



Upbeat Report on Goldman Provides a Spark

By Katie Kuehner-Hebert

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Bank stocks and the broader markets were lifted Monday by a positive analyst report on Goldman Sachs.

The KBW Bank Index rose 6.53%, the Dow Jones industrial average rose 2.27% and the Standard & Poor's 500 rose 2.49% after Meredith Whitney upgraded Goldman's stock to "buy," from "neutral." Shares of Goldman, which reports Tuesday, rose 5.3%.

Whitney said that Bank of America Corp.'s shares also have value. B of A, which reports Friday, rose 9.3%.

The bullish comments from Whitney, one of the most notable analysts to predict the onset of the current bear market, impressed many investors, said Randy Cass, founder and vice chairman of First Coverage, a Boston firm that specializes in using sell-side research to track investor attitudes.

"Banks are getting a bit of a pop today, but financials as a whole are still far and away not really liked by institutional sell-side analysts right now," Cass said. "With sentiment souring on the financial industry over the last few weeks, people are going to go over banks' earnings with a lot more scrutiny and perhaps a bit more skepticism — they're probably not going to interpret earnings results in the most positive light."

JPMorgan Chase & Co. rose 7.3%, Wells Fargo & Co. rose 8.4%, PNC Financial Services Group Inc. rose 6.2%, U.S. Bancorp rose 6.6% and Citigroup Inc. rose 19 cents, to \$2.78.

Among the regionals, SunTrust Banks Inc. rose 6.8%, BB&T Corp. rose 6%, Capital One Financial Corp. rose 6%, Comerica Inc. rose 6.2%, Zions Bancorp. rose 8.6%, Fifth Third Bancorp rose 9.5% and Regions Financial Corp. rose 17 cents, to \$4.07.