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## Wall Street Pauses as Investors Brace for Earnings Wave

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U.S. stock futures hovered near flat early Wednesday morning as investors held off on major moves ahead of a crucial wave of corporate earnings reports. While the broader market remains cautiously optimistic, key indicators suggest a wait-and-see approach as traders digest economic data and prepare for results from major industry players.

Futures tied to the Dow Jones Industrial Average (DJIA) were down 0.08% as of 6 a.m. Eastern Time (ET), while the Standard & Poor's 500 (S&P 500) futures edged up 0.06%. The Nasdaq Composite futures, heavily weighted toward technology stocks, showed slightly more enthusiasm with a 0.15% rise.

Several major corporations are set to report earnings before the opening bell, including Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC), General Electric (GE), Aerospace, Travelers Companies Inc., Abbott Laboratories, PepsiCo Inc., U.S. Bancorp, and Citizens Financial Group. Streaming giant Netflix Inc. will follow after markets close, providing key insight into consumer behavior amid ongoing market uncertainty.

Markets will also parse through fresh data on June retail sales and weekly jobless claims, key barometers of consumer strength and labor market resilience. May's retail numbers were weaker than expected, raising concerns about household spending, while weekly unemployment claims remain steady. However, a rise in continuing claims suggests that when Americans do lose jobs, it is taking them longer to find new ones.

Among notable corporate developments, United Airlines fell short of second-quarter revenue expectations and revised its annual earnings-per-share forecast downward, citing softer-than-expected demand. Meanwhile, Sarepta Therapeutics announced a strategic restructuring initiative, which includes cutting approximately 500 jobs, or 36% of its workforce, to streamline operations and reduce costs.

Monarch Casino & Resort delivered some upbeat news, reporting stronger second-quarter earnings compared to last year, pointing to continued strength in the leisure and gaming sector. On the retail front, Bloomberg reported that Walmart Inc. plans to reduce hundreds of store-support and training roles within its Walmart Academy division, according to an internal memo.

As markets digest both corporate earnings and economic signals, Wall Street appears to be treading carefully, seeking reassurance that inflation remains manageable, job growth remains stable, and companies can continue delivering solid bottom lines in a post-pandemic economy. Investors are betting that resilient corporate performance, especially among tech and consumer leaders, will continue to buoy the market through the second half of the year.