



# Gladstone Investment Corp. (GAIN)

Updated February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024 by Jonathan Weber

## Key Metrics

<b>Current Price:</b>	\$15	<b>5 Year CAGR Estimate:</b>	3.3%	<b>Market Cap:</b>	\$530M
<b>Fair Value Price:</b>	\$11	<b>5 Year Growth Estimate:</b>	3.0%	<b>Ex-Dividend Date:</b>	03/22/24 <sup>1</sup>
<b>% Fair Value:</b>	139%	<b>5 Year Valuation Multiple Estimate:</b>	-6.4%	<b>Dividend Payment Date:</b>	03/30/24 <sup>2</sup>
<b>Dividend Yield:</b>	6.4%	<b>5 Year Price Target</b>	\$13	<b>Years Of Dividend Growth:</b>	2
<b>Dividend Risk Score:</b>	F	<b>Retirement Suitability Score:</b>	D	<b>Rating:</b>	Hold

## Overview & Current Events

Gladstone Investment is a business development company (BDC) that focuses on US-based small- and medium-sized companies. Industries which Gladstone Investment targets include aerospace & defense, oil & gas, machinery, electronics, and media & communications. The company was founded in 2005 and is headquartered in McLean, VA.

Gladstone Investment reported its third quarter (Q3 2023 ended December 31) earnings results on February 6. The company generated total investment income - Gladstone Investment's revenue equivalent - of \$23.1 million during the quarter, which represents an increase of 7% compared to the prior quarter. This number missed the analyst consensus estimate by \$0.7 million, as analysts expected a stronger performance for the company's top line.

Gladstone Investment's adjusted net investment income-per-share totaled \$0.26 during the fiscal third quarter. That was up 8% from the previous quarter's level. Gladstone Investment's net asset value per share totaled \$13.01 on a per-share basis at the end of the quarter, which was down compared to the NAV-per-share that the company reported at the end of the previous quarter. Following a NIIPS decline in fiscal 2020, Gladstone Investment has seen its NIIPS recover meaningfully and hit new record highs in fiscal 2021 and fiscal 2022. It is expected that Gladstone's earnings-per-share will decline during the current fiscal year, however.

## Growth on a Per-Share Basis

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2028
<b>NIIPS</b>	\$0.68	\$0.73	\$0.75	\$0.68	\$0.74	\$0.77	\$0.90	\$0.69	\$1.00	\$1.10	<b>\$0.90</b>	<b>\$1.04</b>
<b>DPS</b>	\$0.60	\$0.71	\$0.73	\$0.75	\$0.75	\$0.82	\$0.84	\$0.84	\$0.90	\$0.96	<b>\$0.96</b>	<b>\$1.06</b>
<b>Shares<sup>3</sup></b>	26	26	30	30	33	33	33	33	33	34	<b>34</b>	<b>35</b>

Gladstone Investment's net investment income per share is quite lumpy. During the financial crisis the company's profits declined substantially, but Gladstone Investment remained profitable. Over the last five years profits grew by 4.3% annually, which is not a very high growth rate, but which is also not at all disappointing for a high-yielding investment.

Gladstone Investment's business model is relatively straightforward. The company lends money to small- and mid-sized companies. Position sizes for debt investments usually range from \$5 million to \$30 million. The company also takes equity stakes in such companies, with position sizes for equity investments typically ranging from \$10 million to \$40 million. The companies Gladstone does business with usually cannot access debt or equity markets directly, as bond sales and public listings are not possible for them due to their small size. Gladstone makes its money via spreads between the interest rates the company pays on cash that it borrows, and the interest rates it receives on cash that it lends - the same principle as with banks. Interest rates can result in some up and downswings in the company's net investment income, but Gladstone Investment's weighted average interest yield has been very strong in the past on average, with a weighted average interest rate of well above 10%. 2020 was a year with higher loan losses due to the pandemic, but the pandemic was not a long-term headwind for the company, as the company quickly recovered.

<sup>1</sup> Estimated date

<sup>2</sup> Estimated date

<sup>3</sup> In Millions

Disclosure: This analyst has no position in the security discussed in this research report, and no plans to initiate one in the next 72 hours.



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## Valuation Analysis

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Now	2028
<b>P/NII</b>	10.7	10.5	10.2	11.9	12.8	15.3	8.9	17.8	16.1	12.1	<b>16.7</b>	<b>12.0</b>
<b>Avg. Yld.</b>	8.2%	9.2%	10.1%	9.3%	7.9%	7.0%	10.5%	6.8%	5.6%	7.2%	<b>6.4%</b>	<b>8.5%</b>

Gladstone Investment has been valued at a low-double-digit price to net investment income multiple throughout the majority of the last decade. Today, shares trade at more than 16x net profits, using our estimate for the current fiscal year. We believe that multiple contraction will be a headwind for the company's total returns, since we expect that the company's valuation will compress over the coming years.

## Safety, Quality, Competitive Advantage, & Recession Resiliency

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2028
<b>Payout</b>	88.2%	97.3%	103%	110%	101%	106%	93.3%	122%	90.0%	87.3%	<b>107%</b>	<b>102%</b>

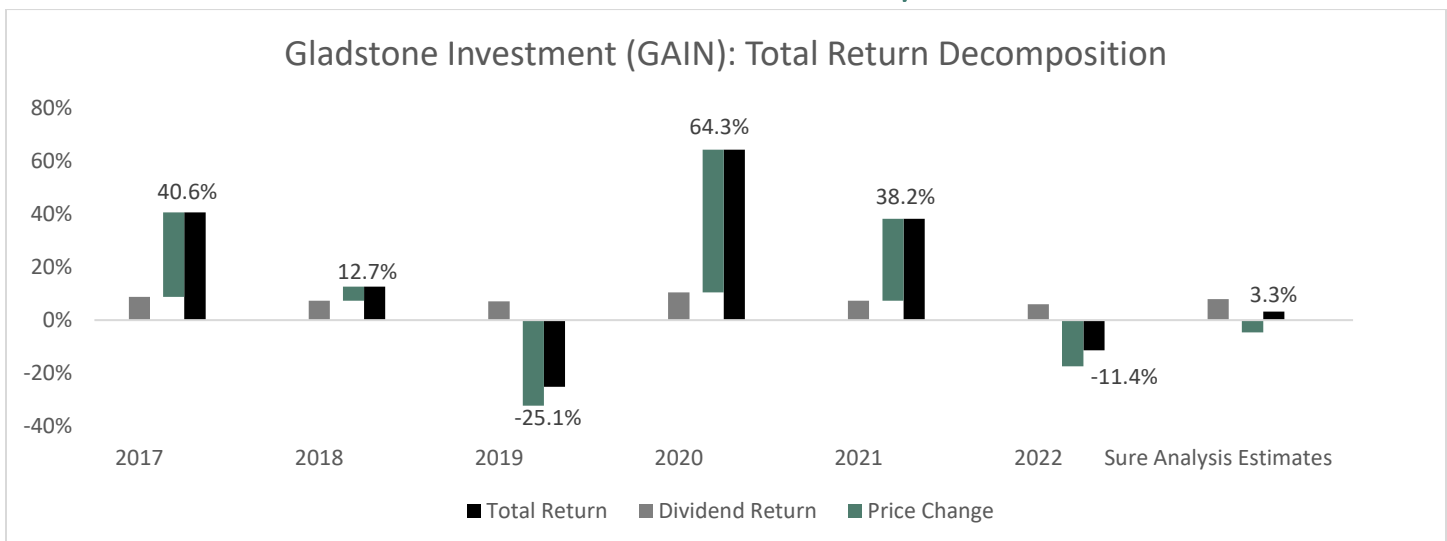
Gladstone Investment's dividend payout ratio, relative to its net investment income, has been close to or above 100% throughout several years over the last decade. The company usually is more profitable than the net investment income metric suggests, due to the fact that Gladstone Investment can also generate gains from its equity investments, which are not reflected in the net investment income metric. The company nevertheless had to cut its dividend during the last financial crisis, but a dividend cut was avoided during the pandemic.

Gladstone Investment's equity investment gains explain the company's long-term book value growth. Gladstone Investment's recession performance is not very compelling compared to less cyclical income stocks, but at least the company remained profitable during the last financial crisis, unlike many other financial corporations. We also see Gladstone remaining profitable during the current global crisis, but profits will be down from prior highs.

## Final Thoughts & Recommendation

Gladstone Investment is a business development company targeting small companies that do not have the ability to access debt and/or equity markets easily. This allows Gladstone to demand above-average interest rates. The company does not generate a lot of growth, but the high payout ratio allows for an above-average dividend yield. Right now, shares trade above fair value, which is why we rate Gladstone Investment a hold at current prices.

## Total Return Breakdown by Year



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## Income Statement Metrics

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Revenue	(1)	51	29	49	65	99	8	49	99	33
SG&A Exp.	3	3	4	4	4	6	6	6	6	7
D&A Exp.	(1)	50	25	45	61	82	(7)	42	102	36
Net Profit	138.0%	98.7%	85.3%	90.6%	92.9%	82.2%	-90.4%	87.1%	103.2%	108.9%
Net Margin	(34)	(98)	4	33	(30)	94	35	(30)	37	(5)
Free Cash Flow	(1)	51	29	49	65	99	8	49	99	33

## Balance Sheet Metrics

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total Assets	331	484	503	515	611	635	576	644	740	766
Cash & Equivalents	5	5	4	3	4	2	3	2	14	3
Total Liabilities	110	210	224	214	257	228	207	261	295	326
Long-Term Debt	67	124	100	75	113	58	54	151	261	293
Shareholder's Equity	221	273	279	301	354	407	369	382	446	440
LTD/E Ratio	0.30	0.45	0.36	0.25	0.32	0.14	0.15	0.40	0.59	0.67

## Profitability & Per Share Metrics

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Return on Assets	-0.4%	12.3%	5.0%	8.8%	10.8%	13.1%	-1.2%	7.0%	14.8%	4.7%
Return on Equity	-0.6%	20.3%	9.0%	15.4%	18.5%	21.4%	-1.9%	11.3%	24.7%	8.0%
ROIC	-0.4%	14.7%	6.4%	11.9%	14.4%	17.5%	-1.6%	8.9%	16.5%	4.9%
Shares Out.	26	26	30	30	33	33	33	33	33	34
Revenue/Share	(0.04)	1.91	0.96	1.63	2.02	3.02	0.24	1.47	2.99	0.98
FCF/Share	(1.27)	(3.66)	0.13	1.08	(0.92)	2.85	1.07	(0.90)	1.10	(0.14)

Note: All figures in millions of U.S. Dollars unless per share or indicated otherwise.

## Disclaimer

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