

 IN PERSON

# JPMorgan's Private Bank Expands, Too



**DANIEL CURTIN**

**Title:** Market Manager, J.P. Morgan Private Bank in New England

**Age:** 52

**Industry experience:** 30 years

**BY DIANE MCLAUGHLIN**  
BANKER & TRADESMAN STAFF

**J**PMorgan Chase started opening retail branches in the region about two years ago, but the bank has a long presence and more than 1,500 employees in the Boston area. One of those long-time employees is Daniel Curtin, head of J.P. Morgan Private Bank in New England, as the JPMorgan arm is branded. He joined the bank in 2007 as part of the team that established the private bank in Boston. As more retail branches open in the region, Curtin is also leading an expansion of the private bank.

In addition to banking and lending, the private bank provides clients with investment products and services. One trend the private bank is looking at for 2021 is sustainability investing. JPMorgan first signed the United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment in 2007, and the private bank's clients have assets under management totaling \$11 billion in sustainable investing strategies.

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**Q: What is your role at JPMorgan Chase?**

**A:** I lead the private bank for the Boston and New England area, which includes every New England state except for Connecticut. We help our clients invest, bank, borrow and plan. We've got a team that is growing rapidly in this area and is focusing on working with clients every day.

I have an additional responsibility of being co-chair of the market leadership team, which is involved in the broader JPMorgan Chase and the expansion of our business here. This is a time of really incredible growth that we're seeing in New England. It's a really exciting time to be here.

**Q: How does the expansion into this region tie to the growth of the private bank?**

**A:** It's correlated. We're hiring here in my office, currently trying to find the best advisers in this community to join us. It's also linked into a broader strategy of expanding the commercial bank and expanding our retail bank. We're going to have something like 60 branches here within the next year or so, expanding mostly in the Greater Boston area but also in other parts of New England. We've got branches in Rhode Island and New Hampshire. You'll see them in Vermont and Maine too. It is all integrated, and it is a fantastic opportunity for the firm. JPMorgan's private bank expands along with that.

**Q: What else is driving the growth of private banking?**

**A:** This is a fantastic area for life sciences, for technology, for financials – asset management firms, private equity firms, hedge fund firms – so there's a lot of opportunity for a private bank to grow its business. It's not just the macro story about JPMorgan Chase expanding into a new region. It's also a tremendous opportunity for us in terms of wealth creation events and market size. From my perspective, I think the next three to five years will be one of tremendous growth in the clients that we work with, growth in the advisers that work with clients, and expansion of our franchise in a lot of different ways.

**Q: How has the interest rate environment affected investments for the private bank?**

**A:** Interest rates are one of the primary undercurrents of a lot of different markets. Interest rates are low, so as clients are looking to try to increase yield, the traditional mechanisms for that – core fixed income – often don't provide the kind of return and yield that those clients need.

The current environment forces you to be more creative in pursuing yield. What it also does is it influences the equity markets too. If you've got a dollar and you're trying to figure out where to apply it, the equity markets will look more attractive when interest rates are very low. The dividends provided by equities, the growth rate of a company's earnings, will look more attractive relative to fixed income markets, and that is why some of the valuations – which in a lot of metrics in equities seem very, very high – can seem reasonable through the lens of the current fixed income environment and the low rates.

**Q: What is the private bank's outlook for 2021?**

**A:** The first thing for clients is to make sure you've got the portfolios positioned correctly based on the risk the clients are willing and able to take. Before you even dive into specific investment trends, it's really important to make sure that the portfolio is structured specific to the need of the client and structured so you know what their goals are and take the appropriate risk in order to reach those goals.

After that, we do believe there are three major elements to 2021. The volatility that we're going to see and that we have seen – that's not going to go away. There's that search for yield – for a lot of folks, it's a key part of their portfolios. And then specifically within some of the more opportunistic parts of the market, there are these big megatrends which open up opportunities for clients who can invest in things for the longer term.

The three that we're focusing for clients include digital transformation – some of it is driven by COVID speeding up the need and the usage of technology. We've seen specifically here in the Boston area some of our local companies be a huge part of this healthcare innovation theme – there's a tremendous amount of science being created here in the Greater Boston area and all through New England, and those create really fascinating opportunities for clients. And then sustainability has been getting more and more focus over the last several years. Some call it a defining movement of the decade, so clients are asking what the opportunities are to take advantage of the drive toward increased sustainability.

**Q: What does JPMorgan bring to the sustainability trend?**

**A:** That's a big part of where we're focusing our resources. We have a large group that's focusing on ESG opportunities, whether it's equity, fixed income, private equity. It's an increasing ask of our clients to have either 100 percent of their assets managed in a way that is more green or at least a portion of their assets – an increasing portion of their assets – invested in a way that is sensitive to that. ◀

**CURTIN'S FIVE FAVORITE QUARANTINE ACTIVITIES:**

- 1 Exercise
- 2 Hiking
- 3 Talking about bizarre science topics with his 12-year-old
- 4 Zillow surfing
- 5 Cooking

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