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TrueBridge Repeats Kauffman-Linked Play

TrueBridge Capital is marketing a second-of-its-kind fund of funds that promises to gain access to some of the venture capital industry's top managers, thanks to a tight relationship the firm maintains with the **Center for Venture Education**.

The Chapel Hill, N.C., firm, led by founders **Edwin Poston** and **Mel Williams**, hopes to raise \$325 million for its CVE-Kauffman Fellows Endowment Fund 2. It is aiming to hold a first close by yearend with at least \$100 million.

As the vehicle's name suggests, it is closely affiliated with the not-for-profit Center for Venture Education's Kauffman Fellows Program. Each year, that program places aspiring venture capitalists with a range of managers for two-year fellowships — resulting in an extensive network of alumni across the industry.

TrueBridge's association with the Center for Venture Education, meanwhile, gives it a conduit to the firms employing the former Kauffman fellows — individuals who also make up a large portion of the firm's limited-partner base. The new fund is expected to draw on the various relationships to invest with a mix of managers, including contacts that Poston and Williams made at their previous employers. It has already carved out allocations with some of the most respected players in the industry.

In exchange for the boost it receives from the Center for Venture Education's presence, TrueBridge will return a portion of the fund's profits to the Palo Alto, Calif., organization. That money, in turn, could help finance the group's operations and build up its endowment.

The set-up has worked out well for TrueBridge's first CVE-Kauffman fund. After hitting the market in May 2007 with a \$250 million equity target, that vehicle went on to hold a final close last year with \$310 million. Its portfolio contains investments with a number of top-name venture capital firms. In some cases, it was able to take larger-than-



expected positions with managers who were facing an overflow of demand.

Before starting TrueBridge, Poston managed the private equity portfolio at **Rockefeller Foundation**. Williams was a vice president at **UNC Management**, which runs endowment capital for the University of North Carolina and several other institutions. ❖