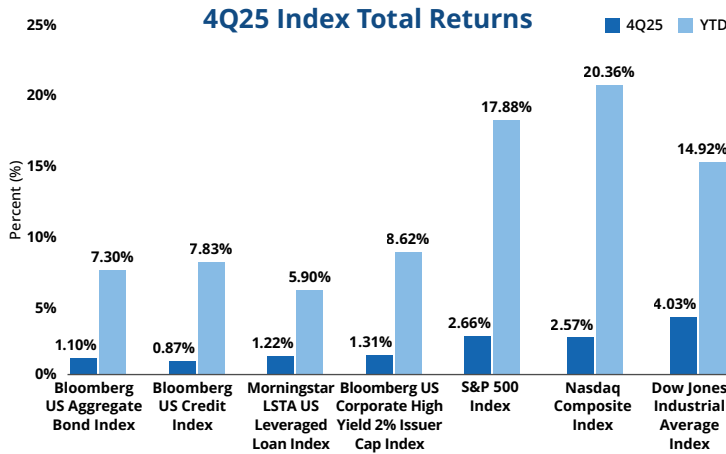




Class A
PLSTX

Class C
PLCNX

Class I-2
PLSFX



Index	4Q25	YTD
Bloomberg US Aggregate Bond Index	1.10%	7.30%
Bloomberg US Credit Index	0.87%	7.83%
Morningstar LSTA US Leveraged Loan Index	1.22%	5.90%
Bloomberg US Corporate High Yield 2% Issuer Cap Index	1.31%	8.62%
S&P 500 Index	2.66%	17.88%
Nasdaq Composite Index	2.57%	20.36%
Dow Jones Industrial Average Index	4.03%	14.92%

Source: Bloomberg as of 12/31/25.

Market Review

U.S. equity and fixed-income markets generated positive total returns in the final quarter of 2025, but softening macro data muddled the economic outlook heading into the new year. Domestic equity indices ended the period higher, while fixed income performance favored intermediate maturities and high yield sectors.

- The economy is expected to expand between 1.0%-1.5% real growth in the fourth quarter, which is in line with forecasts. Full-year growth is expected to be ~2%. Inflation, meanwhile, has proven more stubborn as the Consumer Price Index (CPI) ended the year at 2.7% in December. Several tailwinds supported markets in 2025. With inflation being manageable, the Federal Reserve continued the rate-cutting cycle it began in 2024, lowering financing costs. Companies in the S&P 500 Index grew earnings by roughly 12% last year, and capital expenditure on artificial intelligence continued at a robust pace.

- The Fed lowered the federal funds rate by 50 basis points (bps), with cuts in October and December, and ended the year with a target range of 3.5% to 3.75%. Fed Chair Jerome Powell looked to thread the needle of addressing labor softness without stoking inflation expectations, but the number of dissenting votes grew from one to three members by December.
- Artificial intelligence (AI) continued to captivate markets during the fourth quarter, but a dynamic of have and have not has developed among companies. One chip manufacturer briefly became the first company to cross the \$5 trillion market cap threshold, while pessimism weighed on AI infrastructure builders in light of large debt issuance and spending plans.
- Energy and precious metals charted distinctly different paths during the quarter, raising questions about global growth and a diminishing reserve status of the U.S. dollar. Gold enjoyed a fourth consecutive quarterly gain, rising over 12%, while oil (as represented by West Texas Intermediate) fell 7.9% during the period to mark a full year of losses.

While the Fed kept rates steady for much of the year, the tempo of easing accelerated in the final months of 2025. In explaining the rate cut at the December press conference, Powell stated that most of the above target inflation seen today is driven by tariffs, while the labor market faces significant downside risks. Recently appointed Governor Stephen Miran continued to press for a 50-point cut, while Chicago Fed President Austan Goolsbee and Kansas City Fed President Jeffrey Schmid voted for no change in the target rate. Concurrently, the Fed announced a program to purchase \$40 billion monthly in T-bills through April 2026 to ensure ample bank reserves going forward. These actions are supportive of risk assets in the near term. March 2026 will represent a full five years since we have seen the Fed's preferred inflation metric, core Personal Consumption Expenditures, at their target of 2%, and we are two to three years away from the Fed's own projections of 2% inflation.

Economic data was choppy during the final quarter, and the outlook was complicated by the longest government shutdown in U.S. history (43 days), which prompted the cancellation of multiple reports. Non-farm payrolls oscillated with a gain of 108,000 in September, a negative print of roughly the same

amount in October, and a return to modest growth of 64,000 in November. Softening was evident in the unemployment rate, which rose 20 bps to 4.6%, marking the highest reading since the fall of 2021. The University of Michigan Consumer Sentiment Survey, which measures confidence and future expectations, reflected the weakening job outlook and muted business conditions as well. Sentiment remains 30% below the year-end 2024 reading, and nearly 63% of consumers expect unemployment to rise in 2026. One bright spot among consumers was the easing of long-run inflation expectations, which fell from 3.4% to 3.2% at year end. This aligned with the 2.7% CPI in December. The future of tariffs and their knock-on effect to inflation remain to be seen as the U.S. Supreme Court is set to rule in 2026 if the Trump administration exceeded its authority to impose tariffs under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA).

Coupons and rate sensitivity were the deciding factors for performance during the quarter. The U.S. Treasury curve steepened as front-end yields fell in response to Fed easing, while the 30-year bond yield rose 11 bps. Year to date, the belly of the curve has experienced the largest decline in yields, as yields on two and three-year notes fell 78 bps and 72 bps, respectively. Credit markets generated positive total returns, with high yield corporates and loans outpacing investment-grade securities largely on account of lower interest rate exposure as long-end yields rose in December. Credit spreads were flat to modestly wider during the quarter, but stand near the lower band of history. Looking specifically at U.S. investment grade corporates, the 77 bps of option adjusted spread (OAS) as of year-end was 38 bps below the 10-year average as strong fundamentals, such as robust revenue and EBITDA growth, have underpinned the grind lower.

The U.S. dollar eked out a small gain of 0.56% during the fourth quarter but ended the year down 9.37% as lower Treasury yields and lingering effects from the spring trade war likely weighed on the reserve currency. Gold was a primary beneficiary of dollar weakness as central bank and retail buying drove spot prices for an ounce of gold up almost 65% to end 2025 at \$4,431. Oil prices fell during the final months and chalked up a nearly 20% decline in 2025, in spite of dollar weakness and volatility leading up to the U.S invasion of OPEC member Venezuela in early January 2026.

Asset Class Overview

Investment-grade bonds generated positive total returns during the quarter, with performance favoring intermediate maturities and higher-rated bonds within the universe. Investment-grade corporate bonds remained on solid footing, supported by positive fundamentals and technicals. While 2025 was marked by large debt deals in support of AI capital spending, it's worth noting that the supply of investment-grade bonds grew 3.9% in 2025, well below the 6.6% average over the past 10 years. Overall credit quality remained strong, with upgrades outpacing downgrades by a two-to-one ratio in 2025. The yield-to-worst of the Bloomberg US Aggregate Bond Index (Agg) tightened over the quarter by 5 bps to end at 4.32%, whereas spreads compressed 1 bp, ending with an option-adjusted spread (OAS) of 27 bps. The total return for investment-grade bonds (represented by the Bloomberg US Aggregate Bond Index) in the fourth quarter was 1.10%, while the average price was \$94.07, up from \$93.84 at the end of September.

	4Q25 Return	OAS	OAS to Start Year	YTW	YTW to Start Year	Duration	Duration to Start Year
US Aggregate Index	1.10%	27	34	4.32%	4.91%	5.98	6.08
AAA	1.12%	31	34	4.02%	4.72	4.14	4.22
AA	1.16%	9.5	17	4.16%	4.76%	5.82	5.95
A	0.95%	65	70	4.68%	5.22%	6.80	6.75
BBB	0.85%	99	100	5.02%	5.54%	6.70	6.73

Source: Bloomberg as of 12/31/25.

The high-yield bond market was the top performer relative to credit peers in both the fourth quarter and calendar year 2025, as attractive all-in yields, strong capital market activity, and Fed easing policy were all tailwinds during the quarter. The Bloomberg US High Yield 2% Issuer Capped Bond Index returned 1.31% in the fourth quarter, with coupon carrying the day and helping to offset price weakness in October. Option-adjusted spreads (OAS) compressed 1 bp, but the move belies the challenging start to the quarter. Spreads initially widened 14 bps in October on account of rising credit concerns and the impact of the U.S. government shutdown but largely retraced the move in the final months of 2025. The asset class remained well supported by corporate fundamentals, and while default activity ticked up in 2025, it

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remained low relative to history as many weaker borrowers have migrated to private credit lenders. According to J.P. Morgan, the 12-month par-weighted U.S. high-yield bond default rate (including distressed exchanges) ended the quarter at 1.88%, well below the 25-year monthly average of 3.3%. High-yield companies issued \$65.9 billion in new bonds across 78 tranches, capping off the strong year of \$328.9 billion in aggregate and the highest point since 2021 with 70% of proceeds earmarked for refinancing.

	4Q25 Return	OAS	OAS to Start Year	YTW	YTW to Start Year	Duration	Duration to Start Year
US HY 2% Issuer Cap Index	1.31%	266	287	6.53%	7.49%	2.77	3.11
BB	1.51%	165	179	5.56%	6.39%	3.00	3.33
B	1.58%	268	277	6.53%	7.43%	2.51	2.89
CCC	0.18%	615	558	9.83%	10.16%	2.46	2.94

Source: Bloomberg as of 12/31/25.

The floating-rate loan market generated a positive total return in the fourth quarter, though two rounds of fed funds rate cuts and weakness in specific sectors weighed on the asset class. The Morningstar LSTA US Leveraged Loan Index returned 1.22%, with carry the primary driver of returns and offsetting secondary price softness in October and November. The four-year discounted spread for the index widened 8 bps to end at 404 bps, while the effective yield declined 31 bps to 7.69%. The average secondary price for the Morningstar Leveraged Loan Index declined 42 cents during the fourth quarter to end at \$96.64. Market conditions were more muted in the final months of 2025, with \$156 billion in total loan market activity relative to the three-month record of \$404 billion set the prior quarter. Much of the decline in loan activity came from repricings, which fell from 56% of total loan activity to 40% quarter over quarter. Investor sentiment improved as the quarter progressed, as evident in the number of loans that traded above par, which rose from 37% in September to 58% as of year-end. In 2025, a push/pull dynamic developed in terms of demand from individual and institutional buyers. Retail loan mutual fund flows were negative \$3.1 billion in the fourth quarter as the prospect of further Fed easing in 2026 weighed on future yields. CLOs remained active buyers of loans, with \$55 billion of new tranche issuance during the period.

	4Q25 Return	3Yr DM	3Yr DM to Start Year	3Yr Life Yield	3Yr Life Yield to Start Year
Morningstar LSTA US Leveraged Loan Index	1.22%	429	424	8.30%	8.93%
BB	1.47%	263	254	6.64%	7.23%
B	1.40%	414	426	8.15%	8.95%
CCC	-1.59%	1689	1379	20.89%	18.48%

Source: Bloomberg and PitchBook as of 12/31/25.

Fund Performance

For the quarter, the Aristotle Strategic Income Fund (Class I-2) returned 0.97% versus the Bloomberg US Aggregate Bond Index return of 1.10%.

Portfolio Review

Returns across the credit spectrum were broadly positive over the fourth quarter as well as for the full calendar year.

The relative value backdrop remains challenged with credit spreads at or near historical tightness in many areas. Because of this, the portfolio remains up in credit quality targeting flat to slightly overweight duration relative to the blended benchmark, with greater exposure in the belly of the curve and underweights at the long end. Portfolio managers continued to reduce credit and issuer concentration risk within lower-quality positions, continuing to favor higher quality as the area in which to hold spread duration.

Credit selection continues to focus on U.S. centric issues and away from firms that are dependent upon global supply chains. On a sector basis, we have favored U.S. money center banks, midstream energy, and select technology and manufacturing credits. Overall, we remain oriented towards performing credits and have limited exposure to distressed and lower-quality names. We used rallies in lower-credit-quality issues to reduce exposure to that category, especially in more cyclical names and industries.

Fund Allocation

The portfolio's composition quarter-over-quarter did not materially change. As of 12/31/25, the Fund's allocation was as follows: investment-grade corporate bonds (45%), floating-rate bank loans

Past Performance is not indicative of future results. Returns reflect reinvestment of dividends/distribution. Investment return and principal value will fluctuate so that an investor's shares, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than their original cost. Current performance may be lower or higher than the performance quoted. Performance current to the most recent month end may be found at www.AristotleFunds.com/performance or by calling 1-844-274-7885. The investment advisor has contractually agreed to limit certain expenses through 7/31/28. Please see the current prospectus for detailed information.

(14%), high-yield bonds (28%), asset-backed securities (3%), and mortgage-backed securities (3%). Duration was stable throughout the quarter, ending the fourth quarter at approximately four years. The portfolio added dry powder heading into 2026 to take advantage of future volatility and relative value opportunities. Cash ended the year at approximately 2%. The Fund continues to have a higher-than-normal investment-grade exposure due to historically tight spreads across credit markets.

Contributors/Detractors

The Fund (I-2) share class underperformed the benchmark over the fourth quarter of 2025, on a net of fee basis.

An underweight to Agency MBS detracted from performance as this sector outperformed investment-grade and high yield corporate bonds over the fourth quarter. A lower duration profile relative to the US Aggregate index detracted as the curve steepened, with yields on T-Notes and Bills under 10 years rallying significantly.

The portfolio's off-benchmark allocation to bank loans and modest allocations to CLOs and Non-Agency MBS were additive to relative returns over the fourth quarter. On an industry-level basis overweights to Banking, Insurance, Consumer Cyclical and Electrical Utility companies were additive, while overweights to Energy, Consumer Non-Cyclicals and Technology detracted on a relative basis.

Manager Outlook

In the fourth quarter, markets continued to digest high valuations and historically tight credit spreads against a backdrop that remains broadly constructive. While valuations enter 2026 with little margin for error, confidence has grown that inflation will begin to move in the right direction. This has

reinforced expectations that the Federal Reserve will continue to ease policy as conditions allow. Although volatility pockets continue to emerge, the overall macro environment has been supported by a resilient consumer, an easing Federal Reserve, and the prospect of incremental fiscal support.

Treasury yields have stabilized, and rate volatility has remained more contained relative to prior periods. Credit spreads across most asset classes remain historically tight, reflecting both strong technicals and continued demand for income-oriented assets. While valuations limit upside and leave markets somewhat vulnerable to shocks, the combination of an easing policy backdrop and steady growth expectations has helped sustain constructive sentiment across credit markets.

From a fundamental perspective, the fourth quarter reinforced the view that U.S. economic growth remains strong, with signs that activity could accelerate modestly from here. Corporate fundamentals remain generally sound, and consumer spending has continued to benefit from strong balance sheets at the higher end of the income spectrum. In addition, ongoing investment related to artificial intelligence remains an important support for growth. While late-cycle risks persist, particularly around the labor market, current conditions suggest a gradual rather than abrupt slowdown, warranting close monitoring but not a meaningful shift in outlook.

In the Aristotle Strategic Income Fund, we continue to maintain a higher-quality bias, with a higher-than-normal exposure to investment-grade instruments. While we expect the market and economy to continue to show their resilience, very little cushion exists for unexpected events. However, this constructive outlook and up in quality positioning allows us to use the fund's flexibility to the extent that we see spread widening events.

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Performance as of 12/31/25

	Total Returns (%)			Annualized Total Returns (%)				Top 10 Issuers	Weight (%)
	3-Month	YTD	1-Year	3-Year	5-Year	10-Year	Since Fund Inception		
Class A-NAV	1.00	7.06	7.06	7.82	3.13	5.20	5.33	Government Of The United States Of America	3.99
Class A-MOP	-3.26	2.47	2.47	6.28	2.25	4.75	5.01	JPMorgan Chase & Co.	1.85
Class I-2	0.97	7.23	7.23	8.08	3.37	5.45	5.58	Bank Of America Corp	1.79
Bloomberg US Aggregate Bond Index	1.10	7.30	7.30	4.66	-0.36	2.01	2.04	Citigroup Inc.	1.69
								Venture Global Partners II LLC	1.65
								Goldman Sachs Group, Inc.	1.54
								Alliant Holdings, L.P.	1.41
								Energy Transfer LP	1.41
								Charter Communications, Inc.	1.39
								Morgan Stanley	1.31
								Total	18.04

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Class A shares at maximum offering price (MOP) reflect the deduction of the up-front 4.25% sales load. Performance reflects any applicable fee waivers and expense reimbursements. If a sales charge had been deducted, the results would have been lower.

Gross/Net annual operating expenses for Class A are 0.94%/0.94%. Gross/Net annual operating expenses for Class I-2 are 0.69%/0.69%, inception date 6/29/12.

Indexes are unmanaged and cannot be invested in directly. Further, they hold no cash and incur no expenses. All share classes may not be available at all firms and not all investors may be eligible for all share classes.

Definitions

One **basis point** equals 0.01%.

The **Bloomberg 1–3 Year US Government/Credit Bond Index** is a performance benchmark of U.S. investment-grade government and corporate bonds with maturities of one to three years.

The **Bloomberg Asset-Backed Securities (ABS) Index** is the ABS component of the Bloomberg U.S. Aggregate Index that measures the performance of ABS with the following collateral types: credit and charge card, auto and utility loans. All securities have an average life of at least one year.

The **Bloomberg Short Treasury Total Return Index** is a performance benchmark of all U.S. Treasuries that have a remaining maturity between one and twelve months.

The **Bloomberg US Aggregate Bond Index** is composed of investment-grade U.S. government bonds, investment-grade corporate bonds, mortgage pass-through securities, and asset-backed securities, and is commonly used to track the performance of U.S. investment-grade bonds.

The **Bloomberg US Corporate Bond Index** includes publicly issued U.S. corporate and specified foreign debentures and secured notes that meet the specified maturity, liquidity, and quality requirements.

The **Bloomberg US Corporate High Yield Bond Index** measures the USD-denominated, high yield, fixed-rate corporate bond market.

The **Bloomberg US Credit Index** measures the investment grade, US dollar-denominated, fixed-rate, taxable corporate and government-related bond markets. It is composed of the US Corporate Index and a non-corporate component that includes non-US agencies, sovereigns, supranationals and local authorities.

The **Bloomberg US High-Yield 2% Issuer Capped Bond Index** measures the performance of high-yield bonds with a 2% maximum allocation to any one issuer.

The **Dow Jones Industrial Average index (DJIA)** tracks the share price of the top 30 large, publicly owned U.S. companies which is often used as an indicator of the overall condition of the U.S. stock market.

Duration is often used to measure a bond's or fund's sensitivity to interest rates. The longer a fund's duration, the more sensitive it is to interest-rate risk. The shorter a fund's duration, the less sensitive it is to interest-rate risk.

Morningstar LSTA US Leveraged Loan Index is a market-value weighted index designed to measure the performance of the US leveraged loan market.

The **Nasdaq Composite** is a stock market index that consists of the stocks that are listed on the Nasdaq stock exchange.

Option adjusted spread (OAS) is the measurement of the spread of a fixed-income security rate and the risk-free rate of return.

The **S&P 500 index** is a market capitalization-weighted index of 500 widely held stocks often used as a proxy for the U.S. stock market.

Yield to worst is the lowest potential yield that can be received on a bond without the issuer actually defaulting.

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Investing involves risk. Principal loss is possible. The Fund is subject to liquidity risk (the risk that an investment may be difficult to purchase, value, and sell particularly during adverse market conditions, because there is a limited market for the investment, or there are restrictions on resale) and credit risk (the risk an issuer may be unable or unwilling to meet its financial obligations, risking default). High-yield/high-risk bonds ("junk bonds") and floating-rate loans (usually rated below investment grade) have greater risk of default than higher-rated securities/higher-quality bonds that may have a lower yield. The Fund is also subject to foreign-markets risk.

This commentary represents the views of the portfolio managers at Aristotle Pacific Capital, LLC as of the publication date and are presented for informational purposes only. These views should not be construed as investment advice, an endorsement of any security, mutual fund, sector or index, or to predict performance of any investment. Any forward-looking statements are not guaranteed. All material is compiled from sources believed to be reliable, but accuracy cannot be guaranteed. The opinions expressed herein are subject to change without notice as market and other conditions warrant. Sector names in this commentary are provided by the Fund's portfolio managers and could be different if provided by a third party.

Investors should consider a fund's investment goal, risk, charges, and expenses carefully before investing. The prospectus contains this and other information about the fund and can be obtained at www.AristotleFunds.com. It should be read carefully before investing.

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Diversification does not assure a profit, nor does it protect against a loss in a declining market.

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