



## MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
April 23, 2009

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### **Southern Arts Federation Welcomes New Directors and Officer to its Board**

*Atlanta, Ga.* – The Southern Arts Federation (SAF) announces the election of two distinguished board members: **Ted Abernathy**, executive director, Southern Growth Policies Board, and **The Hon. Vanzetta Penn McPherson**, United States Magistrate Judge, Middle District of Alabama. In addition, current director **William M. Nix**, Vice President of Marketing and Government Affairs, Palm Beach County Cultural Council, has been elected to serve as Vice Chair—External Relations. They will assume their new roles with SAF on July 1, 2009.

**Ted Abernathy** of Research Triangle Park, N.C., currently serves as Executive Director of the Southern Growth Policies Board, a public policy think tank that develops economic development policies for 13 Southern states. An Eisenhower Fellow, Mr. Abernathy received his Bachelor's degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; his Master's from Johns Hopkins University, and graduated from the Economic Development Institute at the University of Oklahoma. The focus of his 28-year economic development career has been on strategic competitiveness and economic positioning. Most recently he served as Executive Vice President and COO for the Research Triangle Regional Partnership, a private non-profit economic development organization.

**Judge Vanzetta Penn McPherson** of Montgomery, Ala., was appointed United States Magistrate Judge for the Middle District of Alabama in 1992. Prior to this, she had served as an associate at the Wall Street law firm of Hughes, Hubbard & Reed; Assistant Attorney General for the State of Alabama; and as a private practitioner for 15 years. She graduated from Columbia Law School in 1974. She is currently a member of the Alabama State Council on the Arts and has served on the boards of the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, the Montgomery Symphony Orchestra, the Landmarks Foundation, the Carver Performing Arts Center, and the City-County Public Library. Determined to develop a high level of cultural literacy in young children, Judge McPherson co-founded, and for 11 years, co-owned Roots & Wings, A Cultural Bookplace, one of America's premier African-American bookstores.

**William “Bill” Nix** of Delray Beach, Fla., is currently the Vice President of Marketing and Government Affairs for the Palm Beach County Cultural Council. His responsibilities include planning and overseeing marketing, public relations, and advocacy on behalf of the Palm Beach County cultural industry. He has served in that position since 1998. For more than 20 years Bill has also been involved in the Nix Communications Group, Inc., a printing and graphic design company. Noteworthy among his awards and honors are selection as one of The 50 Most Powerful and Influential South Florida Black Professionals; designated as NAACP Business of

the Year and Morehouse College Alumnus of the Year. Bill has also been awarded the Minority Business Award for the Palm Beach County Commission and the Florida Leadership Award.

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*The Southern Arts Federation, a non-profit regional arts organization founded in 1975, creates partnerships and collaborations; presents, promotes and produces Southern arts and cultural programming; and advocates for the arts and arts education. Working in partnership with nine state arts agencies, SAF builds on the South's unique heritage, and enhances the public value of the arts in our communities by promoting and supporting the arts in the South, enhancing the artistic excellence and professionalism of Southern arts organizations and artists, and serving the diverse population of the South. [www.southarts.org](http://www.southarts.org)*