing data support.

Bryan points to the launch of the Global Benchmark Data Service as a highlight. "It was designed as a custom data solutions for clients, so the basic idea was to build an economic database. I also created a marketing website, and trained sales team and clients," he said.

After a promotion from senior data analyst to a project management role in 2011, Bryan was tasked with leading the development of the Morningstar Global Reference Database. In 2012, he moved to the manager research department, working on the passive strategy team covering ETFs and index funds.

"I knew during my MBA that I wanted to move into the research side because it was my passion, and so when I had a chance to pursue it as a career it was something I was really interested in doing," he said.

Bryan then moved to the equity research team covering both passive and actively managed strategies in a department reorganization. He also writes articles and makes videos for Morningstar that help educate investors.

Bryan is an avid swing dancer and tennis player.



STEPHEN COHEN

PARTNER, **DECHERT**

Education: University of Florida, BS, American University Washington College of Law, JD

Mentors: Jack Murphy, former associate director and chief counsel for the Division of Investment Management, and current partner at Dechert; Douglas Dick, partner at Dechert

Stephen Cohen made finance his career from the start. He saw the business first hand by watching his father who had a small broker-dealer business in Tampa, Fla. He also knew he liked living in Washington, DC, from spending many summers working on Capitol Hill and with political campaigns. He attended law school in the evening while he worked full time at the Department of Labor Bureau of Statistics from 2000 to 2005.

"The financial services group [at Dechert] was a perfect fit," he said. "The integration of working with funds and the law is how I ended up here."

Getting his start during the peak of the financial crisis was a formative experience, according to Cohen. "There was so much regulatory change going on in those early years around 2008 with the Reserve Fund 'breaking the buck,' [and] the new regulations that came out in 2010," he said.

In Washington, he felt close to the action and liked the opportunity to help shape the regulatory conversation. "Being there when it is all being developed is very exciting for a new lawyer because you get to be part of it and get to learn it," Cohen said. "You get to be an expert as quickly as anyone else."

The first project Cohen worked on at Dechert was reviewing registration statements for a large money market fund. Today his practice includes providing counsel for mutual fund clients on all aspects of their operations, with a sub-specialty in money market funds. He also helps clients respond to Securities and Exchange Commission exam requests and other regulatory requirements.

Recently Cohen has done some work with multi-series trusts, where an adviser launches funds with one board overseeing multiple advisers. This sometimes involves helping them convert to a more standard stand-alone trust. "When you do that kind of work it's really helping a client start from scratch with their own legal structure, their own board, and it can really help them grow."

In his spare time Cohen and his wife are involved with a local charity — Share our Strengths — which works to end child hunger.



NICK DARSCH

ASSET MANAGER SOLUTIONS,

BOSTON FINANCIAL

Education: Bentley University, BS and MBA

Mentors: Nicole DeBlois Greene, Relationship

Executive at DST Systems; Jason Vaughn, Global Enterprise Relationship Manager, DST Systems

Nick Darsch grew up near Plymouth, Mass., the site where the Mayflower Pilgrims landed in America in 1620. He got some exposure to the investment community by observing the experiences of his father, who worked for Federated Investors. After graduating from Bentley University in 2011, he immediately went to work for technology consulting company Deltek to help businesses update their enterprise infrastructure technology. Much of that was working with CPA firms.

His time at Deltek allowed him some travel and to live in Copenhagen, Stockholm and Seattle. After about a year and a half he moved to Boston Financial — where he had worked part-time in operations during college, as well as the retirement arm of DST Retirement Solutions. "When I rejoined, we launched a new initiative to add a more strategic layer on our day-to-day management function — primarily focused on our top 10 to 20 clients," he said.

Darsch created a monthly Exchange Forum for clients and industry leaders to tackle business challenges and develop

best practices. Compliance, intermediary oversight, escheatment mitigation and digital engagement were among the focus areas. He led the implementation of a new customer relationship management system and process at Boston Financial.

As a program manager, Darsch also managed Boston Financial's benchmarking efforts, helping identify opportunities to enhance service delivery. His current role has allowed him to take on a more formal business development and sales role within the firm working with both existing and new clients.

Darsch says the best way to build value has a lot to do with what Boston Financial is doing in the compliance area, unclaimed property and oversight best practices. He collaborates with State Street and DST Systems, the parent companies of Boston Financial, to deliver bundled solutions to fund complexes as well as advanced data management, communications and advanced analytics solutions.

Darsch has also worked to help build a "prescriptive wholesaling" data warehouse that helps wholesalers better understand the needs and actions of advisers working with plan sponsors and what activity has occurred with that adviser recently, for example, and give them tools on how to better provide for the advisers' needs.

In his free time, Darsch is a marathon runner and is involved with United Way Boston, Expect Miracles Foundation — Financial Services Against Cancer.



PAUL DELDIGATTI
PARTNER, **GOODWIN PROCTER**

Education: Cornell University, BS, Columbus School of Law at The Catholic University of America, JD (cum laude),

Mentors: Robert Kurucz, partner at Goodwin Procter and David Lipton, law professor at The Catholic University of America

Paul Delligatti is no stranger to the legal profession. The son of a lawyer, who is now a judge, Delligatti grew up around his father's profession and worked alongside him for a short time following law school. "Even taking a business law course at Cornell had confirmed my predisposition to the law," Delligatti said.

As a law student, he participated in the Securities and Exchange Commission's Law Student Observer Program as an intern for the Division of Enforcement's trial unit.

Delligatti's first "real" job in law was in the investment management group at Morrison & Foerster. "I had an opportunity to specialize in a chosen field right out of school, which I think gave me an advantage and experience over the last 10 years."

Delligatti's career started just as the financial crisis came to a head. The resultant market tribulations translated to opportunities that advanced his career at a rate a more stagnant environment might not have permitted, he said.

For example, burgeoning regulatory initiatives and innovative mutual fund products like liquid alternatives allowed Delligatti to immerse himself into new areas and navigate clients through the unfamiliar terrain.

In 2009 Delligatti and others from Morrison & Foerster moved to Goodwin Procter.

Delligatti's work with smaller advisers sets him apart, he says. Highlights include working with a new entrant into the mutual fund space and helping it execute strategic plans for growth. Recently, he helped an asset manager client prepare documentation and diligence around a purchase agreement.

An avid skier, Delligatti is starting to get his young daughter into the mix with her first lessons this year.



ELLIOT GLUCK
COUNSEL, **WILLKIE FARR & GALLAGHER**

Education: Yeshiva University, BS (magna cum laude), Fordham University School of

Law (Dean's list)

Mentors: Margery Neale and Rose DiMartino, partners at Willkie Farr & Gallagher

The legal profession was always part of Elliot Gluck's plan, but his early career path took him on a detour. Following his graduation from Yeshiva University, Gluck spent time in the investment management industry as an analyst at Barclays Global Investors' investment business, and in the wealth management unit at Scudder Kemper (now part of Deutsche Bank).

"I wanted to understand what the financial world is all about first hand," Gluck said. "Understanding how things work for the people I now do work for has been valuable to me."

His first foray into the legal side of investment management was with Shearman & Sterling's asset management group. Gluck worked with mutual funds, registered investment companies and hedge funds. In 2006, Gluck went to Willkie Farr & Gallagher along with a portion of Shearman & Sterling's asset management team.

The financial crisis hit shortly after the move. Throughout the industry, mutual funds were closing, consolidating and merging. Gluck had the opportunity to see how fund companies function in a stressed environment.

"One of the significant things that came out of it was with-in money markets," according to Gluck. One money market fund I worked on 'broke the buck' — which means it went

below a dollar per share and the underlying assets were not able to support the valuation.” That crisis, and the reforms it gave rise to, “was a big learning experience,” Gluck said.

More recently, Gluck helped a closed-end fund client close \$600m of leverage, incorporating revolving credit, term loans, notes and preferred stock. This allowed the fund to lock in a lower interest rate than it otherwise might have. “That is something I was heavily involved in and was more unique in the fund space,” he noted.

In the last year, Gluck has worked on several M&A transactions for asset management companies. “When there are mutual funds involved, there are a lot of regulatory issues. I have helped clients navigate those issues and have negotiated purchase agreements,” Gluck said.

A Long Island boy at heart, Gluck lives today near the area where he grew up.



PHILIP HINKLE

PARTNER, **DECHERT**

Education: The College of William and Mary, BBA, American University Washington College of Law, JD (cum laude)

Upon getting his undergraduate degree, Philip Hinkle thought he might want a career on Wall Street. But having met with several companies and law firms, he liked the idea of “putting the pieces together” behind the scenes.

During his legal studies, Hinkle participated in a number of internships including doing tax work with the Internal Revenue Service and the Securities and Exchange Commission in their Division of Small Business Policy. “Doing all those things, I developed a strong preference to get into the financial services industry somewhere and ended up finding Dechert’s financial services group,” Hinkle explained.

One of the regulatory changes among many taking place in the past few years relates to how derivatives use swaps within transactions. “Our clients use a lot of swaps and other derivative transactions that suddenly became regulated,” Hinkle said. “So I started being one of the people at Dechert who took the reigns and figured out how the rules worked. I helped our clients navigate the rule-making process, review how the rules would impact their businesses, and help them comply with the requirements.”

A new area that Hinkle is working on relates to an SEC rule that changes how mutual funds use derivatives. He is helping clients craft letters to the SEC to show how this rule will affect mutual fund businesses.

Since becoming a partner this past winter, Hinkle quips that his office got bigger but that not much has changed day-to-day. But, he adds, he is leading more client development

initiatives including the Dechert comment letter on the SEC derivatives rule proposal.

Hinkle has helped private fund managers open their first mutual funds by reviewing and negotiating sub-advisory arrangements. He also worked with their legal and compliance department to build a compliance program. Hinkle has also worked on mergers as well as investment adviser takeover transactions.

In his spare time Hinkle loves to run. “DC is a great city for running,” he said.



JENNIFER NICHOLS

GLOBAL HEAD OF LEGAL, **ABERDEEN ASSET MANAGEMENT**

Education: Harvard University, B.A. cum laude, University of Virginia School of Law, J.D.

Mentors: Larry Schmidt, High School Chemistry Teacher; Jim Capezzuto, former CCO at Aberdeen Asset Management

When a high school girl from Toney, Ala., told her teachers she wanted to go to Harvard University, only one person listened. People like her mentor Larry Schmidt encouraged her to pursue her dreams. Jennifer Nichols wasted no time, and upon graduating from both Harvard and the University of Virginia School of Law, she went to work for Philadelphia law firm Pepper Hamilton’s corporate securities division. Her work focused on mergers and acquisitions, and later hedge funds, investment advisers and broker/dealers.

“Pepper was a small firm at the time so it was a good place for a young attorney to come and get my feet wet quickly,” Nichols said.

Three years later she moved to Aberdeen Asset Management, where she started as US Counsel with only three compliance officers and one paralegal at the time. About a year later she took over the role as head of legal and temporarily as head of compliance. She now serves as global head of legal, supervising attorneys worldwide. She oversees about 50 professionals and supervises Aberdeen’s risk division.

Making the transition from a law firm to an investment firm seemed like a natural progression. “There came a point for me where although I appreciated that learning experience, I felt I wasn’t getting true on-the-ground insight into what the business was doing,” she says. “I almost felt like I was a step removed from providing the legal advice ... but I appreciate being an in-house lawyer getting the insight as to what is actually going on and what is the context of what you are trying to achieve.”

Currently Nichols is working on global derivatives rule changes. “It’s an interesting moment ... we’re all going to have to move towards a middle,” she says when considering

the different rules being adopted by various jurisdictions.

Outside of work Nichols is involved in the Ronald McDonald House chapter in Philadelphia. She also belongs to the Philadelphia Fund Alliance, which gathers local financial industry people to raise money for charities. In her spare time, Nichols loves a good game of Texas Hold'em.



NICOLE SIMON
ASSOCIATE, **STRADLEY RONON
STEVENS & YOUNG**

Education: Penn State University, BA in psychology, Harvard Law School, J.D. (magna

cum laude)

Mentors: Matthew DiClemente, Bruce Leto, Ruth Epstein – all partners with Stradley Ronon

As one in a long line of lawyers, Nicole Simon “grew up with a respect for what it means to be an attorney ... and what it means to provide value for your clients,” she says.

Internships with local District Attorneys’ offices and the Securities and Exchange Commission, and her own observations of the regulatory environment in the wake of the Great Recession drew her to the investment and regulatory world. When she graduated from law school just as the Dodd-Frank Act rules started coming into effect, Simon says she found herself at the right place at the right time.

She selected Stradley Ronon after completing her law degree because she said she felt the firm cared for the development of young attorneys and provided ample resources for their development, she said. “It was an easy decision for me.”

One recent accomplishment was co-founding Stradley’s commodities and derivatives working group. “Every week we meet to talk about issues as they continue to develop.” The purpose of the group is to discuss new regulations and understand what clients are dealing with across practices to provide a fuller picture to clients.

Simon has helped work on mutual fund mergers. “It’s a unique first look at the industry because any time we are talking about business combinations or changes of that magnitude it allows you to develop a deep understanding of areas you might not see every day.”

Much of what Simon does today revolves around helping clients determine whether they need to be registered under the new regulations and support them through that process, which requires a true understanding of a client’s business and what they do, she said. She also assists with the formation of domestic and offshore private funds, which includes drafting private placement memoranda, operating agreements and subscription documents.

In her spare time Simon is passionate about charity work

with the Penn State Dance Marathon, a non-profit organization that helps fund cancer research. Simon is currently learning to read and write Japanese, “slowly,” she says.



WILLIAM SMALLEY
EXECUTIVE MANAGING DIRECTOR
AND HEAD OF PRODUCT STRATEGY
AND MANAGEMENT, **VIRTUS ETF
SOLUTIONS**

Education: Cornell University, BA

Mentors: Robert Tull, former VP of New Product Development, American Stock Exchange

William Smalley was introduced to the ETF business through a stint with the American Stock Exchange while still in school, and quickly realized it was for him. After graduating from Cornell University, he worked at Norwalk, Conn.-based FactSet as a portfolio analytics specialist with investment management firms. He covered some key account clients, including Raymond James and Franklin Templeton Investments, among others.

A year and a half later Smalley moved to Madison, NJ’s Macro Markets, where he had the opportunity to work with Nobel Prize-winning economist Robert Shiller. “I was his analyst for some innovative exchange traded products that had ETF-like attributes,” he says.

Smalley stayed in the ETF world when he moved to Factor Advisors, where his focus was developing futures-based ETFs that were novel at the time, Smalley said. He also covered institutional accounts and ETF capital markets.

It was at Factor Advisors in 2010 that he met his now partner, Matthew Brown, and in 2012 they started the business concept for ETF-Issuers Solutions (ETF-IS), the predecessor for Virtus ETF Solutions.

“We saw the same kinds of challenges that any new entrant to the space would be facing and we set out to build a comprehensive platform for listing, operating and distributing ETFs,” Smalley said. The idea was to reduce barriers to entry for asset managers or index providers launching ETFs.

“For a while it was Matt, myself, a laptop and couple of pitch books. We really grew the business from the ground up ... but we felt we had a compelling idea that was really resonating with potential ETF issuers who were not yet in the space,” according to Smalley.

In April 2015, Virtus Investment Partners acquired ETF-IS. Today, Virtus has seven ETFs in the marketplace with about \$350m. Nine more funds are in registration with the SEC.

“The goal is to get to \$1bn in short order but it’s hard to say where specifically that growth will come from and which products,” Smalley said.