NEWS RELEASE

Wintrust Financial Corporation Announces Semi-Annual Dividend

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LAKE FOREST, Ill., Jan. 26, 2012 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Wintrust Financial Corporation ("Wintrust" or the "Company") (Nasdaq:WTFC) today announced that the Company's Board of Directors approved a semi-annual cash dividend of $0.09 per share of outstanding common stock. The dividend is payable on February 23, 2012 to shareholders of record as of February 9, 2012. This cash dividend is the same as the per share common stock dividend paid in August of 2011.

About Wintrust

Wintrust is a financial holding company with assets of approximately $16 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, now with 99 banking locations located in the greater Chicago and Milwaukee market areas. Additionally, the Company operates various non-bank subsidiaries including one of the largest commercial insurance premium finance companies operating in the United States, a company providing short-term accounts receivable financing and value-added out-sourced administrative services to the temporary staffing services industry, companies engaging in the origination 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. Investors are cautioned that such statements are predictions and that 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 and in Wintrust's subsequent Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q. Forward-looking statements speak only as of the date made and Wintrust undertakes no duty to update the information.

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