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Press Release

Esalen Institute Celebrates its 50 Year Anniversary with a Week Long Celebration

Big Sur, California (September 18, 2012) Esalen, a leading center for exploring and realizing human potential through experience, education and research, is hosting two special events to culminate the celebration of its 50th Anniversary. The events are "The Best of Esalen: A Movable Feast" which runs from September 30 through October 3rd and "Esalen's 50th Anniversary Benefit Weekend" which begins on October 4 and concludes on October 7. "Our 50th anniversary is a time to renew our pride in Esalen's timeless mission of integral transformation – personal, social, spiritual and cultural-- from change to change agent, healing and lifelong learning combined," says Gordon Wheeler, Ph.D., Esalen president.

"At this pivotal time in our history, we celebrate innovation and the enduring contributions of many leaders in diverse fields such as psychology, ecology, somatics, and spirituality whose vision and creativity was nurtured at Esalen. Abraham Maslow, founder of the fields of humanistic and transpersonal psychology; Fritz Perls, noted Gestalt psychotherapist, Buckminster Fuller, architect/engineer/designer and futurist; Joseph Campbell, pre-eminent mythologist; Virginia Satir, pioneering family therapist; and others, were part of the Esalen community who explored and realized what Aldous Huxley called the "human potentialities," continued Wheeler.

"The Best of Esalen: A Movable Feast", September 30-October 4, offers a medley of uniquely Esalen offerings including farm to table cooking and dining, planting, dance, singing, improv, yoga, Gestalt, performances, creativity, meditation, and time to enjoy the healing hot springs and food harvested straight from the Esalen farm and gardens. Included in the Best of Esalen package is a special commemorative afternoon concert by Joan Baez on October 3rd. "These four days will be a remarkable confluence of body, mind, spirit and community; they represent the very best of the Esalen experience", notes Wheeler. Spaces are still available. See www.esalen.org/esalen50th/ to register.

"Esalen's 50th Anniversary Benefit Weekend", October 4-7, welcomes an extraordinary group of presenters leading participants on a far-ranging journey of ideas, activism and deep connection", says Wheeler. The weekend's speakers include Robert Reich, Marianne Williamson, Byron Katie, Michael Murphy, Anna Halprin, Al Huang, and Ken Dychtwald. Other activities include music and movement, yoga and meditation classes, a Big Sur nature hike, and online, silent and live auctions to benefit the Institute. For more information, see www.esalen.org/benefit.

"Esalen, which established the human potential movement in 1962, is a grand experiment, 50 years young and stronger than ever. We're never finished learning, exploring new frontiers and creating a better way. Over the years, Esalen has helped shape many cultural trends that were once considered alternative but are now mainstream, including complementary health practices, such as mindfulness, yoga, meditation and bodywork; organic foods; eco-psychology; physics and consciousness, as well as citizen diplomacy, to name a few," continued Wheeler.

Whole Foods co-CEO John Mackey says, 'We are all children of Esalen'.

"Our fall events will honor and celebrate the many contributions that Esalen has birthed over the past 50 years and provide a foundation for our next 50. In laying that foundation, we are renewing our mission and dedication to 'pioneering deep change in self and society' in people, organizations and beyond," stated Wheeler.

Esalen will also be conducting an online auction to raise funds for the Institute's programs. The online auction goes live on September 24th and includes over 100 donated items of value. To see the auction or donate to it, go to: <http://www.biddingforgood.com/esalen50thanniversary>

About Esalen

Esalen is a leading center for exploring and realizing human potential through experience, education and research. The community works toward the realization of a more humane and all-embracing world, seeking answers to questions unlikely to be explored by traditional universities and religions. Esalen sponsors pioneering initiatives and offers personal, spiritual and social transformation practices for residents, interns and workshop participants. Perched on a windswept rocky promontory on California's scenic Big Sur Coast, Esalen opened its doors over 50 years ago as a center for positive, personal change, and for the 750,000 people who have been through its gates since 1962, nothing has ever been quite the same. For more information, www.esalen.org