
Honorable Mention

By Editorial Staff Thu, Feb 14, 2019

Murphy succeeds Reynolds at Great-West, Investors flock to emerging market ETFs: TrimTabs, AIG garners DALBAR awards.

Murphy succeeds Reynolds at Great-West

Edmund F. Murphy III, 56, will succeed Robert L. Reynolds as President and CEO of Great-West Life & Annuity Insurance Company (GWL&A), the US subsidiary of Great-West Lifeco Inc. and the parent of Empower Retirement, according to a release this week.

Reynolds will shift to a new role as Chair of Great-West Lifeco U.S. LLC. He will remain president and CEO of Boston-based Putnam Investments, also a subsidiary of Great-West Lifeco US.

Last month the company announced it had agreed to sell, through reinsurance, substantially all of its individual life insurance and annuity business to Protective Life.

Murphy will assume leadership of all of GWL&A, which has \$544 billion in assets for approximately 9.2 million customers (as of 12/31/18), and includes Empower Retirement, Great-West Investments and the company's individual life insurance and annuity businesses. Murphy will remain president of Empower Retirement and will report directly to Great-West Lifeco President and CEO Paul Mahon.

Empower, the nation's second largest retirement service provider after Fidelity, was formed in 2014 and serves approximately 39,000 retirement plans sponsors.

Before his 2014 appointment as president of Empower, Murphy had served as managing director of the Defined Contribution and Investment-Only business at Putnam Investments since 2009 and served on the firm's Operating Committee. Previously, he held executive roles at Fidelity Investments in its institutional, private equity and retail businesses. He spent six years before that at Merrill Lynch.

Murphy holds a bachelor's degree from Boston College and is a graduate of the General Manager Program at Harvard Business School.

AIG garners DALBAR awards

AIG Life & Retirement's Individual Retirement business has received multiple customer

service awards for annuity excellence from DALBAR, an independent organization for evaluating, auditing and rating business practices, customer performance, product quality and service in the financial services industry.

AIG's Individual Retirement business was the only recipient of the DALBAR Communications Seal of Excellence for superior annuity policyholder communications this year, according to a release.

AIG received the top ranking for its variable annuity statements for the 17th consecutive year. For the 12th consecutive year, AIG received the DALBAR Annuity Service Award for its delivery of "consistent, best-in-class" customer service through its contact center.

Investors flock to emerging market ETFs: TrimTabs

Money has been flooding into emerging markets assets in the wake of the Federal Reserve's dramatic shift in monetary policy, according to a report this week from TrimTabs research.

Emerging markets bond exchange-traded funds have been drawing record inflows. Emerging Markets bond ETFs added \$900 million (3.0% of assets) on the five trading days ended Friday, February 8, and the inflow of \$1.5 billion (5.1% of assets) on the five days ended Tuesday, February 5 was the biggest five-day inflow on record. Inflows have occurred on all but two trading days this year.

Emerging Markets equity ETFs issued \$2.7 billion (1.5% of assets) on the past five trading days, and the inflows of \$3.5 billion (1.9% of assets) on the five trading days ended February 5 was the biggest five-day inflow since April 2014. These funds have not had a single daily outflow since late December.

"Demand for emerging markets assets has exploded as the Fed has turned dovish," said David Santschi, director of liquidity research at TrimTabs Investment Research. "Traders are playing the Powell put aggressively, although they seem to prefer broad exposure rather than bets on particular regions."

Latin America was the most popular emerging markets region last week as a percentage of assets. Latin America equity ETFs added \$200 million (2.0% of assets).