



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**NORTH CASTLE PARTNERS COMPLETES SALES OF  
CRC HEALTH GROUP AND EQUINOX FITNESS**

---

GREENWICH, CT, February 13, 2006 -- North Castle Partners (“North Castle”), a leading private equity investor focused exclusively on consumer-driven product and service companies that benefit from “Healthy Living & Aging” trends, announced today the closing of two transactions totaling more than \$1 billion in value.

Last week, North Castle completed the sale of CRC Health Group, the nation's largest provider of drug and alcohol treatment services, to Bain Capital in a transaction valued at \$720 million. In addition, North Castle closed on the sale of Equinox Fitness, a leading operator of upscale fitness clubs in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco and South Florida, to The Related Companies for \$505 million. These realizations follow three successful exits over the past two years, including: the sale of Grand Expeditions, Inc., a leading high-end travel group, to First Choice Holidays PLC, a UK-based leisure travel company in December 2005; the sale of EAS, the preeminent branded nutritional food and beverage company in the United States, to Abbott Laboratories in November 2004; and the recapitalization of Leiner Health Products, a market leading store brand manufacturer of vitamins, nutritional supplements and over the counter drugs in May 2004.

“We are very proud of these businesses and our partnerships with their management teams,” said Charles F. Baird Jr., Managing Director of North Castle. “We believe these successes are a reflection of the value of our focus - specifically our knowledge of and network in these industries. In each case, we have built market leaders that are well positioned to thrive under their new ownership.”

Mr. Baird added: “We believe that consumer interest in “Healthy Living and Aging” products and services is growing and that our focused approach to investing has generated tremendous opportunities for North Castle to create value.”

### **About North Castle Partners**

North Castle Partners is a leading private equity firm focused exclusively on investments in consumer-driven product and service businesses that benefit from “Healthy Living and Aging” trends. North Castle targets high-growth, middle market companies in the (i) aesthetics & personal care, (ii) consumer health, (iii) fitness & weight loss, (iv) home, leisure & recreation and (v) nutrition industries. North Castle is an active, value-added investor. We utilize our cumulative knowledge and network, which results from our industry focus, to partner with management and entrepreneurs to create world-class companies.

North Castle has already built several world-class companies, including Equinox Fitness, EAS, CRC Health, and Grand Expeditions. North Castle’s current portfolio includes such well-known brands as Avalon Natural Products, Red Door Spas and Naked Juice.

North Castle is led by a seasoned group of six partners and supported by nine additional private equity professionals. The North Castle team is further enhanced by nine proactive operating advisors who bring a wide range of operational and investment capabilities as well as an extensive knowledge base and network. The strength of the North Castle team, combined with our focus and network, is creating significant competitive advantages in building great companies. North Castle is headquartered in Greenwich, Connecticut. For more information, visit [www.northcastlepartners.com](http://www.northcastlepartners.com).