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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

David R. Papritz Joins Howe Barnes Hoefler & Arnett

September 26, 2007, Chicago, IL- Howe Barnes Hoefler & Arnett announces the appointment of David R. Papritz as Senior Vice President and Director of Private Equity. He will oversee and manage the Howe Barnes private equity funds which includes working with the banks that make up the investment portfolios, evaluating potential new investments and initiating enhanced communications with the funds' limited partners.

Prior to joining Howe Barnes, Mr. Papritz was a Group Senior Vice President for LaSalle Bank Corporation/ABN Amro North America. While at LaSalle, he acquired 20 years of experience in finance, strategic planning, merger integration and retail banking. Mr. Papritz received his B.A. from Luther College, Decorah, Iowa and his M.B.A. from the J.L. Kellogg Graduate School of Management, Northwestern University.

"I am very pleased to join Howe Barnes and help the firm continue to grow its dynamic and focused franchise of serving community banking organizations across the country. I have long admired the firm and am thrilled to become part of the team," commented Mr. Papritz.

According to Howe Barnes President and CEO Daniel E. Coughlin, "Providing capital for community banks is a core strength of our firm. The addition of Dave Papritz to our private equity team is an exciting development. Dave is a quality individual with the necessary bank experience to assist the companies in our portfolio and help us identify new community bank investment opportunities."

Established in 1915, Howe Barnes Hoefler & Arnett, Inc. is a full service brokerage firm headquartered in Chicago, IL with offices in six states throughout the U.S. Through its bank sales and trading, research, investment banking and asset finance services departments, Howe Barnes specializes in community banks and thrifts. Through its private client services department, the firm provides investment advice and products to both individual and institutional customers. Howe Barnes Hoefler & Arnett is the exclusive provider of capital markets services for the Independent Community Bankers of America (ICBA). The firm delivers fixed income products and services through a strategic initiative with Vining Sparks IBG, Memphis, Tennessee.

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