Wednesday, April 6, 2016

The S&P Dow Jones Indices, which tracks approximately 10,000 U.S. traded stocks, announced that total stock dividend distributions increased by a net (increases less decreases) $3.9 billion in Q1’16, down significantly from the previous month’s total of $26.9 billion. In February, the percent change in region/country semiconductor sales were as follows (year-over-year): Americas (-19.3%); China (+3.5%); Europe (-6.3%); Japan (-3.5%); and Asia Pacific/All Other (-6.3%). Year-to-date through 4/11/16, the Philadelphia Semiconductor Sector Index posted a total return of 3.24%, compared to 3.48% for the S&P 500 Information Technology Index and 1.99% for the S&P 500 Index.

Tuesday, April 5, 2016

In Q1’16, global mergers and acquisitions (M&A) activity declined 14% year-over-year to $669 billion, according to Thomson Reuters. Global M&A deal volume set a record-high in 2015. Deal activity was very strong in China. China outbound cross-border M&A totaled $101.1 billion in Q1’16, nearly topping 2015’s full-year record-high of $109.5 billion. Chinese companies are targeting consumer brands, energy resources and high-end manufacturing. Deal activity in the U.S. fell by more than 25%, while volume in Europe was up 11%, its best quarter in five years.

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At the start of 2016, data from the Education Department revealed that 43% of the roughly 22 million Americans with federal student loans were not making payments, according to MarketWatch. The amount of debt in the government’s student loan program is $1.2 trillion. Nearly 1 in 6 borrowers, or 3.6 million, were in default on $56 billion of student debt, indicating they had gone at least a year without making a payment. Another three million borrowers owing close to $110 billion were in “forbearance” or “deferment,” meaning they received permission to halt payments due to a financial emergency, such as unemployment.

Sources:

- Bloomberg
- Wealthfront
- MarketWatch
- Thomson Reuters

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