

CASTLEOAK SECURITIES, L.P. EXPANDS INTO EQUITIES

-- Marlon S. Weems Joins Leading Minority-Owned Investment Bank --

New York, – January 9, 2007 – CastleOak Securities, L.P., a minority-owned investment bank based in New York, announced that it is expanding into equity sales and trading with the hiring of Marlon S. Weems as Managing Director of Equity Sales & Trading in its New York office.

David R. Jones, President and Chief Executive Officer of CastleOak, said, “We are pleased to welcome Marlon to our team, and are confident that his broad-based experience, particularly in the area of algorithmic and electronic trading, will be a tremendous asset in augmenting the range of the firm’s sales and trading, capital markets and financial advisory products and services.”

Mr. Jones added, “CastleOak’s strong capital position, marquee client base of Fortune 500 and emerging growth companies, and strategic partnership with Cantor Fitzgerald have enabled us to win several mandates to co-manage corporate underwritings, participate in syndicates and selling groups, and advise on leveraged buyout and M&A deals in the six months since the firm received regulatory approval to underwrite debt and equity securities. As a seasoned professional, Marlon will make a valuable contribution to our new equity sales and trading platform and help maximize our ability to fulfill our institutional clients’ strategic and financial needs.”

Mr. Weems joins CastleOak with over 20 years experience in the equities markets. Most recently, he served as President and Chief Operating Officer of MultiTrade Securities. Previously, he was a Managing Partner with Saratoga Capital Markets and a Managing Director of Equities with Blaylock & Partners.

About CastleOak Securities, L.P.

CastleOak Securities, L.P. is a minority-owned investment bank offering an extensive suite of financial services including fixed income sales and trading, equity sales and trading, and financial

advisory services. The firm offers clients expertise in primary and secondary market transactions, advice on mergers, acquisitions, divestitures, valuations and general strategic assessments. Based in New York, with regional offices in Chicago and Atlanta, CastleOak is managed by a team of seasoned investment bankers, each with an average of 15 years experience who provide innovative, client-driven solutions that leverage their extensive professional experience, strong institutional relationships and keen market insight. For more information, please visit www.castleoaklp.com

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