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David C. Fording Joins William Blair All-Cap Growth Portfolio Team

Chicago, November 8, 2005 – William Blair & Company today announced that David C. Fording, CFA, has joined the firm as a portfolio manager of the William Blair All-Cap Growth team. Mr. Fording joins John F. Jostrand, CFA, who has been portfolio manager of All-Cap Growth products since 1993.

A 10-year veteran of the investment industry, Mr. Fording has solid experience in a bottom-up, fundamental research environment and across a range of market capitalizations in growth equity portfolio management. He was a portfolio manager with TIAA-CREF Investment Management, Inc., in New York, before joining William Blair & Company.

“We are very excited to welcome someone of David’s caliber to our All-Cap Portfolio team,” said Michelle R. Seitz, CFA, head of the Investment Management Division. “David’s skills are a tremendous complement to our existing team, and he brings an abundance of experience and energy to our growing effort within Investment Management. This hire is exemplary of our commitment to attract and retain the highest-quality investment professionals for the benefit of our clients. We look forward to his contributions.”

Mr. Fording received his B.A. from Tufts University (summa cum laude and *Phi Beta Kappa*) and his M.B.A. from the Stern School of Business, New York University (*Beta Gamma Sigma*).

William Blair & Company, L.L.C. is a Chicago-based investment firm offering investment banking, asset management, equity research, institutional and private brokerage, and private capital to individual, institutional, and issuing clients. Since 1935, we have been committed to helping clients achieve their financial objectives. As an independent, employee-owned firm, our philosophy is to serve our clients' interests first and foremost. We place a high value on the enduring nature of our client relationships, the quality of our products and services, and the continuity and integrity of our people. William Blair & Company has offices in Chicago, Hartford, London, San Francisco, Tokyo, Vaduz, and Zurich. For more information, please visit www.williamblair.com

William Blair Investment Management is the buy side money management division of William Blair & Company, comprising the institutional, subadvisory, mutual fund, and wealth management businesses. With more than $30 billion in assets, this division provides customized and structured portfolios for domestic, global, and international equities, cash, and domestic fixed income. William Blair Investment Management also acts as the investment advisor to a family of fourteen open-end mutual funds.