

WEBSTER FINANCIAL CORP

Form 424B3

May 08, 2013

Table of Contents

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The information in this preliminary prospectus supplement is not complete and may be changed. This preliminary prospectus supplement and the accompanying base prospectus are not an offer to sell these securities and are not soliciting offers to buy these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted.

Subject to Completion, dated May 8, 2013

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

(To prospectus dated December 20, 2011)

8,744,850 Shares

WEBSTER FINANCIAL CORPORATION

Common Stock

Warburg Pincus Private Equity X, L.P. and Warburg Pincus X Partners, L.P. (collectively, Warburg Pincus) are offering 8,744,850 shares of our common stock in the aggregate. We will not receive any proceeds from the sale of shares of our common stock offered hereby.

Immediately following completion of this offering, Warburg Pincus will no longer own any shares of our common stock.

Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange (the NYSE) under the trading symbol WBS. On May 7, 2013, the last sale price of our common stock as reported on the NYSE was \$23.76 per share.

Investing in our common stock involves risks. You should consider the information under the heading Risk Factors beginning on page S-6 before investing in our common stock.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or passed upon the adequacy or accuracy of this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

These securities are not savings accounts, deposits or other obligations of any bank and are not insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other governmental agency.

The underwriters have agreed to purchase the shares of our common stock from the selling stockholders at a price of \$ _____ per share, which will result in approximately \$ _____ of proceeds to the selling stockholders.

The underwriters propose to offer our shares of common stock from time to time for sale in one or more transactions on the NYSE, in the over-the-counter market, through negotiated transactions or otherwise at market prices prevailing at the time of sale, at prices related to prevailing market prices or at negotiated prices, subject to receipt and acceptance by them and subject to their right to reject any order in whole or in part.

See Underwriting beginning on page S-17 of this prospectus supplement for more information

The underwriters expect to deliver the common stock against payment on or about May _____, 2013 only in book-entry form through the facilities of The Depository Trust Company.

J.P. Morgan

Deutsche Bank Securities

The date of this prospectus supplement is May _____, 2013.

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Prospectus Supplement

| | Page |
|--|-------------|
| <u>About this Prospectus Supplement</u> | S-1 |
| <u>Where You Can Find More Information</u> | S-1 |
| <u>Incorporation of Certain Documents by Reference</u> | S-1 |
| <u>Special Note Regarding Forward-looking Statements</u> | S-2 |
| <u>Prospectus Supplement Summary</u> | S-4 |
| <u>Risk Factors</u> | S-6 |
| <u>Use of Proceeds</u> | S-8 |
| <u>Price Range of Common Stock and Dividends</u> | S-9 |
| <u>Selling Stockholder</u> | S-11 |
| <u>U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations for Non-U.S. Holders</u> | S-12 |
| <u>Underwriting</u> | S-17 |
| <u>Legal Matters</u> | S-21 |
| <u>Experts</u> | S-21 |

Prospectus

| | Page |
|---|-------------|
| <u>About this Prospectus</u> | 1 |
| <u>Where You Can Find More Information</u> | 1 |
| <u>Incorporation of Certain Documents by Reference</u> | 3 |
| <u>Special Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements</u> | 4 |
| <u>About Webster Financial Corporation</u> | 5 |
| <u>Ratio of Earnings (Deficit) to Fixed Charges and Ratio of Earnings (Deficit) to Combined Fixed Charges and Preferred Stock</u> | |
| <u>Dividends</u> | 6 |
| <u>Use of Proceeds</u> | 6 |
| <u>The Securities We May Offer</u> | 7 |
| <u>Description of Debt Securities</u> | 8 |
| <u>Description of Common Stock</u> | 25 |
| <u>Description of Preferred Stock</u> | 28 |
| <u>Description of Depositary Shares</u> | 33 |
| <u>Description of Warrants</u> | 37 |
| <u>Description of Purchase Contracts</u> | 39 |
| <u>Description of Units</u> | 40 |
| <u>Plan of Distribution</u> | 41 |
| <u>Legal Matters</u> | 43 |
| <u>Experts</u> | 43 |

Table of Contents

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

This document is in two parts. The first part is this prospectus supplement, which describes the specific terms of this offering. The second part is the accompanying prospectus, which gives more general information, some of which may not apply to the offering. Generally, the term prospectus refers to both parts combined.

We have not authorized anyone to provide any information other than that contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or in any free writing prospectus prepared by or on behalf of us or to which we have referred you. We take no responsibility for, and can provide no assurance as to the reliability of, any other information that others may give you. If anyone provides you with different or inconsistent information, you should not rely on it. We, Warburg Pincus and the underwriters, are offering to sell these securities and seeking offers to buy these securities only in jurisdictions where offers and sales are permitted. The information contained in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus is accurate only as of the date of each document regardless of the time of delivery of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus or any sale of these securities. In case there are any differences or inconsistencies between this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the information incorporated by reference, you should rely on the information in the document with the latest date.

All references in this prospectus supplement to Webster Financial, the Company, we, us, our or similar references mean Webster Financial Corporation and its successors, and include our consolidated subsidiaries where the context so requires.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We are subject to the information requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the Exchange Act), and file annual, quarterly and special reports, proxy statements and other information with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the SEC). You may read and copy any materials we file with the SEC at the Public Reference Room of the SEC at Room 1580, 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. You may obtain information on the operation of the Public Reference Room by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330. In addition, we file many of our documents electronically with the SEC, and you may access those documents over the Internet. The SEC maintains a website that contains reports, proxy and information statements and other information regarding issuers that file electronically with the SEC. The address of the SEC's website is www.sec.gov. Documents we have filed with the SEC are also available on our website at www.wbst.com. Except as expressly stated herein, information contained on our website does not constitute a part of this prospectus and is not incorporated by reference herein.

INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference information into this prospectus supplement. This means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to another document filed separately with the SEC. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be a part of this prospectus supplement, except for any information that is superseded by other information that is included in or incorporated by reference into this document.

This prospectus incorporates by reference the documents listed below that we have previously filed with the SEC (File No. 001-31486). These documents contain important information about us:

our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012, filed on February 28, 2013;

our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2013, filed on May 6, 2013;

our Proxy Statement on Schedule 14A filed on March 15, 2013; and

Table of Contents

our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on February, 14, 2013, February 27, 2013 (file no. 13647505) (as amended on March 6, 2013), April 24, 2013 and April 26, 2013 (except, with respect to each of the foregoing, for portions of such reports which were deemed to be furnished and not filed).

We incorporate by reference any additional documents that we may file with the SEC under Section 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act (other than those furnished pursuant to Item 2.02 or Item 7.01 of Form 8-K or other information furnished to the SEC) from the date of the registration statement of which this prospectus supplement is part until the termination of the offering of the securities. These documents may include annual, quarterly and current reports, as well as proxy statements. Any material that we later file with the SEC will automatically update and replace the information previously filed with the SEC. These documents are available to you without charge. See [Where You Can Find More Information](#).

You may obtain copies of these documents, other than exhibits, free of charge by contacting Terrence K. Mangan, Senior Vice President, Investor Relations, at our principal executive offices, which are located at 145 Bank Street, Waterbury, Connecticut 06702, or by telephone at (203) 578-2202.

SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus supplement, the prospectus and the information included or incorporated by reference in them include forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Forward-looking statements often include the words believes, expects, anticipates, estimates, forecasts, intends, plans, targets, potentially, probably, projects, outlook or similar conditional verbs such as may, will, should, would and could. These forward-looking statements are subject to known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors that could cause the actual results to differ materially from the statements, including:

local, regional, national and international economic conditions and the impact they may have on us and our customers and our assessment of that impact;

volatility and disruption in national and international financial markets;

government intervention in the U.S. financial system;

changes in the level of non-performing assets and charge-offs;

changes in estimates of future reserve requirements based upon the periodic review thereof under relevant regulatory and accounting requirements;

adverse conditions in the securities markets that lead to impairment in the value of securities in our investment portfolio;

inflation, interest rate, securities market and monetary fluctuations;

the timely development and acceptance of new products and services and perceived overall value of these products and services by customers;

changes in consumer spending, borrowings and savings habits;

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technological changes and cyber-security matters;

the ability to increase market share and control expenses;

changes in the competitive environment among banks, financial holding companies and other financial service providers;

S-2

Table of Contents

the effect of changes in laws and regulations (including laws and regulations concerning taxes, banking, securities and insurance) with which we and our subsidiaries must comply, including those under the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act and the Basel III update to the Basel Accords;

the effect of changes in accounting policies and practices, as may be adopted by the regulatory agencies, as well as the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board, the Financial Accounting Standards Board and other accounting standard setters;

the costs and effects of legal and regulatory developments including the resolution of legal proceedings or regulatory or other governmental inquiries and the results of regulatory examinations or reviews; and

our success at managing the risks involved in the foregoing items.

Some of these and other factors are discussed in our annual and quarterly reports previously filed with the SEC. Such developments could have an adverse impact on our financial position and our results of operations.

The forward-looking statements are based upon management's beliefs and assumptions and are made as of the date of this prospectus supplement. We undertake no obligation to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statements included or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or to update the reasons why actual results could differ from those contained in such statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, except to the extent required by federal securities laws. In light of these risks, uncertainties and assumptions, the forward-looking events discussed in this prospectus supplement or in the incorporated documents might not occur, and you should not put undue reliance on any forward-looking statements.

Table of Contents

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT SUMMARY

The following summary contains basic information about us and this offering. Because it is a summary, it does not contain all the information that may be important to you. Before making an investment decision, you should read this entire prospectus supplement and accompanying prospectus carefully, including the section entitled Risk Factors, and the documents incorporated by reference herein, including the financial statements and the accompanying notes contained in such documents.

About Webster Financial Corporation

Webster Financial Corporation is a bank holding company and financial holding company under the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956, as amended, and was incorporated under the laws of Delaware in 1986. On a consolidated basis, at December 31, 2012, we had assets of \$20.1 billion and equity of \$2.1 billion. Our principal asset at December 31, 2012 was all of the outstanding capital stock of Webster Bank, National Association (Webster Bank).

Through Webster Bank and various non-banking financial services subsidiaries, we deliver financial services to individuals, families, and businesses throughout southern New England and into Westchester County, New York. We also offer equipment financing, commercial real estate lending, asset-based lending, and health savings accounts on a regional or national basis. We provide business and consumer banking, mortgage, financial planning, trust and investment services through 168 banking offices, 294 ATMs, telephone banking, mobile banking and the Internet. Webster Bank owns the asset based lending firm Webster Business Credit Corporation, the equipment finance firm Webster Capital Finance Corporation, and provides health savings account trustee and administrative services through its HSA Bank division. References to our website and those of our subsidiaries are not intended to be active links and the information on such websites is not, and you must not consider the information to be, a part of this prospectus supplement except as expressly set forth herein.

Our common stock is traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol WBS. Our principal executive offices are located at 145 Bank Street, Waterbury, Connecticut 06702. Our telephone number is (203) 578-2202.

Table of Contents

The Offering

Common stock offered by Warburg Pincus 8,744,850 shares (approximately 9.7% of our outstanding common stock)

Common stock held by Warburg Pincus after this offering None

Common stock to be outstanding after this offering⁽¹⁾ 90,256,724 shares

Use of proceeds We will not receive any of the proceeds from the sale of shares of common stock by Warburg Pincus.

Risk Factors You should read carefully the information set forth under **Risk Factors** herein for a discussion of factors that you should consider before deciding to invest in our common stock.

New York Stock Exchange symbol WBS

(1) The number of shares of common stock outstanding after this offering is based on the number of shares outstanding as of April 30, 2013 (90,256,724 shares of common stock) and excludes:

2,906,253 shares of common stock issuable upon the exercise of stock options;

679,921 shares of common stock issuable upon the exercise of warrants; and

1,065,088 shares of common stock issuable upon conversion of our 8.50% Series A Non-Cumulative Perpetual Convertible Preferred Stock.

Table of Contents

RISK FACTORS

An investment in our common stock involves certain risks. Before making an investment decision, you should carefully consider the following risks and all of the other information included in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference herein and therein. In particular, before deciding whether to invest in our common stock, you should carefully consider the risk factors and the discussion of risks contained in the Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012, as well as the other information included or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. Our business, financial condition or results of operations could be materially adversely affected by any of these risks. The trading price of our common stock could decline due to any of these risks, and you may lose all or part of your investment. This prospectus supplement also contains forward-looking statements that involve risks and uncertainties. Our actual results could differ materially from those anticipated in these forward-looking statements as a result of certain factors, including the risks faced by us described below and elsewhere in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus.

Risks Related to this Offering and Our Common Stock

The market price of our common stock may decline after the offering.

The price per share of common stock sold in this offering may be more or less than the market price of our common stock on the date the offering is consummated. If the purchase price is greater than the market price at the time of sale, purchasers may experience an immediate decline in the market value of the common stock purchased in this offering. If the actual purchase price is less than the market price for the shares of common stock, some purchasers in the offering may be inclined to immediately sell shares of common stock to attempt to realize a profit. Any such sales, depending on the volume and timing, could cause the price of our common stock to decline. Additionally, because stock prices generally fluctuate over time, there is no assurance that purchasers of our common stock in the offering will be able to sell shares after the offering at a price that is equal to or greater than the actual purchase price. Purchasers should consider these possibilities in determining whether to purchase shares in the offering and the timing of any sales of shares of common stock.

Future sales of our common stock or other securities may dilute the value and adversely affect the market price of our common stock.

In many situations, our board of directors has the authority, without any vote of our stockholders, to issue shares of our authorized but unissued shares of common stock or shares of our authorized but unissued preferred stock. In the future, we may issue additional securities, through public or private offerings, in order to raise additional capital. Any such issuance would dilute the percentage of ownership interest of existing stockholders and may dilute the per share book value of the common stock. In addition, option holders may exercise their options at a time when we would otherwise be able to obtain additional equity capital on more favorable terms. In the case of issuances of our preferred stock, any issuances would likely result in your interest being subject to the prior rights of holders of that preferred stock. The market price of our common stock could decline as a result of this offering as well as sales of shares of our common stock made after this offering or the perception that such sales could occur.

You may not receive dividends on the common stock.

Although we have historically declared cash dividends on our common stock, we are not required to do so and may reduce or cease to pay common stock dividends in the future. If we reduce or cease to pay common stock dividends, the market price of our common stock could be adversely affected. See **Supervision and Regulation** **Dividends** in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012 for a discussion of regulatory and other restrictions on dividend declarations.

We may not pay dividends if we are not able to receive dividends from our subsidiary, Webster Bank.

We are a separate and distinct legal entity from our banking and nonbanking subsidiaries and depend on the payment of cash dividends from Webster Bank and our existing liquid assets as the principal sources of funds for paying

Table of Contents

cash dividends on our common stock. Unless we receive dividends from Webster Bank or choose to use our liquid assets, we may not be able to pay dividends. Webster Bank's ability to pay dividends is subject to its ability to earn net income and to meet certain regulatory requirements. See "Supervision and Regulation - Dividends" in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012 for a discussion of regulatory and other restrictions on dividend declarations. If, in the opinion of the applicable regulatory authority, a bank under its jurisdiction is engaged in or is about to engage in an unsafe or unsound practice, such authority may require, after notice and the opportunity for a hearing, that such bank cease and desist from such practice, and may take other supervisory actions, including other formal or informal enforcement actions. Depending on the financial condition of our banking subsidiaries, the applicable regulatory authority might deem us or any relevant banking subsidiary to be engaged in an unsafe or unsound practice if our banking subsidiaries were to pay dividends. The Federal Reserve and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency have issued policy statements generally requiring insured banks and bank holding companies only to pay dividends out of current operating earnings. In 2009, the Federal Reserve released a supervisory letter advising bank holding companies, among other things, that as a general matter a bank holding company should inform the Federal Reserve and should eliminate, defer or significantly reduce its dividends if (1) the bank holding company's net income available to shareholders for the past four quarters, net of dividends previously paid during that period, is not sufficient to fully fund the dividends, (2) the bank holding company's prospective rate of earnings is not consistent with the bank holding company's capital needs and overall current and prospective financial condition, or (3) the bank holding company will not meet, or is in danger of not meeting, its minimum regulatory capital adequacy ratios.

Our common stock is equity and is subordinate to our existing and future indebtedness and preferred stock.

Shares of common stock are equity interests in us and do not constitute indebtedness. As such, shares of common stock will rank junior to all of our indebtedness and to other non-equity claims against us and our assets available to satisfy claims against us, including in our liquidation. Additionally, holders of our common stock are subject to the prior dividend and liquidation rights of holders of our outstanding preferred stock. The issued and outstanding shares of our 8.50% Series A Non-Cumulative Perpetual Convertible Preferred Stock and 6.40% Series E Non-Cumulative Perpetual Preferred Stock have an aggregate liquidation preference of approximately \$155.4 million. We may also issue preferred stock in the future that has a preference over the common stock with respect to the payment of dividends or upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up, or voting rights that dilute the voting power of the common stock. Our board of directors is authorized to issue additional classes or series of preferred stock without any action on the part of the holders of our common stock and we are permitted to incur additional debt. Upon liquidation, lenders and holders of our debt securities and preferred stock would receive distributions of our available assets prior to holders of our common stock.

Offerings of debt, which would be senior to our common stock upon liquidation, and/or preferred equity securities which would likely be senior to our common stock for purposes of dividend distributions or upon liquidation, may adversely affect the market price of our common stock.

In the future, we may attempt to further increase our capital resources or, if our or Webster Bank's capital ratios fall below the required minimums, we or Webster Bank could be forced to raise additional capital by making additional offerings of debt or preferred equity securities, including medium-term notes, trust preferred securities, senior or subordinated notes and preferred stock. Upon liquidation, holders of our debt securities and shares of preferred stock and lenders with respect to other borrowings will receive distributions of our available assets prior to the holders of our common stock. Additional equity offerings may dilute the holdings of our existing stockholders or reduce the market price of our common stock, or both. Holders of our common stock are not entitled to preemptive rights or other protections against dilution. Our certificate of incorporation, subject to limitations prescribed in our certificate of incorporation and subject to limitations prescribed by Delaware law, authorizes the board, from time to time by resolution or action of a committee of the board and without further stockholder action, to provide for the issuance of shares of preferred stock, in one or more series, and to fix the relative rights and preferences of the shares, including voting powers, dividend rights, liquidation preferences, redemption rights and conversion privileges. If we issue additional preferred stock in the future that has a preference over our common stock with respect to the payment of dividends or upon our liquidation, dissolution, or winding-up, the rights of holders of our common stock or the market price of our common stock could be adversely affected.

Table of Contents

USE OF PROCEEDS

We will not receive any proceeds from the sale of shares of our common stock being offered hereby. All proceeds from this offering will be received by Warburg Pincus.

S-8

Table of Contents**PRICE RANGE OF COMMON STOCK AND DIVIDENDS**

Our common stock is listed on the NYSE under the symbol WBS. As of May 7, 2013, the last reported sale price of our common stock on the NYSE was \$23.76 per share. As of May 1, 2013, there were approximately 7,705 stockholders of record.

The following table presents the high and low sales price per share of our common stock during certain periods, as reported on the NYSE. Cash dividends paid per share of our common stock are also shown.

Common Stock (per share)

| | Market Prices | | Dividends Declared |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|----------|--------------------|
| | High | Low | |
| 2013 | | | |
| Second quarter (through May 7, 2013) | \$ 24.25 | \$ 22.04 | \$ 0.15 |
| First quarter | 24.67 | 20.81 | 0.10 |
| 2012 | | | |
| Fourth quarter | \$ 24.46 | \$ 19.71 | \$ 0.10 |
| Third quarter | 24.98 | 19.43 | 0.10 |
| Second quarter | 23.11 | 18.88 | 0.10 |
| First quarter | 23.94 | 20.15 | 0.05 |
| 2011 | | | |
| Fourth quarter | \$ 21.23 | \$ 14.34 | \$ 0.05 |
| Third quarter | 22.42 | 14.78 | 0.05 |
| Second quarter | 22.03 | 19.14 | 0.05 |
| First quarter | 23.73 | 19.16 | 0.01 |

Dividends

Although we have historically declared cash dividends on our common stock, we are not required to do so and may reduce or cease to pay common stock dividends in the future. See Risk Factors You may not receive dividends on the common stock.

Our primary source of liquidity is dividend payments from Webster Bank. Webster Bank's ability to make dividend payments to us is governed by OCC regulations. Without specific OCC approval, and subject to Webster Bank meeting applicable regulatory capital requirements before and after payment of dividends, the total of all dividends declared by Webster Bank is limited to net profits for the current year to date as of the declaration date plus net retained profits from the preceding two years less dividends declared in such years. In addition, the OCC has the discretion to prohibit any otherwise permitted capital distribution on general safety and soundness grounds. See Risk Factors We may not pay dividends if we are not able to receive dividends from our subsidiary, Webster Bank.

Payment of dividends to us from Webster Bank is subject to certain regulatory and other restrictions. Under OCC regulations, Webster Bank may pay dividends to us without prior regulatory approval so long as it meets its applicable regulatory capital requirements before and after payment of such dividends and its total dividends declared do not exceed its net profits for the current year to the date of declaration plus net retained profits from the preceding two years less dividends declared in such years. At December 31, 2012, Webster Bank was in compliance with all applicable minimum capital requirements, and had the ability to pay dividends to us.

Table of Contents

In addition, Webster Financial and Webster Bank are subject to other regulatory policies and requirements relating to the payment of dividends, including requirements to maintain capital above regulatory minimums. The appropriate federal regulatory authority is authorized to determine, under certain circumstances relating to the financial condition of a bank holding company or a bank, that the payment of dividends would be an unsafe or unsound practice and to prohibit payment thereof. The appropriate regulatory authorities have indicated that paying dividends that deplete a bank's capital base to an inadequate level would be an unsafe and unsound banking practice and that banking organizations should generally pay dividends only out of current operating earnings.

S-10

Table of Contents**SELLING STOCKHOLDER**

The following table sets forth information regarding the ownership of our common stock held by Warburg Pincus Private Equity X, L.P. and Warburg Pincus X Partners, L.P. as of May 7, 2013. Prior to this offering, Warburg Pincus beneficially owned approximately 9.7% of our outstanding common stock. Immediately following completion of this offering, Warburg Pincus will no longer own any shares of our common stock.

For more information regarding the terms of our common stock, see **Description of Common Stock** in the accompanying prospectus. For more information regarding our relationship with Warburg Pincus, see our definitive proxy statement for our 2013 annual meeting of stockholders, which is incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement.

The numbers listed below are based on 90,256,724 shares of our common stock outstanding as of April 30, 2013.

| Name of Selling Stockholder | Shares Owned Before the Offering | | Shares Offered Hereby | Shares Owned After the Offering | |
|---|-------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------|
| | Number | Percentage | | Number | Percentage |
| Warburg Pincus Private Equity X, L.P. ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾ | 8,473,727 | 9.4% | 8,473,727 | 0 | 0.0% |
| Warburg Pincus X Partners, L.P. ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾ | 271,123 | 0.3% | 271,123 | 0 | 0.0% |

- (1) Each of Warburg Pincus Private Equity X, L.P. and Warburg Pincus X Partners, L.P. reported that it had shared voting and shared dispositive power over 8,744,850 shares.
- (2) Warburg Pincus X, L.P., a Delaware limited partnership (**WP X GP**), is the general partner of Warburg Pincus Private Equity X, L.P. and Warburg Pincus X Partners, L.P., both Delaware limited partnerships. Warburg Pincus X LLC, a Delaware limited liability company (**WP X LLC**), is the general partner of WP X GP. Warburg Pincus Partners LLC, a New York limited liability company (**WP Partners**), is the sole member of WP X LLC. Warburg Pincus & Co., a New York general partnership, (**WP**), is the managing member of WP Partners. The principal offices of Warburg Pincus are located at 450 Lexington Avenue, New York, New York 10017.

Table of Contents

U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSIDERATIONS FOR NON-U.S. HOLDERS

This section describes the material U.S. federal income tax consequences relevant to the purchase, ownership and disposition of our common stock by non-U.S. holders. This discussion addresses only the U.S. federal income tax considerations relevant to non-U.S. holders of our common stock who are initial purchasers of our common stock and who will hold the common stock as capital assets, within the meaning of Section 1221 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the Code). A capital asset for these purposes generally is property held for investment.

This discussion does not address tax considerations applicable in the case of non-U.S. holders that may themselves be subject to or whose owners may be subject to certain special U.S. federal income tax rules, including:

financial institutions,

controlled foreign corporations or passive foreign investment companies for U.S. federal income tax purposes,

grantor trusts,

dealers or traders in securities or currencies or notional principal contracts, and

certain former citizens or former long-term residents of the United States.

Moreover, this discussion does not address the U.S. federal estate and gift or alternative minimum tax or Medicare contribution tax consequences, or any foreign, U.S. state or local tax consequences, of the purchase, ownership and disposition of our common stock, or other tax considerations that may be relevant to holders of shares of our common stock in light of their personal circumstances.

If a partnership (or any other entity treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes) holds our common stock, the tax treatment of a partner in such partnership will generally depend on the tax status of the partner and the activities of the partnership. Such a partner should consult its own tax advisors as to the U.S. tax consequences of being a partner in a partnership that acquires, holds, or disposes of our common stock.

As used in this discussion, a non-U.S. Holder means a beneficial owner of our common stock (other than an entity treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes) that is not, for U.S. federal income tax purposes:

a citizen or individual resident of the United States,

a corporation, or other entity treated as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes, created or organized in or under the laws of the United States or any state or political subdivision thereof (including the District of Columbia),

an estate the income of which is subject to U.S. federal income taxation regardless of its source, or

a trust if (a) a United States court can exercise primary supervision over the trust's administration and one or more United States persons are authorized to control all substantial decisions of the trust or (b) it has a valid election in effect under application Treasury Regulations to be treated as a United States person.

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This discussion is not intended to constitute a complete analysis of all U.S. federal income tax consequences relating to the purchase, ownership and disposition of our common stock. You should consult a tax advisor regarding the tax consequences of purchasing, owning or disposing of our common stock in your particular circumstances (including the application and effect of any U.S. federal, state, local, foreign income, estate and other tax laws). This discussion is based upon the Code, proposed, temporary and final Treasury Regulations promulgated under the Code, and judicial and administrative interpretations of the Code and Treasury Regulations, in each case as in effect and available as of the date of this prospectus supplement. The Code,

S-12

Table of Contents

Treasury Regulations and judicial and administrative interpretations thereof may change at any time, and any change could be retroactive to the date of this prospectus supplement. In addition, new Code sections or Treasury Regulations may be proposed and subsequently enacted, which could result in different effects on an investment in our stock than those effects discussed in this prospectus supplement. We undertake no obligation to publicly update or otherwise revise this discussion whether as a result of new Treasury Regulations, Code sections, judicial and administrative interpretations or otherwise. The Code, Treasury Regulations and judicial and administrative interpretations thereof are also subject to various interpretations, and there can be no guarantee that the Internal Revenue Service, or the IRS, or U.S. courts will agree with the tax consequences described in this discussion.

Dividends

Except as described below, dividends paid to you on our common stock are subject to withholding of United States federal income tax at a 30% rate or at a lower rate if you are eligible for the benefits of an income tax treaty that provides for a lower rate. Even if you are eligible for a lower treaty rate, we and other payors will generally be required to withhold at a 30% rate (rather than the lower treaty rate) on dividend payments to you, unless you have furnished to the withholding agent:

a valid Internal Revenue Service Form W-8BEN or an acceptable substitute form upon which you certify, under penalties of perjury, your status as a person who is not a United States person and your entitlement to the lower treaty rate with respect to such payments; or

in the case of payments made outside the United States to an offshore account (generally, an account maintained by you at an office or branch of a bank or other financial institution at any location outside the United States), other documentary evidence establishing your entitlement to the lower treaty rate in accordance with United States Treasury Department regulations.

If you are eligible for a reduced rate of United States withholding tax under a tax treaty, you may obtain a refund of any amounts withheld in excess of that rate by filing a refund claim with the United States Internal Revenue Service.

Because it will generally not be known, at the time you receive any distribution on our common stock, whether the distribution will be paid out of our current or accumulated earnings and profits, as determined under U.S. federal income tax principles, and therefore whether the distribution will be treated as a dividend, we expect that a withholding agent will deduct and withhold U.S. tax at the applicable rate on all distributions that you receive on our common stock. If it is later determined that a distribution on our common stock was not a dividend, in whole or in part, you may be entitled to claim a refund of the U.S. tax withheld with respect to that portion of the distribution, provided that the required information is timely furnished to the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. If a distribution exceeds our current and accumulated earnings and profits as determined under United States federal income tax principles, the excess will be allocated ratably among each share of our common stock with respect to which the distribution is paid and treated first as a tax-free return of capital to the extent of your adjusted basis in each such share and thereafter as capital gain subject to the tax treatment described below in **Gain on disposition of common stock**. Your adjusted basis in such share is generally the purchase price of each share, reduced by the amount of any such tax-free returns of capital.

If dividends paid to you are **effectively connected** with your conduct of a trade or business within the United States, we and other payors generally are not required to withhold tax from the dividends, provided that you have furnished to the withholding agent a valid Internal Revenue Service Form W-8ECI or an acceptable substitute form upon which you certify, under penalties of perjury, that:

you are not a United States person; and

the dividends are effectively connected with your conduct of a trade or business within the United States and are includible in your gross income.

Table of Contents

Effectively connected dividends are generally taxed on a net basis at rates applicable to United States citizens, resident aliens and domestic United States corporations, provided that, if required by an applicable income tax treaty, such dividends are attributable to a permanent establishment maintained by the United States alien holder in the United States.

If you are a corporate non-U.S. Holder, effectively connected dividends that you receive may, under certain circumstances, be subject to an additional branch profits tax at a 30% rate or at a lower rate if you are eligible for the benefits of an income tax treaty that provides for a lower rate.

Gain on disposition of common stock

You generally will not be subject to United States federal income tax on gain that you recognize on a disposition of our common stock unless:

the gain is effectively connected with your conduct of a trade or business in the United States, and the gain is attributable to a permanent establishment that you maintain in the United States, if that is required by an applicable income tax treaty as a condition for subjecting you to United States taxation on a net income basis;

you are an individual, you are present in the United States for 183 or more days in the taxable year of the disposition and certain other conditions exist; or

we are or have been during a specified testing period a United States real property holding corporation for United States federal income tax purposes and certain other conditions are met.

If you are a non-U.S. Holder described in the first bullet point immediately above, you will be subject to tax on the net gain derived from the disposition under regular graduated United States federal income tax rates. If you are a corporate non-U.S. Holder, effectively connected gains that you recognize may also, under certain circumstances, be subject to an additional branch profits tax at a 30% rate or at a lower rate if you are eligible for the benefits of an income tax treaty that provides for a lower rate. If you are an individual non-U.S. holder described in the second bullet point immediately above you will be subject to a flat 30% tax on the gain derived from the disposition, which may be offset by United States source capital losses, even though you are not considered a resident of the United States.

We have not been, are not and do not anticipate becoming a United States real property holding corporation for United States federal income tax purposes.

Withholdable payments to foreign financial entities and other foreign entities

Legislation enacted in March 2010 generally will require withholding at a rate of 30% on dividend income from shares of our common stock and the gross proceeds of a disposition of our common stock paid to a foreign financial institution (as a beneficial owner or as an intermediary), unless such institution enters into an agreement with the U.S. government to withhold on certain payments and collect and provide to the U.S. tax authorities substantial information regarding U.S. account holders of such institution (which would include certain equity and debt holders of such institution, as well as certain account holders that are foreign entities with U.S. owners). Absent any applicable exception, this legislation also generally will require withholding at a rate of 30% on dividend income from shares of our common stock and the gross proceeds of a disposition of our common stock paid to a foreign entity that is not a foreign financial institution (as a beneficial owner or as an intermediary) unless such entity provides the withholding agent with a certification identifying the substantial U.S. owners of the entity, which generally includes any U.S. person who directly or indirectly owns more than 10% of the entity. Under certain circumstances, a non-U.S. holder of our common stock might be eligible for refunds or credits of such withheld amounts, and a non-U.S. holder might be required to file a U.S. federal income tax return to claim such refunds or credits. Recently finalized Treasury regulations have delayed implementation of withholding (i) on payments of dividends until January 1, 2014 and (ii) on payments of gross proceeds from the disposition of stock until January 1, 2017.

Table of Contents

Investors are encouraged to consult with their own tax advisors regarding the implications of this legislation on their investment in our common stock.

Backup withholding and information reporting

We and other payors must report annually to the IRS and to you the amount of dividends paid to you, even if the payments are exempt from withholding. Copies of the information returns reporting such dividends and the amount withheld may also be made available to the tax authorities in the country in which you reside under the provisions of an applicable income tax treaty.

In addition, you may be subject to information reporting requirements and backup withholding (currently at a rate of 28%) with respect to dividends paid on our common stock, unless, generally, you certify under penalties of perjury (usually on a valid IRS Form W-8BEN) that you are not a U.S. person or you otherwise establish an exemption. Rules relating to information reporting requirements and backup withholding with respect to payments of the proceeds from the disposition of shares of our common stock are as follows:

If the proceeds are paid to or through a United States office of a broker, the proceeds generally will be subject to backup withholding and information reporting unless the income associated with such payments is otherwise exempt from United States federal income tax, and:

the payor or broker does not have actual knowledge or reason to believe that you are a United States person, and you have furnished to the payor or broker either (i) a valid IRS Form W-8BEN or an acceptable substitute form upon which you certify, under penalties of perjury that you are a non-United States person, or (ii) other documentation upon which it may rely to treat the payments as made to a non-United States person that is, for United States federal income tax purposes, the beneficial owner of the payments in accordance with United States Treasury Department regulations; or

you otherwise establish an exemption.

If the proceeds are paid to or through a non-U.S. office of a broker that is not a U.S. person and is not a foreign person with certain specified U.S. connections, or a U.S.-related person, information reporting and backup withholding generally will not apply. However, a sale of our common stock that is effected at the foreign office of a broker will be subject to information reporting or backup withholding if:

the proceeds are transferred to an account maintained by you in the United States;

the payment of proceeds or the confirmation of the sale is mailed to you at a United States address; or

the sale has some other specified connection with the United States as provided in United States Treasury Department regulations; unless the broker does not have actual knowledge or reason to know that you are a United States person and the documentation requirements described above are met or you otherwise establish an exemption.

If the proceeds are paid to or through a non-U.S. office of a broker that is one of the following:

a United States person;

a controlled foreign corporation for United States tax purposes;

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a foreign person 50% or more of whose gross income is effectively connected with the conduct of a United States trade or business for a specified three-year period; or

a foreign partnership, if at any time during its tax year (i) one or more of its partners are U.S. persons, as defined in United States Treasury Department regulations, who in the aggregate hold more than 50% of the income or capital interest in the partnership; or (ii) such foreign partnership is engaged in the conduct of a United States trade or business,

S-15

Table of Contents

the proceeds generally will be subject to information reporting (but not backup withholding), unless (i) the broker does not have actual knowledge or reason to know that you are a United States person and (ii) the documentation requirements described above are met or you otherwise establish an exemption. Backup withholding will apply if the sale is subject to information reporting and the broker has actual knowledge that you are a United States person that is, for United States federal income tax purposes, the beneficial owner of the payments.

Backup withholding is not an additional tax. Non-U.S. Holders generally may obtain a refund of any amounts withheld under the backup withholding rules that exceed their income tax liability by filing a refund claim with the Internal Revenue Service in a timely manner.

The foregoing discussion does not address all aspects of U.S. federal income taxation that may be relevant to investors in light of their particular circumstances and income tax situation. Investors should consult their own independent tax advisors as to the specific tax consequences that would result from their acquisition, ownership and disposition of our common stock, including the application and effect of state and local, and other tax laws and the possible effects of changes in federal or other tax laws.

Table of Contents

UNDERWRITING

We and Warburg Pincus have entered into an underwriting agreement with J.P. Morgan Securities LLC and Deutsche Bank Securities Inc., the underwriters. Subject to the terms and conditions of the underwriting agreement, Warburg Pincus has agreed to sell to the underwriters, and each underwriter has severally agreed to purchase the number of shares of common stock listed next to its name below:

| Underwriters | Number of Shares |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| J.P. Morgan Securities LLC | |
| Deutsche Bank Securities Inc. | |
| Total | 8,744,850 |

The underwriting agreement provides that the obligation of the underwriters to purchase the shares included in this offering is subject to approval of legal matters by counsel and to other conditions. The underwriters are obligated to purchase all the shares if they purchase any of the shares.

The underwriters propose to offer our shares of common stock from time to time for sale in one or more transactions on the NYSE, in the over-the-counter market, through negotiated transactions or otherwise at market prices prevailing at the time of sale, at prices related to prevailing market prices or at negotiated prices, subject to receipt and acceptance by them and subject to their right to reject any order in whole or in part. In connection with the sale of our shares of common stock offered hereby, the underwriter may be deemed to have received compensation in the form of underwriting discounts. The underwriters may effect such transactions by selling our shares of common stock to or through dealers, and such dealers may receive compensation in the form of discounts or commissions from the underwriters and/or purchasers of our shares of common stock for whom they may act as agents or to whom they may sell as principals.

The underwriters have agreed to purchase the shares of our common stock from the selling stockholders at a price of \$ _____ per share, which will result in approximately \$ _____ of proceeds to the selling stockholders.

Sales of shares made outside of the United States may be made by affiliates of the underwriters. The offering of the shares by the underwriters is subject to receipt and acceptance and subject to the underwriters' right to reject any order in whole or in part.

We estimate that the total expenses of this offering, including registration, filing and listing fees, printing fees and legal and accounting expenses, but excluding the underwriting discounts and commissions, will be approximately \$ _____.

A prospectus supplement in electronic format may be made available on the websites maintained by the underwriters, or one or more selling group members, if any, participating in the offering. The underwriters may agree to allocate a number of shares to selling group members for sale to their online brokerage account holders. Internet distributions will be allocated by the underwriters to the selling group members that may make Internet distributions on the same basis as other allocations.

We, all of our directors, certain of our executive officers and certain shareholders have agreed that, without the prior written consent of the underwriters, we and they will not directly or indirectly (1) offer for sale, sell, pledge, or otherwise dispose of (or enter into any transaction or device that is designed to, or could be expected to, result in the disposition by any person at any time in the future of) any shares of common stock (including, without limitation, shares of common stock that may be deemed to be beneficially owned by the undersigned in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Securities and Exchange Commission and shares of common stock that may be issued upon exercise of any options or warrants) or securities convertible into or exercisable or exchangeable for common stock or sell or grant options, rights or warrants with respect to any shares of common stock or securities convertible into or exchangeable for common stock (other than the grant of options pursuant to option plans existing on the date hereof), (2) enter into any swap or other derivatives transaction that transfers to

Table of Contents

another, in whole or in part, any of the economic consequences of ownership of the common stock, (3) make any demand for or exercise any right or file or cause to be filed a registration statement, including any amendments thereto, with respect to the registration of any shares of common stock or securities convertible, exercisable or exchangeable into common stock or any of our other securities, or (4) publicly disclose the intention to do any of the foregoing for a period of 60 days after the date of this prospectus supplement.

The restrictions described in the immediately preceding paragraph do not apply to (i) bona fide gift or gifts, provided that the donee or donees thereof agree to be bound in writing by the restrictions set forth above; (ii) any trust for the direct or indirect benefit of the parties or immediate family of the parties subject to the restrictions set forth above, provided that the trustee of the trust agrees to be bound in writing by the restrictions set forth above, provided further that any such transfer shall not involve a disposition for value and provided further that, in the case of any transfer or distribution pursuant to this (i) or (ii), no filing by any party (donor, donee, transferor or transferee) under Section 16(a) of the Exchange Act shall be required, or shall voluntarily be made, in connection with such transfer or distribution; (iii) sales or deemed sales of common stock to us pursuant to net exercises or cashless exercises of options outstanding on the date hereof to the extent that such shares of common stock are not subsequently sold by us on the open market during the restricted period; or (iv) sales of shares of common stock pursuant to any sales plan existing as of the date hereof pursuant to Rule 10b5-1 under the Exchange Act.

The underwriters, in their sole discretion, may release the common stock and other securities subject to the lock-up agreements described above in whole or in part at any time with or without notice. When determining whether or not to release the common stock and other securities from lock-up agreements, the underwriters will consider, among other factors, the holder's reasons for requesting the release, the number of shares of common stock or other securities for which the release is being requested and market conditions at the time.

We and Warburg Pincus have agreed to indemnify the underwriters against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended.

Our common stock is listed on the NYSE under the symbol WBS.

In connection with this offering, the underwriters may engage in stabilizing transactions, which involves making bids for, purchasing and selling shares of common stock in the open market for the purpose of preventing or retarding a decline in the market price of the common stock while this offering is in progress. These stabilizing transactions may include making short sales of the common stock, which involves the sale by the underwriters of a greater number of shares of common stock than they are required to purchase in this offering, and purchasing shares of common stock on the open market to cover positions created by short sales. The underwriters may close out any covered short position by purchasing shares in the open market. A naked short position is more likely to be created if the underwriters are concerned that there may be downward pressure on the price of the common stock in the open market that could adversely affect investors who purchase in this offering.

The underwriters have advised us that, pursuant to Regulation M of the Securities Act, they may also engage in other activities that stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the price of the common stock, including the imposition of penalty bids. These activities may have the effect of raising or maintaining the market price of the common stock or preventing or retarding a decline in the market price of the common stock, and, as a result, the price of the common stock may be higher than the price that otherwise might exist in the open market. If the underwriters commence these activities, they may discontinue them at any time. The underwriters may carry out these transactions on the NYSE, in the over-the-counter market or otherwise.

Other than in the United States, no action has been taken by us or the underwriters that would permit a public offering of the securities offered by this prospectus supplement in any jurisdiction where action for that purpose is required. The securities offered by this prospectus supplement may not be offered or sold, directly or indirectly, nor may this prospectus supplement or any other offering material or advertisements in connection with the offer and sale of any such securities be distributed or published in any jurisdiction, except under circumstances that will result

Table of Contents

in compliance with the applicable rules and regulations of that jurisdiction. Persons into whose possession this prospectus supplement comes are advised to inform themselves about and to observe any restrictions relating to the offering and the distribution of this prospectus supplement. This prospectus supplement does not constitute an offer to sell or a solicitation of an offer to buy any securities offered by this prospectus supplement in any jurisdiction in which such an offer or a solicitation is unlawful.

The underwriters and their respective affiliates are full service financial institutions engaged in various activities, which may include securities trading, commercial and investment banking, financial advisory, investment management, investment research, principal investment, hedging, financing and brokerage activities.

Certain of the underwriters and their respective affiliates have, from time to time, performed, and may in the future perform, various financial advisory and investment banking services for us, for which they received or will receive customary fees and expenses.

In the ordinary course of their various business activities, the underwriters and their respective affiliates may make or hold a broad array of investments, including serving as counterparties to certain derivative and hedging arrangements, and actively trade debt and equity securities (or related derivative securities) and financial instruments (including bank loans) for their own account and for the accounts of their customers, and such investment and securities activities may involve securities or instruments of the issuer. Such investment and securities activities may have involved, and in the future may involve, our securities and instruments. If any of the underwriters or their affiliates has a lending relationship with us, certain of these underwriters or their affiliates may hedge their credit exposure to us consistent with their customary risk management policies. Typically, such underwriters and their affiliates would hedge such exposure by entering into transactions which consist of either the purchase of credit default swaps or the creation of short positions in our securities. The underwriters and their respective affiliates may also make investment recommendations or publish or express independent research views in respect of such securities or instruments and may at any time hold, or recommend to clients that they acquire, long or short positions in such securities and instruments.

Selling Restrictions

Notice to Prospective Investors in the European Economic Area

In relation to each member state of the European Economic Area which has implemented the Prospectus Directive (each, a Relevant Member State) no shares have been offered or will be offered pursuant to the offers contemplated in this prospectus (the Offering) to the public in that Relevant Member State, except in that Relevant Member State at any time under the following exemptions under the Prospectus Directive, if they are implemented in that Relevant Member State:

- (a) to legal entities which are qualified investors as defined in the Prospectus Directive;
- (b) by the underwriters to fewer than 100 (or, if the Relevant Member State has implemented the relevant provision of Directive 2010/73/EU, 150) natural or legal persons (other than qualified investors as defined in the Prospectus Directive) subject to obtaining the prior consent of the representatives; or
- (c) in any other circumstances which do not require the publication by us or any underwriter of a prospectus pursuant to Article 3 of the Prospectus Directive, provided that no such offer of shares shall result in a requirement for the publication of a prospectus pursuant to Article 3 of the Prospectus Directive or any measure implementing the Prospectus Directive in a Relevant Member State.

For the purpose of the expression an offer of any shares to the public in relation to any shares in any Relevant Member State means a communication to persons in any form and by any means presenting sufficient information on the terms of the offer and the shares to be offered, so as to enable an investor to decide to acquire any shares, as that definition may be varied in that Relevant Member State by any measure implementing the Prospectus Directive.

Table of Contents

In the case of any shares being offered to a financial intermediary as that term is used in Article 3(2) of the Prospectus Directive, such financial intermediary will also be deemed to have represented, acknowledged and agreed that the shares acquired by it in the Offering have not been acquired on a non-discretionary basis on behalf of, nor have they been acquired with a view to their offer or resale to, persons in circumstances which may give rise to an offer of any shares to the public other than their offer or resale in a Relevant Member State to qualified investors as so defined or in circumstances in which the prior consent of the representative has been obtained to each such proposed offer or resale. The Company, the selling stockholders, the underwriters and their respective affiliates, and others will rely upon the truth and accuracy of the foregoing representation, acknowledgement and agreement. Notwithstanding the above, a person who is not a qualified investor and who has notified the underwriters of such fact in writing may, with the prior consent of the representative, be permitted to acquire shares in the Offering.

Notice to Investors in the United Kingdom

This prospectus and any other material in relation to the shares described herein is only being distributed to, and is only directed at, persons in the United Kingdom who are qualified investors or otherwise in circumstances which do not require publication by the Company of a prospectus pursuant to section 85(1) of the UK Financial Services and Markets Act 2000.

Any investment or investment activity to which this prospectus relates is available only to, and will be engaged in only with, investment professionals falling within Article 19(5), or high net worth entities falling within Article 49(2), of the UK Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (Financial Promotion) Order 2005 or other persons to whom such investment or investment activity may lawfully be made available (together, relevant persons). Persons who are not relevant persons should not take any action on the basis of this prospectus and should not act or rely on it.

Notice to Investors in Japan

The depositary shares have not been and will not be registered under the Financial Instruments and Exchange Law of Japan (the Financial Instruments and Exchange Law) and each underwriter has agreed that it will not offer or sell any depositary shares, directly or indirectly, in Japan or to, or for the benefit of, any resident of Japan (which term as used herein means any person resident in Japan, including any corporation or other entity organized under the laws of Japan), or to others for re-offering or resale, directly or indirectly, in Japan or to a resident of Japan, except pursuant to an exemption from the registration requirements of, and otherwise in compliance with, the Financial Instruments and Exchange Law and any other applicable laws, regulations and ministerial guidelines of Japan.

Notice to Investors in Hong Kong

Each underwriter has represented and agreed that:

- (a) it has not offered or sold and will not offer or sell in Hong Kong, by means of any document, any depositary shares other than (a) to professional investors as defined in the Securities and Futures Ordinance (Cap. 571) of Hong Kong and any rules made under that Ordinance; or (b) in other circumstances which do not result in the document being a prospectus as defined in the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 32) of Hong Kong or which do not constitute an offer to the public within the meaning of that Ordinance; and
- (b) it has not issued or had in its possession for the purposes of issue, and will not issue or have in its possession for the purposes of issue, whether in Hong Kong or elsewhere, any advertisement, invitation or document relating to the depositary shares, which is directed at, or the contents of which are likely to be accessed or read by, the public of Hong Kong (except if permitted to do so under the securities laws of Hong Kong) other than with respect to depositary shares which are or are intended to be disposed of only to persons outside Hong Kong or only to professional investors as defined in the Securities and Futures Ordinance and any rules made under that Ordinance.

Table of Contents

Notice to Investors in Singapore

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus has not been registered as a prospectus with the Monetary Authority of Singapore. Accordingly, this prospectus and any other document or material in connection with the offer or sale, or invitation for subscription or purchase, of the depositary shares may not be circulated or distributed, nor may the depositary shares be offered or sold, or be made the subject of an invitation for subscription or purchase, whether directly or indirectly, to persons in Singapore other than (i) to an institutional investor under Section 274 of the Securities and Futures Act, Chapter 289 of Singapore (the "SFA"), (ii) to a relevant person, or any person pursuant to Section 275(1A), and in accordance with the conditions specified in Section 275 of the SFA or (iii) otherwise pursuant to, and in accordance with the conditions of, any other applicable provision of the SFA. Where the depositary shares are subscribed or purchased under Section 275 of the SFA by a relevant person which is: (a) a corporation (which is not an accredited investor) the sole business of which is to hold investments and the entire share capital of which is owned by one or more individuals, each of whom is an accredited investor; or (b) a trust (where the trustee is not an accredited investor) whose sole purpose is to hold investments and each beneficiary is an accredited investor, shares, debentures and units of shares and debentures of that corporation or the beneficiaries' rights and interest in that trust will not be transferable for six months after that corporation or that trust has acquired the depositary shares under Section 275 of the SFA except: (1) to an institutional investor under Section 274 of the SFA or to a relevant person, or any person pursuant to Section 275(1A) of the SFA and in accordance with the conditions specified in Section 275 of the SFA; (2) where no consideration is given for the transfer; or (3) by operation of law.

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the issuance of shares of common stock to be sold in this offering will be passed upon for us by Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz. Certain legal matters will be passed upon for the underwriters by Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP, New York, New York.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements of Webster Financial Corporation appearing in Webster Financial Corporation's Annual Report (Form 10-K) for the year ended December 31, 2012, and the effectiveness of Webster Financial Corporation's internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2012 have been audited by Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, as set forth in their reports thereon, included therein, and incorporated herein by reference. Such consolidated financial statements are incorporated herein by reference in reliance upon such reports given on the authority of such firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

Table of Contents

PROSPECTUS

WEBSTER FINANCIAL CORPORATION

Debt Securities, Common Stock, Preferred Stock, Depositary Shares,

Purchase Contracts, Units and Warrants

By this prospectus, Webster Financial Corporation may offer from time to time:

debt securities;

common stock;

preferred stock;

depository shares;

purchase contracts;

units; and

warrants exercisable for debt securities, common stock or preferred stock.

In addition, this prospectus may be used to offer securities for the account of other persons.

When each of Webster Financial Corporation or selling securityholders offers securities, it or they will provide you with a prospectus supplement describing the terms of the specific issue of securities, including the price of the securities.

We or any selling securityholders may offer and sell these securities to or through one or more underwriters, dealers and agents, or directly to purchasers, on a continuous or delayed basis.

You should read this prospectus and any prospectus supplement carefully before you decide to invest. This prospectus may not be used to sell securities unless it is accompanied by a prospectus supplement that further describes the securities being delivered to you.

Webster Financial Corporation's common stock is listed for trading on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol WBS. We have not yet determined whether any of the securities that may be offered by this prospectus will be listed on any exchange, or included in any inter-dealer quotation system or over-the-counter market. If we decide to seek the listing or inclusion of any such securities upon issuance, the prospectus supplement relating to those securities will disclose the exchange, quotation system or market on or in which the securities will be listed or included.

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Investing in our securities involves risks. See **Risk Factors** in our most recent annual report on Form 10-K, which is incorporated herein by reference, and in any of our subsequently filed quarterly and current reports that are incorporated herein by reference. We may include specific risk factors in an applicable prospectus supplement under the heading **Risk Factors**.

The offered securities are not deposits or obligations of a bank or savings associations and are not insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other governmental agency.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus is December 20, 2011.

Table of Contents

No dealer, salesperson or other person is authorized to give any information or to represent anything not contained in this prospectus or any accompanying prospectus supplement. You must not rely on any unauthorized information or representations. This prospectus and any prospectus supplement together are an offer to sell only the securities offered hereby and thereby, but only under circumstances and in jurisdictions where it is lawful to do so. The information contained herein and in any accompanying prospectus supplement is current only as of its date.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| <u>ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS</u> | 1 |
| <u>WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION</u> | 1 |
| <u>INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE</u> | 3 |
| <u>SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS</u> | 4 |
| <u>ABOUT WEBSTER FINANCIAL CORPORATION</u> | 5 |
| <u>RATIO OF EARNINGS (DEFICIT) TO FIXED CHARGES AND RATIO OF EARNINGS (DEFICIT) TO COMBINED FIXED CHARGES AND PREFERRED STOCK DIVIDENDS</u> | 6 |
| <u>USE OF PROCEEDS</u> | 6 |
| <u>THE SECURITIES WE MAY OFFER</u> | 7 |
| <u>DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES</u> | 8 |
| <u>DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK</u> | 25 |
| <u>DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED STOCK</u> | 28 |
| <u>DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSITARY SHARES</u> | 33 |
| <u>DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS</u> | 37 |
| <u>DESCRIPTION OF PURCHASE CONTRACTS</u> | 39 |
| <u>DESCRIPTION OF UNITS</u> | 40 |
| <u>PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION</u> | 41 |
| <u>LEGAL MATTERS</u> | 43 |
| <u>EXPERTS</u> | 43 |

Table of Contents

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the SEC) using a shelf registration process. Under this shelf registration statement, we may sell, either separately or together, common stock, preferred stock, debt securities, depository shares, purchase contracts, units and warrants.

Each time we sell securities we will provide a prospectus supplement containing specific information about the terms of the securities being offered. The prospectus supplement may include a discussion of any risk factors or other special considerations that apply to those securities. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change the information in this prospectus. If there is any inconsistency between the information in this prospectus (including the information incorporated by reference herein) and any prospectus supplement, you should rely on the information in the applicable prospectus supplement. You should read both this prospectus and any prospectus supplement together with additional information described under the heading **Where You Can Find More Information**.

We have not authorized anyone to provide you with different information. You should not assume that the information in this prospectus, or any supplement to this prospectus, is accurate at any date other than the date indicated on the cover page of these documents.

References in this prospectus to Webster Financial, the Corporation, we, us and our are to Webster Financial Corporation. In this prospectus sometimes refer to the debt securities, common stock, preferred stock, depository shares, purchase contracts, units, and warrants collectively as offered securities.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. Because our common stock trades on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol WBS, those materials can also be inspected and copied at the offices of that organization. Here are ways you can review and obtain copies of this information:

What is Available

Paper copies of information

Where to Get it

SEC's Public Reference Room

100 F Street, N.E.

Washington, D.C. 20549

The New York Stock Exchange

20 Broad Street

New York, New York 10005

On-line information, free of charge

SEC's Internet website at

www.sec.gov

Information about the SEC's Public Reference Room

Call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330

We have filed with the SEC a registration statement on Form S-3 under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, relating to the securities covered by this prospectus. The registration statement, including the attached exhibits and schedules, contains additional relevant information about us and the securities. This prospectus does not contain all of the information set forth in the registration statement. Whenever a reference is made in this prospectus to a contract or other document, the reference is only a summary and you should refer to the exhibits that form a part of the registration statement for a copy of the contract or other document. You can get a copy of the registration statement, at prescribed rates, from the sources listed above. The registration statement and the documents referred to below under **Incorporation of Certain Documents by Reference** are also available on our

Table of Contents

Internet website, *www.websteronline.com*. You can also obtain these documents from us, without charge (other than exhibits, unless the exhibits are specifically incorporated by reference), by requesting them in writing or by telephone at the following address:

Webster Financial Corporation

Webster Plaza

145 Bank Street

Waterbury, Connecticut 06702

(203) 578-2202

Attn: Terrence K. Mangan, Senior Vice President, Investor Relations

Internet Website: www.websteronline.com

**THE INFORMATION CONTAINED ON OUR WEBSITE DOES NOT
CONSTITUTE A PART OF THIS PROSPECTUS.**

Table of Contents

INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference information into this prospectus. This means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to another document filed separately with the SEC. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be a part of this prospectus, except for any information that is superseded by other information that is included in or incorporated by reference into this document.

This prospectus incorporates by reference the documents listed below that we have previously filed with the SEC (File No. 001-31486). These documents contain important information about us:

our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2010 filed on February 28, 2011;

our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the quarters ended March 31, 2011, June 30, 2011 and September 30, 2011 filed on May 5, 2011, August 1, 2011 and November 2, 2011, respectively;

our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on January 3, 2011, January 5, 2011, February 14, 2011, April 26, 2011, April 29, 2011, May 31, 2011, June 8, 2011, September 9, 2011, November 18, 2011 and December 15, 2011 (except, with respect to each of the foregoing, for portions of such reports which were deemed to be furnished and not filed); and

the description of our common stock contained in our Registration Statement on Form S-4, as amended, filed with the SEC on March 24, 2000.

We incorporate by reference any additional documents that we may file with the SEC under Section 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (other than those furnished pursuant to Item 2.02 or Item 7.01 of Form 8-K or other information furnished to the SEC), from the date of the registration statement of which this prospectus is part until the termination of the offering of the securities. These documents may include annual, quarterly and current reports, as well as proxy statements. Any material that we later file with the SEC will automatically update and replace the information previously filed with the SEC. These documents are available to you without charge. See [Where You Can Find More Information](#).

For purposes of this registration statement, any statement contained in a document incorporated or deemed to be incorporated herein by reference shall be deemed to be modified or superseded to the extent that a statement contained herein or in any other subsequently filed document which also is or is deemed to be incorporated herein by reference modifies or supersedes such statement in such document.

Table of Contents

SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus and the information included or incorporated by reference in it include forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Forward-looking statements often include the words believes, expects, anticipates, estimates, forecasts, intends, plans, targets, potentially, probably, projects, outlook or similar expressions or future conditional verbs such as should, would and could. These forward-looking statements are subject to known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors that could cause the actual results to differ materially from the statements, including:

changes in interest rates and spreads;

changes in market conditions;

increased costs associated with compliance with the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act;

changes in any applicable law, rule, regulation, policy, guideline or practice governing or affecting financial holding companies and their subsidiaries or with respect to tax or accounting principles or otherwise;

changes in the quality or composition of Webster Financial's loan and investment portfolios;

the size and sufficiency of the allowance for loan losses;

increased competition;

changes in technology;

higher than expected costs or other difficulties related to integration of combined or merged businesses;

deposit attrition;

changes in the cost of funds, demand for loan products or demand for financial services; and

other economic, competitive, governmental or technological factors affecting our operations, markets, products, services and prices. Some of these and other factors are discussed in our annual and quarterly reports previously filed with the SEC. These factors could have an adverse impact on our financial position and our results of operations.

The forward-looking statements are based upon management's beliefs and assumptions and are made as of the date of this prospectus. We undertake no obligation to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statements included or incorporated by reference in this prospectus or to update the reasons why actual results could differ from those contained in such statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, except to the extent required by federal securities laws. In light of these risks, uncertainties and assumptions, the

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forward-looking events discussed in this prospectus or in the incorporated documents might not occur, and you should not put undue reliance on any forward-looking statements.

Table of Contents

ABOUT WEBSTER FINANCIAL CORPORATION

Through Webster Bank and various non-banking financial services subsidiaries, we deliver financial services to individuals, families and businesses throughout New England and into Westchester County, New York. We provide business and consumer banking, mortgage lending, financial planning, trust and investment services through 168 banking offices, 473 ATMs, mobile banking and its Internet website (www.websteronline.com). Webster Bank offers, through its HSA Bank division, (www.hsabank.com), health savings accounts on a nationwide basis. We also offer equipment financing, commercial real estate lending and asset-based lending. Our common stock is traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol WBS .

Our principal executive offices are located at 145 Bank Street, Waterbury, Connecticut 06702. Our telephone number is (203) 578-2202. Our website is www.websteronline.com. References to our website and those of our subsidiaries are not intended to be active links and the information on such websites is not, and you must not consider the information to be, a part of this prospectus.

Table of Contents

**RATIO OF EARNINGS (DEFICIT) TO FIXED CHARGES AND
RATIO OF EARNINGS (DEFICIT) TO COMBINED FIXED CHARGES
AND PREFERRED STOCK DIVIDENDS**

Our historical ratios of earnings (deficit) to fixed charges and earnings (deficit) to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends for the periods indicated are set forth in the table below. As of September 30, 2011, we had 28,939 shares of preferred stock outstanding, all of which were issued on June 11, 2008. The ratio of earnings to fixed charges is computed by dividing (1) income from continuing operations before income taxes and fixed charges by (2) total fixed charges. The ratio of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends is computed by dividing (1) income from continuing operations before income taxes and fixed charges by (2) total fixed charges and preferred stock dividends. For purposes of computing these ratios:

earnings consist of income before income taxes plus fixed charges,

fixed charges, excluding interest on deposits, include interest expense (other than on deposits) and the estimated portion of rental expense attributable to interest, net of income from subleases,

fixed charges, including interest on deposits, include all interest expense and the estimated portion of rental expense attributable to interest, net of income from subleases, and

pre-tax earnings required for preferred stock dividends were computed using tax rates for the applicable year.

| | 2006 | Year Ended December 31, | | | 2010 | Nine Months Ended September 30, | |
|--|------|-------------------------|--------|--------|------|---------------------------------|------|
| | | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | | 2011 | 2010 |
| Ratio of Earnings (Deficit) to Fixed Charges: | | | | | | | |
| Excluding Interest on Deposits | 1.99 | 2.27 | (2.39) | (0.84) | 2.49 | 4.77 | 2.05 |
| Including Interest on Deposits | 1.38 | 1.33 | (0.06) | 0.49 | 1.51 | 2.47 | 1.35 |
| Ratio of Earnings (Deficit) to Combined Fixed Charges and Preferred Stock Dividends: | | | | | | | |
| Excluding Interest on Deposits | 1.98 | 2.25 | (2.14) | (0.57) | 1.91 | 4.50 | 1.55 |
| Including Interest on Deposits | 1.38 | 1.33 | (0.05) | 0.43 | 1.37 | 2.41 | 1.22 |

USE OF PROCEEDS

Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, we expect to use the net proceeds from the sale of offered securities for general corporate purposes, including:

refinancing, reduction or repayment of debt;

investments in Webster Bank, National Association and our other subsidiaries as regulatory capital;

financing of possible acquisitions;

expansion of the business; and

investments at the holding company level.

The prospectus supplement with respect to an offering of offered securities may identify different or additional uses for the proceeds of that offering.

Except as otherwise stated in an applicable prospectus supplement, pending the application of the net proceeds, we expect to temporarily invest the proceeds from the sale of offered securities in short-term obligations.

We will not receive proceeds from sales of securities by selling securityholders except as otherwise stated in an applicable prospectus supplement.

Table of Contents

THE SECURITIES WE MAY OFFER

The descriptions of the securities contained in this prospectus, together with the applicable prospectus supplements, summarize certain material terms and provisions of the various types of securities that we or selling securityholders may offer. The particular material terms of the securities offered by a prospectus supplement will be described in that prospectus supplement. If indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, the terms of the offered securities may differ from the terms summarized below. The prospectus supplement will also contain information, where applicable, about material U.S. federal income tax considerations relating to the offered securities, and the securities exchange, if any, on which the offered securities will be listed. The descriptions herein and in the applicable prospectus supplement do not contain all of the information that you may find useful or that may be important to you. You should refer to the provisions of the actual documents whose terms are summarized herein and in the applicable prospectus supplement, because those documents, and not the summaries, define your rights as holders of the relevant securities. For more information, please review the forms of these documents, which are or will be filed with the SEC and will be available as described under the heading "Where You Can Find More Information" above.

We or selling securityholders may offer and sell from time to time, in one or more offerings, the following:

debt securities;

common stock;

preferred stock;

depository shares;

purchase contracts;

units; and/or

warrants exercisable for debt securities, common stock or preferred stock.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

Description of Senior Debt Securities and Subordinated Debt Securities

General

We may issue senior debt securities and/or subordinated debt securities, which in each case will be unsecured, direct, general obligations of Webster Financial.

The senior debt securities will rank equally with all our other unsecured and unsubordinated debt. The subordinated debt securities will be subordinate and junior in priority of payment to senior debt securities of Webster Financial, as described below under **Subordination of Subordinated Debt Securities** and in the prospectus supplement applicable to any subordinated debt securities that we may offer. For purposes of the descriptions under the heading **Description of Senior Debt Securities and Subordinated Debt Securities**, we may refer to the senior debt securities and the subordinated debt securities collectively as the **debt securities**. The debt securities will be effectively subordinated to the creditors and preferred equity holders of our subsidiaries.

We will issue senior debt securities under a senior debt indenture and subordinated debt securities under a separate subordinated debt indenture. Provisions relating to the issuance of debt securities may also be set forth in a supplemental indenture to either of the indentures. For purposes of the descriptions under the heading **Description of Senior Debt Securities and Subordinated Debt Securities**, we may refer to the senior debt indenture and the subordinated debt indenture and any related supplemental indentures, as **an indenture** or, collectively, as **the indentures**. The indentures will be qualified under and governed by the Trust Indenture Act of 1939.

Each indenture will be between Webster Financial and a trustee that meets the requirements of the Trust Indenture Act. We expect that each indenture will provide that there may be more than one trustee under that indenture, each with respect to one or more series of debt securities. Any trustee under an indenture may resign or be removed with respect to one or more series of debt securities and, in that event, we may appoint a successor trustee. Except as otherwise provided in the indenture or supplemental indenture, any action permitted to be taken by a trustee may be taken by that trustee only with respect to the one or more series of debt securities for which it is trustee under the applicable indenture.

The descriptions under the heading **Description of Senior Debt Securities and Subordinated Debt Securities** relating to the debt securities and the indentures are summaries of their provisions. The summaries are not complete and are qualified in their entirety by reference to the actual indentures and debt securities and the further descriptions in the applicable prospectus supplement. A form of the senior debt indenture and a form of the subordinated debt indenture under which we may issue our senior debt securities and subordinated debt securities, respectively, and the forms of the debt securities, have been filed with the SEC as exhibits to the registration statement that includes this prospectus and will be available as described under the heading **Where You Can Find More Information** above. Whenever we refer in this prospectus or in any prospectus supplement to particular sections or defined terms of an indenture, those sections or defined terms are incorporated by reference in this prospectus or in the prospectus supplement, as applicable. You should refer to the provisions of the indentures for provisions that may be important to you.

The terms and conditions described under this heading are terms and conditions that apply generally to the debt securities. The particular terms of any series of debt securities will be summarized in the applicable prospectus supplement. Those terms may differ from the terms summarized below.

Table of Contents

Except as set forth in the applicable indenture or in a supplemental indenture and described in an applicable prospectus supplement, the indentures do not limit the amount of debt securities we may issue under the indentures. We are not required to issue all of the debt securities of one series at the same time and, unless otherwise provided in the applicable indenture or supplemental indenture and described in the applicable prospectus supplement, we may, from time to time, reopen any series and issue additional debt securities under that series without the consent of the holders of the outstanding debt securities of that series. Additional notes issued in this manner will have the same terms and conditions as the outstanding debt securities of that series, except for their original issue date and issue price, and will be consolidated with, and form a single series with, the previously outstanding debt securities of that series.

Terms of Debt Securities to be Included in the Prospectus Supplement

The prospectus supplement relating to any series of debt securities that we may offer will set forth the price or prices at which the debt securities will be offered, and will contain the specific terms of the debt securities of that series. These terms may include, without limitation, the following:

the title of the debt securities and whether they are senior debt securities or subordinated debt securities;

the amount of debt securities issued and any limit on the amount that may be issued;

the price(s) (expressed as a percentage of the principal amount) at which the debt securities will be issued;

if other than the principal amount of those debt securities, the portion of the principal amount payable upon declaration of acceleration of the maturity of those debt securities;

the maturity date or dates, or the method for determining the maturity date or dates, on which the principal of the debt securities will be payable and any rights of extension;

the rate or rates, which may be fixed or variable, or the method of determining the rate or rates at which the debt securities will bear interest, if any;

the date or dates from which any interest will accrue and the date or dates on which any interest will be payable, the regular record dates and whether we may elect to extend or defer such interest payment dates;

the place or places where payments will be payable, where the debt securities may be surrendered for registration of transfer or exchange and where notices or demands to or upon us may be served;

the period or periods within which, the price or prices at which and the other terms and conditions upon which the debt securities may be redeemed, in whole or in part, at our option, if we are to have such an option;

our obligation, if any, to redeem, repay or purchase the debt securities pursuant to any sinking fund or analogous provision or at the option of a holder of the debt securities, and the period or periods within which, or the date and dates on which, the price or prices at which and the other terms and conditions upon which the debt securities will be redeemed, repaid or purchased, in whole or in part, pursuant to that obligation;

the currency or currencies in which the debt securities may be purchased, are denominated and are payable, which may be a foreign currency or units of two or more foreign currencies or a composite currency or currencies, and the related terms and

Table of Contents

conditions, including whether we or the holders of any such debt securities may elect to receive payments in respect of such debt securities in a currency or currency unit other than that in which such debt securities are stated to be payable;

whether the amount of payments of principal of and premium, if any, or interest, if any, on the debt securities may be determined with reference to an index, formula or other method, which index, formula or method may, but need not be, based on a currency, currencies, currency unit or units or composite currency or currencies or with reference to changes in prices of particular securities or commodities, and the manner in which the amounts are to be determined;

any additions to, modifications of or deletions from the terms of the debt securities with respect to events of default, amendments, merger, consolidation and sale or covenants set forth in the applicable indenture;

whether the debt securities will be issued in certificated or book-entry form;

whether the debt securities will be in registered or bearer form or both and, if in registered form, their denominations, if other than \$1,000 and any integral multiple thereof, and, if in bearer form, their denominations, if other than \$5,000, and the related terms and conditions;

if the debt securities will be issuable only in global form, the depository or its nominee with respect to the debt securities and the circumstances under which the global security may be registered for transfer or exchange in the name of a person other than the depository or its nominee;

the applicability, if any, of the defeasance and covenant defeasance provisions of the indenture and any additional or different terms on which the series of debt securities may be defeased;

whether and the extent to which the debt securities will be guaranteed, any guarantors and the form of any guarantee;

whether the debt securities can be converted into or exchanged for other securities of Webster Financial, and the related terms and conditions;

in the case of subordinated debt securities, provisions relating to any modification of the subordination provisions described elsewhere in this prospectus;

whether the debt securities will be sold as part of units consisting of debt securities and other securities;

if the debt securities are to be issued upon the exercise of warrants, the time, manner and place for the debt securities to be authenticated and delivered;

any trustee, depository, authenticating agent, paying agent, transfer agent, registrar or other agent with respect to the debt securities; and

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any other terms of the debt securities.

Unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, the debt securities will not be listed on any securities exchange.

We may offer and sell our debt securities at a substantial discount below their stated principal amount. These debt securities may be original issue discount securities, which means that less than the entire principal amount of the original issue discount securities will be payable upon declaration of acceleration of their maturity. Special federal income tax, accounting and other considerations applicable to original issue discount securities will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Table of Contents

We may issue debt securities with a fixed interest rate or a floating interest rate. Any material federal income tax considerations applicable to any discounted debt securities or to debt securities issued at par that are treated as having been issued at a discount for federal income tax purposes will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Except as set forth in the applicable indenture or in a supplemental indenture, the applicable indenture will not contain any provisions that would limit our ability to incur indebtedness or that would afford holders of debt securities protection in the event of a highly leveraged or similar transaction involving Webster Financial. The applicable indenture may contain provisions that would afford debt security holders protection in the event of a change of control. You should refer to the applicable prospectus supplement for information with respect to any deletions from, modifications of or additions to the events of default or covenants of Webster Financial that are described below, including any addition of a covenant or other provision providing event risk or similar protection.

For purposes of the descriptions under the heading **Description of Senior Debt Securities and Subordinated Debt Securities** :

subsidiary means a corporation or a partnership or a limited liability company a majority of the outstanding voting stock or partnership or membership interests, as the case may be, of which is owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by Webster Financial or by one or more other subsidiaries of Webster Financial. For the purposes of this definition, **voting stock** means stock having voting power for the election of directors, or trustees, as the case may be, whether at all times or only so long as no senior class of stock has voting power by reason of any contingency; and

significant subsidiary means any subsidiary of Webster Financial that is a **significant subsidiary**, within the meaning of Regulation S-X promulgated by the SEC under the Securities Act.

Ranking

Senior Debt Securities

Payment of the principal of and premium, if any, and interest on debt securities we issue under the senior debt indenture will rank equally with all of our unsecured and unsubordinated debt.

Subordination of Subordinated Debt Securities

To the extent provided in the subordinated debt indenture and any supplemental indenture, and as described in the prospectus supplement describing the applicable series of subordinated debt securities, the payment of the principal of and premium, if any, and interest on any subordinated debt securities, including amounts payable on any redemption or repurchase, will be subordinated in right of payment and junior to senior debt, which is defined below. If there is a distribution to creditors of Webster Financial in a liquidation or dissolution of Webster Financial, or in a bankruptcy, reorganization, insolvency, receivership or similar proceeding relating to Webster Financial, the holders of senior debt will first be entitled to receive payment in full of all amounts due on the senior debt (or provision shall be made for such payment in cash) before any payments may be made on the subordinated debt securities. Because of this subordination, general creditors of Webster Financial may recover more, ratably, than holders of subordinated debt securities in the event of a distribution of assets upon insolvency.

Table of Contents

The supplemental indenture will set forth the terms and conditions under which, if any, we will not be permitted to pay principal, premium, if any, or interest on the related subordinated debt securities upon the occurrence of an event of default or other circumstances arising under or with respect to senior debt.

The indentures will place no limitation on the amount of senior debt that we may incur. We expect to incur from time to time additional indebtedness constituting senior debt, which may include indebtedness that is senior to the subordinated debt securities but subordinate to our other obligations.

Senior debt means the principal of, and premium, if any, and interest, including interest accruing after the commencement of any bankruptcy proceeding relating to Webster Financial, on, or substantially similar payments we will make in respect of the following categories of debt, whether that debt is outstanding at the date of execution of the applicable indenture or thereafter incurred, created or assumed:

existing senior debt, which means indebtedness of Webster Financial in the amount of \$150 million evidenced by 5.125% senior notes due April 2014 issued pursuant to the purchase agreement dated April 6, 2004;

other indebtedness of Webster Financial evidenced by notes, debentures, or bonds or other securities issued under the provisions of any indenture, fiscal agency agreement, note purchase agreement or other agreement, including the senior debt securities that may be offered by means of this prospectus and one or more prospectus supplements;

indebtedness of Webster Financial for money borrowed or represented by purchase-money obligations, as defined below;

our obligations as lessee under leases of property either made as part of a sale and leaseback transaction to which we are a party or otherwise;

indebtedness, obligations and liabilities of others in respect of which we are liable contingently or otherwise to pay or advance money or property or as guarantor, endorser or otherwise or which we have agreed to purchase or otherwise acquire and indebtedness of partnerships and joint ventures which is included in the Company's consolidated financial statements;

reimbursement and other obligations relating to letters of credit, bankers' acceptances and similar obligations;

obligations under various hedging arrangements and agreements, including interest rate and currency hedging agreements;

all our obligations issued or assumed as the deferred purchase price of property or services, but excluding trade accounts payable and accrued liabilities arising in the ordinary course of business; and

deferrals, renewals or extensions of any of the indebtedness or obligations described in the eight clauses above.

However, senior debt excludes:

any indebtedness, obligation or liability referred to in the nine clauses above as to which, in the instrument creating or evidencing that indebtedness, obligation or liability, it is expressly provided that the indebtedness, obligation or liability is not senior in right of payment to subordinated debt securities or ranks equally with the subordinated debt securities,

Table of Contents

any indebtedness, obligation or liability which is subordinated to indebtedness of Webster Financial to substantially the same extent as or to a greater extent than the subordinated debt securities are subordinated, and, unless expressly provided in the terms thereof,

any indebtedness of Webster Financial to its subsidiaries.

As used above, the term purchase-money obligations means indebtedness, obligations or guarantees evidenced by a note, debenture, bond or other instrument, whether or not secured by a lien or other security interest, and any deferred obligation for the payment of the purchase price of property but excluding indebtedness or obligations for which recourse is limited to the property purchased, issued or assumed as all or a part of the consideration for the acquisition of property or services, whether by purchase, merger, consolidation or otherwise, but does not include any trade accounts payable. There will not be any restrictions in an indenture relating to subordinated debt securities upon the creation of additional senior debt.

The applicable prospectus supplement may further describe the provisions, if any, applicable to the subordination of the subordinated debt securities of a particular series. The applicable prospectus supplement or the information incorporated by reference in the applicable prospectus supplement or in this prospectus will describe as of a recent date the approximate amount of our senior debt outstanding as to which the subordinated debt securities of that series will be subordinated.

Structural Subordination

Because Webster Financial is a holding company, our cash flows and consequent ability to service our obligations, including our debt securities, are dependent on distributions and other payments of earnings and other funds by our subsidiaries to us. The payment of dividends and other distributions by our subsidiaries is contingent on their earnings and is subject to the requirements of federal banking regulations and other restrictions. In addition, the debt securities will be structurally subordinated to all indebtedness and other liabilities of Webster Financial's subsidiaries, since any right of Webster Financial to receive any assets of its subsidiaries upon their liquidation or reorganization, and the consequent right of the holders of the debt securities to participate in those assets, will be effectively subordinated to the claims of that subsidiary's creditors. If Webster Financial itself is recognized as a creditor of that subsidiary, the claims of Webster Financial would still be subordinate to any security interest in the assets of that subsidiary and any indebtedness of that subsidiary senior to that held by Webster Financial. Claims from creditors (other than us), on subsidiaries may include long-term and medium-term debt and substantial obligations related to deposit liabilities, federal funds purchased, securities sold under repurchase agreements and other short-term borrowings. Any capital loans that we make to Webster Bank would be subordinate in right of payment to deposits and to other indebtedness of the bank.

Conversion or Exchange of Debt Securities

The applicable prospectus supplement will set forth the terms, if any, on which a series of debt securities may be converted into or exchanged for our other securities. These terms will include whether conversion or exchange is mandatory, or is at our option or at the option of the holder. We will also describe in the applicable prospectus supplement how we will calculate the number of securities that holders of debt securities would receive if they were to convert or exchange their debt securities, the conversion price and other terms related to conversion and any anti-dilution protections.

Table of Contents

Redemption of Securities

We may redeem the debt securities at any time, in whole or in part, at the prescribed redemption price, at the times and on the terms described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

From and after notice has been given as provided in the indentures, if we have made available funds for the redemption of any debt securities called for redemption on the applicable redemption date, the debt securities will cease to bear interest on the date fixed for the redemption specified in the notice, and the only right of the holders of the debt securities will be to receive payment of the redemption price.

Notice of any optional redemption by us of any debt securities is required to be given to holders at their addresses, as shown in the security register. The notice of redemption will be required to specify, among other items, the redemption price and the principal amount of the debt securities held by the holder to be redeemed.

If we elect to redeem debt securities, we will be required to notify the trustee of the aggregate principal amount of debt securities to be redeemed and the redemption date. If fewer than all the debt securities are to be redeemed, the trustee is required to select the debt securities to be redeemed equally, by lot or in a manner it deems fair and appropriate.

Denomination, Interest, Registration and Transfer

Unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, we will issue the debt securities (i) in denominations of \$1,000 or integral multiples of \$1,000 if the debt securities are in registered form and (ii) in denominations of \$5,000 if the debt securities are in bearer form.

Unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, we will pay the principal of, and applicable premium, if any, and interest on any series of debt securities at the corporate trust office of the trustee, the address of which will be stated in the applicable prospectus supplement. At our option, we may pay interest by check mailed to the address of the person entitled to the interest payment as it appears in the register for the applicable debt securities or by wire transfer of funds to that person at an account maintained within the United States.

Any defaulted interest, which means interest not punctually paid or duly provided for on any interest payment date with respect to a debt security, will immediately cease to be payable to the registered holder on the applicable regular record date by virtue of his having been the registered holder on such date. We may pay defaulted interest either to the person in whose name the debt security is registered at the close of business on a special record date for the payment of the defaulted interest to be fixed by the trustee, notice of which is to be given to the holder of the debt security not less than ten days before the special record date, or at any time in any other lawful manner, all as more completely described in the applicable indenture or supplemental indenture.

Subject to limitations imposed upon debt securities issued in book-entry form, the holder may exchange debt securities of any series for other debt securities of the same series and of a like aggregate principal amount and tenor of different authorized denominations upon surrender of the debt securities at the corporate trust office of the applicable trustee. In addition, subject to limitations imposed upon debt securities issued in book-entry form, the holder may surrender debt securities of any series for registration of transfer or exchange at the corporate trust office of the applicable trustee. Every debt security surrendered for registration of transfer

Table of Contents

or exchange must be duly endorsed or accompanied by a written instrument of transfer. No service charge will be imposed for any registration of transfer or exchange of any debt securities, but we may require payment of a sum sufficient to cover any tax or other governmental charge payable in connection with any registration of transfer or exchange of any debt securities. If the applicable prospectus supplement refers to any transfer agent, in addition to the applicable trustee, initially designated by us with respect to any series of debt securities, we may at any time rescind the designation of that transfer agent or approve a change in the location through which any transfer agent acts, except that we will be required to maintain a transfer agent in each place of payment for that series. We may at any time designate additional transfer agents with respect to any series of debt securities.

If we redeem the debt securities of any series, neither we nor any trustee will be required to:

issue, register the transfer of, or exchange debt securities of any series during a period beginning at the opening of business 15 days before any selection of debt securities of that series to be redeemed and ending at the close of business on the day of mailing of the relevant notice of redemption;

register the transfer of, or exchange any debt security, or portion of any debt security, called for redemption, except the unredeemed portion of any debt security being redeemed in part; or

issue, register the transfer of, or exchange any debt security that has been surrendered for repayment at the option of the holder, except the portion, if any, of the debt security not to be repaid.

Global Securities

We may issue the debt securities of a series in whole or in part in the form of one or more global securities to be deposited with, or on behalf of, a depository or with a nominee for a depository identified in the applicable prospectus supplement relating to that series. We may issue global securities in either registered or bearer form and in either temporary or permanent form. The specific terms of the depository arrangement with respect to a series of debt securities will be described in the prospectus supplement relating to that series.

Our obligations with respect to the debt securities, as well as the obligations of the applicable trustee, run only to persons who are registered holders of debt securities. For example, once we make payment to the registered holder, we have no further responsibility for that payment even if the recipient is legally required to pass the payment along to an individual investor but fails to do so. As an indirect holder, an investor's rights relating to a global security will be governed by the account rules of the investor's financial institution and of the depository, as well as general laws relating to transfers of debt securities.

An investor should be aware that when debt securities are issued in the form of global securities:

the investor cannot have debt securities registered in his or her own name;

the investor cannot receive physical certificates for his or her debt securities;

the investor must look to his or her bank or brokerage firm for payments on the debt securities and protection of his or her legal rights relating to the debt securities;

the investor may not be able to sell interests in the debt securities to some insurance or other institutions that are required by law to hold the physical certificates of debt that they own;

Table of Contents

the depositary's policies will govern payments, transfers, exchanges and other matters relating to the investor's interest in the global security; and

the depositary will usually require that interests in a global security be purchased or sold within its system using same-day funds. The prospectus supplement for a series of debt securities will list the special situations, if any, in which a global security will terminate and interests in the global security will be exchanged for physical certificates representing debt securities. After that exchange, the investor may choose whether to hold debt securities directly or indirectly through an account at the investor's bank or brokerage firm. In that event, investors must consult their banks or brokers to find out how to have their interests in debt securities transferred to their own names so that they may become direct holders. When a global security terminates, the depositary, and not us or one of the trustees, is responsible for deciding the names of the institutions that will be the initial direct holders.

Merger, Consolidation or Sale of Assets

We will not be permitted to consolidate with or merge into any other entity, or sell, lease, transfer or convey all or substantially all of our properties and assets, either in one transaction or a series of transactions, to any other entity and no other entity will consolidate with or merge into us, or sell, lease, transfer or convey all or substantially all of its properties and assets to us unless:

(1) either:

Webster Financial is the continuing entity, or

the successor entity, if other than Webster Financial, formed by or resulting from any consolidation or merger, or which has received the transfer of Webster Financial's assets, expressly assumes payment of the principal of, and premium, if any, and interest on all of the outstanding debt securities and the due and punctual performance and observance of all of the covenants and conditions contained in the indentures, and

(2) immediately after giving effect to the transaction and treating any indebtedness that becomes an obligation of Webster Financial or any subsidiary as a result of that transaction as having been incurred by Webster Financial or a subsidiary at the time of the transaction, no event of default under the indentures or supplemental indentures, and no event which, after notice or the lapse of time, or both, would become an event of default, will have occurred and be continuing; provided, however, that the conditions described in (1) and (2) above will not apply to the direct or indirect transfer of the stock, assets or liabilities of any of our subsidiaries to another of our direct or indirect subsidiaries.

Except as provided in this prospectus or as may otherwise be provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, the indenture and the terms of the debt securities will not contain any event risks or similar covenants that are intended to afford protection to holders of any debt securities in the event of a merger, a highly leveraged transaction or other significant corporate event involving us or our subsidiaries, whether or not resulting in a change of control, which may adversely affect holders of the debt securities.

Table of Contents

Additional Covenants and/or Modifications to the Covenant Described Above

Any additional covenants of Webster Financial and/or modifications to the covenant described above with respect to any series of debt securities, including any covenants relating to limitations on incurrence of indebtedness or other financial covenants, will be set forth in the applicable indenture or supplemental indenture and described in the prospectus supplement relating to that series of debt securities.

Unless the applicable prospectus supplement indicates otherwise, the subordinated indenture does not contain the restrictive covenant stated above, nor does it contain any other provision which restricts us from, among other things:

incurring or becoming liable on any secured or unsecured senior indebtedness or general obligations; or

paying dividends or making other distributions on our capital stock; or

purchasing or redeeming our capital stock; or

creating any liens on our property for any purpose.

Events of Default, Waiver and Notice

Events of Default.

The events of default with respect to any series of debt securities issued under it, subject to any modifications or deletions provided in any supplemental indenture with respect to any specific series of debt securities, include the following events:

failure to pay any installment of interest or any additional amounts payable on any debt security of the series for 30 days;

failure to pay principal of, or premium, if any, on, any debt security of the series when due, whether at maturity, upon redemption, by declaration or acceleration of maturity or otherwise;

default in making any sinking fund payment when due, for any debt security of the series;

default in the performance or breach of any other covenant or warranty of Webster Financial contained in the applicable indenture, other than a covenant added to the indenture solely for the benefit of any other series of debt securities issued under that indenture, continued for 90 days after written notice as provided in the applicable indenture;

specific events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization, or court appointment of a receiver, liquidator or trustee of Webster Financial or any significant subsidiary or either of their property; and

any other event of default provided with respect to a particular series of debt securities.

If an event of default under any indenture with respect to debt securities of any series at the time outstanding occurs and is continuing, then in every case other than in the case described in clause (5) above, in which case acceleration will be automatic, the applicable trustee or the holders of not less than 25% of the principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series will have the right to declare the principal amount,

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or, if the debt securities of that series are original issue discount securities or indexed securities, the portion of the principal amount as may be specified in the terms of that series, of all the debt securities of that series to be due

Table of Contents

and payable immediately by written notice to us, and to the applicable trustee if given by the holders. At any time after a declaration of acceleration has been made with respect to debt securities of a series, or of all debt securities then outstanding under any indenture, as the case may be, but before a judgment or decree for payment of the money due has been obtained by the applicable trustee, however, the holders of not less than a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series, or of all debt securities then outstanding under the applicable indenture, as the case may be, may annul the declaration of acceleration and waive any default in respect of those debt securities if:

we have deposited with the applicable trustee all required payments due otherwise than by acceleration of the principal of, and premium, if any, and interest on the debt securities of that series, or of all debt securities then outstanding under the applicable indenture, as the case may be, plus specified fees, expenses, disbursements and advances of the applicable trustee, and

all events of default, other than the non-payment of all or a specified portion of the accelerated principal, with respect to debt securities of that series, or of all debt securities then outstanding under the applicable indenture, as the case may be, have been cured or waived as provided in the applicable indenture.

Waiver

Each indenture also will provide that the holders of not less than a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series, or of all debt securities then outstanding under the applicable indenture, as the case may be, may waive any past default with respect to that series and its consequences, except a default:

in the payment of the principal of, or premium, if any, or interest on any debt security of that series, or

in respect of a covenant or provision contained in the applicable indenture that, by the terms of that indenture, cannot be modified or amended without the consent of each affected holder of an outstanding debt security.

Notice

Each trustee will be required to give notice to the holders of the applicable debt securities within 90 days of a default under the applicable indenture unless the default has been cured or waived; but the trustee may withhold notice of any default, except a default in the payment of the principal of, or premium, if any, or interest on the debt securities or in the payment of any sinking fund installment in respect of the debt securities, if specified responsible officers of the trustee consider the withholding to be in the interest of the holders.

The holders of debt securities of any series may not institute any proceedings, judicial or otherwise, with respect to the indentures or for any remedy under the indentures, except in the case of failure of the applicable trustee, for 60 days, to act after the trustee has received a written request to institute proceedings in respect of an event of default from the holders of not less than 25% in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series, as well as an offer of indemnity reasonably satisfactory to the trustee, and provided that no direction inconsistent with such written request has been given to the trustee during such 60-day period by the holders of a majority of the outstanding debt securities of that series. However, any holder of debt securities is not prohibited from instituting suit for the enforcement of payment of the principal of, and premium, if any, and interest on the debt securities at their respective due dates.

Table of Contents

Subject to the trustee's duties in case of default, no trustee will be under any obligation to exercise any of its rights or powers under an indenture at the request or direction of any holders of any series of debt securities then outstanding under that indenture, unless the holders offer to the trustee reasonable security or indemnity. Subject to such provisions for the indemnification of the trustee, the holders of not less than a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series, or of all debt securities then outstanding under an indenture, as the case may be, will have the right to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the applicable trustee, or of exercising any trust or power conferred upon the trustee. A trustee may refuse, however, to follow any direction that is in conflict with any law or the applicable indenture that may involve the trustee in personal liability or may be unduly prejudicial to the holders of debt securities of that series not joining in the direction.

Within 180 days after the end of each fiscal year, we will be required to deliver to each trustee a certificate, signed by one of several specified officers, stating whether or not that officer has knowledge of any default under the applicable indenture and, if so, specifying each default and the nature and status of the default.

Modification of the Indentures

Except as otherwise specifically provided in the applicable indenture, with the consent of the holders of not less than a majority in principal amount of all outstanding debt securities issued under that indenture that are affected by the modification or amendment, we may enter into supplemental indentures with the trustee for the purpose of adding any provisions to or changing in any manner or eliminating any of the provisions of such indenture or of modifying in any manner the rights of the holders under debt securities issued under such indenture. However, no modification or amendment may, without the consent of the holder of each debt security affected by the modification or amendment:

except as described in the prospectus supplement relating to such debt security:

extend the stated maturity of the principal of, or any installment of interest or any additional amounts, or the premium, if any, on, any debt security,

reduce the principal amount of, or the rate or amount of interest on, or change the manner of calculating the rate, or any premium payable on redemption of, any debt security, or reduce the amount of principal of an original issue discount security that would be due and payable upon declaration of acceleration of its maturity or would be provable in bankruptcy, or adversely affect any right of repayment of the holder of any debt security,

extend the time of payment of interest on any debt security or any additional amounts,

change any of the conversion, exchange or redemption provisions of any debt security,

change the place of payment, or the coin or currency for payment, of principal, or premium, if any, including any amount in respect of original issue discount or interest on any debt security,

impair the right to institute suit for the enforcement of any payment on or with respect to any debt security or for the conversion or exchange of any debt security in accordance with its terms,

Table of Contents

release any guarantors from their guarantees of the debt securities, or, except as contemplated in any supplemental indenture, make any change in a guarantee of a debt security that would adversely affect the interests of the holders of those debt securities,

in the case of subordinated debt securities, modify the ranking or priority of the securities,

reduce the percentage of outstanding debt securities of any series necessary to modify or amend the applicable indenture, to waive compliance with specific provisions of or certain defaults and consequences under the applicable indenture, or to reduce the quorum or voting requirements set forth in the applicable indenture, or

modify any of the provisions relating to the waiver of specific past defaults or specific covenants, except to increase the required percentage to effect that action or to provide that specific other provisions may not be modified or waived without the consent of the holder of that debt security.

The holders of not less than a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of each series affected by the modification or amendment will have the right to waive compliance by Webster Financial with specific covenants in the indenture.

Webster Financial and the respective trustee may modify and amend an indenture without the consent of any holder of debt securities for any of the following purposes:

to evidence the succession of another person to Webster Financial as obligor under the indenture or to evidence the addition or release of any guarantor in accordance with the indenture or any supplemental indenture;

to add to the covenants of Webster Financial for the benefit of the holders of all or any series of debt securities or to surrender any right or power conferred upon Webster Financial in the indenture;

to add events of default for the benefit of the holders of all or any series of debt securities;

to add or change any provisions of the indenture to facilitate the issuance of, or to liberalize specific terms of, debt securities in bearer form, or to permit or facilitate the issuance of debt securities in uncertificated form, provided that the action will not adversely affect the interests of the holders of the debt securities of any series in any material respect;

to change or eliminate any provisions of an indenture, if the change or elimination becomes effective only when there are no debt securities outstanding of any series created prior to the change or elimination that are entitled to the benefit of the changed or eliminated provision;

to secure or provide for the guarantee of the debt securities;

to establish the form or terms of debt securities of any series and any related coupons;

to provide for the acceptance of appointment by a successor trustee or facilitate the administration of the trusts under an indenture by more than one trustee;

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to cure any ambiguity or correct any inconsistency in an indenture provided that the cure or correction does not adversely affect the holders of the debt securities;

to supplement any of the provisions of an indenture to the extent necessary to permit or facilitate defeasance and discharge of any series of debt securities, provided that the supplement does not adversely affect the interests of the holders of the debt securities of any series in any material respect;

Table of Contents

to make provisions with respect to the conversion or exchange terms and conditions applicable to the debt securities of any series;

to add to, delete from or revise the conditions, limitations or restrictions on issue, authentication and delivery of debt securities;

to conform any provision in an indenture to the requirements of the Trust Indenture Act; or

to make any change that does not adversely affect the legal rights under an indenture of any holder of debt securities of any series issued under that indenture.

In determining whether the holders of the requisite principal amount of outstanding debt securities of a series have given any request, demand, authorization, direction, notice, consent or waiver under the indenture or whether a quorum is present at a meeting of holders of debt securities:

the principal amount of an original issue discount security that is deemed to be outstanding will be the amount of the principal of that original issue discount security that would be due and payable as of the date of the determination upon declaration of acceleration of the maturity of that original issue discount security;

the principal amount of any debt security denominated in a foreign currency that is deemed outstanding will be the U.S. dollar equivalent, determined on the issue date for that debt security, of the principal amount, or, in the case of an original issue discount security, the U.S. dollar equivalent on the issue date of that debt security of the amount determined as provided in the immediately preceding bullet point;

the principal amount of an indexed security that is deemed outstanding will be the principal face amount of the indexed security at original issuance, unless otherwise provided with respect to the indexed security under the applicable indenture; and

debt securities owned by Webster Financial or any other obligor upon the debt securities or any affiliate of Webster Financial or of any other obligor are to be disregarded.

Discharge, Defeasance and Covenant Defeasance

Discharge

We may be permitted under the applicable indenture to discharge specific obligations to holders of any series of debt securities (1) that have not already been delivered to the applicable trustee for cancellation and (2) that either have become due and payable or will, within one year, become due and payable or scheduled for redemption, by irrevocably depositing with the applicable trustee, in trust, money or funds certified to be sufficient to pay when due, whether at maturity, upon redemption or otherwise, the principal of, and premium, if any, on and interest on the debt securities.

Defeasance and Covenant Defeasance

If the provisions in that indenture relating to defeasance and covenant defeasance are made applicable to the debt securities of or within any series, we may elect either:

defeasance, which means we elect to defease and be discharged from any and all obligations with respect to the debt securities, except for the obligations to register the transfer or exchange of the debt securities, to replace temporary or mutilated, destroyed, lost or stolen debt securities, to maintain an office or agency in respect of the debt securities and to hold moneys for payment in trust; or

Table of Contents

covenant defeasance, which means we elect to be released from our obligations with respect to the debt securities under specified sections of the applicable indenture relating to covenants, as described in the applicable prospectus supplement and any omission to comply with its obligations will not constitute an event of default with respect to the debt securities; in either case upon the irrevocable deposit by us with the applicable trustee, in trust, of an amount, in currency or currencies or government obligations, or both, sufficient without reinvestment to make scheduled payments of the principal of, and premium, if any, and interest on the debt securities, when due, whether at maturity, upon redemption or otherwise, and any mandatory sinking fund or analogous payments.

A trust will only be permitted to be established if, among other things:

we have delivered to the applicable trustee an opinion of counsel, as specified in the applicable indenture, to the effect that the holders of the debt securities will not recognize income, gain or loss for federal income tax purposes as a result of the defeasance or covenant defeasance and will be subject to federal income tax on the same amounts, in the same manner and at the same times as would have been the case if the defeasance or covenant defeasance had not occurred, and the opinion of counsel, in the case of defeasance, will be required to refer to and be based upon a ruling of the Internal Revenue Service or a change in applicable U.S. federal income tax law occurring after the date of the indenture;

no event of default or any event which after notice or lapse of time or both would be an event of default has occurred;

the defeasance or covenant defeasance will not result in a breach or violation of, or constitute a default under, the indenture or any other material agreement or instrument to which Webster Financial is a party or by which it is bound;

certain other provisions set forth in the indenture are met;

we will have delivered to the trustee an officers' certificate and an opinion of counsel, each stating that all conditions precedent to the defeasance or covenant defeasance have been complied with; and

in the case of the subordinated debt indenture, no event or condition will exist that, pursuant to certain provisions described under **Subordination of Subordinated Debt Securities** would prevent Webster Financial from making payments of principal of and premium, if any, and interest on the subordinated debt securities at the date of the irrevocable deposit referred to above.

In general, if we elect covenant defeasance with respect to any debt securities and payments on those debt securities are declared due and payable because of the occurrence of an event of default, the amount of money and/or government obligations on deposit with the applicable trustee would be sufficient to pay amounts due on those debt securities at the time of their stated maturity, but may not be sufficient to pay amounts due on those debt securities at the time of the acceleration resulting from the event of default. In that case, we would remain liable to make payment of the amounts due on the debt securities at the time of acceleration.

The applicable prospectus supplement may further describe the provisions, if any, permitting defeasance or covenant defeasance, including any modifications to the provisions described above, with respect to the debt securities of or within a particular series.

Table of Contents

Option to Extend Interest Payment Period

If indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, we will have the right, as long as no event of default under the applicable series of debt securities has occurred and is continuing, at any time and from time to time during the term of the series of debt securities to defer the payment of interest on one or more series of debt securities for the number of consecutive interest payment periods specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, subject to the terms, conditions and covenants, if any, specified in the prospectus supplement, provided that no extension period may extend beyond the stated maturity of the debt securities. Material United States federal income tax consequences and special considerations applicable to these debt securities will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement. Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, at the end of the extension period, we will pay all interest then accrued and unpaid together with interest on accrued and unpaid interest compounded semiannually at the rate specified for the debt securities to the extent permitted by applicable law. However, unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, during the extension period neither we nor any of our subsidiaries may:

declare or pay dividends on, make distributions regarding, or redeem, purchase, acquire or make a liquidation payment with respect to, any of our capital stock, other than:

purchases of our capital stock in connection with any employee or agent benefit plans or the satisfaction of our obligations under any contract or security outstanding on the date of the event requiring us to purchase capital stock,

in connection with the reclassifications of any class or series of our capital stock, or the exchange or conversion of one class or series of our capital stock for or into another class or series of our capital stock,

the purchase of fractional interests in shares of our capital stock in connection with the conversion or exchange provisions of that capital stock or the security being converted or exchanged,

dividends or distributions in our capital stock, or rights to acquire capital stock, or repurchases or redemptions of capital stock solely from the issuance or exchange of capital stock, or

any non-cash dividends declared in connection with the implementation of a shareholder rights plan by us;

make any payment of interest, principal or premium, if any, on or repay, repurchase or redeem, any debt securities issued by us that rank equally with or junior to the debt securities; or

make any guarantee payments regarding the foregoing.

Prior to the termination of any extension period, as long as no event of default under the applicable indenture has occurred and is continuing, we may further defer payments of interest, subject to the above limitations set forth in this section, by extending the interest payment period; provided, however, that, the extension period, including all previous and further extensions, may not extend beyond the maturity of the debt securities. Upon the termination of any extension period and the payment of all amounts then due, we may commence a new extension period, subject to the terms set forth in this section. No interest during an extension period, except at the end of the extension period, will be due and payable, but we may prepay at any time all or any portion of the interest accrued during an extension period.

We do not currently intend to exercise our right to defer payments of interest by extending the interest payment period on the senior debt securities or the subordinated debt securities. We will give the holders of these debt securities notice of our selection of an extension period at

Table of Contents

least two business days before the earlier of (a) the next succeeding interest payment date or (b) the date upon which we are required to give notice to the New York Stock Exchange, or other applicable self-regulatory organization, or to holders of such debt securities of the record or payment date of the related interest payment.

Regarding the Trustees

We will designate the trustee under the senior and subordinated indentures in a prospectus supplement. From time to time, we may enter into banking or other relationships with any of such trustees or their affiliates.

There may be more than one trustee under each indenture, each with respect to one or more series of debt securities. Any trustee may resign or be removed with respect to one or more series of debt securities, and a successor trustee may be appointed to act with respect to such series.

If two or more persons are acting as trustee with respect to different series of debt securities, each trustee will be a trustee of a trust under the indenture separate from the trust administered by any other such trustee. Except as otherwise indicated in this prospectus, any action to be taken by the trustee may be taken by each such trustee with respect to, and only with respect to, the one or more series of debt securities for which it is trustee under the indenture.

Governing Law

The senior debt securities, the subordinated debt securities and the related indentures will be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the internal laws of the State of New York.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK

The following description is a general summary of the terms of our common stock. The description below does not purport to be complete and is subject to and qualified in its entirety by reference to our Certificate of Incorporation and bylaws, as amended. The description herein does not contain all of the information that you may find useful or that may be important to you. You should refer to the provisions of our Certificate of Incorporation and bylaws because they, and not the summaries, define the rights of holders of shares of our common stock. You can obtain copies of our Certificate of Incorporation and bylaws by following the directions under the heading **Where You Can Find More Information**.

General

Our Certificate of Incorporation provides the authority to issue 200,000,000 shares of common stock, par value \$.01 per share. At September 30, 2011, there were 90,703,887 shares of common stock issued and we had outstanding stock options granted to directors, officers and other employees for 2,702,628 shares of our common stock.

Each share of our common stock has the same relative rights and is identical in all respects to each other share of our common stock. Our common stock is non-withdrawable capital, is not of an insurable type and is not insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other governmental entity.

Voting Rights

Holders of our common stock are entitled to one vote per share on each matter properly submitted to stockholders for their vote, including the election of directors. Holders of our common stock do not have the right to cumulate their votes for the election of directors, which means that the holders of more than 50% of the shares of common stock voting for the election of directors can elect 100% of the directors standing for election at any meeting if they choose to do so. In that event, the holders of the remaining shares voting for the election of directors will not be able to elect any person or persons to our board of directors at that meeting.

Liquidation Rights

The holders of our common stock and the holders of any class or series of stock entitled to participate with the holders of our common stock as to the distribution of assets in the event of any liquidation, dissolution or winding-up of Webster Financial, whether voluntary or involuntary, will become entitled to participate equally in the distribution of any of our assets remaining after we have paid, or provided for the payment of, all of our debts and liabilities and after we have paid, or set aside for payment, to the holders of any class of stock having preference over the common stock in the event of liquidation, dissolution or winding-up, the full preferential amounts, if any, to which they are entitled.

Dividends

The holders of our common stock and any class or series of stock entitled to participate with the holders of our common stock are entitled to receive dividends declared by our board of directors out of any assets legally available for distribution. The board may not declare, and we may not pay, dividends or other distributions, unless we have paid or the board has declared or set aside all accumulated dividends and any sinking fund, retirement fund or other retirement payments on any class of stock having preference as to payments of dividends over our

Table of Contents

common stock. As a holding company, our ability to pay distributions is affected by the ability of our subsidiaries to pay dividends. The ability of our bank subsidiary, and our ability, to pay dividends in the future is, and could in the future be further, influenced by bank regulatory requirements and capital guidelines.

Miscellaneous

The holders of our common stock have no preemptive or conversion rights for any shares that may be issued. Our common stock is not subject to additional calls or assessments, and all shares of our common stock currently outstanding are fully paid and nonassessable. All shares of common stock offered pursuant to a prospectus supplement, or issuable upon conversion, exchange or exercise of the Preferred Stock or other convertible securities, will, when issued, be fully paid and non-assessable, which means that the full purchase price of the shares will have been paid and the holders of the shares will not be assessed any additional monies for the shares.

Some Important Charter Provisions

Our Certificate of Incorporation provides for the division of our board of directors into three classes of directors, each class as nearly as equal as possible, with each serving staggered, three-year terms. Any amendment to our Certificate of Incorporation must be approved by at least two-thirds of our board of directors at a duly constituted meeting called for that purpose and also by stockholders by the affirmative vote of at least a majority of the shares entitled to vote thereon at a duly called annual or special meeting; provided, however, that approval by the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the shares entitled to vote is required to amend the provisions regarding amendment of our Certificate of Incorporation, directors, bylaws, approval for acquisitions of control and offers to acquire control, criteria for evaluating offers, the calling of special meetings of stockholders, greenmail, and stockholder action by written consent. In addition, the provisions regarding business combinations may be amended only by the affirmative vote of at least 80% of the shares entitled to vote on the matter. Our bylaws may be amended by the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the board of directors or by stockholders by the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the total votes eligible to be voted, at a duly constituted meeting called for that purpose.

Our Certificate of Incorporation also provides that no individual, firm, corporation or other entity may, alone or based on shared power, make any offer to buy or acquire, any solicitation of an offer to sell, any tender offer for, or any request or invitation for tender of, 10% or more of our outstanding shares of capital stock generally entitled to vote for directors without either:

(1) receiving the approval of at least two-thirds of our directors then in office; or

(2) obtaining approval from the appropriate federal regulatory authorities pursuant to applicable laws and regulations.

Our Certificate of Incorporation requires that business combinations between Webster Financial or any majority-owned subsidiary of Webster Financial and a 10% or more stockholder or its affiliates or associates, referred to collectively in this section as the interested stockholder, be approved either by:

(1) at least 80% of the total number of outstanding shares of capital stock entitled to vote generally in the election of directors;

(2) at least two-thirds of our continuing directors, which means those directors unaffiliated with the interested stockholder and serving before the interested stockholder became an interested stockholder; or

Table of Contents

- (3) meet specified price and procedure requirements that provide for consideration per share generally equal to or greater than that paid by the interested stockholder when it acquired its block of stock.

The types of business combinations with an interested stockholder covered by this provision include:

any merger, consolidation or share exchange

any sale, lease, exchange, mortgage, pledge or other transfer of assets other than in the usual and regular course of business;

any issuance or transfer of equity securities having an aggregate market value in excess of 5% of the aggregate market value of our outstanding shares;

the adoption of any plan or proposal of liquidation proposed by or on behalf of an interested stockholder; or

any reclassification of securities, recapitalization of Webster Financial or any merger or consolidation of Webster Financial with any of its subsidiaries or any other transaction which has the effect of increasing the proportionate ownership of the interested stockholder.

These provisions may have the effect of deterring hostile takeovers or delaying changes in control or management of Webster Financial.

Our Certificate of Incorporation excludes our employee stock purchase plans and other employee benefit plans from the definition of interested stockholder.

Since the terms of our Certificate of Incorporation and bylaws may differ from the general information we are providing, you should only rely on the actual provisions of our Certificate of Incorporation and bylaws. If you would like to read our Certificate of Incorporation and bylaws, you may request a copy from us by following the directions under the heading [Where You Can Find More Information](#).

NYSE Listing

Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol [WBS](#).

Transfer Agent and Registrar

The transfer agent and registrar for our common stock is BNY Mellon Shareowner Services.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED STOCK

The following description is a general summary of the terms of the preferred stock which we may issue. The description below and in any prospectus supplement does not purport to be complete and is subject to and qualified in its entirety by reference to our certificate of incorporation, and the applicable certificate of designation to our certificate of incorporation, determining the terms of the related series of preferred stock and our bylaws, as amended, each of which we will make available upon request. The descriptions herein and in the applicable prospectus supplement do not contain all of the information that you may find useful or that may be important to you. You should refer to the provisions of our certificate of incorporation, the applicable certificate of designation and our bylaws because they, and not the summaries, define your rights as holders of shares of our common stock.

General

We are authorized to issue 3,000,000 shares of preferred stock, par value \$0.01 per share. As of September 30, 2011, 28,939 shares of 8.50% Series A Non-Cumulative Perpetual Convertible Preferred Stock were issued and outstanding. Our certificate of incorporation, subject to limitations prescribed in our certificate of incorporation and subject to limitations prescribed by Delaware law, authorizes the board of directors, from time to time by resolution or duly authorizing committee of the board and without further stockholder action, to provide for the issuance of shares of preferred stock, in one or more series, and to fix the relative rights and preferences of the shares, including voting powers, dividend rights, liquidation preferences, redemption rights and conversion privileges. As a result of its broad discretion with respect to the creation and issuance of preferred stock without stockholder approval, the board of directors could adversely affect the voting power of the holders of common stock and, by issuing shares of preferred stock with certain voting, conversion and/or redemption rights, could discourage any attempt to obtain control of Webster Financial.

Terms of the Preferred Stock That We May Offer and Sell to You

You should refer to the prospectus supplement relating to the class or series of preferred stock being offered for the specific terms of that class or series, including:

the title and stated value of the preferred stock being offered;

the number of shares of preferred stock being offered, their liquidation preference per share and their purchase price;

the dividend rate(s), period(s) and/or payment date(s) or method(s) of calculating the payment date(s) applicable to the preferred stock being offered;

whether dividends will be cumulative or non-cumulative and, if cumulative, the date from which dividends on the preferred stock being offered will accumulate;

the procedures for any auction and remarketing, if any, for the preferred stock being offered;

the provisions for a sinking fund, if any, for the preferred stock being offered;

the provisions for redemption, if applicable, of the preferred stock being offered;

any listing of the preferred stock being offered on any securities exchange or market;

the terms and conditions, if applicable, upon which the preferred stock being offered will be convertible into or exchangeable for other securities or rights, or a combination of the foregoing, including the name of the issuer of the securities or rights, conversion or

Table of Contents

exchange price, or the manner of calculating the conversion or exchange price, and the conversion or exchange date(s) or period(s) and whether we will have the option to convert such preferred stock into cash;

voting rights, if any, of the preferred stock being offered;

whether interests in the preferred stock being offered will be represented by depositary shares and, if so, the terms of those shares;

a discussion of any material and/or special United States federal income tax considerations applicable to the preferred stock being offered;

the relative ranking and preferences of the preferred stock being offered as to dividend rights and rights upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up of the affairs of Webster Financial;

any limitations on the issuance of any class or series of preferred stock ranking senior to or equally with the series of preferred stock being offered as to dividend rights and rights upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up of the affairs of Webster Financial; and

any other specific terms, preferences, rights, limitations or restrictions of the preferred stock being offered.

Ranking

Unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, the preferred stock will, with respect to distribution rights and rights upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up of Webster Financial, rank:

senior to all classes or series of our common stock and to all equity securities the terms of which specifically provide that the equity securities rank junior to the preferred stock being offered;

equally with all equity securities issued by us other than those referred to in the first and last bullet points of this subheading; and

junior to all equity securities issued by us the terms of which specifically provide that the equity securities rank senior to the preferred stock being offered.

For purposes of this subheading, the term "equity securities" does not include convertible debt securities.

Distributions

Holders of the preferred stock of each series will be entitled to receive, when, as and if declared by our board of directors, out of our assets legally available for payment to stockholders, cash distributions, or distributions in kind or in other property if expressly permitted and described in the applicable prospectus supplement, at the rates and on the dates as we will set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. We will pay each distribution to holders of record as they appear on our stock transfer books on the record dates determined by our board of directors.

Distributions on any class or series of preferred stock, if cumulative, will be cumulative from and after the date set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. If our board of directors fails to declare a distribution payable on a distribution payment date on any class or series of preferred stock for which distributions are non-cumulative, then the holders of that class or series of preferred stock will have no right to receive a distribution in respect of the distribution

Table of Contents

period ending on that distribution payment date, and we will have no obligation to pay the distribution accumulated for that period, whether or not distributions on that series are declared payable on any future distribution payment date.

If any shares of the preferred stock of any class or series are outstanding, no full dividends will be declared or paid or set apart for payment on our preferred stock of any other class or series ranking, as to dividends, equally with or junior to the preferred stock of the class or series for any period unless all required dividends are paid. The phrase "all required dividends are paid" when used in this prospectus with respect to class or series of preferred stock means that:

if the class or series of preferred stock has a cumulative dividend, full cumulative dividends on the preferred stock of the class or series have been or contemporaneously are declared and paid or declared and a sum sufficient for the payment is set apart for payment for all past dividend periods and the then current dividend period, or

if the class or series of preferred stock does not have a cumulative dividend, full dividends on the preferred stock of the class or series have been or contemporaneously are declared and paid or declared and a sum sufficient for the payment is set apart for the payment for the then current dividend period.

When dividends are not paid in full, or a sum sufficient for the full payment is not so set apart, upon the shares of preferred stock of any class or series and the shares of any other class or series of preferred stock ranking equally as to dividends with the preferred stock of the class or series, all dividends declared upon shares of preferred stock of the class or series and any other class or series of preferred stock ranking equally as to dividends with the preferred stock will be declared equally so that the amount of dividends declared per share on the preferred stock of the class or series and the other class or series of preferred stock will in all cases bear to each other the same ratio that accrued and unpaid dividends per share on the shares of preferred stock of the class or series, which will not include any accumulation in respect of unpaid dividends for prior dividend periods if the preferred stock does not have cumulative dividend, and the other class or series of preferred stock bear to each other. No interest, sum of money in lieu of interest, will be payable in respect of any dividend payment or payments on preferred stock of the class or series which may be in arrears.

Except as provided in the immediately preceding paragraph, unless all required dividends are paid, no dividends, other than in common stock or other stock ranking junior to the preferred stock of the class or series as to dividends and upon liquidation, dissolution or winding-up of Webster Financial, will be declared or paid or set aside for payment or other distribution will be declared or made upon the common stock or any of our other stock ranking junior or equally with the preferred stock of the class or series as to dividends or upon liquidation, nor will any common stock or any of our other capital stock ranking junior to or equally with preferred stock of the class or series as to dividends or upon liquidation, dissolution or winding-up of Webster Financial be redeemed, purchased or otherwise acquired for any consideration, or any moneys be paid to or made available for a sinking fund for the redemption of any shares of any stock, by us except by conversion into or exchange for our other stock ranking junior to the preferred stock of the class or series as to dividends and upon liquidation, dissolution or winding-up of Webster Financial.

Any dividend payment made on shares of a class or series of preferred stock will first be credited against the earliest accrued but unpaid dividend due with respect to shares of the class or series which remains payable.

Table of Contents

Redemption

If so provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, the preferred stock will be subject to mandatory redemption or redemption at our option, in whole or in part, in each case upon the terms, at the times and at the redemption prices set forth in the prospectus supplement.

The prospectus supplement relating to a class series of preferred stock that is subject to mandatory redemption will specify the number of shares of the preferred stock that will be redeemed by us in each year commencing after a date to be specified, at a redemption price per share to be specified, together with an amount equal to all accumulated and unpaid dividends thereon, which will not, if the preferred stock does not have a cumulative dividend, include an accumulation in respect of unpaid dividends for prior dividends periods, to the date of redemption. The redemption price may be payable in cash or other property, as specified in the applicable prospectus supplement. If the redemption price for preferred stock of any series is payable only from the net proceeds of the issuance of our stock, the terms of the preferred stock may provide that, if no stock will have been issued or to the extent the net proceeds from any issuance are insufficient to pay in full the aggregate redemption price then due, the preferred stock will automatically and mandatorily be converted into shares of our applicable stock pursuant to conversion provisions specified in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, unless provided otherwise for any class or series of preferred stock, unless all required dividends are paid:

no shares of the applicable class or series of preferred stock will be redeemed unless all outstanding shares of preferred stock of the class or series are simultaneously redeemed, and

we will not purchase or otherwise acquire directly or indirectly any shares of the applicable class or series of preferred stock, except by conversion into or exchange for stock of Webster Financial ranking junior to the preferred stock of the class or series as to dividends and upon liquidation, dissolution or winding-up of Webster Financial,

provided, however, that the above restrictions will not prevent the purchase or acquisition of shares of preferred stock of the class or series pursuant to a purchase or exchange offer made on the same terms to holders of all outstanding shares of preferred stock of the class or series.

Liquidation Preference

Upon any voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up of the affairs of Webster Financial, then, before any distribution or payment will be made to the holders of any common stock or any other class or series of shares of our capital stock ranking junior to the preferred stock in the distribution of assets upon any liquidation, dissolution or winding up of Webster Financial, the holders of each series or class of preferred stock will be entitled to receive out of our assets legally available for distribution to stockholders liquidating distributions in the amount of the liquidation preference set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement, plus an amount equal to all accumulated and unpaid distributions. After payment of the full amount of the liquidating distributions to which they are entitled, the holders of shares of preferred stock will have no right or claim to any of our remaining assets. If, upon the voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up, our available assets are insufficient to pay the amount of the liquidating distributions on all outstanding shares of preferred stock and the corresponding amounts payable on all shares of other classes or series of shares of our capital stock ranking equally with the preferred stock in the distribution of assets, then the holders of the preferred stock and all other classes or series of shares of capital stock will share ratably in any distribution of assets in proportion to the full liquidating distributions to which they would otherwise be respectively entitled.

Table of Contents

If liquidating distributions will have been made in full to all holders of preferred stock, our remaining assets will be distributed among the holders of any other classes or series of shares of capital stock ranking junior to the preferred stock upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up, according to their respective rights and preferences and in each case according to their respective number of shares.

For those purposes, the consolidation or merger of Webster Financial with or into any other corporation, trust or entity, or the sale, lease or conveyance of all or substantially all of the property or business of Webster Financial, will not be deemed to constitute a liquidation, dissolution or winding up of Webster Financial.

Voting Rights

Holders of preferred stock will not have any voting rights, except as set forth below or as otherwise from time to time required by law, or as otherwise provided in the certificate of designation or the resolutions establishing such series and as indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Under the Delaware General Corporation Law, holders of outstanding shares of a series of preferred stock may be entitled to vote as a separate class on a proposed amendment to the terms of that series of preferred stock or our certificate of incorporation, if the amendment would:

- (1) increase or decrease the aggregate number of authorized shares of that series of preferred stock,
- (2) increase or decrease the par value of the shares of that series of preferred stock, or
- (3) alter or change the powers, preferences or special rights of the shares of such class so as to affect them adversely, in which case the approval of the proposed amendment would require the affirmative vote of at least a majority of the outstanding shares of that series of preferred stock.

Conversion Rights

The terms and conditions, if any, upon which any class or series of preferred stock are convertible into or exchangeable for other securities or rights of Webster Financial or other issuers, including, without limitation, common stock, debt securities or another series of preferred stock, or any combination of the foregoing, will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement relating to the preferred stock. The terms will include the name of the issuer of the other securities or rights and the number or principal amount of the securities or rights into which the shares of preferred stock are convertible or exchangeable, the conversion or exchange price or rate or the manner of calculating the price, the conversion or exchange date(s) or period(s), provisions as to whether conversion or exchange will be at the option of the holders of the preferred stock or at Webster Financial's or other issuer's option, the events requiring an adjustment of the conversion or exchange price or rate and provisions affecting conversion or exchange in the event of the redemption of the series of preferred stock.

Transfer Agent and Registrar

The transfer agent and registrar for the preferred stock will be BNY Mellon Shareowner Services.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSITARY SHARES

The following description, together with the applicable prospectus supplements, summarizes certain terms and provisions of the depositary shares that we may offer under this prospectus and the related deposit agreements and depositary receipts. The following summary relates to terms and conditions applicable to these types of securities generally. The particular terms of any series of depositary shares will be those set forth in the applicable deposit agreement and summarized in the applicable prospectus supplement. If indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, the terms of any series may differ from the terms summarized below.

Specific deposit agreements and depositary receipts will contain additional important terms and provisions and will be incorporated by reference into the registration statement which includes this prospectus before we issue any depositary shares. The descriptions herein and in the applicable prospectus supplement do not restate those agreements and receipts in their entirety and do not contain all of the information that you may find useful or that may be important to you. You should refer to the provisions of the applicable deposit agreement and deposit certificate because they, and not the summaries, define your rights as holders of the depositary shares. For more information, please review the forms of these documents, which will be filed with the SEC promptly after the offering of depositary shares or depositary share units and will be available as described under the heading *Where You Can Find More Information* above.

General

We may elect to offer fractional shares of preferred stock rather than full shares of preferred stock. If so, we will issue depositary receipts for these depositary shares. Each depositary share will represent a fraction of a share of a particular series of preferred stock. Each holder of a depositary share will be entitled, in proportion to the fraction of preferred stock represented by that depositary share, to the rights and preferences of the preferred stock, including dividend, voting, redemption, conversion and liquidation rights, if any. We will enter into a deposit agreement with a depositary, which will be named in the related prospectus supplement.

In order to issue depositary shares, we will issue preferred stock and immediately deposit these shares with the depositary. The depositary will then issue and deliver depositary receipts to the persons who purchase depositary shares. Each whole depositary share issued by the depositary may represent a fraction of a share held by the depositary. The depositary will issue depositary receipts in a form that reflects whole depositary shares, and each depositary receipt may evidence any number of whole depositary shares.

Pending the preparation of definitive engraved depositary receipts, a depositary may, upon our written order, issue temporary depositary receipts, which will temporarily entitle the holders to all the rights pertaining to the definitive depositary receipts. We will bear the costs and expenses of promptly preparing definitive depositary receipts and of exchanging the temporary depositary receipts for definitive depositary receipts.

Dividends and Other Distributions

The depositary will distribute all cash and non-cash dividends and distributions it receives with respect to the underlying preferred stock to the record holders of depositary shares in proportion to the number of depositary shares they hold. In the case of non-cash distributions,

Table of Contents

the depositary may determine that it is not feasible to make the distribution. If so, the depositary may, with our approval, sell the property and distribute the net proceeds from the sale to the holders. The amounts distributed by the depositary will be reduced by any amount required to be withheld by us or the depositary on account of taxes.

Redemption of Depositary Shares

If we redeem the series of preferred stock that underlies the depositary shares, the depositary will redeem the depositary shares from the proceeds it receives from the redemption of the preferred stock it holds. The depositary will redeem the number of depositary shares that represent the amount of underlying preferred stock that we have redeemed. The redemption price for depositary shares will be in proportion to the redemption price per share that we paid for the underlying preferred stock. If we redeem less than all of the depositary shares, the depositary will select which depositary shares to redeem by lot, or some substantially equivalent method.

After a redemption date is fixed, the depositary shares to be redeemed no longer will be considered outstanding. The rights of the holders of the depositary shares will cease, except for the rights to receive money or other property upon redemption. In order to redeem their depositary shares, holders will surrender their depositary receipts to the depositary.

Voting the Preferred Stock

We will notify the depositary about any meeting at which the holders of preferred stock are entitled to vote, and the depositary will mail the information to the record holders of depositary shares related to that preferred stock. Each record holder of depositary shares on the record date will be entitled to instruct the depositary on how to vote the shares of preferred stock represented by that holder's depositary shares. The depositary will vote the preferred stock represented by the depositary shares in accordance with these instructions, provided the depositary receives these instructions sufficiently in advance of the meeting. If the depositary does not receive instructions from the holders of the depositary shares, the depositary will abstain from voting the preferred stock that underlies those depositary shares.

Withdrawal of Preferred Stock

When a holder surrenders depositary receipts at the corporate trust office of the depositary, and pays any necessary taxes, charges or other fees, the holder will be entitled to receive the number of whole shares of the related series of preferred stock, and any money or other property, if any, represented by the holder's depositary shares. Once a holder exchanges depositary shares for whole shares of preferred stock, that holder cannot re-deposit these shares of preferred stock with the depositary, or exchange them for depositary shares. If a holder delivers depositary receipts that represent a number of depositary shares that exceeds the number of whole shares of related preferred stock the holder seeks to withdraw, the depositary will issue a new depositary receipt to the holder that evidences the excess number of depositary shares.

Amendment and Termination of the Deposit Agreement

Webster Financial and the depositary can agree, at any time, to amend the form of depositary receipt and any provisions of the depositary receipt and any provisions of the deposit agreement. However, if an amendment has a material adverse effect on the rights of the holders of related depositary shares, the holders of at least a majority of the depositary shares

Table of Contents

then outstanding must first approve the amendment. Every holder of a depositary receipt at the time an amendment becomes effective will be bound by the amended deposit agreement. However, subject to any conditions in the deposit agreement or applicable law, no amendment can impair the right of any holder of a depositary share to receive shares of the related preferred stock, or any money or other property represented by the depositary shares, when they surrender their depositary receipts.

We can terminate the deposit agreement at any time, as long as the depositary mails notice of termination to the record holders of depositary shares then outstanding at least 30 days prior to the date fixed for termination. Upon termination, the depositary shall deliver to each holder of depositary receipts, upon surrender of the depositary receipts held by such holder, such number of whole or fractional shares of preferred stock as are represented by the depositary shares evidenced by such depositary receipts, together with any other property held by the depositary with respect to such depositary receipt.

Charges of Depositary

We will pay all transfer and other taxes and the government charges that relate solely to the depositary arrangements. We will also pay the charges of each depositary, including charges in connection with the initial deposit of the related series of preferred stock, the initial issuance of the depositary shares, and all withdrawals of shares of the related series of preferred stock. However, holders of depositary receipts will pay the fees and expenses of the depositary for any duties requested by such holders to be performed which are outside of those expressly provided for in the deposit agreement.

Resignation and Removal of Depositary

The depositary may resign at any time by delivering written notice of its decision to us. We may remove the depositary at any time. Any resignation or removal will take effect when we appoint a successor depositary. We must appoint the successor depositary within 60 days after delivery of the notice of resignation or removal. The successor depositary must be a bank or trust company that has its principal office in the United States and has a combined capital and surplus of at least \$50,000,000.

Miscellaneous

We will be required to furnish certain information to the holders of the preferred stock underlying any depositary shares. The depositary, as the holder of the underlying preferred stock, will forward any report or information it receives from us to the holders of depositary shares.

Neither the depositary nor Webster Financial will be liable if its ability to perform its obligations under the deposit agreement is prevented or delayed by law or any circumstance beyond its control. Both Webster Financial and the depositary will be obligated to use their best judgment and to act in good faith in performing their respective duties under the deposit agreement. Each of Webster Financial and the depositary will be liable only for gross negligence and willful misconduct in performing their duties under the deposit agreement. They will not be obligated to appear in, prosecute or defend any legal proceeding with respect to any depositary receipts, depositary shares or preferred stock unless they receive what they, in their sole discretion, determine to be a satisfactory indemnity from one or more holders of the depositary shares. Webster Financial and the depositary will evaluate any proposed indemnity in order to determine whether the financial protection afforded by the indemnity is sufficient to reduce

Table of Contents

each party's risk to a satisfactory and customary level. Webster Financial and the depositary may rely on the advice of legal counsel or accountants of their choice. They may also rely on information provided by persons they believe, in good faith, to be competent, and on documents they believe, in good faith, to be genuine.

The applicable prospectus supplement will identify the depositary's corporate trust office. Unless the prospectus supplement indicates otherwise, the depositary will act as transfer agent and registrar for depositary receipts, and if we redeem shares of preferred stock, the depositary will act as redemption agent for the corresponding depositary receipts.

Title

Webster Financial, each depositary and any agent of Webster Financial or the applicable depositary may treat the registered owner of any depositary share as the absolute owner of the depositary shares for all purposes, including making payment, regardless of whether any payment in respect of the depositary share is overdue and regardless of any notice to the contrary.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

General

We may issue warrants to purchase our debt securities, common stock or preferred stock or units of two or more of these types of securities, which are collectively referred to in this prospectus as underlying warrant securities. We may issue warrants independently or together with any underlying warrant securities and such warrants may be attached to or separate from those underlying warrant securities. We will issue the warrants under warrant agreements to be entered into between us and a bank or trust company, as warrant agent, as more fully described in the applicable prospectus supplement. The warrant agent will act solely as our agent in connection with the warrants of the series being offered and will not assume any obligation or relationship of agency or trust for or with any holders or beneficial owners of warrants. As of September 30, 2011, 9,357,557 warrants to purchase shares of our common stock were issued and outstanding.

The applicable prospectus supplement will contain a description of the following terms:

the title of the warrants;

the designation, amount and terms of the underlying warrant securities for which the warrants are exercisable;

the designation and terms of the underlying warrant securities, if any, with which the warrants are to be issued and the number of warrants issued with each underlying warrant security;

the price or prices at which the warrants will be issued;

the aggregate number of warrants;

any provisions for adjustment of the number or amount of securities receivable upon exercise of the warrants or the exercise price of the warrants;

the price or prices at which the underlying warrant securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants may be purchased;

if applicable, the date on and after which the warrants and the underlying warrant securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants will be separately transferable;

if applicable, a discussion of the material United States federal income tax considerations applicable to the exercise of the warrants;

the date on which the right to exercise the warrants will commence, and the date on which the right will expire;

the currency or currencies (including composite currencies), and/or the securities (if any), in which the exercise price of the warrants may be payable; and, if the exercise price is payable in whole or in part with securities, the basis for determining the amount or number of such securities to be provided as such payment;

the maximum or minimum number of warrants which may be exercised at any time;

information with respect to book-entry procedures, if any; and

any other terms, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exercise and exchange of the warrants.

Table of Contents

Exercise of Warrants

Each warrant will entitle its holder to purchase, for cash and/or securities (as will be specified in the applicable prospectus supplement), the amount or number of debt securities, shares of preferred stock, or shares of common stock, at the exercise price, as will in each case be set forth in, or be determinable as set forth in, the applicable prospectus supplement. Holders may exercise warrants at any time up to the close of business on the expiration date set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to the warrants offered thereby. After the close of business on the expiration date, unexercised warrants will become void.

Holders of warrants may exercise their respective warrants as set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to such warrants. Upon receipt of payment and the warrant certificate properly completed and duly executed at the corporate trust office of the warrant agent or any other office indicated in the prospectus supplement, we will, as soon as practicable, forward the underlying warrant securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants. If a holder exercises less than all of the warrants represented by the warrant certificate, the warrant agent will issue a new warrant certificate for the remaining warrants.

Prior to the exercise of any warrants to purchase debt securities or other securities, including shares of preferred stock or common stock, holders of the warrants will not have any of the rights of holders of the debt securities or other securities, including shares of preferred stock or common stock purchasable upon exercise, including:

in the case of warrants for the purchase of debt securities, the right to receive payments of principal of, or any premium or interest on, the debt securities purchasable upon exercise or to enforce covenants in the applicable indenture; or

in the case of warrants for the purchase of shares of preferred stock or shares of common stock, the right to vote or to receive any payments of dividends on the shares of preferred stock or common stock purchasable upon exercise.

The descriptions of the warrant agreements in this prospectus and in any prospectus supplement are summaries of certain material provisions of the applicable warrant agreements. These descriptions do not restate those agreements in their entirety and do not contain all of the information that you may find useful or that may be important to you. You should refer to the provisions of the applicable warrant agreement and warrant certificate relating to the warrants because they, and not the summaries, define your rights as holders of the warrants or any warrant units. For more information, please review the forms of these documents, which will be filed with the SEC promptly after the offering of warrants or warrant units and will be available as described under the heading **Where You Can Find More Information** above.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF PURCHASE CONTRACTS

As may be specified in a prospectus supplement, we may issue purchase contracts obligating holders to purchase from Webster Financial, and obligating Webster Financial to sell to the holders, a number of debt securities, shares of our common stock, or preferred stock or depository shares or warrants, at a future date or dates. The price per purchase contract security may be fixed at the time the purchase contracts are issued or may be determined by reference to a specific formula set forth in the purchase contracts. Under the purchase contracts, we may be required to make periodic payments to the holders of the units or vice versa. These payments may be unsecured or prefunded on some basis to be specified in the applicable prospectus supplement.

The purchase contracts may require holders to secure their obligations under the contracts in a specified manner and, in specified circumstances, we may deliver newly issued prepaid purchase contracts, or prepaid securities, when we transfer to a holder any collateral securing the holder's obligations under the original purchase contract.

The purchase contracts may be issued separately or as part of units consisting of a purchase contract and one or more other securities, which may include debt securities, depository shares, preferred securities, common stock, warrants or debt obligations of Webster Financial, or government securities, and which may secure the holder's obligations to purchase the purchase contract security under the purchase contract.

The prospectus supplement relating to any purchase contracts we are offering will specify the material terms of the purchase contracts, whether they will be issued separately or as part of units, and any applicable pledge or depository arrangements.

The descriptions of the purchase contracts and any applicable underlying security or pledge or depository arrangements in this prospectus and in any prospectus supplement are summaries of certain material provisions of the applicable agreements. These descriptions do not restate those agreements in their entirety and do not contain all of the information that you may find useful or that may be important to you. You should refer to the provisions of the applicable agreements because they, and not the summaries, define your rights as holders of the purchase contracts. We will make copies of the relevant agreements available as described under the heading "Where You Can Find More Information" above.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF UNITS

As specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, we may issue units comprised of one or more of the other securities described in this prospectus in any combination. Each unit may also include debt obligations of third parties, such as U.S. Treasury securities. Each unit will be issued so that the holder of the unit is also the holder of each security included in the unit. Thus, the holder of a unit will have the rights and obligations of a holder of each included security. The prospectus supplement will describe:

the designation and terms of the units and of the securities comprising the units, including whether and under what circumstances the securities comprising the units may be held or transferred separately;

a description of the terms of any unit agreement governing the units;

a description of the provisions for the payment, settlement, transfer or exchange of the units; and

whether the units will be issued in fully registered or global form.

The descriptions of the units and any applicable underlying security or pledge or depository arrangements in this prospectus and in any prospectus supplement are summaries of the material provisions of the applicable agreements. These descriptions do not restate those agreements in their entirety and do not contain all of the information that you may find useful or that may be important to you. You should refer to the provisions of the applicable agreements because they, and not the summaries, define your rights as holders of the units. We will make copies of the relevant agreements available as described under the heading **Where You Can Find More Information** above.

Table of Contents

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

Webster Financial or the selling securityholders may sell the offered securities:

directly to purchasers,

through agents,

through dealers,

through underwriters,

directly to its stockholders, or

through a combination of any of these methods of sale.

The prospectus supplement relating to a series of the offered securities will set forth its offering terms, including the name or names of any underwriters, dealers or agents, the purchase price of the offered securities and the proceeds to Webster Financial and/or selling securityholder from the sale, any underwriting discounts, commissions and other items constituting underwriters' compensation, any initial public offering price and any underwriting discounts, commissions and other items allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers or agents and any securities exchanges on which the offered securities may be listed.

Webster Financial or the selling securityholders may use one or more underwriters in the sale of the offered securities, in which case the offered securities will be acquired by the underwriter or underwriters for their own account and may be resold from time to time in one or more transactions either:

at a fixed price or prices, which may be changed,

at market prices prevailing at the time of sale,

at prices related to the prevailing market prices, or

at negotiated prices.

Webster Financial or a selling securityholder may directly solicit offers to purchase offered securities. Agents designated by Webster Financial or a selling securityholder from time to time may also solicit offers to purchase offered securities. Any agent designated by Webster Financial or a selling securityholder, who may be deemed to be an underwriter as that term is defined in the Securities Act, involved in the offer or sale of the offered securities in respect of which this prospectus is delivered will be named, and any commissions payable by Webster Financial or a selling securityholder to such agent will be set forth in the prospectus supplement.

If a dealer is utilized in the sale of the offered securities in respect of which this prospectus is delivered, Webster Financial or the selling securityholder will sell the offered securities to the dealer, as principal. The dealer, who may be deemed to be an underwriter as that term is defined in the Securities Act, may then resell the offered securities to the public at varying prices to be determined by the dealer at the time of

resale.

If an underwriter is, or underwriters are, used in the sale, Webster Financial or a selling securityholder (if any) will execute an underwriting agreement with the underwriters at the time of sale to the underwriters. The names of the underwriters will be set forth in the prospectus supplement, which will be used by the underwriter to make resales of the offered securities in respect of which this prospectus is delivered to the public. In connection with the sale of offered

Table of Contents

securities, the underwriter may be deemed to have received compensation from Webster Financial or the selling securityholder in the form of underwriting discounts or commissions and may also receive commissions from purchasers of offered securities for whom they may act as agents. Underwriters may also sell offered securities to or through dealers, and the dealers may receive compensation in the form of discounts, concessions or commissions from the underwriters and/or commissions from the purchasers for whom they may act as agents.

If so indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, Webster Financial or a selling securityholder will authorize underwriters, dealers or other persons to solicit offers by certain institutions to purchase offered securities from Webster Financial or a selling securityholder at the public offering price set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement pursuant to delayed delivery contracts providing for payment and delivery on a future date or dates. Institutions with which these contracts may be made include commercial and savings banks, insurance companies, pension funds, investment companies, educational and charitable institutions and others. The obligations of any purchasers under any delayed delivery contract will not be subject to any conditions except that:

the purchase of the offered securities shall not at the time of delivery be prohibited under the laws of the jurisdiction to which the purchaser is subject, and

if the offered securities are also being sold to underwriters, Webster Financial or a selling securityholder will have sold to the underwriters the offered securities not sold for delayed delivery.

The underwriters, dealers and other persons will not have any responsibility in respect of the validity or performance of such contracts. The prospectus supplement relating to the contracts will set forth the price to be paid for offered securities pursuant to the contracts, the commission payable for solicitation of the contracts and the date or dates in the future for delivery of offered securities pursuant to the contracts.

Offered securities may also be offered and sold, if so indicated in the prospectus supplement, in connection with a remarketing upon their purchase, in accordance with a redemption or repayment pursuant to their terms, or otherwise, by one or more remarketing firms, acting as principals for their own accounts or as agents for Webster Financial or a selling securityholder. Any remarketing firm will be identified and the terms of its agreement, if any, with Webster Financial or a selling securityholder and its compensation will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement. Remarketing firms may be deemed to be underwriters in connection with their remarketing of offered securities.

Unless otherwise set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement, the obligations of underwriters to purchase the offered securities will be subject to certain conditions precedent and such underwriters will be obligated to purchase all such securities, if any are purchased. In connection with the offering of securities, we or the selling securityholder may grant to the underwriters an option to purchase additional securities to cover over-allotments at the initial public offering price, with an additional underwriting commission, as may be set forth in the accompanying prospectus supplement. If we or the selling securityholder grants any over-allotment option, the terms of such over-allotment option will be set forth in the prospectus supplement for such securities.

Underwriters, dealers, remarketing firms and agents may be entitled, under agreements that may be entered into with Webster Financial or a selling securityholder, to indemnification by Webster Financial or a selling securityholder against certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, or to contribution with respect to payments which they may

Table of Contents

be required to make in respect thereof and may engage in transactions with, or perform services for, Webster Financial or the selling securityholder in the ordinary course of business.

Any underwriter may engage in over-allotment, stabilizing transactions, short-covering transactions and penalty bids in accordance with Regulation M under the Securities Exchange Act. Over-allotment involves sales in excess of the offering size, which create a short position. Stabilizing transactions permit bids to purchase the underlying security so long as the stabilizing bids do not exceed a specified maximum. Short-covering transactions involve purchases of the securities in the open market after the distribution is completed to cover short positions. Penalty bids permit the underwriters to reclaim a selling concession from a dealer when the securities originally sold by the dealer are purchased in a covering transaction to cover short positions. Those activities may cause the price of the securities to be higher than it would otherwise be. If commenced, the underwriters may discontinue any of the activities at any time.

The anticipated date of delivery of offered securities will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement relating to each offer.

Sales by Selling Securityholders

Selling securityholders may use this prospectus in connection with the resale of securities. The applicable prospectus supplement will identify the selling securityholders and the terms of the securities. Selling securityholders may be deemed to be underwriters in connection with the securities they resell and any profits on the sales may be deemed to be underwriting discounts and commissions under the Securities Act. The selling securityholders will receive all the proceeds from the sale of securities. We will not receive any proceeds from sales by selling securityholders.

LEGAL MATTERS

In connection with particular offerings of the securities in the future, and if stated in the applicable prospectus supplement, the validity of those securities and certain U.S. federal income tax matters may be passed upon for us by Hogan Lovells US LLP, and for the underwriters or agents by counsel named in the applicable prospectus supplement.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements of Webster Financial appearing in Webster Financial's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the years ended December 31, 2010 and 2009, and the effectiveness of Webster Financial's internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2010 and 2009, have been audited by Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, as set forth in their reports thereon, included therein, and incorporated herein by reference. Such consolidated financial statements are incorporated herein by reference in reliance upon such reports given on the authority of such firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

The consolidated financial statements of Webster Financial and subsidiaries for the year ended December 31, 2008, incorporated by reference herein from Webster Financial's 2010 Annual Report on Form 10-K, include the effects of the adjustments to retrospectively apply the changes in accounting described in Notes 1 and 16 to the consolidated financial statements, as

Table of Contents

well as the effects of changes to reportable segments that resulted in retrospective restatement of the segment disclosures as described in Note 22 to the consolidated financial statements (collectively the Retrospective Adjustments). KPMG LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, audited the consolidated financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2008, before the effects of the Retrospective Adjustments, which financial statements are not incorporated by reference herein. Ernst & Young LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, audited the Retrospective Adjustments.

The consolidated financial statements of Webster Financial Corporation and subsidiaries for the year ended December 31, 2008 have been incorporated by reference herein and in the registration statement in reliance upon the reports of (1) KPMG LLP, solely with respect to those financial statements before the effects of the Retrospective Adjustments, and (2) Ernst & Young LLP, solely with respect to the Retrospective Adjustments, incorporated by reference herein, and upon the authority of said firms as experts in accounting and auditing.

Table of Contents

8,744,850 Shares

Common Stock

Prospectus Supplement

May , 2013

J.P. Morgan

Deutsche Bank Securities