

INVEST-A-CATS

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Special points of interest:

- Membership has doubled since January 2005
- Portfolio returns exceeded the market by 250% in 2005
- Surpassed fundraising goal
- Scholarships will be given for the Fall 2006 Semester

MAKING HISTORY

BY: THERESA KASPER (JUNIOR)

In May of 2004 three ambitious students contemplated the idea of starting a student financial planning group at Kansas State University that replicated aspects of the financial planning process. In October of the same year their concept was set into motion. Thus, Invest-a-Cats was born. Invest-a-Cats is the only volunteer organization of it's kind that starts with a financial goal, then gathers funds using financial planning techniques to make the objective a reality. Invest-a-Cats is not an investment club; it is a charitable foundation activity. Unlike other



Members at Kansas State Open House

organizations, students develop experience in public speaking, relationship building, asset allocation and charitable giving, all of which are important in the financial planning process.

As of March of 2006 Invest-a-Cats has quadrupled in size and is still growing. What started out as an idea of three students has grown to the potential of reaching hundreds of students in the future.

STUDENT COMPETITION

BY: JAMIE MAGER (SENIOR)

Kansas State is at it again for the Ameriprise National Collegiate Financial Planning Invitational. This year's team consists of three seniors: Julie Fletcher, Audrea Youngers, and Jamie Mager.

After four long weeks of analyzing a case and making recommendations that fit the family's goals, the team submitted a comprehensive case to a team of judges. The trio has just received

word that they will be going to the finals. This is a remarkable accomplishment for the team. Kansas State University is the only school to be invited to the final all seven years of the competition.

GOALS

BY: JULIE FLETCHER (SENIOR)

The Invest-a-Cat's portfolio accumulation goals were set high for the 2005-2006 school year. The goal was high for the purpose of motivat-

ing members to set and meet high standards. Students agree that a higher balance creates more learning opportunities for investing and diversifying as-

sets. For the Fall 2005 semester, a goal of \$17,000 was set. The goal was met and exceeded. The portfolio reached a balance of \$18,500.

For the Spring 2006 semester, the goal was set at \$25,000. The short-term goal for the account is to create a scholarship for next year with a percentage of the Invest-a-Cats assets. The scholarship will be granted to students within the Financial Planning major. The amount awarded is dependent on the portfolio balance at the end of the Spring 2006 semester.



"The goal was met and exceeded"

STUDENTS OF EXCELLENCE

BY: EMMA GOFF (JUNIOR)

Students involved in Invest-a-Cats stop at nothing to enhance their learning. Most students are involved in many activities and organizations outside of their commitment to Invest-a-Cat's weekly meetings and presentations. Two students work at Sunflower bank and three are paid interns at planning firms such as Kramer Capital Management, Keating and Associates, and Edward Jones. Many are leaders in their sororities, fraternities, and residence halls. In a great



Weekly student meeting

balance of part time work and studies, thirty percent of the students received academic honors last semester and two students were rewarded with the Kansas City Financial Planning Association schol-

arship of \$500 each. With such high achievement of Invest-a-Cats students, the future looks promising for more leadership, commitment, and hard work!

SAN DIEGO DIARY

BY: NICK GARDNER (SENIOR)

This past September, I along with seven other Financial Planning students from KSU, got the wonderful opportunity to attend the Financial Planning Association's national conference in San Diego, California. Attending the FPA conference gave us the opportunity to meet with Financial Planners from all over the world, while joining them in attending lectures and networking events.

Kansas State University was one of four universities invited to help with

the conference.

This prestigious invitation has been extended for seven consecutive years. While at the conference, not only did we help with the daily operation, but we were able to attend Bridge the Gap sessions and attend a Career Fair. Both Bridge the Gap and the Career fair functioned as tools to speak with professionals about developing a career in financial planning.

The conference is a posi-



Students standing by the booth in San Diego

tive experience for students and helps to further our education outside the classroom. The support of Invest-a-Cats donors makes this possible!

"Attending the FPA conference gave us the opportunity to meet with Financial Planners from all over the world"

PERFORMANCE RESULTS

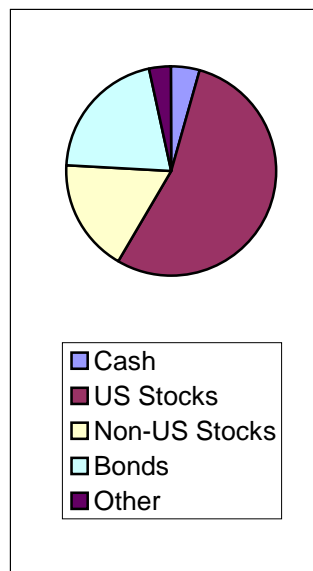
BY: INVEST-A-CATS TEAM

Using a formalized investment policy statement as a framework for making decisions, Invest-a-Cats students meet twice a month to review potential purchases and analyze current holdings. The performance of the Invest-a-Cats fund portfolio, under the leadership of students, has exceeded expectations. Since inception in December 2004 the portfolio has gained over 9.0%. As of March 1, 2006, the portfolio had gained 7.90% for the year and 3.25% over the previous 3-month period.

Modern Portfolio Theory statistics, as calculated by *Morningstar* and benchmarked against the S&P 500, are as follows:

✓ **Beta:** 0.72
 ✓ **Alpha:** 6.56
 ✓ **R²:** 0.77

The risk-adjusted expected rate of return of the portfolio is excellent. The students have managed to invest in a relatively conservative portfolio of holdings that generates superior risk-adjusted returns.



Message From the Faculty Advisor

BY: JOHN GRABLE, Ph.D., CFP®, RFC

The seed for the Invest-a-Cats project was planted in May 2004. Three students attended a conference in New Orleans where they learned about charitable donation funds. The students were intrigued with the idea of establishing their own fund. Their purpose was clear. Raise money from industry professionals, family, friends, and supporters of financial planning at K-State, invest the money using a systematic approach, and use earnings to support student learning.

When the students presented the idea to me I knew that they had hit upon a great concept. The K-State Foundation was eager to help the students, and in December 2004 the students raised \$10,000 to establish the fund. Not only have the students done well with the fund, I believe that they are breaking new ground with the Invest-a-Cats model. While many universities provide students with an opportunity to manage assets, no other program encourages students to develop and implement fundraising and scholarship objectives in addition to managing assets. This project is a win-win for students, friends, and alumni. Students gain valuable experience. Donors receive the knowledge that they are making a significant impact in the lives of young professionals – while also receiving a tax deduction for contributions!

This annual publication was written, edited and published by students. This is just one example of how Invest-a-Cats helps students improve academically and professionally. Kudos students!

If you have not already made a contribution to the Invest-a-Cats fund this year, I strongly encourage you to do so. My family and I have made a donation, and in addition to our regular giving to local charities and church, Invest-a-Cats is our primary charitable activity. I hope you will join me in supporting the financial planning students at K-State.

“This annual publication was written, edited and published by students”

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