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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

November 10, 2015

**ALBANY CVB GRANTS \$61,800 TO COUNTY NON-PROFITS  
TO GROW TOURISM ECONOMY**

*As tourism industry grows, grants will further develop hospitality culture*

ALBANY, N.Y. – [The Albany County Convention & Visitors Bureau \(ACCVB\)](#) Foundation announced today the recipients of the Hospitality Grants, designed to support not-for-profit organizations located in Albany County.

The fund, which is managed by the [Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region \(CFGCR\)](#), supports programs that aid in building and sustaining Albany County tourism destinations, attractions, events, and other tourism-related activities. The grants encourage collaboration between nonprofit organizations, community groups, and hospitality businesses to further extend the economic impact of tourism and business.

“Each of these organizations understand the importance of tourism to the economy here in Albany County.” said Michele Vennard, President/CEO of the ACCVB, “The grant funds we have distributed will support these unique, collaborative, and groundbreaking programs that will help build Albany’s hospitality culture.”

“Strengthening the communities of the Capital Region through philanthropy is our mission at the Community Foundation,” said Karen Bilowith, President and CEO, the Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region. “ACCVB’s Hospitality Grant Program provides benefits to local nonprofit organizations, and by extension, all of Albany County. The Community Foundation is pleased to continue working with ACCVB on this innovative grant program, and congratulates each of the 2015 grant recipients.”

The grants, ranging from \$1,000 - \$5,000, were approved by the ACCVB’s Board of Directors and were funded through the earned income of the Bureau. This is the fourth time in three years that non-profit organizations within Albany County have been awarded grants from the Foundation. \$61,800 in grants were awarded today, and the total amount awarded since the funds inception is now \$161,500.

**The 2015 Grant Recipients Are:**

**[Capital Repertory Company](#) \$3,000  
*Next Act! New Play Summit***

The launch of *Next Act! New Play Summit* will host developing artists and introduce them and new audiences in Albany.

**Carey Institute for Global Good, Inc. \$2,000**

***Rensselaerville Cycling Challenge***

The Carey Institute is relaunching the Rensselaerville Cycling Challenge to bolster the awareness of the Institute and the surrounding Hilltowns.

**Historic Albany Foundation \$5,000**

***Statewide Preservation Conference***

The Historic Albany Foundation is serving as the lead agency for a statewide preservation conference, Preservation @ 50. The conference will highlight our heritage assets to a wide variety of participants and the committee believes that conference will encourage more preservation events in Albany.

**Old Songs, Inc. \$1,500**

***Annual Old Songs Festival***

The grant will be used to secure and increase talent for this continually successful event that will assure increased hotel rooms used by attendees and visiting artists.

**Troy Savings Bank Music Hall \$2,000**

***Bridge Jazz Festival, in coordination with The College of Saint Rose Massry Center for the Arts***

Grant funds will be used to cross promote this collaborative festival between the Troy Savings Bank Music Hall and the College of Saint Rose Massry Center for the Arts outside of the local area to drive attendance and increase hotel stays.

**Albany Center Gallery \$2,500**

***Visual Arts Exhibit***

The grant will help sustain on-site contemporary art exhibits and help the Gallery move to a new location in 2016.

**Albany Institute of History & Art \$5,000**

***Masterworks Exhibit***

The Albany Institute is about to begin a celebration of its 225th anniversary, and the grant will be utilized to support the Masterworks exhibition, which will be part of the yearlong celebration.

**Lark Street Management Corporation \$1,000**

***Lark Street Information Display Boards***

The Lark Street BID is planning on developing information display boards to help its visitors locate businesses and events that are happening within the district.

**USS Albany Association, Inc. \$5,000**

***USS Albany Memorial Park***

The Association is looking to expand its Albany presence through the development of a memorial park that will include bow from one of the original Albany vessels.

**Albany Barn, Inc. \$3,000**

***2016 Creative License Season***

This grant will help support the 2016 Creative License Theatrical Season at the Barn. Partnering with other area hospitality businesses will also help extend the economic importance of the series.

**Albany Symphony Orchestra, Inc. \$2,000**

### ***Albany Symphony Program***

The ASO will use its grant to extend its marketing reach for the 2015-16 season. These efforts will help build audience from outside our region, share our treasure and build interest and awareness in our destination.

### ***Community Foundation Heritage Tourism Albany Fund \$5,000***

#### ***Albany Heritage Tourism***

The Albany Heritage Tourism Advisory Council was created by Mayor Sheehan in late 2014. The Council is developing a vision and strategic plan for growing Albany as a true heritage tourism destination. The grant will be used to help support and complete the strategic plan that will set out a plan for Albany but eventually for the region.

### ***Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy \$3,000***

#### ***Capital Regional Environmental Calendar***

Grant funds will be used to build and coordinate an online comprehensive calendar of outdoor activities for residents and visitors to the area, as well as develop its promotional plan.

### ***Onrust Project \$5,000***

#### ***Onrust Education and Tourism Initiative***

Grant funds are to be used to develop student tours of this replica 17<sup>th</sup> Century Dutch trading ship on the Hudson River in Albany in 2016.

### ***Open Space Institute Land Trust***

#### ***Thacher Park Center – \$2,500***

Grant funds will assist the Park is developing a state-of-the-art visitor center as part of its master plan that will orient visitors and help extend visitor stays to the area.

### ***The Game Farm Road Project - \$5,000***

This rural treasure encompasses 355 acres of spectacular views of the Catskills as well as streams and fields and small conference facilities. Grant funds will be used to help develop a facility brand and marketing plan for the preserve.

### ***Palace Performing Arts Center, Inc. \$5,000***

#### ***Keep the Palace Lit!***

As a centerpiece performing arts center in downtown Albany, when the Palace lights are lit – so are the lights of many other businesses in downtown. Grant funds will be used to continue the successful programming of this historic downtown treasure to further increase visitation and economic activity.

### ***Schenectady Pipe Band \$4,000***

#### ***The Publicity Project/Expand Retargeting Advertising Effort***

Grant funds will be used to develop a wider-ranging digital advertising and awareness effort for the Capital District Scottish Games, which draws between 10,000-12,000 visitors to Albany County annually.

In addition, the [Albany Police Athletic League](#) was awarded with a donation to further promote Capital Holiday Lights in the Park on the [Albany.org](http://Albany.org) website, assuring approximately 10,000 views during the run of the program.

For more information about the grant recipients and awards, please contact Michele Vennard, President/CEO of the ACCVB, at (518) 434-1217 ext. 300 or [mvennard@albany.org](mailto:mvennard@albany.org); or Jacqueline Mahoney, Vice President of Programs at the CFGCR, at (518) 446-9638 or [jmahoney@cfgcr.org](mailto:jmahoney@cfgcr.org).

## **ABOUT ACCVB**

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. The ACCVB Foundation was established in 1993 to provide educational opportunities and work with other organizations to secure grants and funding to advance regional travel and tourism projects. For more information, call 518-434-1217 or 800-258-3582 or visit [www.albany.org](http://www.albany.org).

### **ABOUT THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF THE GREATER CAPITAL REGION**

Since 1968, The Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region has provided an effective means for people who care about this community to be part of shaping its future. The Community Foundation offers donors a complete toolkit for charitable giving, expert assistance in learning more about the causes they care about, and the opportunity to join others with similar interests to learn and give together.

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Michele Vennard (center), President/CEO of the ACCVB, and Karen Bilowith (second from left), President and CEO of the Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region, with recipients of the 2015 ACCVB Foundation Hospitality Grant Recipients.