**Husson Stock Index**

**Week Ended August 1st, 2025**

 For the week ended August 1st, 2025, the Husson Stock Index (HSI) closed at 239.18. This is a decrease from the previous week of 4.10%. This is a 3.41% increase from the end of the previous year. The Dow Jones Industrial Average closed at 43,588.58. This is a decrease of 2.92% from the end of the previous week and an increase of 2.45% from the end of the last year. The S&P 500 ended the week at 6,238.01, decreasing 2.36% on the week, and 6.06% year to date.

**Summary**

 The top-performing stock in the HSI this week was McDonald's with an increase of 1.48% over the last week. This can be attributed to a combination of strategic initiatives and investor optimism surrounding its value-driven offerings. Despite posting second-quarter earnings miss, the company’s leadership emphasized the success of its newly launched $5 value meal, which has resonated strongly with budget-conscious consumers. This initiative not only boosted foot traffic but also increased average ticket sizes, as customers often purchased additional items beyond the deal. Moreover, McDonald’s reaffirmed its commitment to expanding digital platforms and loyalty programs, signaling long-term growth potential. The company’s ability to maintain strong brand engagement—through pop-culture collaborations and menu innovation—has helped offset broader market volatility. Investors appear encouraged by McDonald’s proactive approach to sustaining consumer interest amid inflationary pressures, especially as comparable-store sales trends show signs of recovery. The modest weekly gain reflects confidence in McDonald’s resilience and adaptability, particularly in navigating economic headwinds while preserving its value proposition. As analysts revise earnings estimates upward, the stock’s performance aligns with broader expectations of steady growth and operational efficiency.

The second top-performing stock in the HSI was Walmart Inc., which went up 1.05% this last week. This increase reflects investor confidence in its strategic positioning amid shifting consumer behavior and macroeconomic uncertainty. The company has continued to outperform broader retail trends by leveraging its scale, supply chain efficiency, and omnichannel capabilities. Notably, Walmart’s expansion of its e-commerce footprint and integration of AI-driven inventory management have enhanced operational agility, allowing it to meet demand fluctuations more effectively. Additionally, analysts have highlighted Walmart’s resilience in the face of inflationary pressures. Its focus on value pricing and essential goods has attracted price-sensitive consumers, especially as discretionary spending tightens. The recent uptick also coincides with favorable revisions to earnings estimates, which often signal improved business outlooks and profitability. Despite modest declines in short-term earnings projections, long-term forecasts remain optimistic, with projected revenue growth of over 3% for the fiscal year. This performance suggests that investors are responding positively to Walmart’s ability to balance cost control with innovation, positioning it as a defensive play in volatile markets. The stock’s movement aligns with broader trends favoring consumer staples and discount retailers during economic slowdowns.

 The worst-performing stock in the HSI was the United Parcel Service, which dropped 18.40% over the previous week, largely driven by disappointing second-quarter earnings and a downward revision of its full-year revenue guidance. The company reported weaker-than-expected results due to soft demand in its U.S. domestic package segment, which has been impacted by reduced consumer spending and a shift away from premium delivery services. Additionally, UPS cited labor-related disruptions and higher operating costs as contributing factors to its margin compression. Investor sentiment was further dampened by management’s cautious outlook, which signaled slower volume recovery and persistent macroeconomic headwinds. Analysts noted that UPS’s exposure to cyclical industries and global trade volatility makes it particularly vulnerable during periods of economic uncertainty. The company’s dividend yield remains attractive, but the steep drop reflects broader concerns about its near-term growth trajectory and competitive pressures from rivals like FedEx and Amazon Logistics. This decline underscores the importance of operational efficiency and strategic agility in the logistics sector, especially as e-commerce growth moderates and cost structures tighten.

The second worst-performing stock in the HSI was Charter Communications, which was down 14.55%. This drop was largely driven by underwhelming second-quarter earnings and a wave of downward price target revisions from major analysts. Despite maintaining strong cash flow, Charter reported slower-than-expected broadband subscriber growth and rising operational costs, which raised concerns about its ability to sustain margins in a competitive telecom landscape. The company’s recent acquisition-related activities—such as its deal with Cox Communications—also introduced uncertainty around integration costs and strategic direction. Adding to investor unease, several firms including Arete Research, Barclays, and BNP Paribas Exane sharply lowered their price targets, citing weaker performance metrics and limited upside potential. These revisions signaled a broader reevaluation of Charter’s valuation, especially as rivals like Comcast posted stronger wireless subscriber growth during the same period. The steep decline reflects market skepticism about Charter’s near-term growth prospects and its ability to adapt to shifting consumer preferences, particularly in the face of cord-cutting trends and increased competition from streaming and wireless providers.

**Overview**

 The HSI was developed by Marie Kenney, while a student at Husson University, in

consultation with Associate Professor J. Douglas Wellington. The index is currently being

tracked and analyzed by Husson student Donovan Landry under the supervision of the Associate Professor of Finance Dr. Jia Liu. The HSI currently tracks and analyzes the stocks of 25 companies that are considered to affect the Maine economy. These companies are either based in Maine or have an influence on the Maine economy through employment or consumer spending. This price-weighted index offers a numerical breakdown of Maine’s economy. The analysis investigates the events of the week and finds the likely reasons the index went up or down. This index and analysis help provide a better understanding of Maine’s economy as well as explain significant changes in stock prices of the companies that comprise the HSI.

References:

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Composition of Husson Stock Index (HSI)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Ticker symbol: Exchange | Stock  | Maine Affiliation | Sector |
| BAC: NYSE | Bank of american corp | presence | Fincancials |
| BHB: NYSE | Bar Harbor Bank | Maine-based | Fincancials |
| CAC: NASDAQ | Camden National Corporation | Maine-based | Fincancials |
| CHRT: NASDAQ | Charter Comminucaion, Inc. | presence | Communication Services |
| CL: NYSE | Colgate-palmolive Company | Maine-based | Consumer Staples |
| DRI: NYSE | Darden Restaurants, Inc. | presence | Consumer Discretionaries  |
| FNLC: NASDAQ | The First Bancorp, Inc. | Maine-based | Fincancials |
| GD: NYSE | General Dynamics Corporation | presence | Fincancials |
| HLT: NYSE | Hilton Worldwide Holding, Inc. | presence | Consumer Discretionaries  |
| HD: NYSE | The Home Depot, Inc. | presence | Consumer Discretionaries  |
| ICC: NASDAQ | ImmuCell Corporation  | Maine-based | Health Care  |
| IDXX:NASDAQ | IDEXX Laboratories, Inc. | Maine-based | Health Care  |
| LOW: NYSE | Lowe’s Companies, Inc. | presence | Consumer Discretionaries  |
| MCD: NYSE | McDonalds Corporation | presence | Consumer Discretionaries  |
| NBN: NASDAQ | Northeast Bank | Maine-based | Fincancials |
| PENN: NASDAQ | Penn National Gaming, Inc. | presence | Consumer Discretionaries  |
| RTX: NYSE | Raytheon Technologies Corporation | presence | Industrials |
| TD: NYSE | The Toronto-Dominion Bank | presence | Fincancials |
| TMUS: NASDAQ | T-Mobile US, Inc. | presence | Consumer Services |
| UPS: NYSE | United Parcel Service, Inc.  | presence | Industrials |
| UNM: NYSE | UNUM Group | presence | Fincancials |
| VLO: NYSE | Valero Energy Corporation | presence | Energy |
| WMT: NYSE | Walmart, Inc. | presence | Consumer Services |
| WEX: NYSE | WEX, Inc.  | presence | Information Technologies |
| WBA: NASDAQ | Walgreens Boots Alliance, Inc. | presence | Consumer Staples |