

## ECHELON PARTNERS FACILITATES AN INVESTMENT IN AND NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR COLLINS INVESTMENT GROUP

10/03/2017 Originally Published by ECHELON Partners, PRWeb.com

**ECHELON Partners**, a leading investment bank focused on the wealth & investment management (WIM) industry, announced today the successful closing of a major partnership and succession transaction for Collins Investment Group (CIG), a leading independent wealth management firm headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland. ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor and consultant on the significant minority sale of the company to Richard J. Calhoun, Jr., who will become a Partner and President of CIG.

As part of an ongoing growth and succession plan, CIG founder & CEO Robert (Bob) Collins expands the depth of executive talent for CIG through the executive appointment of Calhoun to President. Since founding CIG in 2003, Collins has been a perennial Barron's Top Advisor and has been named as one of the Financial Times Top 400 advisors in multiple years. The firm currently manages approximately \$800 million in assets for its clients, who span across 41 states.

"Bob has been searching for a proven executive talent to continue to grow and manage CIG for many years, and he is very excited to have found such a special partner," said **Mike Wunderli**, Managing Director at ECHELON. "Bob is driven by his tremendous passion for making a meaningful difference in his client's and employees' lives, and we are proud to have helped him further accomplish this goal."

ECHELON Partners has been a leading presence in wealth management M&A and succession planning, advising over 75 firms with over \$1 billion in AUM in recent years, and the CIG deal is the latest high-profile transaction ECHELON has led. ECHELON worked closely with the executive team at CIG on structuring the deal, negotiating terms and providing valuation services.

"As the wealth management industry continues to be transformed by large macro-trends, such as the aging advisor population, changing consumer expectations and the rise of new technologies, we are seeing extensive interest in our total platform approach of valuation, M&A advisory and consulting services," said **Dan Seivert**, CEO of ECHELON Partners.

"Collins wanted to work with seasoned experts to make sure that this transition would best serve CIG's clients and ensure the continuity of the firm for generations to come," said Seivert. "They really appreciated the attention to detail, personal service and holistic solutions that ECHELON brought to the table for this momentous transaction," added Wunderli.

Calhoun comes to CIG on the heels of 25 successful years in the wealth management industry. Most recently, Calhoun was an executive and managing director of Wells Fargo Advisors Financial Network (FiNet). While there, Calhoun played a major role in the early development of FiNet and the tremendous growth the division has experienced since. Prior to joining FiNet, Calhoun was SVP and branch manager at Smith Barney, as well as a financial advisor with Legg Mason and Merrill Lynch.

With the addition of Calhoun, CIG will be extremely well positioned to bring on additional advisor talent, while also ensuring the long-term stability and growth of the firm. Calhoun will focus on the management and inorganic growth of CIG, while Collins will focus on client management and organic growth.

"We are seeing more and more of these types of opportunities for existing independent wealth firms to tap into the great talent that exists in the wirehouse and captive advisor segment to continue their growth and ensure continuity," said Seivert. "We look forward to being the industry's key resource to facilitate successful transition and succession outcomes such as CIG experienced."

#### About ECHELON Partners

Founded over 15 years ago, ECHELON Partners combines the high quality expected of a large investment bank with the high-touch expected of a personal boutique. Compared to traditional investment bankers, ECHELON Partners offers a total platform approach of investment banking, valuation and management consulting services - bringing together financial advisory, strategic consulting, and senior-level operational experience to each engagement. ECHELON's keys to successfully serving clients are a deep understanding of the wealth and investment management industry, an extensive network of contacts and strategic partners, a powerful set of processes and databases, integrity, and trust. ECHELON Partners is committed to bringing all of these qualities to every client assignment. With a track record spanning hundreds of engagements, ECHELON's team understands the unique needs of owners, executives and advisors in the financial services industry.

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