



P R E S S R E L E A S E

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**SBK-BROOKS INVESTMENT CORP. TEAM JOINS
BLAYLOCK ROBERT VAN**

*Firm Adds Offices in Cleveland, Columbus, OH,
Los Angeles, Detroit and Fort Lauderdale*

Oakland, CA, August 18, 2009 – Blaylock Robert Van LLC, (BRV) a leading minority-owned investment bank and financial services company, announced today that the SBK-Brooks (SBK) municipal finance, corporate finance and institutional sales and trading specialists have joined the firm.

Eric Small, formerly president and CEO at SBK, will now serve as executive vice president at BRV and William Matlock, who was managing director at SBK, will assume the position of senior vice president at BRV. As part of the expansion, BRV will operate from SBK's headquarters in Cleveland as well as its offices in Chicago and Columbus. Personnel based in SBK's New York City office will be transitioned to BRV's office at 600 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY.

The addition of the SBK team underscores BRV's strategic plan to build a full-service investment bank with a significant footprint in the municipal finance market. Having served as

senior or sole manager on over \$6 billion in issuances and over \$200 billion as co-manager, the addition of Mr. Small and the SBK team significantly increases BRV's bench of municipal finance experts and immediately provides the firm depth in the Midwest with access to both coasts.

"The municipal finance market continues to undergo an enormous transition period as many of the bulge bracket firms that traditionally served as senior managers have left the market or are no longer in business. We see this as a huge opportunity and with the hire of Eric and his team we will have an immediate impact," said Eric Standifer, president of BRV.

"Keeping the SBK-Brooks Investment Corp. team intact and transitioning it into Blaylock Robert Van is the perfect situation for us and for our clients. Together we will offer a stronger platform for banking, underwriting, advisory, municipal sales as well as trading and brokerage services for public sector investment portfolios," said Mr. Small.

Earlier this year, BRV hired Aquacena Lopez, founder of A. Lopez & Associates, an advisory firm specializing in municipal bond original issuance for California public agencies. BRV plans to continue to make strategic acquisitions and hires to extend the firm's expansion into the municipal finance market.

As a senior banking officer since 1991, Mr. Small has participated in structuring and underwriting over 200 municipal bond transactions. He has over 30 years of broad-based capital markets experience. Mr. Small is a former senior investment director with the Bond Investment Department of Aetna Life & Casualty. He holds a Bachelor of Science in finance from the McDonough School of Management (Georgetown University) and a Master of Science in management from the Arthur D. Little School of Management. Mr. Small is a registered Securities Principal with the SEC and NASD (Series 24, 7, 53 and 63).

William E. Matlock, Jr., has over 25 years of both public and private sector investments, treasury management and debt management experience. Mr. Matlock has served as manager for more than \$2.5 billion in municipal debt issues.

As Deputy Director of Investments and Debt Management in the State of Ohio Treasury, Mr. Matlock was responsible for investment operations, including investment of short term and intermediate portfolio investments in excess of \$9 billion. He also managed bond issues in excess of \$1.3 billion in general obligation, appropriation, and lease revenue financing including Ohio capital projects for Housing, infrastructure, transportation, education, student loans, and economic development. Prior to that, Mr. Matlock served as Senior Treasury Management and Investment Officer for The Ohio State University.

Mr. Matlock is a graduate of Cleveland State University (BBA in Accounting and Financial Management). Graduate coursework was completed at the Cannon Financial Institute at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

ABOUT BLAYLOCK ROBERT VAN, LLC

Blaylock Robert Van, LLC is a leading minority-owned investment banking boutique offering innovative sales and trading, capital markets underwriting, and proprietary equity research. The firm's mission hinges upon a single-minded focus on understanding and delivering financial services of the highest quality. Blaylock Robert Van LLC provides asset managers with global electronic equity trading capabilities to more than 40 worldwide exchanges and provides institutional research through its proprietary platform *ELROI - The Electronic Analyst*®, a web-based research tool for constructing and testing actionable portfolio strategies. The firm also owns SPI Strategies LLC, an investment advisory. Based in Oakland, CA, Blaylock Robert Van LLC also has offices in New York City and Chicago. The firm is a member of FINRA, MSRB and SIPC.

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