

# Equity Dividend Fund

BlackRock®

INST: MADVX • A: MDDVX • C: MCDVX

★★★★ Morningstar Overall (Inst)

**Performance:** The Fund delivered a positive investment return and underperformed its benchmark during the month of February.

**Positioning:** We prefer areas of the market that are poised for future dividend growth versus those offering high current yields. A large portion of the fund is allocated to health care, financials and consumer discretionary.

▲ **Contributors:** Health Care & Financials

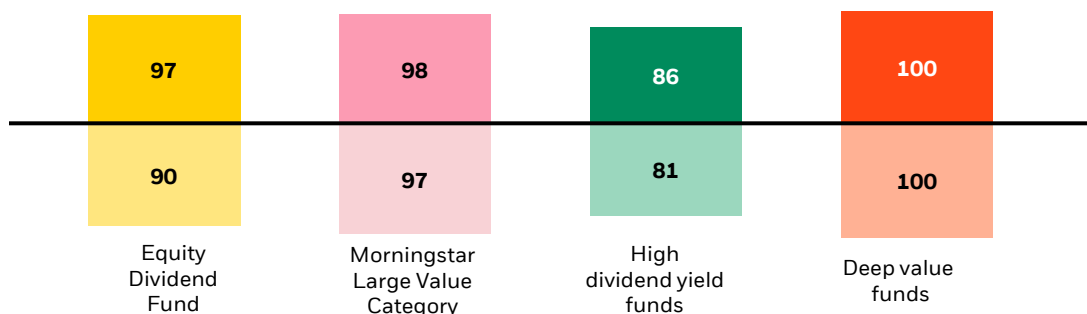
▼ **Detractors:** Energy & Industrials

▲ **Increased:** Industrials

▼ **Decreased:** Financials

## The fund's focus on dividend growth has delivered strong performance with less risk

Upside and downside capture versus the Russell 1000 Value Index since PM change (8/4/14-03/31/24)



Upside/downside capture is a measure of performance relative to a benchmark in periods of rising and falling markets. Upside capture is the percentage of the benchmark's gains captured during periods when the benchmark was rising. Downside capture is the percentage of the benchmark's losses captured during periods when the benchmark was falling. An upside or downside capture of 100% means performance was equal to that of the benchmark. A capture rate above 100% means the gains (i.e., upside capture) or losses (i.e., downside capture) were greater than that of the benchmark. A capture rate below 100% means the gains (i.e., upside capture) or losses (i.e., downside capture) were smaller than that of the benchmark. High dividend yield funds represented by the MSCI USA High Dividend Yield Index. Deep value funds represented by the Manager Benchmark Aggregate US Deep Value Index.

### A large cap value strategy built for diverse markets

The fund seeks high quality companies with histories of paying and growing their dividend at attractive valuations. With this strategy, the fund has outperformed 41% of its peers since PM inception in August 2014.

| As of 03/31/24              | BlackRock Equity Dividend Fund | Russell 1000 Value Index |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 3-year return on equity     | 13.64                          | 13.69                    |
| 3-year dividend growth rate | 7.33                           | 5.09                     |
| Forward P/E ratio           | 12.50x                         | 16.70x                   |
| 3-year annualized return    | 7.99                           | 8.11                     |
| 3-year standard deviation   | 15.27                          | 16.20                    |

There is no guarantee that a company will continue to pay dividends. The 3-year dividend growth rate represents the median annual growth of the underlying stocks; it is not a dividend yield. Standard deviation is a measure of volatility of returns. Higher deviation represents higher volatility.

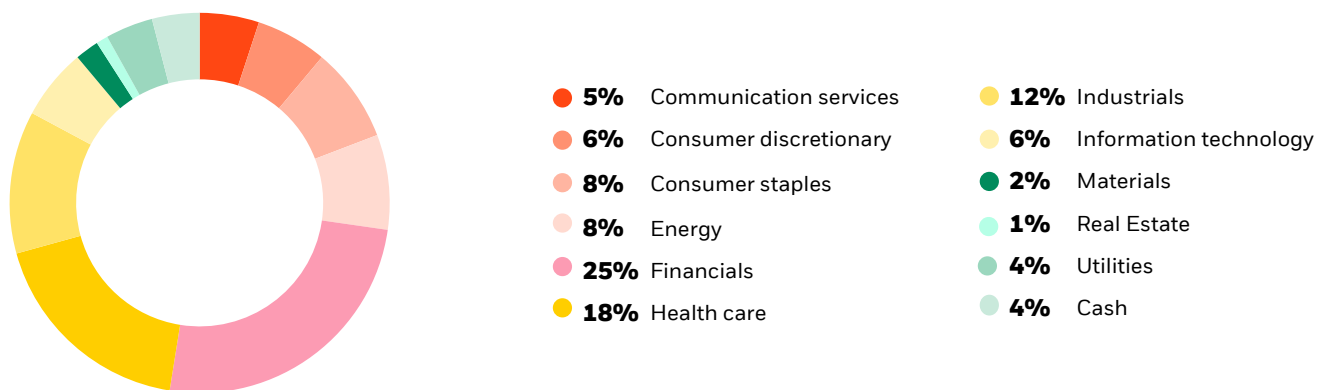
### Fund data based on Institutional shares, which may not be available to all investors; other share classes will vary.

Index performance is shown for illustrative purposes only. It is not possible to invest directly in an unmanaged index. **Performance data quoted represents past performance and is no guarantee of future results. Investment returns and principal values may fluctuate so that an investor's shares, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than their original cost. All returns assume reinvestment of dividends and capital gains. Current performance may be lower or higher than that shown. Refer to blackrock.com for most recent month-end performance.** Morningstar ranking based on total return of Institutional shares as of 03/31/24. Fund performance ranked against 895 funds since PM inception in August 2014.<sup>1</sup>

The Overall Morningstar Rating of 4 stars pertains to the fund's Institutional shares, rated against 1,118 Large Value Funds as of 03/31/24. Ratings are based on risk-adjusted total return and a weighted average of performance figures associated with Morningstar's 3-, 5- and 10-year rating metrics. Ratings are determined monthly and subject to change.<sup>2</sup>

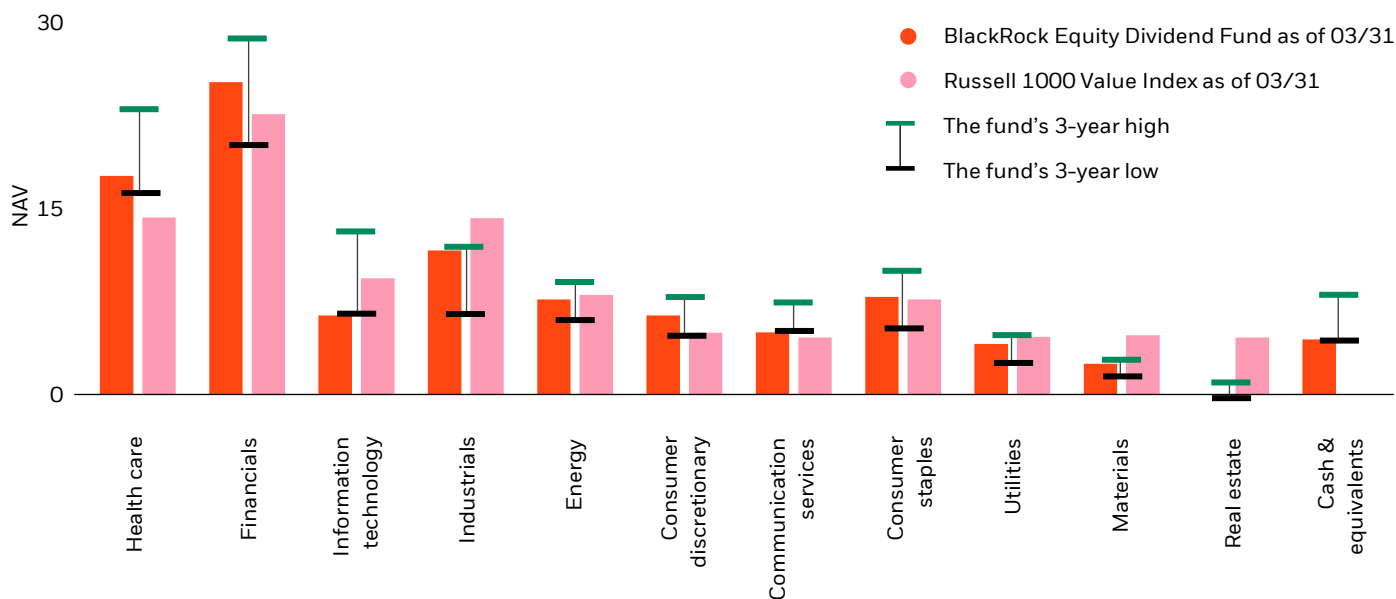
## Individual stock selection drives changes in sector allocation

In March we increased our exposure to the industrials sector, while decreasing holdings in financials.



## Allocations relative to the index and fund history

The fund is investing in a combination of attractively priced cyclicals and sectors with good stability characteristics.



## Dividend yields

| Largest holdings                   | % of net assets | Dividend yield (%) | Largest holdings                   | % of net assets | Dividend yield (%) |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| WELLS FARGO                        | 3.41            | 2.42               | GENERAL MOTORS                     | 2.32            | 4.52               |
| CITIGROUP INC                      | 3.31            | 3.35               | LEIDOS HOLDINGS INC                | 2.16            | 2.18               |
| AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL GROUP INC   | 2.72            | 1.84               | L3HARRIS TECHNOLOGIES INC          | 2.16            | 4.34               |
| SHELL PLC                          | 2.46            | 1.06               | KRAFT HEINZ                        | 2.16            | 3.93               |
| FIRST CITIZENS BANCSHARES INC CLAS | 2.35            | 0.40               | SS AND C TECHNOLOGIES HOLDINGS INC | 2.01            | 3.17               |

Yields shown relate to the individual securities and do not reflect the fund's dividend yield.

All data as of 03/31/24.

# New Year, Same Questions for U.S. Stocks

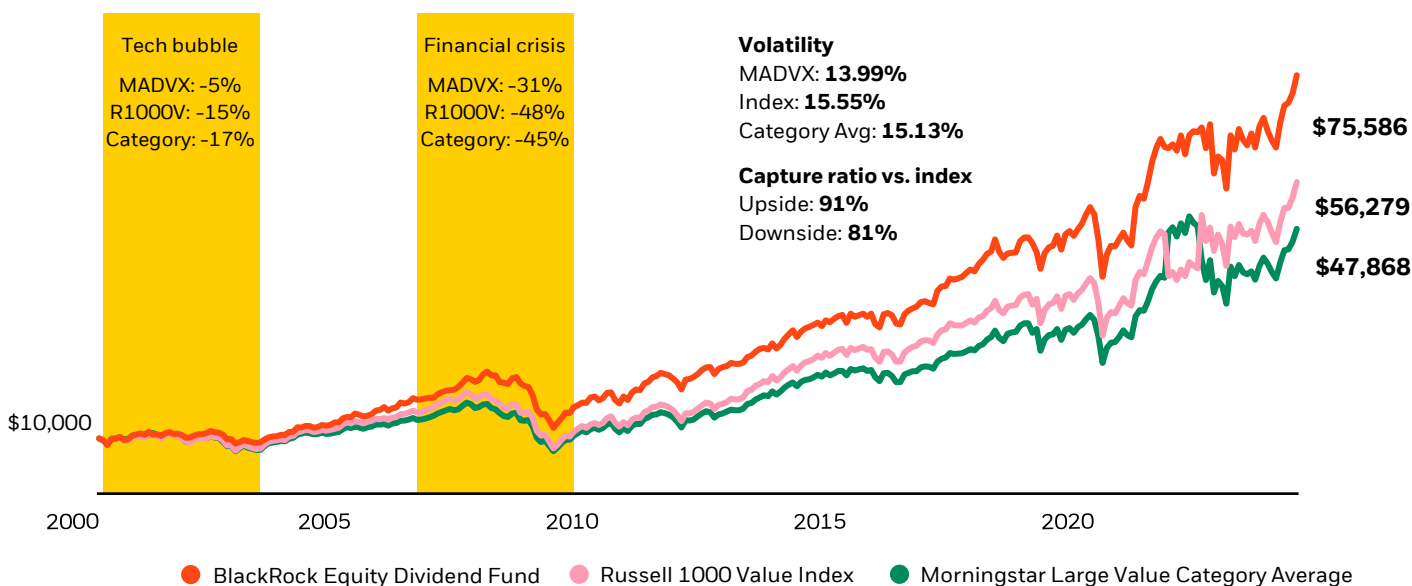
While the economy and stock market are not always linked, the strong run of economic data has led to renewed optimism for the US economy in 2024 which has translated into strong stock returns. While our team believes that the US economy can continue to be resilient and grow, we also see a narrow path for sustained growth at the current pace. In our view, the key measure to consider is “productivity”. If new technologies, such as generative AI, can help increase productivity at both the personnel and business level, this may help the US economy maintain its growth prospects barring other factors. That said, if productivity growth expectations are not met or the path proves volatile, we do not see many other avenues that can pick up the economic slack. This helps drive conviction in our view that we continue to be “late-cycle” in the U.S. economy. Additionally, many indicators remain such as: unemployment remaining generationally low and set to decline over time, savings rates among consumers continuing to be near all-time lows, and the yield curve continuing to be inverted. For investors, we continue to believe this is an environment best suited for “quality” companies, i.e. those who demonstrate consistent earnings, have strong balance sheets, and have savvy management teams among other characteristics. These companies should be well positioned to manage through the economic cycle, especially compared to companies with financially disadvantaged positions, such as levered balance sheets. In addition though, we feel valuation discipline is key given the high level of expectations, as measured by forward P/E, built into many companies at this stage. Lastly, while the election will get more airtime as the campaigns heat up, our team prefers to focus on the more secular “mega forces” which we think offers more interesting investment opportunities in the medium term, such as reshoring and AI/digitalization.



**Tony DeSpirito, JD**  
 Chief Investment Officer, US Fundamental Equities and Lead Portfolio Manager of the Equity Dividend Fund

**Portfolio Managers**  
 Tony DeSpirito, JD; David Zhao

## The fund has outperformed the market and its peers with less volatility



Source: Morningstar, January 2000 – March 2024. Fund data is based on Institutional shares. Performance reflects a hypothetical investment of \$10,000. Volatility is measured by annualized standard deviation. Capture ratios are based on monthly returns. Capture ratios measure a fund’s performance vs an index. An upside capture ratio above 100 indicates that a fund gained more than the index when the index generated positive returns. A downside capture ratio below 100 indicates that a fund has lost less than the index when the index generated negative returns.

## Average annual total returns (%) as of 03/31/24

|                                   | 1 Month<br>(not annualized) | YTD<br>(not annualized) | 1 Year | 3 Year | 5 Year | 10 Year | 30-day SEC yield as of 03/31* |              |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--------|--------|--------|---------|-------------------------------|--------------|
|                                   |                             |                         |        |        |        |         | Subsidized                    | Unsubsidized |
| Institutional                     | 2.49                        | 3.23                    | 13.23  | 8.71   | 10.20  | 9.47    | 1.99                          | 1.99         |
| Investor A (Without Sales Charge) | 2.45                        | 3.20                    | 12.93  | 8.45   | 9.92   | 9.19    | 1.68                          | 1.68         |
| Investor A (With Sales Charge)    | -2.93                       | -2.22                   | 7.00   | 6.52   | 8.74   | 8.61    | -                             | -            |
| Lipper Equity Income Funds Avg.†  | 3.12                        | 3.37                    | 13.82  | 8.83   | 9.56   | 8.56    | -                             | -            |
| Morningstar Large Value Funds     | 3.26                        | 3.60                    | 13.91  | 9.31   | 9.88   | 8.74    | -                             | -            |
| Russell 1000 Value Index‡         | 3.69                        | 3.80                    | 14.01  | 8.41   | 9.38   | 8.74    | -                             | -            |

**Data represents past performance and is no guarantee of future results. Investment returns and principal values may fluctuate so that an investor's shares, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than their original cost. All returns assume reinvestment of dividends and capital gains distributions. Current performance may be lower or higher than that shown. Investment returns reflect total fund operating expenses, net of all fees, waivers and/or expense reimbursements. Total/Net fund expenses, as stated in the fund's most recent prospectus, for Institutional shares: 0.70%/0.69%; for Investor A shares: 0.94%/0.93%. Institutional and Investor A shares have contractual waivers with an end date of 6/30/25, terminable upon 90 days' notice. Share classes have different sales charges, fees and other features. Investor A share has a maximum front-end sales charge of 5.25%. Institutional shares have no front- or back-end load. Institutional shares have limited availability and may be purchased at various minimums. See prospectus for details. Index performance is shown for illustrative purposes only. It is not possible to invest directly in an unmanaged index.**

**Important risks:** The fund is actively managed and its characteristics will vary. Stock and bond values fluctuate in price so the value of your investment can go down depending on market conditions. International investing involves special risks including, but not limited to political risks, currency fluctuations, illiquidity and volatility. These risks may be heightened for investments in emerging markets. The fund may use derivatives to hedge its investments or to seek to enhance returns. Derivatives entail risks relating to liquidity, leverage and credit that may reduce returns and increase volatility. The opinions expressed are those of the fund's portfolio management team as of March 31, 2024, and may change as subsequent conditions vary. Information and opinions are derived from proprietary and nonproprietary sources deemed by BlackRock to be reliable, are not necessarily all-inclusive and are not guaranteed as to accuracy. 1The fund outperformed 70% of peers over the 10 years (rated against 816 funds), 53% of peers over 5 years (rated against 1,058 funds) and 44% of peers over 1 year (rated against 1,118 funds). \* 30-day SEC Yield reflects the income earned by an investor in the fund during a 30-day period after deducting the fund's expenses. Unsubsidized SEC Yield represents what a fund's 30-day SEC Yield would have been had no fee waiver or expense reimbursement been in place during the period. † Lipper category is as of 03/31/24 and may not accurately represent the current composition of the portfolio. ‡ The Russell 1000 Value Index comprises the large-cap value segment of U.S. equities. BlackRock provides compensation in connection with obtaining or using third-party ratings and rankings. 2The 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 3-, 5-, and 10-year (if applicable) Morningstar Rating metrics. The weights are: 100% 3-year rating for 36-59 months of total returns, 60% 5-year rating/40% 3-year rating for 60-119 months of total returns, and 50% 10-year rating/30% 5-year rating/20% 3-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 3-year period actually has the greatest impact because it is included in all three rating periods. BlackRock Equity Dividend Fund received a Morningstar Rating of 3 stars for the 3-year period, 3 stars for the 5-year period and 4 stars for the 10-year period, rated against 1,118, 1,058 & 816 Large Value Funds, respectively. Performance results represent past performance and are no guarantee of future results. Ratings are for Institutional share class. Other classes may have different performance characteristics. BlackRock provides compensation in connection with obtaining or using third-party ratings and rankings.

**You should consider the investment objectives, risks, charges and expenses of the fund carefully before investing. The prospectus and, if available, the summary prospectus contain this and other information about the fund and are available, along with information on other BlackRock funds, by calling 800-882-0052 or from your financial professional. The prospectus should be read carefully before investing.**

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