

**Contact:**

Brian Ytterberg, Senior V.P., Director of Investment Banking  
Howe Barnes Hoefer & Arnett  
Chicago, Illinois  
312-655-2979

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Thomas Lynch Joins Howe Barnes Hoefer & Arnett's Investment Banking Group**

*September 25, 2006, Chicago, IL-* Howe Barnes Hoefer & Arnett announces the appointment of Thomas A. Lynch as Managing Director, Investment Banking. Tom will provide investment banking advisory services to many of our key relationships and has led many material transactions, including acquisitions, mergers of equals, thrift conversions, branch divestitures and general advisory assignments. He has over 19 years of investment banking experience most recently as a Managing Director at Sandler O'Neill's Chicago office. Tom received his B.A. in Economics from The University of Notre Dame and an M.B.A. in Finance from Loyola University, Chicago.

Tom Lynch commented, "I'm very excited about joining a fast growing national firm headquartered in Chicago which shares my core beliefs. I chose to join Howe Barnes because the franchise offers a great platform with capabilities that are second to none."

According to Howe Barnes President and CEO Daniel E. Coughlin, "The addition of Tom Lynch to our investment banking team is an exciting development. Tom is a senior banker with strong relationships and significant transaction experience. He is a quality individual who shares our commitment to providing excellent advice and service to our community bank clients. I look forward to working closely with him."

Established in 1915, Howe Barnes Hoefer & Arnett, Inc. is a full service brokerage firm headquartered in Chicago, IL. Its banking department specializes in sales, trading, research and corporate finance services for 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. ([www.howebarnes.com](http://www.howebarnes.com))

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