



Meeder Investment Management Taps Abe Sheikh as New Co-CIO

Meeder Investment Management has been tactically managing portfolios since 1974. Our capabilities include mutual funds, investment portfolios, separately managed accounts, cash management solutions and investment consulting. Our team continues to refine our disciplines and develop solutions that stay true to our founding principal, no matter the market environment. It is because of our deep commitment to this principle that we have evolved into a client-focused firm specializing in custom solutions. We continue to add resources to ensure we deliver these solutions with unmatched responsiveness. The latest addition of expertise to join Meeder Investment Management is Co-Chief Investment Officer, Abe Sheikh, FSA.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

I have been in financial services industry for almost 18 years. Prior to joining Meeder, I served as Chief Investment Officer and Portfolio Manager at Cougar Global Investments, a global macro downside risk manager and affiliate of Raymond James Financial. Prior to that, I spent 11 years at J.P. Morgan Asset Management, during which I developed and managed a range of tactical asset allocation and factor based systematic strategies. While at JPMorgan, I was also responsible for retirement research geared toward their Target Date platform and Post-Retirement product development. I started my career as an Actuary at Willis Towers Watson—an actuarial consulting firm—where I developed and implemented a range of asset-liability models for a range of pension funds and insurance companies. I have a bachelor's degree in actuarial science from the London School of Economics and Political Science and a master's in computational finance from Carnegie Mellon University. I am also a fellow of the Society of Actuaries (FSA) and a Member of the American Academy of Actuaries (MAAA).

WHEN AT COUGAR GLOBAL, WHAT WAS YOUR PRIMARY FOCUS, AND WHAT FUNDS/PRODUCTS WERE OF NOTE?

As Chief Investment Officer and Portfolio Manager at Cougar Global, I was responsible for managing unconstrained tactical portfolios with over \$1.3 billion in assets. We offered five different macro strategies in two currencies (USD, CAD) that catered to institutional, high net-worth and retail clients with different risk profiles and constraints. I also managed the Carillon Cougar Tactical Allocation Fund—a U.S. listed mutual fund with top quartile performance over a one- and three-year basis, as calculated by Morningstar. Notably, our portfolios significantly outperformed our peers and

benchmark over the recession and financial market shock induced by the 2020 coronavirus pandemic. Our performance during this period was in the top decile of the Morningstar tactical allocation peer group.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE, WHAT DREW YOU TOWARD A ROLE WITH A TACTICAL FUND MANAGER?

I believe tactical managers—such as Meeder—that follow a disciplined strategy have the potential to add significant value to risk-aware clients, especially during periods of extreme market volatility. While most investors would like the upside potential offered by the stock market they are ill-prepared for the extreme volatility and downside risk that stocks typically also present. My previous experience developing and managing tactical strategies at Cougar Global and JPMorgan reinforce this belief. I am drawn to Meeder because of my desire to help clients successfully navigate their financial journey, specifically by protecting against large portfolio losses.

WHAT DO YOU FEEL ARE KEY THINGS TO LOOK AT WHEN EVALUATING THE MARKETS?

I look at a combination of fundamentals and technical factors when evaluating markets, the former when looking at an intermediate and long-term time frame, and the latter when looking at shorter-term market movements. In addition, I recognize that technological advances—such as high frequency and algorithmic trading—have fundamentally changed the investment landscape. Over the last 20 years, financial markets have become increasingly efficient at incorporating new information into asset prices. Consider how a single tweet can often lead to large almost instantaneous gains or losses in financial markets. Finally, I recognize that—post the financial crisis of 2008—central banks have become

very significant players, utilizing unconventional tools to bolster economic growth, often using large-scale asset purchases as their tool of choice.

WHY MEEDER INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT?

Meeder offers clients a truly unique value proposition, with a long history of superior risk-adjusted performance. I am attracted to the culture of collaboration, innovation, and growth that the firm has fostered since its founding. With a wide range of solutions to meet client demands for accumulation, preservation, and distribution of capital, I believe my professional experience and educational background is a great fit for the investment team and the firm. I look forward to partnering with clients to meet and exceed their long-term financial goals.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO ACCOMPLISHING IN 2020?

Professionally, I am looking forward to helping our clients navigate the extremely complex financial and economic environment that has resulted from the global coronavirus pandemic and accompanying recession. The situation is dynamic and—despite the concerted efforts of the central banks, governments, and health organizations—the investing environment remains extremely uncertain and risky. Together with the rest of the investment team at Meeder, we are looking to navigate these uncertain times with an eye towards minimizing large losses. Personally, I am looking forward to becoming a dad and getting settled in Columbus, Ohio!

WHAT ARE SOME PERSONAL INTERESTS THAT MAY BE OF NOTE?

I am an avid reader, tennis player, runner, traveler, and—in my spare time—enjoy exploring new cultures, languages, and cuisines!