

Hilltop Holdings Inc. Announces New Merchant Banking Business with Launch of Hilltop Opportunity Partners

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Completes First Transaction with \$10 Million Equity Investment in AFN, LLC

DALLAS--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Dallas-based Hilltop Holdings Inc. (NYSE: HTH) has launched a new merchant banking business, Hilltop Opportunity Partners (“HOP”), to pursue investment opportunities across a variety of sectors and capital structures. As part of Hilltop Holdings, HOP will focus on long- and short-term, non-control investments.

The effort will be led by Hilltop Holdings Executive Vice President Mark Plunkett, who will serve as chief investment officer and head of Hilltop Opportunity Partners, and Hilltop Holdings Vice President Peter Lynch.

“We’ve established Hilltop Opportunity Partners to provide Hilltop Holdings with an effective platform to identify and execute on attractive non-bank opportunities for capital deployment,” said Jeremy B. Ford, president and co-CEO of Hilltop Holdings. “We are excited about this new venture, and under the experienced leadership of Mark and Peter, we look forward to expanding this business as opportunities arise.”

Hilltop Opportunity Partners utilizes excess capital at HTH to employ a flexible investment strategy and address a variety of capital needs, targeting middle market investments outside of the banking industry that range from \$5 million to \$25 million. Larger or smaller opportunities are considered on a case-by-case basis. In December 2017, HOP completed a \$10 million preferred equity investment in AFN, LLC, an Illinois-based, award-winning leader in freight brokerage, third-party logistics, and transportation management services.

“As demonstrated by our work with AFN, LLC, we seek out exceptional owners, operators and co-investors to

structure investments that best meet their objectives,” Plunkett said. “AFN Co-founder and CEO Ryan Daube, is an industry leader and veteran of the logistics space who has built a top-notch team at AFN over the last 15 years.”

To learn more about Hilltop Opportunity Partners, visit www.Hilltop-Holdings.com/HOP or email HOP@Hilltop-Holdings.com for more information. To learn more about AFN, LLC, visit loadafn.com.

About Mark Plunkett

Before joining Hilltop Holdings, Plunkett co-founded and ran Hilliard Street Capital, a Blackstone and Bridger seeded long/short equity fund, and served as a partner with Atlas Capital. He has also worked for the Washington, D.C.-based Carlyle Group; with Hicks, Muse, Tate, and Furst in Mexico City; and with Cardinal Investment Company in Dallas. He currently serves as a Senior Advisor to the New York-based private equity fund Argand Capital and as a director of a Dallas-based bakery company and a Hong Kong-based global toy company. Plunkett earned a B.B.A. and B.S. from Southern Methodist University, graduating magna cum laude with honors and received his M.B.A. from Harvard Business School. He is also a U.S. Fulbright Scholar.

About Peter Lynch

Before joining Hilltop Holdings, Lynch was a vice president at Argenta Partners, a private equity firm focused on control-only equity investments. Prior to that, he worked with the M&A team at Rabobank International in New York City, and with J.P. Morgan in Buenos Aires, Argentina and in Santiago, Chile. He currently serves as chairman of Fleetwood Transportation Services and as a director of NovaLink, Inc., OTTR Chronic Care Solutions and Stephen Gould Corporation. Additionally, he founded **ASimpleModel.com** in 2013, a website dedicated to making financial modeling instruction simple and affordable. Lynch earned a B.A. in economics from the University of Pennsylvania.

About Hilltop Holdings Inc.

Hilltop Holdings is a Dallas-based financial holding company. Its primary line of business is to provide business and consumer banking services from offices located throughout Texas through PlainsCapital Bank. PlainsCapital Bank's wholly owned subsidiary, PrimeLending, provides residential mortgage lending throughout the United States. Hilltop Holdings' broker-dealer subsidiaries, Hilltop Securities Inc. and Hilltop Securities Independent Network Inc., provide a full complement of securities brokerage, institutional and investment banking services in addition to clearing services and retail financial advisory. Through Hilltop Holdings' other wholly owned subsidiary, National Lloyds Corporation, it provides property and casualty insurance through two insurance companies, National Lloyds Insurance Company and American Summit Insurance Company. At December 31, 2017, Hilltop employed approximately 5,500 people and operated approximately 475 locations in 44 states. Hilltop Holdings' common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol "HTH." Find more information at Hilltop-Holdings.com,

PlainsCapital.com, PrimeLending.com, NationalLloydsInsurance.com and HilltopSecurities.com.

About AFN, LLC

AFN is an award-winning leader in freight brokerage, third-party logistics, and transportation management services that has served the needs of major manufacturers, top-20 retailers, and best-in-class carriers in North America since 2003. Known for its commitment to client service, AFN has a robust suite of people-first, technology-enabled solutions -- from truckload, LTL and consolidation services to risk management, carrier compliance, cargo security and surveillance, and more. To learn more about AFN, please visit www.loadafn.com or call 877-562-3236.

FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This press release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These forward-looking statements involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors that may cause our actual results, performance or achievements to be materially different from any future results, performance or achievements anticipated in such statements. Forward-looking statements speak only as of the date they are made and, except as required by law, we do not assume any duty to update forward-looking statements. Such forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to, statements concerning such things as our plans, objectives, strategies, expectations and intentions and other statements that are not statements of historical fact, and may be identified by words such as “anticipates,” “believes,” “could,” “estimates,” “expanding,” “expects,” “forecasts,” “goal,” “intends,” “may,” “might,” “plan,” “probable,” “projects,” “seek,” “should,” “target,” “view” or “would” or the negative of these words and phrases or similar words or phrases. For a discussion of certain factors that could cause our actual results to differ materially from those described in the forward-looking statements, please see the risk factors discussed in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and subsequent Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q and other reports that are filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission. All forward-looking statements are qualified in their entirety by this cautionary statement.

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