



## ***NEWS RELEASE***

**For Immediate Release**

### **THE RLJ COMPANIES LAUNCHES RLJ FIXED INCOME, LLC**

*Expands Financial Services Expertise with New Asset Class*

**BETHESDA, MD//JUNE 27, 2011//**Robert L. Johnson, founder and chairman of The RLJ Companies, today announced the launch of RLJ Fixed Income, LLC, as part of the ongoing strategy to expand RLJ's footprint in the financial services sector. RLJ Fixed Income, in collaboration with Wealth Management Associates, has created a team to acquire bond and other debt instruments in the fixed income markets.

"I am very excited about launching RLJ Fixed Income and entering into the bond trading industry sector," said Johnson. "Over the last year, we have expanded our asset management offerings including raising a \$143 million special purpose acquisition company (SPAC), through RLJ Acquisition, Inc., and last month successfully took our hotel private equity fund public on the New York Stock Exchange now called, RLJ Lodging Trust," he added.

"Entering into the fixed income trading business gives us the opportunity to strengthen our relationships with market participants and to join in an asset class that is a primary driver of capital access for companies and governments looking to raise capital using debt instruments for growth and development projects," Johnson continued. "It is an area that is underrepresented by minority firms and we want to leverage our brand to open up the opportunity for ourselves and other emerging minority firms," Johnson concluded.

Tarik A. Brooks has been selected to lead RLJ Fixed Income. Brooks has held management positions in several RLJ portfolio companies including Caribbean CAGE, RLJ Kendeja, and RLJ Financial. Brooks is a graduate of Howard University and received his MBA from the Harvard Business School. He will serve as executive vice president.

"We are thrilled to form an alliance with Bob Johnson and the RLJ team" stated Richard A. Perea, ChFC, Principal of Wealth Management Associates. "RLJ's reputation in the asset management industry and dedication to playing an important role in the bond business make it a clear choice for us," added Jim Adams, Managing Director of Wealth Management Associates.

(more)

The RLJ Companies continues to demonstrate its ability to attract and manage capital and create value for his investors as he has done with several portfolio companies including: RLJ Lodging Trust (NYSE: RLJ); RLJ Acquisition, which makes Johnson the first African American to successfully complete a SPAC raise; RLJ-McLarty-Landers Automotive Holdings, LLC, the nation's largest minority-owned automotive group; RLJ Western Asset Management, LLC, a \$2.8 billion fund designated by the U.S. Department of the Treasury to purchase mortgage backed securities through the Public Private Investment Program (PPIP); RLJ Equity Partners, a private equity fund with \$230M in assets under management. RLJ Acquisition (RLJA) and RLJ Lodging Trust (NYSE: RLJ) are the second and third companies Johnson has successfully taken public, respectively. In 1991, Johnson took Black Entertainment Television (BET) public making BET the first African American company to be publicly traded on the New York Stock Exchange.

***About The RLJ Companies:*** *The RLJ Companies, founded by Robert L. Johnson, is an innovative business network that provides strategic investments in a diverse portfolio of companies. Within The RLJ Companies portfolio, Johnson owns or holds interests in businesses operating in hotel real estate investment; private equity; financial services; asset management; insurance services; automobile dealerships; sports and entertainment; and video lottery terminal (VLT) gaming. The RLJ Companies is headquartered in Bethesda, MD, with affiliate operations in Charlotte, NC; Little Rock, AR; Los Angeles, CA; San Juan, PR; and Monrovia, Liberia. Prior to founding The RLJ Companies, Johnson was founder and chairman of Black Entertainment Television (BET). For additional information please visit: [www.rljcompanies.com](http://www.rljcompanies.com).*

***About Wealth Management Associates, LLC:*** *Established in 2002 by Richard A. Perea, Wealth Management Associates is a privately held wealth management firm based in Tampa, Florida. The company provides a wide range of financial services to businesses, successful families, and financial institutions in the United States. Perea's professional background includes serving as Treasurer of Country Operations in South America for Citibank, N.A. Jim Adams' background includes serving as a Senior Vice President at Credit Suisse First Boston prior to joining Wealth Management Associates as Managing Director. For additional information please visit: [www.wealthmgmnt.net](http://www.wealthmgmnt.net).*

***Media Inquiries: Traci Otey Blunt, 240.744.7858 or [press@rljcompanies.com](mailto:press@rljcompanies.com)***

***Business Inquiries: Tarik A. Brooks, 240.744.7882 or [tbrooks@rljcompanies.com](mailto:tbrooks@rljcompanies.com)***

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