Stephen Blyth to lead Harvard Management Company

Stephen Blyth will become the next president and chief executive officer of Harvard Management Company (HMC), Harvard University announced today.

Founded in 1974, HMC manages Harvard University’s endowment and related financial assets, seeking strong investment returns to advance the University’s academic mission.

Blyth currently serves as managing director and head of public markets at HMC, which he joined in 2006. In that role, he is responsible for investments in public equity, credit, and fixed-income markets, accounting for roughly 40 percent of the endowment and other assets that HMC invests through its hybrid model of internal and external management.

An alumnus of Cambridge University and Harvard, Blyth has also served in recent years as a professor of the practice of statistics in Harvard’s Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

He will assume the presidency of HMC as of Jan. 1, 2015, succeeding Jane Mendillo, who in June announced her plans to step down at the end of the calendar year.

“He is an extraordinarily talented investment professional with admired leadership qualities, uncommon savvy about markets, and a deep dedication to the purposes of higher education,” said James F. Rothenberg, chairman of the HMC board of directors, which conducted the nationwide search, and a member of the Harvard Corporation, the University’s principal governing board.

“He has excelled in his role leading the investment of HMC’s internally managed portfolio through a period of often volatile market conditions,” Rothenberg said, “and we are fortunate that he will be bringing his financial acumen, his executive abilities, and his passion for advancing the University’s highest purposes to HMC’s highest post.”

“It’s an honor to be asked to lead this remarkable organization. I can think of few nobler missions in investment management than leading Harvard Management Company,” said Blyth. “As an alumnus and a faculty member, I believe deeply in the mission of Harvard University and HMC, and our responsibility to support the work of current and future generations of Harvard students, faculty, and staff.

“Jane Mendillo has been an outstanding leader of HMC, and I will inherit an organization that is in great shape,” Blyth added. “HMC has a long tradition of investment innovation, and has pioneered new strategies to take advantage of evolving market opportunities. I look forward to continuing that tradition as we seek to deliver superior returns.”
Blyth emerged as HMC’s next CEO through a nationwide search conducted by the HMC board of directors, chaired by Rothenberg. “We had a remarkably strong pool of candidates,” Rothenberg said, “and I’m grateful to my fellow board members for working together toward an excellent outcome.”

“I have come to know and admire Stephen Blyth as both an outstanding leader of HMC’s investment team and a devoted citizen of the University, someone as committed to higher education as he is expert in finance,” said Drew Faust, president of Harvard University and an ex officio member of the HMC board. “I am delighted that his fine mind and steady hands will serve Harvard in this very important role in the years to come.”

At HMC, Blyth has built one of the industry’s leading fixed-income teams, which outperformed benchmarks in each of the last five years. Soon after his arrival, Blyth was also asked to oversee internal trading activity, and in recent years has led efforts to strengthen relationships with external managers in the public-markets area.

“I can’t imagine a better choice to lead HMC into the future than Stephen Blyth,” said Mendillo. “He has proven himself a talented and successful investor, and a strong and effective leader, during his eight years at HMC and in his prior roles.

“He is in a unique position to understand and undertake the complexities of this job, the responsibility to Harvard University that comes with it, and the markets in which we invest,” said Mendillo.

Blyth joined HMC in 2006 from Deutsche Bank, where he was managing director and head of its global rates proprietary trading group in London, leading a team of professionals trading across fixed-income markets. Previously, he was a managing director of the interest-rate group of Morgan Stanley in New York, where he traded U.S. interest-rate derivatives.

Blyth earned a Ph.D. in statistics from Harvard University and an M.A. in mathematics (first-class honors) from Christ’s College, Cambridge University. After graduation from Harvard, Blyth was a lecturer in the Department of Mathematics at Imperial College London, before taking his first finance job with HSBC Bank.

He is the author of several academic papers on statistics and finance, and his book, “An Introduction to Quantitative Finance,” was published by Oxford University Press in November 2013.

In 2013, he was honored by Harvard’s Phi Beta Kappa chapter with the Alpha Iota Prize for Excellence in Teaching. He teaches the Statistics Department’s course on Applied Quantitative Finance.

Contact
Paul Andrew
617-495-1585
paul_andrew@harvard.edu