

# ABBOT DOWNING

## News Release

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### **AMERICAN GIRL HISTORIAN JOINS ABBOT DOWNING FAMILY BUSINESS AND HISTORY TEAM**

SAN FRANCISCO (March 9, 2017) — Mark Speltz has joined Abbot Downing and the Wells Fargo Family and Business History Center as a senior historian to serve families who seek to understand and preserve their historical legacies for future generations. [Abbot Downing](#)-- with its 45-year history serving ultra-high-net-worth individuals, families and endowments-- is part of Wells Fargo's Wealth and Investment Management Group, a leading U.S. wealth manager, with \$1.7 trillion in client assets as of Dec. 31, 2016.

Speltz, a 20-year historian and accomplished author, comes to Abbot Downing from American Girl Brands, a subsidiary of Mattel, Inc., where he served as senior historian, researching and interpreting historical eras and focusing on culture, architecture, clothing and design. Speltz joins a highly credentialed team of 13 family governance and education consultants and historians, many of whom hold doctorate or master's degrees in history, psychology, business or behavioral science.

By working with families to understand and preserve the most important elements of their history, Abbot Downing helps them integrate their core values into comprehensive wealth planning. The Family and Business History team provides researched archives of historical documents charting the geographic, social, economic, political, religious and cultural circumstances that may have shaped a family's businesses, lives and reputation. Abbot Downing's Family Dynamics and Education team builds upon that work by consulting with clients to develop strategies for communication and decision-making, preparation of next generation heirs and organized family philanthropy.

The firm has offered family and business history services and family dynamics consulting to ultra-high-net-worth clients for more than a decade. Over the last two years, Abbot Downing has seen a 40 percent increase in requests to help prepare next generation leaders for roles in family businesses and to prepare heirs for the responsibilities of wealth.

"We believe strongly in the importance of this work and continue to invest in these capabilities to serve our unique client segment," said Arne Boudewyn, head of Family Governance and Education Services at Abbot Downing.

“Families in this niche understand that it is as essential to manage the impact of wealth as the wealth itself. Wealth creators often succeed through hard work and perseverance. By the time you get to the third generation—a critical juncture for whether they will keep the wealth or not—it’s important to show that generation what’s behind the wealth, how fortunes are made and what it takes to preserve and perpetuate a healthy family legacy.”

Boudewyn said Speltz’s established background in crafting narratives to engage children and their families is appealing to Abbot Downing as the firm looks to provide experiential opportunities for multigenerational families that support cross-generational engagement, connectivity and continuity.

At American Girl, Mark was responsible for the historical accuracy and authenticity of the company’s books, products, movies, and marketing efforts that reach millions of children and their families. In addition to leading the history research team there, Speltz conducted extensive research, recruited and assembled advisory panels of community leaders, educators, and experts to help guide and consult on the development of American Girl Brands’ character line. He is an accomplished author, writing articles and books about social movements, architectural histories and profiles of local industries and family businesses in Wisconsin. His latest book, ***North of Dixie: Civil Rights Photography Beyond the South***, was published in November 2016 by the J. Paul Getty Museum and has earned high marks from reviewers around the country, including *The New York Times*.

#### **About Abbot Downing**

[Abbot Downing](#) is a leading provider of financial services to ultra-high-net-worth clients and family offices, as well as foundations and endowments. Teams of local professionals are dedicated to each client family to provide specialized knowledge in asset management; trust, fiduciary, and administrative services; private banking and custom credit solutions; planning, family history, family dynamics and education services. As of Dec. 31, 2016, the firm has \$39 billion in client assets and ranks as the 7th-largest U.S.-based family office based on assets, according to the 2015 Bloomberg Markets survey. The original Abbot Downing built the iconic stagecoaches that have come to represent Wells Fargo.

#### **About Wells Fargo**

Wells Fargo & Company (NYSE: WFC) is a diversified, community-based financial services company with \$1.9 trillion in assets as of Dec. 31, 2016. Founded in 1852 and headquartered in San Francisco, Wells Fargo provides banking, insurance, investments, mortgage, and consumer and commercial finance through more than 8,600 locations, 13,000 ATMs, the internet (wellsfargo.com) and mobile banking, and has offices in 42 countries and territories to support customers who conduct business in the global economy. With approximately 269,000 team members, Wells Fargo serves one in three households in the United States. Wells Fargo & Company was ranked No. 27 on Fortune’s 2016 rankings of America’s largest corporations. Wells Fargo’s vision is to satisfy our customers’ financial needs and help them succeed financially. News, insights and perspectives from Wells Fargo are also available at [Wells Fargo Stories](#).

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