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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

February 6, 2025

**America’s Public Television Stations Elect Board of Officers and Trustees**

**BOYNTON BEACH, FL** — America’s Public Television Stations (APTS) today announced the election of its board leaders and board members.

* Dolores Fernandez Alonso, President and CEO of South Florida PBS in Miami, Florida, has been elected Chair.
* Adrienne Fairwell, President and CEO of South Carolina Educational Television (SCETV), Columbia, South Carolina, has been elected Professional Vice Chair.
* Garrett King, Board President, Friends of OETA, Inc., Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, has been elected Lay Vice Chair.

The newly elected trustees are:

* Darren LaShelle, President and CEO of Northern California Public Media, Rohnert Park, California
* Mary Nelson, Lay Trustee of Nine PBS, St. Louis, Missouri
* Deborah Smith, Lay Trustee of Alaska Public Media, Anchorage, Alaska
* Sylvia Strobel, President and CEO of Twin Cities PBS, St. Paul, Minnesota

The re-elected trustees are:

* Adrienne Fairwell, President and CEO of South Carolina Educational Television (SCETV), Columbia, South Carolina
* Annette Herrington, Lay Trustee of Arkansas PBS, Conway, Arkansas

The officers and trustees will begin their terms on Tuesday, February 25, 2025.

Following is background on the board officers:

**Dolores Fernandez Alonso**

Dolores Fernandez Alonso serves as the President and CEO of South Florida PBS (SFPBS), the merged organization that brings together WPBT and WXEL to collectively represent the 7th largest TV market in the United States. She is one of the first women in the public television system to have led a station merger. In addition, she launched the 24/7 Health Channel and quadrupled the size of the South Florida PBS endowment. Fernandez Alonso is a visionary and a leader in NEXTGEN TV and immersive media, preparing her stations to meet the demands of ATSC 3.0 and ensuring that South Florida PBS was a part of the Miami NEXTGEN TV launch that occurred in January 2023. Her leadership has resulted in the creation of Emmy award-winning 360-degree content and educational apps. Through her solid stewardship, she has secured the funding for the expansion of the SFPBS studios in Palm Beach County to include an Arts and Cultural center complete with an immersive igloo for experiential learning opportunities for the South Florida community. Fernandez Alonso began her television career in 1990 at the international newsgathering division of Disney/ABC News Inc. - Worldwide Television News in New York, NY. In 1998, she joined WPBT2 as Vice President for Facilities Services where she was responsible for the for-profit activities. She was promoted to Station Manager in 2002 and to Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer in 2003. As a proud bilingual Hispanic, Fernandez Alonso earned a bachelor of arts degree in Spanish Literature from Columbia University and a master’s in business administration from the University of Miami.

**Adrienne Fairwell**

Adrienne Fairwell is the seventh President and CEO in the history of South Carolina Educational Television (SCETV). She returns to SCETV and South Carolina Public Radio (SC Public Radio) after serving as the General Manager of Arizona PBS, headquartered in Phoenix. SCETV is a dual licensee station that is also home to SC Public Radio. Both stations have been trusted community resources for many decades. SCETV is the state’s public educational broadcasting network and amplifies South Carolina voices, provides educational experiences and strengthens communities while working to create a stronger, more connected and informed South Carolina. SCETV’s 11 television stations provide 33,818 hours of educational programs each year on four channels, while SC Public Radio broadcasts two different services over eight transmitters.

Prior to joining SCETV, Fairwell served as the General Manager for Arizona PBS, where she led the station through its transition into a multiplatform public media organization, tripling its digital-only/first productions and podcasts; multiplied philanthropic giving; and created long-term, never-before-seen community partnerships to generate revenue and foster collaboration. Fairwell assisted in creating education content for national use and distribution through the station’s education outreach team. Prior to joining SCETV, Fairwell served as the Division Director of Marketing and Communications at the South Carolina Department of Commerce, where she oversaw the ramp up of the agency’s social media efforts and the development and execution of a long-range strategic marketing and communications plan aimed at creating awareness of agency topics, generating public support and promoting South Carolina as an ideal location for business, both new and existing. Fairwell holds a bachelor’s degree in journalism and mass communications from the University of South Carolina and a master’s degree in human resources development from Webster University and has earned the internationally recognized accreditation in public relations (APR) designation and the certified public manager professional designation. Fairwell is civically engaged, and she and her husband, Michael, share two children.

**Garrett King**

Garrett King served three consecutive terms as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Oklahoma Educational Television Authority (OETA), Oklahoma’s statewide PBS station, as an appointee of Oklahoma Governor Mary Fallin. He currently serves as President of the Board of Trustees of Friends Of OETA, Inc., OETA’s designated philanthropic and advocacy auxiliary partner. King currently is employed as Vice President for Institutional Advancement & Chief of Staff to the President at Southwestern Oklahoma State University (SWOSU). From 2007 to 2014, King served on the personal staff of U.S. Congressman Frank D. Lucas. King represented Oklahoma on the Young Republican National Committee from 2008 to 2013 and in 2009 was named Oklahoma’s Young Republican of the Year. In addition to his extensive volunteering with OETA and APTS, King has served or is serving on the governing boards of the Oklahoma Policy Institute, the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy, the General Tommy Franks Leadership Institute & Museum, the Friends of the Weatherford Public Library, the Weatherford Community Habitat for Humanity, the Weatherford Food & Resources Center, Wisdom Knot Basketball Camps, the Oklahoma-Israel Exchange, HOBY Oklahoma and the local advisory board for Hope is Alive Ministries. In 2024 King was named “Weatherford’s Young Professional of the Year” by the Weatherford Area Chamber of Commerce. King is a fifth-generation Oklahoman and a native of northern Caddo County where he was raised on a peanut farm. He holds an M. Ed. in Social Sciences and in 2025 will complete a Ph.D. in History at the University of Swansea in the United Kingdom. King and his wife, Carissa, reside in Weatherford with their daughters, Nellie and Margie, who attend Weatherford Public Schools. The Kings are members of the Federated Church.

Following is background on the newly elected board members:

**Darren LaShelle**

Darren LaShelle is the President and CEO for Northern California Public Media in the San Francisco Bay Area. Stations include KRCB TV (Sonoma CA), KRCB FM (Sonoma CA) and KPJK (San Mateo CA). LaShelle has led a concentrated media focus on environmental reporting and documentary storytelling at NorCal Public Media, as well as community engagement efforts. He has been working in public media since 1995. Previous to his career in public media, he worked as a producer for NBC and FOX. He is a graduate of Marietta College.

LaShelle is an Emmy award-winning Executive Producer for the science and technology TV series *Plugged-In*. He has written and produced documentaries, live and recorded TV and radio series, and breaking news coverage, including a number of nationally-broadcast documentary programs on public television. He has served public media as a promotion professional, program director, production manager and content chief overseeing television, radio and digital projects.

LaShelle is Chair of the Independent Public Television Stations Association. He also serves on the Executive Committee of California Public Television, Public Television Affinity Group Council, NETA Community Engagement, NLGJA: The Association of LGBTQ Journalists and North Bay Leadership Council. Additionally, LaShelle is a board member of the Peace Studio.

**Mary Nelson**

Mary Nelson is a retired lawyer with a distinguished career that spanned more than 40 years across both public and private sectors. A native of St. Louis, she joined the Board of Nine PBS in 2017 and has served on the Finance and Audit Committee since that time. She currently chairs Nine PBS’s Government Affairs Committee.

Nelson’s law practice concentrated in real estate, construction and business law. She was highly sought after for her skills in bringing creative and elegant solutions to tough problems. She also was drawn to public service and served in a variety of roles at organizations at both the local and state levels: ranging from the St. Louis Development Corporation and the City of St. Louis Employee Pension Board, to serving as general counsel and legislative director for the Missouri Speaker of the House, as Director for Boards and Commissions, and even as part of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission.

Nelson received her bachelor’s degree in political philosophy from Princeton University and her law degree from the University of Missouri School of Law.

While her strong commitment to public service has led her to volunteer for many nonprofit organizations, Nelson is passionate about public media and its critical role in education. Her mother, Kathryn Nelson, an educator and advocate, hosted *Growing Together*, an original program on Nine PBS in the late 1970s exploring early childhood development.

**Deborah Smith**

Deborah Smith, a retired federal judge and former prosecutor and journalist, is passionate about the importance of public media and the insightful and balanced reporting it provides. She currently serves as a board member of Alaska Public Media, serving as Chair of the Board Improvement Committee.

Smith served as a federal magistrate judge in the District of Alaska and as a federal prosecutor in Alaska, ultimately serving as acting U.S. Attorney. Other positions held within the U.S. Department of Justice include Deputy Chief of the Environmental Crime Section in Washington, D.C.; Director of the New England Bank Fraud Taskforce, Boston; and Senior Litigation Counsel of the Criminal Fraud Section. She began her legal career as an Assistant Public Defender in Alaska.

Before attending law school at Northeastern University in Boston, Smith was the Education Editor of the *Fort Lauderdale News*and *Sun-Sentinel*. She was the editor of the University of Florida student newspaper, with a circulation of 30,000, the year the newspaper became independent of the university. And she interned at the *Miami Herald*and *Orlando Sentinel*.

Smith has been active in community and professional organizations at the national, state and local level. She has served as President and board member of the Federal Magistrate Judges Association (FMJA); Chair, International Committee of the FMJA; Chair and board member of the Ninth Circuit Court Magistrate Judges Executive Board; Chair and board member of the Alaska World Affairs Council; Chair, Joint Coordination Group of Antiterrorism Council of Alaska; Co-chair of the Alaska Rural Justice and Law Enforcement Commission; member of the Alaska Land Mobile Radio Executive Committee and member of the Downtown Rotary Club.

As a judge, Smith provided training and consultation with judges in Zambia, Azerbaijan and East Timor. As a prosecutor, she also taught federal agents at Quantico, Virginia and Glynco, Georgia.

**Sylvia Strobel**

Sylvia Strobel joined Twin Cities PBS (TPT) in February of 2020. As the CEO of one of our nation’s foremost PBS stations, she is leading the organization into an exciting new future: expanding TPT’s content, distribution and funding strategies to take full advantage of 21st century tools, technologies and consumer interests.

Sylvia has worked for more than 30 years in the public media industry as an executive and attorney, with positions at ideastream, American Public Media Group, Pennsylvania Public Television Network and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Strobel has served on numerous national boards and commissions, including the board of NPR, the Alliance for Women in Media, the Association of Junior Leagues International, and the FCC’s Advisory Committee for Diversity in the Digital Age. She currently serves on the boards of the Public Television Major Market Group (MMG), MacPhail Center for Music, The Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, the Mary T. and James J. Hill Library Foundation, and Latino Public Broadcasting.

Strobel received her Bachelor of Arts degree in biology from St. Olaf College, her Juris Doctorate (JD) from Mitchell Hamline College of Law, and her Master of Business Administration (MBA) from the University of Minnesota Carlson School of Business.

**About South Florida PBS:**

South Florida PBS is Florida’s largest public media company, including Public Broadcasting stations WXEL-TV, serving the Palm Beaches and the Treasure Coast and WPBT2, serving Miami-Dade and Broward counties, and the Health Channel, the only 24/7 channel dedicated to health in the nation. South Florida PBS connects organizations and institutions across our region and preserves South Florida's history. Leading the way in this global society, South Florida PBS is committed to creating and presenting award-winning programs focused on kids, education, arts and culture, health, environment, science and civic engagement. For more information, visit <https://www.southfloridapbs.org/>.

**About APTS:**
America’s Public Television Stations (APTS) is a nonprofit membership organization ensuring a strong and financially sound public television system and helping member stations provide essential public services in education, public safety and community connections to their local areas and the American people. For more information, visit [www.apts.org](https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fwww.apts.org&c=E,1,jFcGFa1DwTgPnwqqqIZN5CRSY_4GyJFFg66l6jxk248S7z4oJXTVXAs-KO92HTSCLLwOPH2-shLf8adHu2_f4-oSs8IiT8P4e2IB2zgmAoz5Ob2j67yA&typo=1&ancr_add=1).­­­

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