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For immediate release:

Cajun Music Legends BeauSoLeil to Play Free SummerMusic Concert on the UC Davis Quad

July 20, 2007; Davis, California—The Cajun music masters of **BeauSoleil** will bring their high-spirited brand of traditional Louisiana folk music to the UC Davis Quad for a special free concert on August 1. Presented by the **Robert and Margrit Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts** and sponsored by **UC Davis Summer Sessions**, the event is part of the Mondavi Center's **SummerMusic 2007** series.

The event will begin at 7:30 pm on Wednesday, August 1 on the Quad, which is situated adjacent to the **Memorial Union** and **Shields Library** on the eastern side of the university campus near downtown Davis. Parking is available in university lot P10 near the intersection of A Street and First Street. In accordance with university policy, alcoholic beverages are not permitted.

Often considered the most esteemed group in Cajun music, BeauSoleil (pronounced “BO-so-lay”) has won numerous honors for its good-time blend of Gulf Coast roots music, including a Grammy Award for the 1997 album *L’amour Ou La Folie* and a coveted NEA National Heritage Fellowship for founder **Michael Doucet**. Mixing the rich Creole and Cajun traditions of Louisiana with zydeco, New Orleans jazz, blues, Tex-Mex, and more, the group has recorded more than 30 albums and toured extensively in the United States and around the world. *Billboard* magazine has called them “one of the great Cajun combos of all time,” while the *New York Times* predicted “bon temps, every time they play.”

Founded in 1975, the group is named for **Joseph Broussard dit BeauSoleil**, who led resistance against British efforts to deport French settlers from the colony of Arcadie (now known as Nova Scotia) beginning in 1755. He ultimately led 193 exiles to Louisiana during the 1760s, and they were followed by large numbers of former Arcadians. These people—known to the local population as “Cajuns”—gradually

developed their own cultural traditions that included a unique language, cuisine, and music.

Many of these traditions were in danger of being lost 30 years ago when Doucet began studying the music of traditional Cajun-Creole fiddlers such as **Dennis McGee**, **Canray Fontenot**, and **Dewey Balfa**. Doucet formed a band including his brother, guitarist **David Doucet**, to play traditional ballads and dance music, and quickly became popular in and around their home town of Lafayette. An early appearance on **Garrison Keillor**'s popular **National Public Radio** program *A Prairie Home Companion* was also well-received, leading to dozens of return visits to the program and national exposure for the group's music.

BeauSoleil's debut album, *The Spirit of Cajun Music*, was released in 1977, and the band has recorded regularly ever since, with *L'amour Ou La Folie* winning a Grammy for Best Traditional Folk album in 1998. BeauSoleil has received nine other Grammy nominations for recordings including their 1999 CD, *Cajunization*; their 2001 CD, *Looking Back Tomorrow*; and the 2005 release *Gitane Cajun*. The group has also recorded soundtracks for films including *The Big Easy* and *Belizaire the Cajun*, appeared on television programs such as *Austin City Limits*, *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*, and *Emeril Live*, and played live with artists including **Mary Chapin Carpenter** and the **Grateful Dead**.

The group's most recent recording is the 2006 release *Live in Louisiana*, of which *Rhythms* magazine wrote that "The playing is superb, as you would expect from these veterans, and they really capture the spirit of the music."

The current line-up of BeauSoleil includes Michael Doucet on violin, accordion, guitar, mandolin, and vocals; David Doucet on guitar and vocals; **Jimmy Breaux** on accordion; **Billy Ware** on percussion; **Tommy Alesi** on drums; and **Mitch Reed** on bass, fiddle, banjo, and guitar.

What: SummerMusic 2007
BeauSoleil
When: Wednesday, August 1 • 7:30 pm
Where: UC Davis Quad
University of California, Davis
Admission: Free

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