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US Air Force Thunderbirds to headline 16th Indy Air Show; event named '2011 Show of Year' by US Navy Blue Angels

INDIANAPOLIS – Christmas came early for organizers of the 16th annual Indianapolis Air Show with the receipt of two big presents on the same day: confirmation of the 2012 show's jet performance team headliners, and announcement of a major national award for the event.

During last week's International Council of Air Shows (ICAS) convention in Las Vegas, the US Air Force Air Demonstration Squadron – more commonly known as the **Thunderbirds** – confirmed it will be winging its way to Indianapolis for the 2012 air show. The event takes place Saturday and Sunday, June 23-24 (with Media & Practice Day on Friday, June 22) at Indianapolis Regional Airport, just off I-70 East at Mt. Comfort Road.

Later that same day at the ICAS convention, this past year's headliners, the US Navy Blue Angels, honored the Indianapolis Air Show as its **"2011 Air Show of the Year."**

"We received this double dose of great news at the convention on the same day," said Robert Duncan, chairman of the Indianapolis Air Show executive committee. "We are delighted to be able to offer the precision aerial maneuvers of the Thunderbirds to our fans next June. The Thunderbirds will be the centerpiece of a weekend-long array of fantastic displays, both in the air and on the ground, for all ages to enjoy.

"The Thunderbirds perform a maximum of only 80 demonstrations each year, so we consider ourselves and our air show fans extremely fortunate that they have selected the Indianapolis Air Show for one of their stops."

The US Air Force squadron will be heading to a show recognized by one of its peers as the finest in the nation. The US Navy's aerial demonstration squad, the Blue Angels, selected the Indianapolis Air Show as its "2011 Show of the Year." The announcement was made and a plaque presented to Jeff McGuire, the show's performer chairperson, at the ICAS convention.

“Just when we thought it couldn’t get any better, it did,” Duncan said about the Blue Angels’ “Show of the Year” Award.

“This validates the thousands of hours of hard work that goes into the Indianapolis Air Show annually by our organizers, volunteers and staff, and underscores the quality of show we present for our fans.

“We’re already hard at work creating the 2012 edition, and look forward to welcoming everyone, new fans as well as veteran attendees, to the Indianapolis Air Show next June.”

The Indianapolis Air Show is a not-for-profit organization. Net proceeds benefit the Central Indiana Community Foundation (CICF). Through CICF, the Indianapolis Air Show has donated nearly \$1.5 million to local children’s charities since its inception in 1997. Among recipients is Riley Hospital for Children.

Gift certificates for holiday gift giving are available now through the Indianapolis Air Show office. Call 317.335.7252 to purchase or for additional information, or log on at www.indyairshow.org.