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NEWS RELEASE

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VSA Alabama's Young Soloists Award Competition- Dec. 4, 2010

Birmingham, Ala. - VSA Alabama will host the 2011 Alabama Young Soloists Award Competition on Saturday, December 4 from 2:00-4:00 p.m. at the Bradley Lecture Center at Children's Hospital. This event is free and open to the public. Eleven talented musicians from across the state who have disabilities or chronic illnesses will be performing at this year's competition. Judges for the event are Angela Howard, Music Therapist; Dr. Lud Yisrael, Musical Director of the Neo Jazz Collective; Dr. Brian Rha, Violinist and UAB Pediatric Infectious Diseases Fellow; and Christophe Jackson, UAB Ph.D student in Biology emphasizing in Performing Arts Medicine.

Since 1984, the VSA International Young Soloists Program has sought to identify talented musicians who have a disability. The VSA International Young Soloists Award is given annually to four outstanding musicians, two from the United States and two from the international arena. The award provides an opportunity for these emerging musicians to each earn a \$5,000 award and a performance in Washington, D.C. Any individual musician (instrumental or vocal) from the United States who has a disability, age 25 and under is eligible to apply. All types of music are encouraged. VSA Alabama is one of very few states who implement their Young Soloists Competition in front of a live audience.

In the past eight years, since VSA Alabama began implementing the Young Soloists Competition, many incredible talents have been discovered in Alabama. Our 2003 Young Soloists Winner won the national competition and was one of the four individuals selected to perform at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. The national winners will be announced in March 2011.

About VSA Alabama: VSA Alabama is a statewide, nonprofit organization dedicated to serving children and adults with disabilities and chronic illnesses through the arts. We offer visual arts, drama, creative writing, drumming & rhythm, dance, and music and art therapy programming in community, educational and healthcare settings. Annually, VSA Alabama serves more than 4,000 children and adults with disabilities and chronic illnesses. VSA Alabama is the state affiliate of VSA, the international organization on arts and disability. Each year, millions of people participate in VSA programs through a nationwide network of affiliates and in more than 55 countries around the world. VSA is an affiliate of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and was founded in 1974 by Ambassador Jean Kennedy Smith. For more information please visit our website at www.vsaalabama.org.

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