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Wal-Mart Establishes Private Equity Fund To Drive Women and Minority-owned Business Growth

*\$25 Million Commitment Announced at National Association of Investment Companies
Conference As Company Deepens Commitment to Supplier Diversity*

BENTONVILLE, AR. (October 18, 2005) – As part of its continuing commitment to supplier diversity and the communities it serves, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. on Monday announced that it will invest \$25 million to establish a private equity fund that will directly issue equity investments in women and minority-owned business enterprises. Wal-Mart unveiled the new fund at the 2005 National Association of Investment Companies (NAIC) conference in San Diego.

The co-investment management fund, which will have an allocation life of five years, will be managed by Dallas-based Aldus Equity to provide equity capital to women and minority-owned business enterprises seeking capital for acquisitions, joint ventures and other growth and expansion initiatives. Prospective investment candidates must either operate companies or be in the process of acquiring companies that distribute or have the capacity to distribute products and services to major retailers. Investment candidates must also be certified as minority or women-owned or minority-controlled businesses as defined by the National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC) and the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC).

According to NAIC, although minorities account for 30 percent of the U.S. population, less than 2 percent of all venture and private equity funds are invested in minority companies.

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“Even though small businesses are one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy, access to capital remains a key barrier to growth for women and minority-owned businesses,” said Jay Fitzsimmons, senior vice president of finance and treasurer, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. “By creating this fund we help fill a significant void and can have a positive impact on those businesses that are ready and able to move to that next level of national and international distribution for retailers.”

“This fund complements and extends our company’s long-standing supplier diversity programs,” said Esther Silver-Parker, vice president diversity relations, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. “While many leading corporations are decreasing their vendor base, we are looking to assist those unique entrepreneurs who have talent and capacity not only to serve Wal-Mart, but also to help drive supplier diversity throughout the retail sector.”

At the conference, NAIC-member firms were invited to recommend prospective investment candidates. Aldus will manage all aspects of the investment application and review process. Business owners can apply for funding by forwarding a brief description of the business and financing opportunity to coinvestmentfund@aldusequity.com. Fund managers anticipate the first investments will be completed within the next three to six months and investing in a total of five to nine companies over the life of the fund.

“Aldus maintains a strong commitment to investing in minority markets and is proud to have the opportunity to invest in a select group of companies that demonstrate the promise of becoming major suppliers,” said Marcellus Taylor, founding partner, Aldus Equity. “The funds, provided by Wal-Mart as well as other investors, will serve as an invaluable resource to talented minority and women entrepreneurs seeking to expand their businesses.”

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Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. operates Wal-Mart Stores, Supercenters, Neighborhood Markets and SAM'S CLUB locations in the United States. The company also operates in Argentina, Brazil, Canada, China, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Germany, Guatemala, Honduras, Japan, Mexico, Nicaragua, Puerto Rico, South Korea and the United Kingdom. The company's securities are listed on the New York and Pacific stock exchanges under the symbol WMT. More information about Wal-Mart can be found by visiting www.walmartfacts.com. Online merchandise sales are available at www.walmart.com.

Aldus Equity is a Dallas-based boutique private equity advisory firm. Aldus currently manages over \$1 billion of private equity assets on behalf of some of the largest pension funds in the nation including New York Common, New Mexico State Investment Council and Louisiana State Employees Retirement System. Since 1998, the firm's partners have directed over \$5 billion of private equity investments. Aldus is proud to be an independent firm that is entirely owned by its employees.

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