

Home JPMorgan Exec Trims Stake by \$1.2 Million

By Avi Salzman 760 words 20 April 2009 Barron's Online BON English

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Tables: Buyers | Sellers

INSIDERS AT MAJOR financial institutions made waves a few months ago when they bought millions of dollars in their own companies' stock even as the market was forecasting their doom. The bets paid off -- bank stocks have since rebounded and helped lead the market through its recent rally.

But last week, a managing director at JPMorgan Chase (ticker: JPM) expressed a different sentiment, selling \$1.2 million worth of shares after the stock more than doubled in the past six weeks.

Managing director James Staley, who oversees asset management on the company's executive committee, sold 37,000 shares on Friday for \$1.2 million, or about \$32.92 per share. The sale was Staley's most lucrative since last May and it decreased his holdings by about 7%. He owns less than 1% of the company's stock.

JPMorgan did not respond to requests for comment.

JPMorgan, like other financial firms, saw insider buying in January. Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Jamie Dimon bought 500,000 shares on Jan. 16 for \$11.5 million, or about \$22.93 per share. JPMorgan shares continued falling after Dimon's buy -- hitting a multiyear low of \$14.96 on March 6 -- before climbing back up again in the past few weeks.

They have now more than doubled since they hit their low, getting another boost on Thursday after the company reported better-than-expected earnings for the first quarter.

Shares were off 11% on Monday during a down day for the market and bank stocks in particular.

Staley's sale is troubling, says Jonathan Moreland, research director at InsiderInsights.com, which publishes a newsletter with insider and investment analysis.

"For a managing director at this point to sell that much of his stock when it's still clearly far below its yearly high is frankly not a good sign," he says in an interview. "What the sales have done in my opinion is to make this another conflicted insider profile."

He says Dimon's buy was a positive indicator for the stock, though Moreland was still cautious on JPMorgan in January given all the uncertainties in the sector. Also, Dimon's purchase needs to be evaluated in light of the executive's high profile and wealth.

"Jamie Dimon met the threshold of significance but, let's face it, this is a gentleman with a lot of means," he says. "For him, \$11.5 million isn't as much as it would be for a mere mortal in the executive suite."

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COMPANY NAME INSIDERS NAME TITLE $ VALUE NO. OF SHARES IN TRANS.
RANGE OF VALUES TRANSACTIONS DATES
Chimera Investment P. Donlin D $300,000 100,000
3.00 Apr. 15, 2009
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Fortress Interna 0.90				Rosato	CEO	135,000	150,000	
Suffolk Bancorp 26.40				Goodale	D	105,600	4,000	
National Beverag				Conlee	D	101,444	10,000	
9.98-10.25								
Greenbrier Cos			W.	Furman	CEO	92,427	13,990	
6.38-6.65	Apr.	16,	2009					
Seneca Foods			K.	Kayser	CEO	47,470	2,000	
Seneca Foods 23.74	Apr.	16,	2009					
					CEO	29 <b>,</b> 775	2,500	
Winmark 11.91	Apr.	16,	2009					
Vestin Realty Mo					CEO	19,630	7 <b>,</b> 225	
2.68-2.75	Apr.	15-1	16, 20	009				
Chase			P.	Chase	CEO	17,120	2,000	
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24.49-24.50	Apr.	1/ <b>,</b>	2009					
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Boston Scientifi	.c J.	Abel	Le	D				
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Adtran								8.99-9.01
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