

## Press Releases

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### **Progress Investment Management Company Announces Management Buyout**

*Newly Independent Manager of Emerging Managers Hits the Ground Running*

SAN FRANCISCO, April 5, 2004. - Progress Investment Management Company announced today that its senior management team has successfully negotiated the purchase of the firm from Columbia Management Group, the investment management arm of FleetBoston Financial. FleetBoston Financial on April 1 merged with Bank of America Corporation. Terms of the transaction were not disclosed. The Progress senior management team was advised on this transaction by Colchester Partners LLC.

Progress, founded in 1990, is the oldest and the largest U.S. firm to specialize in the identification and management of high performance emerging investment managers. Progress was acquired in 1998 by Liberty Financial, and subsequently became part of Columbia Management Group when the asset management businesses of Liberty Financial were acquired in 2001.

"We are, naturally, quite excited and pleased that we were able to take advantage of an opportunity to buy Progress and regain our fully independent status," Thurman V. White, President of Progress, said today. "Our team has finally accomplished a long-sought goal: to reclaim our legacy as the original minority employee-owned manager of emerging managers, a legacy that we fully intend to build upon going forward.

"Beyond regaining our independence, nothing has changed at our firm," Mr. White noted. "Our management team has created a financially stable organization that is completely prepared to continue serving the interests of our blue chip roster of pension fund clients. If anything, ownership of the firm by our employees will strongly motivate us to even better align our interests with the interests of our clients.

"I would stress that managing emerging managers is not a 'sideline' business for us, but our sole focus and one that we've maintained for many years," he said. "We're not pension consultants, not an investment bank, and not a broker/dealer. One advantage of being independent is that we have no inherent conflicts of interest, so we can be completely objective in the advice and the service we provide."

Currently, Progress funds 59 emerging managers in 11 multi-manager investment strategies, and 11 partnership funds in a private equity fund-of-funds strategy. In 2003, eight of its equity multi-manager strategies outperformed their respective benchmarks (gross of fees). Progress uses investment strategies encompassing domestic equities, across all styles and capitalization ranges, domestic fixed income, international equity and alternative investments, principally private equity. Progress presently has \$3.8 billion under management.

"We have funded more emerging managers in more products, in more asset classes and more

diverse portfolios for more pension plan sponsors than anyone in this market niche," said Mr. White. "In fact, we helped to create this niche back in 1990, when there were only three such firms in existence. Today, we are the only one of the original three to remain in this business.

"The emerging manager market niche is growing rapidly, with many more searches than in the past, partly because more pension plans appreciate the added value that emerging managers can provide," Mr. White went on to say. "Given our experience and energy, our deep and lasting familiarity with plans sponsors and their needs, and the strong commitment of our employees and management team, we are well positioned to participate and lead the growth of this market niche for many years to come."

### **Progress Investment Management Company**

Founded in 1990 and headquartered in San Francisco, Progress Investment Management Company creates diversified, risk-controlled multi-manager investment funds in a variety of asset classes for institutional clients. Progress specializes in working with smaller, entrepreneurial money management firms with innovative investment strategies. Progress manages \$3.8 billion in assets in public equities and fixed income securities as well as private equity and hedge funds. The firm is recognized as a leader in identifying, managing and assisting emerging investment management firms.

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