

# Baird Chautauqua International Gr Instl CCWIX

This strategy's strengths are still intact.

## Morningstar's Take CCWIX

<b>Overall Morningstar Rating™</b>	★★★★		
378 US Fund Foreign Large Growth (31 May 2024)	3 Yr 378 funds	5 Yr 333 funds	10 Yr — funds
Morningstar Rating™	3★	5★	—
<b>Morningstar Medalist Rating™</b>	Bronze		
Analyst-Driven %	100.00		
Data Coverage %	100.00		

### Morningstar Pillars

Process (7 Jun 2024)	● Average
People (7 Jun 2024)	● Above Average
Parent (21 Feb 2024)	● High
Performance (7 Jun 2024)	
Price (7 Jun 2024)	

7 Jun 2024 | by William Samuel Rocco

Baird Chautauqua International Growth, which includes the US mutual fund as well as a US SMA, remains a worthy option for risk-tolerant long-term investors.

This strategy remains in good hands. Brian Beitner gradually gave up his comanager responsibilities on this strategy and its global sibling during 2022, and he retired at the end of that year. Comanagers Jesse Flores, Haicheng Li, and Nathaniel Velarde remain in place on both strategies, and they are well credentialed. Flores has comanaged the SMA versions of both strategies since late 2013, while Li and Velarde have served as comanagers on both since mid-2016 and mid-2019, respectively. Flores, Li, and Velarde have 17-22 years of investment experience each, and they have played important roles in the global strategy's long-term success.

Flores, Li, and Velarde continue to employ the same quality-driven and focused growth process as has always been used here (and at the global large

stock growth strategy). They strive to find quality growers that are poised to benefit from long-term global trends, enjoy durable competitive advantages, and have conservative accounting, healthy balance sheets, and shareholder alignment. They seek to purchase these companies at reasonable but not necessarily cheap valuations. They build portfolios of roughly 25-35 stocks and regularly allow their stock selection to lead to sizable sector and country overweightings—including hefty stakes in emerging markets—relative to peers and relevant indexes.

The strategy has posted subpar results during the year through May 2024. But the mutual fund version has earned strong results over three years, five years, and since its 2016 inception; the SMA has done the same since it opened at the start of 2009. That's encouraging, but the managers' focused process comes with risks, and the strategy has been pretty volatile over time, so it is best suited for investors with long time horizons comfortable with some rough spells.

**Process** ● Average | William Samuel Rocco | 7 Jun 2024

The current three-person team uses the same quality-driven and focused growth process that has always been in place here.

The team initially screens non-US stocks based on various growth and profitability metrics to identify those that are poised to benefit from long-term trends. The team then dives into prospective holdings to find those with durable competitive advantages. It also prefers firms with conservative accounting, healthy balance sheets, and shareholder alignment, and it considers how each firm's regional and currency exposure may affect its business. The team seeks these firms at reasonable but not necessarily cheap valuations, comparing future cash flow estimates with the current cost of the business. If it determines that an appealing stock is too expensive, that stock sits on a watchlist until its price reaches an attractive level. The team

constructs a focused portfolio of 25-35 stocks and often allows its stock selection to lead to sizable sector and country overweightings versus relevant indexes and peers.

This approach, which the team also uses for its global strategy, is reasonable. But it comes with significant issue, sector, and country risks, and the current team has been executing it without its architect—former comanager Brian Beitner—for only roughly 18 months. The strategy earns an Average Process rating.


The team runs a focused portfolio of roughly 25-35 stocks, and the mutual fund owned 30 stocks and devoted 47% of its assets to its top 10 names as of March 2024. The team favors higher-quality growers, and it readily loads up on sectors and countries that are packed with such names. The mutual fund had a 35.4% stake in technology and a 15.4% position in healthcare as of March, versus 21.3% and 13.3% for its typical rival and 21.0% and 12.0% for the MSCI ACWI ex USA Growth Index, respectively. Two Danish healthcare names—Novo Nordisk and Coloplast Holdings—were top-15 holdings, and the mutual fund had a 12.0% weighting in Denmark overall versus 5.4% for its typical rival and 4.3% for the index. The mutual fund also had far more exposure to Canada than its average peer and the index. The team continues to invest meaningfully in emerging-markets stocks that meet its criteria, and the mutual fund had relatively sizable positions in India and Indonesia. The mutual fund had no exposure to basic materials or energy names and no exposure to German or UK stocks. Its average peer and the index have 9.6% and 8.4% stakes in those two sectors combined and 17.9% and 12.8% positions in those two markets combined, respectively. (The SMA owned the same 30 names as the mutual fund as of March.)

**People** ● Above Average | William Samuel Rocco | 7 Jun 2024

This strategy remains in good hands. Brian Beitner gave up his comanager positions on this strategy as

well as a global large-stock growth strategy and retired in December 2022, as expected. Beitner launched this strategy in 2006 while at TCW Group, and he spent more than 40 years in the investment field. But his transition off the strategy was smooth—he relinquished his responsibilities gradually during 2022—and comanagers Jesses Flores, Haicheng Li, and Nathaniel Velarde remain in place and are well-credentialed. Flores comanaged the SMA versions of this strategy and the global strategy with Beitner for nine years, while Li and Velarde served as managers alongside Beitner and Flores on the strategies for roughly 6.5 and 3.5 years, respectively. Flores, Li, and Velarde, who have 17-22 years of investment experience each, are very well versed in the focused quality-growth process that is used at both strategies and have played major roles in their long-term success.

The already small team is even smaller without Beitner, of course, but it remains reasonably sized given that it uses only one process and runs only two strategies. The two strategies are concentrated, have lots of portfolio overlap, and own a limited number of names in aggregate. The strategy retains its Above Average People rating.

**Parent**  High | William Samuel Rocco | 21 Feb 2024

Baird merits a High Parent rating.

Although Robert W. Baird and Co.'s origins date to 1919, its Milwaukee-based asset-management business has over the past 25 years grown into an industry stalwart through deft talent acquisition. In early 2000, Mary Ellen Stanek and her team joined to form the fixed-income-focused Baird Advisors. With modest fees and an effective, benchmark-aware approach, its taxable bond team now runs the lion's share of Baird's assets under management. The firm bolstered its municipal bond expertise in mid-2015 and in August 2019, and that part of the business now has considerable promise, too.

Although not as big or extensive in its lineup as its fixed-income counterpart, Baird Equity Asset Management has also opportunistically added key personnel. It purchased the international and global growth equity team of Chautauqua Capital Management in 2016 and in late 2021 strengthened ties with proven investor Joseph

Milano, formerly of T. Rowe Price, while removing a small-value team that had struggled over the prior decade.

Succession bears monitoring. Indeed, Stanek and her co-CIO Warren Pierson are part of Baird Advisors' founding generation whose members each have nearly 40 if not more years of experience. That's offset, however, by a collaborative, team-based approach that should leave investors in good hands well after that generation's retirement.

**Performance** | William Samuel Rocco | 7 Jun 2024

This strategy has been held back by some of its emerging-markets and other holdings during the past year. The institutional share class of the mutual fund returned just 7.3% during the 12 months through May 2024, whereas its typical foreign large-growth Morningstar Category peer gained 14.9% and the MSCI ACWI ex USA Growth Index the category benchmark returned 13.0%.

But the strategy has often fared better in the past, particularly when growth stocks thrive overseas. The institutional share class of the mutual fund has comfortably outpaced its average peer and the benchmark over three years, over five years, and since its April 2016 inception. From May 1, 2016, through May 31, 2024, that share class earned an annualized return of 9.1%, while its typical rival and the benchmark posted 7.1% and 6.8% annualized returns, respectively. And though the strategy has been pretty volatile over time, owing to its limited number of holdings and other bold traits, the institutional share class of the mutual fund has posted better Morningstar Risk-Adjusted Returns than its average peer and the index over three years, over five years, and since its April 2016 inception.

The SMA version of the strategy has posted strong returns since its inception at the start of 2009, albeit with ample volatility.

**Price** | William Samuel Rocco | 7 Jun 2024

It's critical to evaluate expenses, as they come directly out of returns. Based on our assessment of the fund's People, Process, and Parent Pillars in the context of these expenses, we think this share class will be able to deliver positive alpha relative to the category benchmark index, explaining its Morningstar Medalist Rating of Bronze.

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The Analyst-Driven % data point displays the weighted percentage of a vehicle's pillar ratings assigned directly or indirectly by analysts. For example, if the People and Parent ratings are assigned directly or indirectly by analysts but the Process rating is assigned algorithmically, the Analyst-Driven % for an actively managed vehicle would disclose that 55% of the pillar weight was assigned by analysts and the Analyst-Driven % for a passively managed vehicle would disclose that 20% of the pillar weight was assigned by analysts.

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The Morningstar Medalist Rating is the summary expression of Morningstar's forward-looking analysis of

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### Equities

Equities are typically subject to greater fluctuations in market value than other asset classes due to factors such as a company's business performance, investor perceptions, stock market trends and general economic conditions. Stocks of small or mid-sized companies involve additional risks; such companies may have a higher risk of failure, are not as well established as larger blue-chip companies, and have historically experienced a greater degree of market volatility than the overall market average.

### International/Emerging Markets Securities Risk

Investing in international securities involves special additional risks. These risks include, but are not limited to, currency risk, political risk, and risk associated with varying accounting standards. Investing in emerging markets may accentuate these risks.

### Liquidity Risk

Trading may be halted due to market conditions, impacting an investor's ability to sell a security.

### Market Price Risk

The market price of securities traded on the secondary

market is subject to the forces of supply and demand and thus independent of the NAV. This can result in the market price trading at a premium or discount to the NAV, which will affect an investor's value.

### Market Risk

The market prices of securities can fluctuate as a result of several factors, such as security-specific factors or general investor sentiment. Therefore, investors should be aware of the prospect of market fluctuations and the impact it may have on the market price.

### Non-Diversified Strategies

Portfolios that invest a significant percentage of assets in a single issuer involve additional risks, including share price fluctuations, because of the increased concentration of investments.

### Sector Strategies

Portfolios that invest exclusively in one sector or industry involve additional risks. The lack of industry diversification subjects the investor to increased industry-specific risks.

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The average annual total returns for the Institutional Class of the Baird Chautauqua International Growth Fund as of May 31, 2024, are 7.31% for the one-year, 10.52% for the five-year and 8.88% since its April 15, 2016, inception date. The expense ratio of the Institutional Class is 0.80%.

The average annual total returns for the MSCI ACWI ex-U.S. Index as of May 31, 2024, are 16.74% for the one-year, 6.81% for the five-year and 6.55% since the fund's inception.

[Click here](#) for the most recent Morningstar rating and performance for Baird Chautauqua International Growth Fund.

The Fund may hold fewer securities than other diversified funds, which increases the risk and volatility because each investment has a greater effect on the overall performance. Foreign investments involve additional risks such as currency rate fluctuations and the potential for political and economic instability, and different and sometimes less strict financial reporting standards and regulations.

The MSCI ACWI ex-U.S. Index® is a free float-adjusted market capitalization weighted index that is designed to measure the equity market performance of developed and emerging markets excluding the United States.

The Fund focuses on growth-style stocks and therefore the performance of the Fund will typically be more volatile than the performance of funds that focus on types of stocks that have a broader investment style.