

## **Christopher Donohoe Joins Sandler O'Neill as Managing Director; Establishes New Practice Dedicated to Specialty Finance Companies**

**New York – July 10, 2012** – Sandler O'Neill + Partners, L.P., a full-service investment banking firm specializing in financial services companies, today announced that Christopher W. Donohoe has joined the firm as a Managing Director and establishes a new investment banking practice at Sandler O'Neill focused on specialty finance companies.

Donohoe will be based in the firm's New York headquarters and will report to Brian R. Sterling and William F. Hickey, Principals and Co-Heads of Investment Banking. Donohoe will provide strategic and financial advice to commercial finance, leasing, consumer finance, and a range of other non-bank financial services companies.

"I am thrilled to be joining Sandler O'Neill," Donohoe said. "The firm has a tremendous reputation for client service and is an established leader in providing advice to financial services companies. It is an impact player in all of its practice areas, and my intention is to uphold and build on that reputation."

The addition is part of Sandler O'Neill's ongoing expansion of its investment banking practice areas. In the past two years, the firm has added dedicated teams to serve the asset management and real estate sectors and significantly expanded its insurance investment banking team.

"Specialty finance is a vibrant part of the financial services sector and an area where we see tremendous opportunities for growth," Sterling said. "Sandler O'Neill has a history of advising these companies, but we have long hoped to meaningfully increase our commitment to the space and bring greater depth and focus to our services. Bringing Chris to the firm accomplishes this and is a major win for our clients."

"Having a seasoned investment banker such as Chris, who has been dedicated to specialty financial companies his entire career, will be a key differentiator for our practice," Hickey said. "He understands the complexities of these businesses and their changing marketplace and possesses an extensive network of relationships that will benefit our clients from day one. Considering our prior work in the space and our overall track record of advising on M&A and capital raising transactions, we expect this to be a partnership that adds great value for our clients."

Sandler O'Neill is one of the most active investment banks in merger advisory and capital raising for financial institutions. Since 2010, the firm has advised on 90 financial services merger transactions valued at an aggregate of \$16.6 billion. During that same period, Sandler O'Neill managed 63 public common equity offerings that raised approximately \$21 billion.<sup>1</sup>

### **About Mr. Donohoe**

Mr. Donohoe, 45, was most recently Managing Director and headed the specialty finance investment banking effort as part of the Financial Institutions Group at BMO Capital Markets. Prior to that, he was a Managing Director at Banc of America Securities, where he advised specialty finance companies on mergers and acquisitions, capital raising, and other key strategic and financial initiatives. Before Banc of America, he was a Managing Director at J.P. Morgan & Co., where he focused on specialty finance companies. He holds a Master of Business Administration from The University of Chicago Booth School of Business and a Bachelor of Arts from Duke University.

### **About Sandler O'Neill + Partners, L.P.**

Founded in 1988, Sandler O'Neill + Partners is a full-service investment banking firm dedicated to providing comprehensive, innovative advisory and transaction execution services to the financial industry. The firm specializes in strategic business planning, mergers and acquisitions, capital markets,

mutual-to-stock conversions, investment portfolio and interest rate risk management, fixed income securities transactions, and mortgage finance restructurings. Sandler O'Neill also is a market maker in hundreds of financial stocks and publishes equity and fixed income research focused on selected banks, thrifts and insurance companies, investment banks, asset managers, specialty finance companies, e-finance companies, real estate investment trusts, financial technology companies, and transaction execution companies. Additional information about Sandler O'Neill can be found on the firm's website at [www.sandleroneill.com](http://www.sandleroneill.com).

<sup>1</sup>Merger transaction and capital raising statistics from SNL Financial LC as of July 6, 2012

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