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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Summer Festival Welcomes New Board Members and Appoints New Director of Development

ANN ARBOR (October 4, 2011) – The Ann Arbor Summer Festival is pleased to announce four new board members: **John Farah**, founder of Enspire Dental; **Erica Fitzgerald**, member of the law firm of Barris, Sott, Denn & Driker, P.L.L.C.; **Linda Girard**, co-founder of Pure Visibility; and **Wendy Lawrence**, arts advocate and community volunteer. The festival also announces the appointment of **Beth J. Johnson** to its management team as director of development.

In addition to the election of new trustees, the festival's slate of board officers for the new year will be: **Erik W. Bakker** as Chair, **Jerold Lax** as Vice Chair, **Kevin S. McDonald** as Secretary, **Michael S. Dubin** as Treasurer, and **James A. Kosteva** as Immediate Past Chair.

Other festival board members for 2011-2012 are: **LeAnn Auer**, **Christie Wong Barrett**, **Lisa Bee**, **Sally Churchill**, **Paul Cousins**, **Tom Crawford**, **Peter B. Fayroian**, **Dawn H. Foerg**, **Stephanie Blackburn Freeth**, **Susan J.D. Gott**, **John C. Hieftje**, **Mary Kerr**, **Jon Kinsey**, **Kenneth Magee**, **Sudha Maheshwari**, **Margaret B. McKinley**, **Anthony Y. Nam**, **Kimberly L. Scott**, **Ellie Serras**, **Rich Sheridan**, and **Daniel Washington**. Ending their board service are **H. David Baru**, **Susan Chandler**, **Julie Fritz**, **Patricia M. Garcia**, and **Ronald G. Miller**.

List and brief bios of new board and staff members follows:

John Farah, DDS, PhD is a graduate of the University of Michigan. His degrees include a dual Ph.D. in Dental Materials and Aerospace Engineering, received in 1972, and a D.D.S. in 1978. He has taught at the University of Florida and the University of Michigan. Dr. Farah has published over 50 peer-reviewed articles in professional dental journals and also maintains a dental practice focusing on cosmetic dentistry, Enspire Dental, in Ann Arbor. He is an avid runner and to date has completed over 100 marathons.

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Erica Fitzgerald is a member of the law firm of Barris, Sott, Denn & Driker, P.L.L.C., in Detroit, where she specializes in business litigation and immigration. She has been honored as an “Up and Coming” lawyer by Michigan Lawyers Weekly and as a Michigan “Rising Star” by Super Lawyers magazine. Erica is active in the Federal Bar Association, where she serves as co-chair of its bench/bar book club and as a volunteer tour guide for students in its federal courthouse tours program. Before graduating from the University of Michigan Law School, Erica spent time living in Mexico, Ireland, and Colorado. Now happily settled in Ann Arbor with her husband and daughter, she is the social coordinator for her daughter’s class at Emerson School and enjoys baking and entertaining on the weekends.

Linda Girard is the Co-Founder & Visionary of Pure Visibility, responsible for leading the aggressive growth and business direction of the company. Linda’s expertise has resulted in numerous awards, including recognition by the National Association of Women Business Owners as one of the “Top 10 Women in Business in Michigan”. In recent years, she has served as President and Education Chair of the Ann Arbor Ad Club as well as standing on the Board of Directors of the Ann Arbor Chamber of Commerce. Currently, Linda is an advisory board member of the Eastern Michigan University CIS Program, in addition to serving on the board of Michigan Innovators and the board of the Entrepreneurs' Organization as Communications Chair.

Wendy Lawrence moved to Ann Arbor in 1987 when her husband, Ted joined the University of Michigan Medical School faculty. Over the years she has been an active volunteer with the Ann Arbor Public Schools and a PTO co-president of Abbot Elementary and Pioneer High School. Wendy currently serves on the board of Temple Beth Emeth and was the board president for four years. She has been a volunteer with the Jewish Community Center Early Childhood Center and the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre and Dance. She’s taught water aerobics at the YMCA for 22 years. Her favorite activity is singing a cappella music with “The Generation Gap”, her family quartet that includes husband, Ted, daughter, Diana and son, Rick.

Beth J. Johnson joins the festival team as director of development with over twenty-five years of fundraising experience. Her prior work positions include serving at director of development for the University of Michigan's Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy and as a major gift officer for the University's central development office. She also served as director of major gifts for St. Joseph Mercy Hospital. At the Ann Arbor Summer Festival, Beth will provide strategic leadership in the development of philanthropic relationships throughout the region in support of the festival’s goals and priorities. She will also be responsible for annual support from individuals, corporations, and foundations, as well as grant funding and special events.

The Ann Arbor Summer Festival is an exhilarating celebration of performing arts, outdoor entertainment, and community spirit. A boutique music and arts festival, the three-week gathering offers an array of ticketed and free events, both indoors and out, featuring a progressive mix of local, national, and international artists. Presenting over 100 events each season and attracting a diverse audience of more than 60,000 people, the festival continues to grow as a major cultural event in the Ann Arbor community, and as a leading multi-arts celebration that enriches the cultural, economic, and social vitality of the region. The festival’s 29th season runs from June 15 through July 8, 2012.