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**ALBANY'S 'HUDSON 400th CELEBRATION OF DISCOVERY'
NAMED TOP EVENT IN U.S. BY AMERICAN BUS ASSOCIATION**

ALBANY, N.Y. (Sept. 10, 2008) -- The American Bus Association (ABA) has named Albany's "Hudson 400th Celebration of Discovery" number one on its list of 2009's Top 100 events in North America.

The announcement was made today by Michele Vennard, president and CEO of the Albany County Convention & Visitors Bureau, which nominated the event.

"For the first time in the 28 years that the ABA has been making these designations, Albany has made it to number one," Ms. Vennard said. "The Hudson 400 celebration promises to be extraordinary, and Albany has been planning to ensure just that for many months," Ms. Vennard said.

The ABA's Top 100 Events in North America is an annual compendium of the best events for group travel in the United States and Canada. Winners are chosen from hundreds of submissions for celebrations, festivals, fairs, commemorative events and more.

According to studies recently completed by researchers at The George Washington University and Dunham and Associates -- an economic consulting firm based in New York City -- one overnight visit by a single motor coach group can leave from \$5,000 to more than \$13,000 in the local destination's economy. Those dollars are spent on lodging, meals, admissions, fees, shopping souvenirs, services and local taxes.

Ms. Vennard noted the year-long celebration will showcase Albany's Dutch heritage and the rich history of the Hudson Valley through an abundance of theater, music, and visual arts. Special events will be ongoing throughout the year on the Hudson River, along its shores and at historic sites throughout the Capital Region.

Albany County Executive Michael Breslin said, "The ABA's designation points out one thing that all of us who are in Albany County have long known: Albany is one amazing discovery! And, we're looking forward to welcoming guests from near and far to the 400th Anniversary Celebration of Henry Hudson's discovery," said Albany County Executive Michael Breslin.

Two of the major events for the Hudson 400 celebration take place in Albany -- Tulip Festival and Albany's 400th Anniversary on Sept 26 in Riverfront Park.

Albany Mayor Gerald D. Jennings said, "This is an incredible honor for Albany to not only receive recognition from the America Bus Association two years in a row, but for the

Quadricentennial Celebration to be named the top event in America in 2009 is an outstanding achievement that many, many people have worked toward for years.'

This year's 60th Annual Tulip Festival in Albany was designated as one of the Top 100 events by the ABA. The three-day event hosted 110,000 visitors.

In addition, the ACCVB has developed new Hudson 400 educational programs for children including a puppet show, Discovery Trunk and a "Where's Henry (Hudson)" sighting contest.

Also named as a top event is Vermont Celebrates Champlain, based in Montpelier. With Albany, the Vermont celebration is part of the overall Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadricentennial Celebration. The Tall Ships Nova Scotia Festival in Halifax received the top event designation for Canada.

For more information about the Hudson 400 celebration, visit www.albany.org or www.hudson400.com, or call 518-463-7017.

The Albany County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc. was established in 1976 to promote the civic and commercial progress of the community through increased development of conventions and tourism. ACCVB currently represents more than 300 member businesses and assists each year in hundreds of regional meetings. ACCVB also operates the Albany Heritage Area Visitors Center, Henry Hudson Planetarium and the Albany International Airport Information Center. For more information, call 518-434-1217 or 800-258-3582 and/or visit www.albany.org.

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