WINTRUST

NEWS RELEASE

Wintrust Financial Corporation Completes Acquisition of Great Lakes Advisors

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LAKE FOREST, Ill., July 1, 2011 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Wintrust Financial Corporation (Wintrust) (Nasdaq:WTFC), announced today the completion of its previously announced acquisition of Great Lakes Advisors, Inc.Great Lakes Advisors, a Chicago-based investment manager with approximately $2.4 billion in assets under management, which specializes in domestic equity and fixed income investment strategies for institutional clients, has been merged into Wintrust's existing asset management business, Wintrust Capital Management, LLC. Going forward, the combined firm will conduct its asset management business as "Great Lakes Advisors, LLC, a Wintrust Wealth Management Company" and will have assets under management of nearly $4.5 billion.

Edward J. Wehmer, President and CEO of Wintrust, commented on the completion of the transaction: "Building our asset management capabilities is a strategic priority. With the acquisition of Great Lakes Advisors, we establish ourselves as a major player in the institutional investor market in the Midwest." Tom Kiley, previously a Managing Director of Great Lakes Advisors who will serve as CEO of the combined company, shared his perspective: "This merger brings together two firms that share many common values and operate distinct but complementary lines of business. Together, we are well-positioned to serve all our clients and can employ our expanded resources and scale to further enhance our investment strategies and client service."

Tom Zidar, Chairman of the combined wealth management company, added: "We are excited to join forces with Great Lakes Advisors. Their leadership team has an outstanding reputation and investment track record. We are thrilled to bring their expertise and capabilities to our private clients and to grow the combined business."

Terms of the Transaction

The full terms of the transaction are not being disclosed by the parties at this time. The initial consideration paid by

Wintrust was in the form of Wintrust's common stock and Wintrust could pay additional contingent consideration consisting of cash and/or common stock, upon the attainment of certain performance measures over the next twelve months.

About Wintrust

Wintrust is a financial holding company with assets of approximately $14 billion whose common stock is traded on the NASDAQ Global Select Market. Wintrust operates fifteen community bank subsidiaries that are 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 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. Currently, Wintrust operates more than 85 banking offices.

About Wintrust Wealth Management

Wintrust Wealth Management provides a comprehensive suite of wealth management services and oversees over $12 billion in client assets (including the acquired client assets of GLA). Wintrust Wealth Management consists of Wintrust's three wealth management companies comprised of Wayne Hummer Investments, Great Lakes Advisors, and The Chicago Trust Company. Since 1931, Wayne Hummer Investments has been providing a full range of investment products and services tailored to meet the specific needs of individual investors throughout the country. Great Lakes Advisors is a registered investment advisor and manages assets for private clients, public and corporate pensions, endowments and foundations, religious communities, Socially Responsible Investors, financial intermediaries, Taft-Hartley funds, as well as portfolios for The Chicago Trust Company. The Chicago Trust Company provides trust and estate services to individuals and businesses in Wintrust community bank markets.

Forward Looking Statements

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 Report 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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Source: Wintrust Financial Corporation