

MARKET BRIEF

Chicago runs more than a third of the world's options and futures.

Its wealth management firms are **about to change hands**.

Chicago is the third-largest metro in the country and home to CME Group, the world's largest derivatives exchange. Wealth managers built alongside that market, Northern Trust and William Blair among them, are entering the busiest ownership transition the industry has seen in years.

3rd

Largest metro area in the United States

\$144B

Local assets at Northern Trust Wealth Management

\$74.8B

AUM at William Blair, headquartered in Chicago's Loop

1/3+

Of the world's options and futures trade on Chicago's exchanges

THE SUCCESSION WAVE

RIA M&A hit a record in Q1 2026: 142 deals, \$1.67 trillion in AUM changed hands, more than double the \$805 billion transacted in Q1 2025. Nationally, 105,887 advisors plan to retire within the next decade, over a third of the industry's headcount and 41% of its assets. Close to a third of soon-to-retire principals don't have a succession plan yet.

Every one of those transitions needs a CFO who can close a deal's books on schedule and a COO who can merge two firms' operations without losing a client. Chicago's wealth management firms are hiring for that moment right now.

ROLES WE PLACE IN WEALTH MANAGEMENT

FINANCE & ACCOUNTING

Chief Financial Officer
Controller
FP&A Leadership
Treasury

OPERATIONS

Chief Operating Officer
Head of Operations
Process Transformation

COMPLIANCE & RISK

Chief Compliance Officer
Chief Risk Officer
General Counsel

HR & TALENT

Chief Human Resources Officer
Head of Talent Acquisition

100%

Placement rate on retained searches since 1993

90%

Of our placements earn a promotion within their organization

Top 250

HuntScanlon's 2025 America's Top Executive Search Firms

We've specialized in insurance, wealth management, and financial services since 1993. We know the difference between staffing an RIA through a succession and staffing a family office's first COO hire, and we know it before the first call. The Lyneer Executive Search Strategy™ evaluates every candidate on technical skill, leadership capability, cultural alignment, and long-term growth potential: the four things that actually predict whether a leader succeeds in your firm.

Let's talk about your next Chicago hire.

The executive search firm for insurance, wealth management, and financial services.

Lyneer Search Group

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