WINTRUST

NEWS RELEASE

# Wintrust Financial Corporation Announces Plans to Acquire North Bank

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ROSEMONT, Ill., March 30, 2015 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Wintrust Financial Corporation ("Wintrust") (Nasdaq:WTFC) today announced the signing of a definitive agreement by its subsidiary Wintrust Bank to acquire North Bank, headquartered in downtown Chicago, Illinois.

Since 1970, North Bank has been providing outstanding personal service, great products and convenience to the River North and Streeterville neighborhoods of Chicago. Its two banking facilities are located at 431 North Clark Street and at 360 East Ohio Street. As of December 31, 2014, North Bank had approximately $108 million in assets, approximately $55 million in loans and approximately $96 million in deposits.

Edward J. Wehmer, President and CEO of Wintrust, said, "This transaction provides a wonderful opportunity to expand and complement our growing market presence in downtown Chicago. We look forward to continuing with the community banking approach that North Bank has established and to providing their customer base with an expanded array of products and services."

Mayo C. Walcott, President of North Bank, stated, "We are excited about the opportunity to combine resources with Wintrust. This is a great opportunity to partner with a successful organization that is compatible with ours. We share a philosophy of offering highly personalized customer-oriented retail and commercial banking services." Mr. Walcott emphasized that by joining forces with Wintrust, "the transaction allows us to continue focusing on serving our customers, while at the same time providing our customers with access to a wider range of products and services. We see many benefits for our customers and shareholders and we look forward to joining the Wintrust family."

Terms of the Transaction

Subject to possible adjustment, the aggregate purchase price will be approximately $17 million, to be paid in cash in exchange for all outstanding shares of North Bank's common stock.

The transaction is subject to approval by banking regulators and North Bank's shareholders, and certain closing conditions. The transaction is expected to close late in the second quarter of 2015 or early in the third quarter of 2015 and is not expected to have a material effect on Wintrust's 2015 earnings per share.

Advisors

D.A. Davidson & Co. acted as exclusive financial advisor to North Bank in the transaction and provided a fairness opinion to its Board of Directors. Fox, Swibel, Levin & Carroll, LLP acted as North Bank's legal advisor and Schiff Hardin LLP served as outside counsel to Wintrust.

About Wintrust

Wintrust is a financial holding company with assets of approximately $20 billion whose common stock is traded on the NASDAQ Global Select Market. Built on the "HAVE IT ALL" model, Wintrust offers sophisticated technology and resources of a large bank while focusing on providing service-based community banking to each and every customer. Wintrust operates fifteen community bank subsidiaries with over 140 banking locations located in the greater Chicago and southern Wisconsin market areas. Additionally, the Company operates various non-bank business units including one of the largest commercial insurance premium finance companies operating in the United States and Canada, a company providing short-term accounts receivable financing and value-added out-sourced administrative services to the temporary staffing services industry, a business unit engaging primarily in the origination and purchase of residential mortgages for sale into the secondary market throughout the United States, and companies providing wealth management services.

Forward-Looking Information

This press release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of the federal securities laws relating to the proposed acquisition of North Bank and integration of North Bank with Wintrust, the combination of their businesses and projected revenue, as well as profitability and earnings outlook. Investors are cautioned that such statements are predictions and actual events or results may differ materially. Wintrust's expected financial results or other plans are subject to a number of risks and uncertainties. For a discussion of such risks and uncertainties, which could cause actual results to differ from those contained in the forward-looking statements, see "Risk Factors" and the forward-looking statement disclosure contained in Wintrust's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the most recently ended fiscal year. Forward-looking statements speak only as of the date made and Wintrust

undertakes no duty to update the information.

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