

Nuveen Core Equity Alpha Fund  
Form N-Q  
May 30, 2018

**UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION**

**Washington, DC 20549**

**FORM N-Q**

**QUARTERLY SCHEDULE OF PORTFOLIO HOLDINGS OF REGISTERED MANAGEMENT  
INVESTMENT COMPANY**

Investment Company Act file number 811-22003

**Nuveen Core Equity Alpha Fund**

(Exact name of registrant as specified in charter)

**333 West Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60606**

(Address of principal executive offices) (Zip code)

**Gifford R. Zimmerman Vice President and Secretary**

**333 West Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60606**

(Name and address of agent for service)

Registrant's telephone number, including area code: 312-917-7700

Date of fiscal year end: December 31

Date of reporting period: March 31, 2018

Form N-Q is to be used by management investment companies, other than small business investment companies registered on Form N-5 (§§ 239.24 and 274.5 of this chapter), to file reports with the Commission, not later than 60 days after the close of the first and third fiscal quarters, pursuant to rule 30b1-5 under the Investment Company Act of 1940 (17 CFR 270.30b1-5). The Commission may use the information provided on Form N-Q in its regulatory, disclosure review, inspection, and policymaking roles.

A registrant is required to disclose the information specified by Form N-Q, and the Commission will make this information public. A registrant is not required to respond to the collection of information contained in Form N-Q unless the Form displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. Please direct comments concerning the accuracy of the information collection burden estimate and any suggestions for reducing the burden to the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 450 Fifth Street, NW, Washington, DC 20549-0609. The OMB has reviewed this collection of information under the clearance requirements of 44 U.S.C. § 3507.



**Item 1. Schedule of Investments**

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Nuveen Core Equity Alpha Fund

Portfolio of Investments March 31, 2018

(Unaudited)

| Shares | Description (1)                    | Value       |
|--------|------------------------------------|-------------|
|        | LONG-TERM INVESTMENTS – 98.3%      |             |
|        | COMMON STOCKS – 98.3%              |             |
|        | Aerospace & Defense – 9.1%         |             |
| 21,800 | Boeing Company, (2)                | \$7,147,784 |
| 5,700  | General Dynamics Corporation       | 1,259,130   |
| 10,500 | Harris Corporation                 | 1,693,440   |
| 7,900  | L-3 Communications Holdings, Inc.  | 1,643,200   |
| 4,600  | Lockheed Martin Corporation        | 1,554,478   |
| 12,800 | Northrop Grumman Corporation       | 4,468,736   |
| 14,300 | Raytheon Company                   | 3,086,226   |
| 4,100  | Rockwell Collins, Inc.             | 552,885     |
| 1,400  | Textron Inc.                       | 82,558      |
|        | Total Aerospace & Defense          | 21,488,437  |
|        | Air Freight & Logistics – 1.0%     |             |
| 15,000 | C.H. Robinson Worldwide, Inc.      | 1,405,650   |
| 4,300  | FedEx Corporation                  | 1,032,473   |
|        | Total Air Freight & Logistics      | 2,438,123   |
|        | Auto Components – 1.2%             |             |
| 20,300 | Aptiv PLC                          | 1,724,891   |
| 22,200 | BorgWarner Inc.                    | 1,115,106   |
|        | Total Auto Components              | 2,839,997   |
|        | Automobiles – 0.5%                 |             |
| 31,900 | General Motors Company             | 1,159,246   |
|        | Banks – 3.0%                       |             |
| 34,100 | Citigroup Inc.                     | 2,301,750   |
| 17,300 | Citizens Financial Group Inc.      | 726,254     |
| 4,900  | Comerica Incorporated              | 470,057     |
| 22,100 | Fifth Third Bancorp                | 701,675     |
| 17,600 | Huntington BancShares Inc.         | 265,760     |
| 5,200  | KeyCorp                            | 101,660     |
| 7,200  | People's United Financial, Inc.    | 134,352     |
| 3,100  | PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. | 468,844     |
| 36,500 | Regions Financial Corporation      | 678,170     |
| 1,200  | SunTrust Banks, Inc.               | 81,648      |
| 23,200 | Zions Bancorporation               | 1,223,336   |
|        | Total Banks                        | 7,153,506   |

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## JCENuveen Core Equity Alpha Fund (continued)

Portfolio of Investments March 31, 2018

(Unaudited)

| Shares | Description (1)                         | Value       |
|--------|---|-------------|
|        | Beverages – 3.1%                        |             |
| 25,375 | Brown-Forman Corporation, Class B       | \$1,380,400 |
| 21,600 | Constellation Brands, Inc., Class A     | 4,923,072   |
| 17,300 | Monster Beverage Corporation            | 989,733     |
|        | Total Beverages                         | 7,293,205   |
|        | Biotechnology – 0.9%                    |             |
| 22,000 | AbbVie Inc.                             | 2,082,300   |
|        | Building Products – 0.4%                |             |
| 19,400 | Masco Corporation                       | 784,536     |
| 2,500  | Smith AO Corporation                    | 158,975     |
|        | Total Building Products                 | 943,511     |
|        | Capital Markets – 8.1%                  |             |
| 5,900  | Affiliated Managers Group Inc.          | 1,118,522   |
| 4,100  | Ameriprise Financial, Inc.              | 606,554     |
| 1,100  | BlackRock Inc.                          | 595,892     |
| 15,600 | CBOE Holdings Inc.                      | 1,779,960   |
| 1,800  | Charles Schwab Corporation              | 93,996      |
| 21,300 | CME Group, Inc., (2)                    | 3,445,062   |
| 24,500 | E*Trade Group Inc.                      | 1,357,545   |
| 15,300 | Moody's Corporation                     | 2,467,890   |
| 16,300 | NASDAQ Stock Market, Inc.               | 1,405,386   |
| 4,800  | Northern Trust Corporation              | 495,024     |
| 15,200 | S&P Global, Inc.                        | 2,904,112   |
| 25,500 | T. Rowe Price Group Inc.                | 2,753,235   |
|        | Total Capital Markets                   | 19,023,178  |
|        | Chemicals – 3.7%                        |             |
| 4,500  | Albemarle Corporation                   | 417,330     |
| 31,400 | CF Industries Holdings, Inc.            | 1,184,722   |
| 3,900  | Eastman Chemical Company                | 411,762     |
| 18,000 | FMC Corporation                         | 1,378,260   |
| 7,200  | International Flavors & Fragrances Inc. | 985,752     |
| 21,600 | LyondellBasell Industries NV, Class A   | 2,282,688   |
| 6,100  | Monsanto Company                        | 711,809     |
| 1,900  | Praxair, Inc.                           | 274,170     |
| 2,600  | Sherwin-Williams Company                | 1,019,512   |
|        | Total Chemicals                         | 8,666,005   |
|        | Commercial Services & Supplies – 1.1%   |             |
| 25,900 | Republic Services, Inc.                 | 1,715,357   |
| 9,400  | Waste Management, Inc.                  | 790,728     |
|        | Total Commercial Services & Supplies    | 2,506,085   |

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| Shares | Description (1)                                       | Value      |
|--------|---|------------|
|        | Construction & Engineering – 0.1%                     |            |
| 4,400  | Fluor Corporation                                     | \$ 251,768 |
|        | Consumer Finance – 1.1%                               |            |
| 11,500 | American Express Company                              | 1,072,720  |
| 14,700 | Discover Financial Services                           | 1,057,371  |
| 14,800 | Synchrony Financial                                   | 496,244    |
|        | Total Consumer Finance                                | 2,626,335  |
|        | Containers & Packaging – 0.6%                         |            |
| 12,300 | Avery Dennison Corporation                            | 1,306,875  |
| 100    | Packaging Corp. of America                            | 11,270     |
|        | Total Containers & Packaging                          | 1,318,145  |
|        | Distributors – 0.5%                                   |            |
| 4,600  | Genuine Parts Company                                 | 413,264    |
| 17,100 | LKQ Corporation                                       | 648,945    |
|        | Total Distributors                                    | 1,062,209  |
|        | Electric Utilities – 3.0%                             |            |
| 15,700 | Alliant Energy Corporation                            | 641,502    |
| 9,100  | American Electric Power Company, Inc.                 | 624,169    |
| 5,600  | Entergy Corporation                                   | 441,168    |
| 7,200  | Eversource Energy                                     | 424,224    |
| 2,300  | Exelon Corporation                                    | 89,723     |
| 18,300 | NextEra Energy Inc.                                   | 2,988,939  |
| 40,700 | Xcel Energy, Inc., (2)                                | 1,851,036  |
|        | Total Electric Utilities                              | 7,060,761  |
|        | Electrical Equipment – 0.4%                           |            |
| 11,800 | Ametek Inc.   | 896,446    |
| 900    | Emerson Electric Company                              | 61,470     |
|        | Total Electrical Equipment                            | 957,916    |
|        | Electronic Equipment, Instruments & Components – 1.7% |            |
| 34,800 | Amphenol Corporation, Class A                         | 2,997,324  |
| 3,100  | FLIR Systems Inc.                                     | 155,031    |
| 7,500  | TE Connectivity Limited                               | 749,250    |
|        | Total Electronic Equipment, Instruments & Components  | 3,901,605  |
|        | Energy Equipment & Services – 0.1%                    |            |
| 3,400  | Helmerich & Payne Inc.                                | 226,304    |
|        | Equity Real Estate Investment Trust – 3.4%            |            |
| 3,000  | Alexandria Real Estate Equities Inc.                  | 374,670    |
| 10,000 | American Tower Corporation, REIT                      | 1,453,400  |
| 7,100  | Duke Realty Corporation                               | 188,008    |
| 143    | Equinix Inc.  | 59,794     |

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JCENuveen Core Equity Alpha Fund (continued)  
 Portfolio of Investments March 31, 2018  
 (Unaudited)

| Shares | Description (1)                                 | Value      |
|--------|---|------------|
|        | Equity Real Estate Investment Trust (continued) |            |
| 400    | Essex Property Trust Inc.                       | \$96,272   |
| 16,900 | Extra Space Storage Inc.                        | 1,476,384  |
| 17,100 | Iron Mountain Inc.                              | 561,906    |
| 700    | Mid-America Apartment Communities               | 63,868     |
| 46,600 | Prologis Inc.                                   | 2,935,334  |
| 2,400  | Regency Centers Corporation                     | 141,552    |
| 3,600  | SBA Communications Corporation                  | 615,312    |
|        | Total Equity Real Estate Investment Trust       | 7,966,500  |
|        | Food & Staples Retailing – 0.8%                 |            |
| 2,000  | Costco Wholesale Corporation                    | 376,860    |
| 9,700  | Kroger Co.                                      | 232,218    |
| 13,000 | Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.                           | 1,156,610  |
|        | Total Food & Staples Retailing                  | 1,765,688  |
|        | Food Products – 0.7%                            |            |
| 1,800  | Hershey Foods Corporation                       | 178,128    |
| 19,400 | Tyson Foods, Inc., Class A                      | 1,419,886  |
|        | Total Food Products                             | 1,598,014  |
|        | Health Care Equipment & Supplies – 5.5%         |            |
| 36,500 | Abbott Laboratories                             | 2,187,080  |
| 5,200  | Align Technology, Inc., (3)                     | 1,305,876  |
| 34,300 | Baxter International, Inc., (2)                 | 2,230,872  |
| 16,100 | Intuitive Surgical, Inc.                        | 6,646,563  |
| 4,600  | ResMed Inc.                                     | 452,962    |
|        | Total Health Care Equipment & Supplies          | 12,823,353 |
|        | Health Care Providers & Services – 1.7%         |            |
| 9,300  | Aetna Inc.                                      | 1,571,700  |
| 16,600 | Centene Corporation, (3)                        | 1,774,042  |
| 3,700  | CIGNA Corporation                               | 620,638    |
|        | Total Health Care Providers & Services          | 3,966,380  |
|        | Health Care Technology – 0.5%                   |            |
| 21,400 | Cerner Corporation                              | 1,241,200  |
|        | Hotels, Restaurants & Leisure – 2.9%            |            |
| 21,400 | Hilton Worldwide Holdings Inc.                  | 1,685,464  |
| 17,900 | Marriott International, Inc., Class A           | 2,434,042  |
| 4,700  | McDonald's Corporation                          | 734,986    |
| 6,100  | Wyndham Worldwide Corporation                   | 698,023    |
| 7,600  | Wynn Resorts Ltd                                | 1,385,936  |
|        | Total Hotels, Restaurants & Leisure             | 6,938,451  |

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| Shares | Description (1)  | Value       |
|--------|--|-------------|
|        | Household Durables – 1.2%                                  |             |
| 39,400 | D.R. Horton, Inc., (2)                                     | \$1,727,296 |
| 4,200  | Garmin Limited   | 247,506     |
| 1,500  | Lennar Corporation, Class A                                | 88,410      |
| 29,400 | PulteGroup Inc.  | 867,006     |
|        | Total Household Durables                                   | 2,930,218   |
|        | Independent Power & Renewable Electricity Producers – 0.6% |             |
| 42,400 | NRG Energy Inc.  | 1,294,472   |
|        | Industrial Conglomerates – 0.8%                            |             |
| 7,900  | 3M Co.   | 1,734,208   |
| 1,800  | Honeywell International Inc.                               | 260,118     |
|        | Total Industrial Conglomerates                             | 1,994,326   |
|        | Insurance – 3.1%   |             |
| 5,600  | AFLAC Incorporated   | 245,056     |
| 17,800 | Allstate Corporation                                       | 1,687,440   |
| 6,100  | AON PLC  | 856,013     |
| 8,500  | Hartford Financial Services Group, Inc.                    | 437,920     |
| 55,200 | Progressive Corporation                                    | 3,363,336   |
| 4,500  | Torchmark Corporation                                      | 378,765     |
| 6,300  | Unum Group   | 299,943     |
| 100    | Willis Towers Watson PLC                                   | 15,219      |
|        | Total Insurance  | 7,283,692   |
|        | Internet Software & Services – 1.2%                        |             |
| 17,300 | Akamai Technologies, Inc.                                  | 1,227,954   |
| 13,200 | VeriSign, Inc.   | 1,564,992   |
|        | Total Internet Software & Services                         | 2,792,946   |
|        | IT Services – 3.7%   |             |
| 5,100  | Accenture Limited, Class A                                 | 782,850     |
| 9,328  | DXC Technology Company                                     | 937,744     |
| 14,600 | Fidelity National Information Services                     | 1,405,980   |
| 4,500  | MasterCard, Inc., Class A                                  | 788,220     |
| 15,000 | Paychex, Inc.  | 923,850     |
| 29,400 | PayPal Holdings, Inc.                                      | 2,230,578   |
| 20,200 | Total System Services Inc.                                 | 1,742,452   |
|        | Total IT Services  | 8,811,674   |
|        | Life Sciences Tools & Services – 0.7%                      |             |
| 400    | Iqvia Holdings, Inc., (3)                                  | 39,244      |
| 3,000  | Mettler-Toledo International Inc., (3)                     | 1,725,090   |
|        | Total Life Sciences Tools & Services                       | 1,764,334   |

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JCENuveen Core Equity Alpha Fund (continued)  
 Portfolio of Investments March 31, 2018  
 (Unaudited)

| Shares  | Description (1)                              | Value       |
|---------|--|-------------|
|         | Machinery – 3.9%                             |             |
| 24,800  | Caterpillar Inc.                             | \$3,655,024 |
| 3,500   | Cummins Inc.                                 | 567,315     |
| 4,500   | Deere & Company                              | 698,940     |
| 14,000  | Dover Corporation                            | 1,375,080   |
| 15,700  | Fortive Corporation                          | 1,217,064   |
| 1,100   | Illinois Tool Works, Inc.                    | 172,326     |
| 20,700  | Xylem Inc.                                   | 1,592,244   |
|         | Total Machinery                              | 9,277,993   |
|         | Media – 0.1%                                 |             |
| 17,600  | News Corporation, Class A                    | 278,080     |
|         | Metals & Mining – 1.2%                       |             |
| 156,800 | Freeport-McMoRan, Inc.                       | 2,754,976   |
| 1,700   | Newmont Mining Corporation                   | 66,419      |
|         | Total Metals & Mining                        | 2,821,395   |
|         | Multiline Retail – 2.2%                      |             |
| 26,600  | Dollar General Corporation                   | 2,488,430   |
| 25,700  | Dollar Tree Stores Inc.                      | 2,438,930   |
| 5,200   | Kohl's Corporation                           | 340,652     |
|         | Total Multiline Retail                       | 5,268,012   |
|         | Multi-Utilities – 2.2%                       |             |
| 21,600  | Ameren Corporation                           | 1,223,208   |
| 3,400   | Consolidated Edison, Inc.                    | 264,996     |
| 7,900   | Dominion Resources, Inc.                     | 532,697     |
| 9,700   | DTE Energy Company                           | 1,012,680   |
| 35,200  | Public Service Enterprise Group Incorporated | 1,768,448   |
| 4,300   | WEC Energy Group, Inc.                       | 269,610     |
|         | Total Multi-Utilities                        | 5,071,639   |
|         | Oil, Gas & Consumable Fuels – 6.8%           |             |
| 2,100   | Anadarko Petroleum Corporation               | 126,861     |
| 20,800  | Andeavor                                     | 2,091,648   |
| 37,500  | Cabot Oil & Gas Corporation                  | 899,250     |
| 9,300   | Cimarex Energy Company                       | 869,550     |
| 5,400   | Concho Resources Inc.                        | 811,782     |
| 19,500  | ConocoPhillips                               | 1,156,155   |
| 28,200  | Devon Energy Corporation                     | 896,478     |
| 4,100   | EOG Resources, Inc.                          | 431,607     |
| 67,600  | Marathon Oil Corporation                     | 1,090,388   |
| 15,200  | Marathon Petroleum Corporation               | 1,111,272   |
| 10,400  | Occidental Petroleum Corporation             | 675,584     |
| 33,100  | Phillips 66                                  | 3,174,952   |

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| Shares | Description (1)                                 | Value        |
|--------|---|--------------|
|        | Oil, Gas & Consumable Fuels (continued)         |              |
| 29,200 | Valero Energy Corporation                       | \$ 2,708,884 |
|        | Total Oil, Gas & Consumable Fuels               | 16,044,411   |
|        | Personal Products – 0.4%                        |              |
| 6,000  | Estee Lauder Companies Inc., Class A            | 898,320      |
|        | Professional Services – 0.4%                    |              |
| 13,600 | Robert Half International Inc.                  | 787,304      |
| 1,200  | Verisk Analytics Inc., (3)                      | 124,800      |
|        | Total Professional Services                     | 912,104      |
|        | Real Estate Management & Development – 0.4%     |              |
| 18,600 | CBRE Group Inc., Class A, (3)                   | 878,292      |
|        | Road & Rail – 1.3%                              |              |
| 13,500 | CSX Corporation, (2)                            | 752,085      |
| 9,600  | J.B. Hunt Transports Services Inc.              | 1,124,640    |
| 8,700  | Norfolk Southern Corporation                    | 1,181,286    |
|        | Total Road & Rail                               | 3,058,011    |
|        | Semiconductors & Semiconductor Equipment – 3.8% |              |
| 35,800 | Applied Materials, Inc., (2)                    | 1,990,838    |
| 2,600  | Lam Research Corporation                        | 528,216      |
| 85,900 | Micron Technology, Inc., (2)                    | 4,478,826    |
| 17,800 | Texas Instruments Incorporated                  | 1,849,242    |
|        | Total Semiconductors & Semiconductor Equipment  | 8,847,122    |
|        | Software – 1.8%                                 |              |
| 2,300  | Ansys Inc.                                      | 360,387      |
| 10,700 | Cadence Design Systems, Inc., (3)               | 393,439      |
| 6,700  | Intuit, Inc.                                    | 1,161,445    |
| 11,300 | Red Hat, Inc.                                   | 1,689,463    |
| 4,800  | Salesforce.com, Inc.                            | 558,240      |
|        | Total Software                                  | 4,162,974    |
|        | Specialty Retail – 2.4%                         |              |
| 2,600  | AutoZone, Inc., (3)                             | 1,686,594    |
| 9,500  | Best Buy Co., Inc.                              | 664,905      |
| 24,300 | Gap, Inc.                                       | 758,160      |
| 3,500  | Home Depot, Inc.                                | 623,840      |
| 24,300 | L Brands Inc.                                   | 928,503      |
| 1,300  | O'Reilly Automotive Inc., (3)                   | 321,594      |
| 3,900  | Ross Stores, Inc.                               | 304,122      |
| 7,300  | Tractor Supply Company                          | 460,046      |
|        | Total Specialty Retail                          | 5,747,764    |

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JCENuveen Core Equity Alpha Fund (continued)  
 Portfolio of Investments March 31, 2018  
 (Unaudited)

| Shares | Description (1)                                   | Value       |
|--------|---|-------------|
|        | Technology Hardware, Storage & Peripherals – 0.4% |             |
| 4,300  | Apple, Inc.                                       | \$721,454   |
| 4,900  | NetApp, Inc.                                      | 302,281     |
|        | Total Technology Hardware, Storage & Peripherals  | 1,023,735   |
|        | Textiles, Apparel & Luxury Goods – 2.2%           |             |
| 8,100  | Michael Kors Holdings Limited, (3)                | 502,848     |
| 12,500 | PVH Corporation                                   | 1,892,875   |
| 5,100  | Ralph Lauren Corporation                          | 570,180     |
| 5,800  | Tapestry Inc.                                     | 305,138     |
| 25,300 | VF Corporation                                    | 1,875,236   |
|        | Total Textiles, Apparel & Luxury Goods            | 5,146,277   |
|        | Trading Companies & Distributors – 1.6%           |             |
| 15,800 | Fastenal Company                                  | 862,522     |
| 9,300  | United Rentals Inc., (3)                          | 1,606,389   |
| 5,000  | W.W. Grainger, Inc.                               | 1,411,350   |
|        | Total Trading Companies & Distributors            | 3,880,261   |
|        | Water Utilities – 0.8%                            |             |
| 22,500 | American Water Works Company                      | 1,847,925   |
|        | Total Long-Term Investments (cost \$207,909,291)  | 231,334,199 |

| Principal Amount (000) | Description (1)   | Coupon | Maturity | Ratings (4) | Value          |
|------------------------|---|--------|----------|-------------|----------------|
|                        | SHORT-TERM INVESTMENTS – 3.6%   |        |          |             |                |
|                        | REPURCHASE AGREEMENTS – 2.5%  |        |          |             |                |
|                        | Repurchase Agreement with Fixed Income Clearing Corporation, dated 3/29/18, repurchase price \$5,963,050, collateralized by \$6,235,000 U.S. Treasury Notes, 2.125%, due 9/30/24, value \$6,086,002 | 0.740% | 4/02/18  | N/A         | \$ 5,962,560   |
| \$ 5,963               |   |        |          |             |                |
|                        | U.S. GOVERNMENT AND AGENCY OBLIGATIONS – 1.1%   |        |          |             |                |
| 2,500                  | U.S. Treasury Bills, (2)  | 0.000% | 7/19/18  | F1+         | 2,486,918      |
| \$ 8,463               | Total Short-Term Investments (cost \$8,450,521)   |        |          |             | 8,449,478      |
|                        | Total Investments (cost \$216,359,812) – 101.9%   |        |          |             | 239,783,677    |
|                        | Other Assets Less Liabilities – (1.9)% (5)  |        |          |             | (4,496,493)    |
|                        | Net Assets – 100%   |        |          |             | \$ 235,287,184 |

Investments in Derivatives

Futures Contracts

| Description         | Contract Position | Number of Contracts | Expiration Date | Notional Amount | Value       | Unrealized Appreciation (Depreciation) | Variation Margin Receivable/ (Payable) |
|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|--|--|
| S&P 500 E-Mini Long | Long              | 40                  | 6/18            | \$5,576,888     | \$5,286,000 | \$(290,888)                            | \$70,800                               |



## Options Written

| Description(6)                                      | Type | Number of Notional |                | Exercise Price | Expiration Date | Value       |
|---|------|--------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|
|   |      | Contracts          | Amount (7)     |                |                 |             |
| RUSSELL 2000® Index                                 | Call | (40)               | \$ (6,300,000) | \$1,575        | 4/20/18         | \$(30,800)  |
| RUSSELL 2000® Index                                 | Call | (100)              | (16,000,000)   | 1,600          | 4/20/18         | (31,000)    |
| RUSSELL 2000® Index                                 | Call | (100)              | (16,100,000)   | 1,610          | 4/20/18         | (23,250)    |
| RUSSELL 2000® Index                                 | Call | (195)              | (31,687,500)   | 1,625          | 4/20/18         | (26,325)    |
| RUSSELL 2000® Index                                 | Call | (75)               | (12,225,000)   | 1,630          | 4/20/18         | (8,438)     |
| Total Options Written (premiums received \$356,211) |      | (510)              | \$(82,312,500) |                |                 | \$(119,813) |

## Fair Value Measurements

Fair value is defined as the price that would be received upon selling an investment or transferring a liability in an orderly transaction to an independent buyer in the principal or most advantageous market for the investment. A three-tier hierarchy is used to maximize the use of observable market data and minimize the use of unobservable inputs and to establish classification of fair value measurements for disclosure purposes. Observable inputs reflect the assumptions market participants would use in pricing the asset or liability. Observable inputs are based on market data obtained from sources independent of the reporting entity. Unobservable inputs reflect the reporting entity's own assumptions about the assumptions market participants would use in pricing the asset or liability. Unobservable inputs are based on the best information available in the circumstances. The following is a summary of the three-tiered hierarchy of valuation input levels.

Level 1 – Inputs are unadjusted and prices are determined using quoted prices in active markets for identical securities.

Level 2 – Prices are determined using other significant observable inputs (including quoted prices for similar securities, interest rates, prepayment speeds, credit risk, etc.).

Level 3 – Prices are determined using significant unobservable inputs (including management's assumptions in determining the fair value of investments).

The inputs or methodologies used for valuing securities are not an indication of the risks associated with investing in those securities. The following is a summary of the Fund's fair value measurements as of the end of the reporting period:

|  | Level 1       | Level 2     | Level 3 | Total         |
|--|---------------|-------------|---------|---------------|
| Long-Term Investments:                 |               |             |         |               |
| Common Stocks                          | \$231,334,199 | \$ —        | \$ —    | \$231,334,199 |
| Short-Term Investments:                |               |             |         |               |
| Repurchase Agreements                  | —             | 5,962,560   | —       | 5,962,560     |
| U.S. Government and Agency Obligations | —             | 2,486,918   | —       | 2,486,918     |
| Investments in Derivatives:            |               |             |         |               |
| Futures Contracts*                     | (290,888)     | —           | —       | (290,888)     |
| Options Written                        | (119,813)     | —           | —       | (119,813)     |
| Total                                  | \$230,923,498 | \$8,449,478 | \$ —    | \$239,372,976 |

\*Represents net unrealized appreciation (depreciation).

## JCE Nuveen Core Equity Alpha Fund (continued)

Portfolio of Investments March 31, 2018

(Unaudited)

## Income Tax Information

The following information is presented on an income tax basis. Differences between amounts for financial statement and federal income tax purposes are primarily due to timing differences in recognizing certain gains and losses on investment transactions and the recognition of unrealized gain or loss for tax (mark-to-market) on futures contracts and certain options contracts. To the extent that differences arise that are permanent in nature, such amounts are reclassified within the capital accounts on the Statement of Assets and Liabilities presented in the annual report, based on their federal tax basis treatment; temporary differences do not require reclassification. Temporary and permanent differences do not impact the net asset value of the Fund.

The table below presents the cost and unrealized appreciation (depreciation) of the Fund's investment portfolio, as determined on a federal income tax basis, as of March 31, 2018.

For purposes of this disclosure, derivative tax cost is generally the sum of any upfront fees or premiums exchanged and any amounts unrealized for income statement reporting but realized in income and/or capital gains for tax reporting. If a particular derivative category does not disclose any tax unrealized appreciation or depreciation, the change in value of those derivatives have generally been fully realized for tax purposes.

|                         |               |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| Tax cost of investments | \$216,359,850 |
|-------------------------|---------------|

Gross unrealized:

|              |               |
|--------------|---------------|
| Appreciation | \$ 27,309,217 |
|--------------|---------------|

|              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| Depreciation | (3,885,390) |
|--------------|-------------|

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| Net unrealized appreciation (depreciation) of investments | \$ 23,423,827 |
|---|---------------|

|                     |             |
|---------------------|-------------|
| Tax cost of futures | \$(290,888) |
|---------------------|-------------|

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Net unrealized appreciation (depreciation) of futures | — |
|---|---|

|                     |             |
|---------------------|-------------|
| Tax cost of options | \$(119,813) |
|---------------------|-------------|

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Net unrealized appreciation (depreciation) of options | — |
|---|---|

For Fund portfolio compliance purposes, the Fund's industry classifications refer to any one or more of the industry sub-classifications used by one or more widely recognized market indexes or ratings group indexes, and/or as defined by Fund management. This definition may not apply for purposes of this report, which may combine industry sub-classifications into sectors for reporting ease.

(1) All percentages shown in the Portfolio of Investments are based on net assets.

(2) Investment, or portion of investment, has been pledged to collateralize the net payment obligations for investments in derivatives.

(3) Non-income producing; issuer has not declared a dividend within the past twelve months.

For financial reporting purposes, the ratings disclosed are the highest of Standard & Poor's Group ("Standard & Poor's"), Moody's Investors Service, Inc. ("Moody's") or Fitch, Inc. ("Fitch") rating. This treatment of split-rated securities may differ from that used for other purposes, such as for Fund investment policies. Ratings below BBB by Standard & Poor's, Baa by Moody's or BBB by Fitch are considered to be below investment grade. Holdings designated N/R are not rated by any of these national rating agencies.

(4) Other assets less liabilities includes the unrealized appreciation (depreciation) of certain over-the-counter ("OTC") derivatives as well as the OTC cleared and exchange-traded derivatives, when applicable. Other assets less liabilities also includes the value of options.

(5) Exchange-traded, unless otherwise noted.

(6) For disclosure purposes, Notional Amount is calculated by multiplying the Number of Contracts by the Strike Price by 100.

(7) N/A Not Applicable

REIT Real Estate Investment Trust

**Item 2. Controls and Procedures.**

- a. The registrant's principal executive and principal financial officers, or persons performing similar functions, have concluded that the registrant's disclosure controls and procedures (as defined in Rule 30a-3(c) under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended (the "1940 Act") (17 CFR 270.30a-3(c))) are effective, as of a date within 90 days of the filing date of this report that includes the disclosure required by this paragraph, based on their evaluation of the controls and procedures required by Rule 30a-3(b) under the 1940 Act (17 CFR 270.30a-3(b)) and Rule 13a-15(b) or 15d-15(b) under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (17 CFR 240.13a-15(b) or 240.15d-15(b)).
- b. There were no changes in the registrant's internal control over financial reporting (as defined in Rule 30a-3(d) under the 1940 Act (17 CFR 270.30a-3(d))) that occurred during the registrant's last fiscal quarter that have materially affected, or are reasonably likely to materially affect, the registrant's internal control over financial reporting.

**Item 3. Exhibits.**

File as exhibits as part of this Form a separate certification for each principal executive officer and principal financial officer of the registrant as required by Rule 30a-2(a) under the 1940 Act (17 CFR 270.30a-2(a)), exactly as set forth below: EX-99 CERT Attached hereto.

**SIGNATURES**

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 and the Investment Company Act of 1940, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized.

(Registrant) Nuveen Core Equity Alpha Fund

By (Signature and Title) /s/ Gifford R. Zimmerman  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Gifford R. Zimmerman  
Vice President and Secretary

Date: May 30, 2018

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 and the Investment Company Act of 1940, this report has been signed below by the following persons on behalf of the registrant and in the capacities and on the dates indicated.

By (Signature and Title) /s/ Cedric H. Antosiewicz  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Cedric H. Antosiewicz  
Chief Administrative Officer (principal executive officer)

Date: May 30, 2018

By (Signature and Title) /s/ Stephen D. Foy  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Stephen D. Foy  
Vice President and Controller (principal financial officer)

Date: May 30, 2018