

Advantus Launches High-Yield Mortgage Strategy for Institutional Investors

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St. Paul, MN, June 20, 2008— Advantus Capital Management is taking advantage of the downturn in the mortgage securities market to launch a high-yield mortgage investment strategy, and the firm has added a portfolio manager to oversee it.

"The timing to enter this market is excellent because spreads have widened substantially on residential and commercial mortgage securities rated AAA to BB-," said Chris Sebald, Executive Vice President and Chief Investment Officer, Advantus. "Yield spreads on many mortgage securities are very wide, creating substantial value."

Advantus has hired Dean Di Bias to manage the high-yield mortgage investment strategy. Most recently, Di Bias was with GMAC-RFC in Bloomington, MN, where he was Managing Director and Senior Vice President of credit portfolio management. Di Bias, a resident of Eden Prairie, MN, is a graduate of the University of Colorado, Boulder.

"Dean has 20 years of experience in the mortgage industry, as a portfolio manager and issuer. He knows the business from both sides, and that insight fits in perfectly with our bottom-up investment style," Sebald said.

Sebald says spreads on investment-grade securities offer significant compensation for potential credit risks. Additionally, the securitization markets have been so damaged by fallout from the housing downturn and its impact on mortgage and other debt securities, Advantus believes that premiums to invest in the sector will remain attractive for some time to come.

"History shows us that when losses rise in a sector, the yield premiums for investors rise and can remain high for a prolonged period," said Sebald.

Advantus Capital Management (www.advantuscapital.com) is an institutional asset manager with \$19.2 billion under management (as of 3/31/08). Advantus manages fixed income and real estate investment products and services for institutional and retail investors, including sub-advised mutual funds, 401(k) offerings and variable insurance and annuity portfolios.