

P R E S S R E L E A S E

2006 S&P Fund Awards: Sal. Oppenheim takes several top spots

Vienna, 28 February 2006. The 2006 awards season has proven to be more than successful for Sal. Oppenheim so far. Three of the Bank's products scooped first place in the sector categories of the 2006 S&P Fund Awards presented yesterday in Vienna.

In the "Fixed Income Global Emerging Markets" category, Sal. Oppenheim's WIP Emerging Markets Fixed Income Fund AX (USD) was awarded first over a one-year period. With performance of 193% over the past seven years, the fund made a key contribution to the improvement in the risk-return ratio of the portfolios. The WIP Emerging Markets Fixed Income Fund has been persistently outperforming its benchmark index since its launch, putting it in the top quartile across all periods, i.e. among the top 25% in its investment class. "Particularly in the demanding emerging markets bond segment, a very high degree of expertise is required to avoid investing in potential crisis hot spots", explained Andreas Lessmann, Head of Mutual Funds at Sal. Oppenheim jr. & Cie. Austria, with respect to the exceptional achievement of the bond team at Oppenheim Pramerica, the joint venture between Sal. Oppenheim and Prudential Financial.

The WIP U.S. Aggressive Growth Fund A (USD) was also rated the best in its class (Smaller Companies N America, over one-year). "The renaissance of growth stocks from small and medium-sized companies is a confirmation of the attractiveness of the current US economy", said Lessmann.

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The top marks awarded for the Medical BioHe@lth-Trends biotechnology fund, in the five-year period, are almost a matter of course. After all in the past few weeks, along with the S&P Fund Awards, this fund has also received the highest accolades for fund management quality from both the rating and research company, Feri, and at the 2006 Lipper Fund Awards. “Medical BioHe@lth-Trends was our way of focussing on highly innovative small and mid caps, and has allowed us to very successfully occupy a niche in the fund segment”, remarked Lessmann on the extremely successful performance of the fund. Forecasts, after all, indicate that in particular the healthcare market with smaller and medium-sized companies will display considerable growth in the future. “Despite the fact that the majority of product innovations are being developed in this sector and that investments in this area offer an opportunity to reap the maximum benefit from the long-term trend in healthcare stocks, only a handful of investment companies have moved into this market thus far”, explained Lessmann.

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