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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **Van Eaton & Romero REALTORS® Joins Forces With LATTER & BLUM Inc.**

*New Orleans, LA* –Latter & Blum Inc. and Van Eaton & Romero REALTORS® today announced that the companies have finalized an agreement that will bring together two of the regions' most respected real estate brands. Effective immediately, this partnership with Van Eaton & Romero increases the size of the residential Real Estate companies of Latter & Blum Inc., already the largest real estate brokerage in the Gulf South, by approximately 28 percent, and will rank it as the 34th largest in the United States by unit sales.

By joining forces, these two longstanding and esteemed Louisiana brands will expand the leadership position already held by Latter & Blum Inc./REALTORS in the New Orleans market, by C.J. Brown REALTORS® in the Baton Rouge market and Noles-Frye Realty in Central Louisiana (companies owned by Latter & Blum Inc.). In 2012, The Latter & Blum Family of Companies will finish the year with nearly \$1.8 billion in total sales and 8,400 total units sold. This addition, positions Latter & Blum Inc. for continued success in the local, regional, national and global Real Estate markets.

“This newest alliance will lead to unprecedented financial strength, growth and breadth of service offerings,” said Bob Merrick, Chairman and CEO of Latter & Blum Inc. “Both Van Eaton & Romero and Latter & Blum are known nationally as companies that bring the highest caliber of residential Real Estate professionalism to all aspects of the business. Now with a combined strength of more than 1,300 talented sales professionals throughout Louisiana and the largest market share in each of the regions we serve, our future is filled with exciting possibilities.”

“Throughout the years, both Latter & Blum and Van Eaton & Romero have shared similar company cultures,” added Rick Haase, President of Latter & Blum Inc. “Our mission statements are also equally aligned, promising the delivery of exceptionally high levels of customer service. This union speaks volumes about an unparalleled commitment to delivering cutting-edge solutions to a team of extremely successful and motivated Real Estate Agents and their customers. We have essentially created an organization with unrivaled tools and services that will be appreciated by today's savvy Real Estate Agents and Consumers.”

“The technological, managerial, and strategic support coupled with the regional, national, and worldwide connections that we are gaining by becoming one of the Latter & Blum Family of Companies heightens our capabilities exponentially,” said CEO of Van Eaton & Romero, Bill Bacqué. “Over the past 35 years, Van Eaton & Romero has delivered an unmatched level of service and commitment to our clients, our agents, our staff, and our community. Our core values

remain constant and unchanged. What will change is the range, scope, and quality of services we will now be able to provide those seeking virtually any type of real estate service.”

The two companies will retain their respective names, Van Eaton & Romero, REALTORS in the Lafayette market and Latter & Blum Inc./REALTORS® serving the Greater New Orleans market. With C.J. Brown REALTORS® Inc. in Greater Baton Rouge and Noles-Frye in the Central Louisiana region, these four companies represent the best in Real Estate in Louisiana.

Latter & Blum, Inc., operates the largest full-service Real Estate brokerage in the Gulf South, and includes, Latter & Blum, Inc./REALTORS®, C.J. Brown REALTORS®, Van Eaton & Romero REALTORS®, Noles-Frye Realty, NAI Latter & Blum Commercial Real Estate, Latter & Blum Property Management, Latter & Blum Insurance Services, Essential Mortgage Corp. and has Franchise Operations in LA & MS. Established in 1916, the company has grown to include operations in Greater New Orleans, Greater Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Alexandria and Southern Mississippi and handles all phases of residential, commercial, leasing, property management, appraisals, insurance, title and mortgage services.

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