

## **Fourth Quarter 2024 Market Review**

After surging in November, equities both at home and abroad saw a significant downturn in December. While most U.S. stock sectors finished Fourth Quarter 2024 in the black, international stocks mostly finished in the red.

For the quarter, the S&P 500 index of U.S. large cap stocks gained 2.41%, while the Russell 2000 index of U.S. small stocks gained 0.33%. The Russell Micro Cap index enjoyed a gain of 5.89%.

Meanwhile, international stocks saw significant downturns, as political upheaval abroad unsettled equity markets. The MSCI EAFE index of large stocks in Europe, Australasia and the Far East fell 8.11% in the fourth quarter, while the MSCI EAFE small stock index declined 8.36%.

Alternative asset classes also struggled during the quarter. The Dow Jones U.S. REIT (real estate stock) index dropped 5.93%, while Dow Jones Global REIT index fell 16.09%. Meanwhile, the MSCI Emerging Markets index dropped 8.01%.

Fixed income also saw slight declines for the quarter. The Bloomberg U.S. Govt/Credit Intermediate-term bond index declined 1.60%, while the Bloomberg Municipal bond index fell 1.22%.

While Fourth Quarter was something of a rollercoaster for stocks, 2024 proved a banner year for equities, especially in the U.S. Despite "expert" predictions of major declines that permeated the airwaves and online sites to start the year, stocks once again shrugged off the predictions of their demise. It has been said in the past that "stocks climb a wall of worry" and 2024 proved that old adage correct yet again.