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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Daniel Weber Joins Howe Barnes Hoefer & Arnett's Investment Banking Group

March 11, 2008, Chicago, IL- Howe Barnes Hoefer & Arnett announces the appointment of Daniel Weber as First Vice President and Managing Director, Investment Banking. Dan will provide investment banking advisory services to financial institution across the country with particular emphasis on the Midwest. He comes to Howe Barnes after 12 years at Sandler O'Neill & Partners, L.P. where he led and participated in numerous transactions including mergers and acquisitions, capital offerings and general advisory assignments. Mr. Weber received his B.S. in Finance from the McIntire School of Commerce at the University of Virginia.

Mr. Weber commented, "I'm excited to be joining a leader in investment banking to middle-market bank and thrifts. Howe Barnes represents a unique opportunity to service my banking clients with a platform dedicated to the middle-market in terms of investment banking, equity research and equity trading."

According to Howe Barnes' Director of Investment Banking, Brian Ytterberg, "We are excited to have someone with Dan's experience and ability join the firm. We continue to expand our investment banking team by adding high-quality bankers such as Dan who share our commitment to providing excellent advice and service to our clients."

Established in 1915, Howe Barnes Hoefer & 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 Hoefer & 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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