



**MICHAEL FREITAG, STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS EXPERT, JOINS
JOELE FRANK WILKINSON BRIMMER KATCHER AS PARTNER**

NEW YORK, May 5, 2011 – Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher (JFWBK), a leading strategic financial corporate communications firm specializing in investor relations, financial public relations and transaction and crisis communications, today announced that Michael Freitag has joined the firm as a Partner.

Freitag provides strategic communications counsel and support to senior managements, boards of directors and their outside advisors at publicly traded and privately held companies, high-profile and/or high-net-worth individuals, and not-for-profit institutions. His areas of expertise include reputation management, crisis communications, restructurings and reorganizations, media relations, and the alternative investment sector (including private equity firms, family offices and university endowments).

Joele Frank, founder and Managing Partner of JFWBK, said, “We are excited to have Michael join us and bring his expertise and judgment to bear in advising our clients on a wide range of business challenges and opportunities. He is an experienced, well-rounded professional who will help us continue to serve our clients.”

Freitag said, “Since its founding more than a decade ago, JFWBK has developed an outstanding reputation for the intelligence, intensity and integrity of its professional staff. The firm is widely regarded, in particular, for being a highly effective advocate and advisor on behalf of its clients. I am very excited about the opportunity to join my new colleagues as we seek to further solidify the firm’s leadership in its select practice areas.”

For more than 20 years, Freitag has been deeply involved in a broad array of significant events and issues impacting the business community, including the restructuring of the automotive, airline and financial services sectors; government inquiries related to allegations of insider trading at hedge funds, “pay to play” improprieties at private equity firms, and accounting irregularities at publicly traded companies; the retirement, departure or death of numerous prominent business leaders and investment managers; international scrutiny of leading Swiss and French financial institutions regarding the restitution of Holocaust-era assets; and the collapse of Amaranth and Enron, as well as the Supreme Court’s 9-0 decision overturning the criminal conviction of the accounting firm Arthur Andersen.

Freitag is a leading expert in developing and implementing communication plans related to out-of-court financial restructurings and in-court Chapter 11 reorganizations. The more than 100 Chapter 11 cases in which he has advised the debtor include Blockbuster, BMHC, Buffets, CB Holding, Delta Air Lines, DIRECTV Latin America, Frontier Airlines, General Motors, Idearc, Kmart, Masonite, the Minneapolis Star-Tribune, Natural Products Group, Owens-Corning, Polaroid, R.H. Macy & Co., Smurfit-Stone, Spectrum Brands, Vitro America, Winn-Dixie Stores, and W.R. Grace.

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Freitag has also been involved in numerous proxy contests and in both friendly and not-so-friendly mergers and acquisitions. In addition, he has advised a number of educational, cultural and charitable organizations, including the Michael Lynch Memorial Foundation, a remarkable family-run charity that has provided more than \$1.6 million in scholarships in honor of a firefighter killed at the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.

Freitag joins JFWBK from Kekst and Company, where he served for many years as a Partner and leader of the Restructuring and Reorganization practice. He joined Kekst in 1990 and became a Partner three years later. He became a member of the firm's Operations Committee in 2010.

From 1986 to 1990, Freitag was on the editorial staff of *The New York Times*, where among other roles he served for two years as the news clerk to A.M. (Abe) Rosenthal, the columnist and former executive editor. He received a B.A. in political science, *cum laude*, from Yale University in 1986. At Yale he served as Managing Editor of the *Yale Daily News* and as campus correspondent for *The Times*.

About Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher

Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher is a financial and corporate communications firm that was founded in January 2000 with a single purpose: to provide excellent, effective and accountable communications counsel and support to corporations. The independently-owned firm works with companies and their advisors to advance its clients' business and strategic objectives using financial communications, corporate public relations, investor relations and transaction and crisis communications. For further information, please visit www.joelefrank.com.

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