



Sabrina Flores
Communications
Discover Albany
sabrina@relentlessaware.com
518.813.4905

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 21, 2020

DISCOVER ALBANY, CITY OF ALBANY'S OFFICE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS LAUNCH "VIRTUAL TULIP FESTIVAL" THROUGHOUT THE CAPITAL REGION

Albany's historic festival moves to digital display in lieu of COVID-19 cancellation

ALBANY, N.Y. (April 21, 2020) – Discover Albany and the City of Albany's Office of Cultural Affairs are working together for Albany's first ever Virtual Tulip Festival. Using the hashtag **#518TulipTracker**, the two groups will feature new blooming flowers across the city for "Tulip Tuesdays" over the next few weeks.

Discover Albany has also prepared a number of Tulip Fest-themed social distancing activities and online content. Some include a self-guided tulip/garden driving tour of Albany County, a history review of Tulip Fest's origins and ties to Albany's Dutch sister city, Nijmegen, Netherlands, and a Q&A with the Washington Park Conservancy about the tulips of Washington Park with tips & tricks for viewers' own backyard tulips.

Virtual Tulip Fest officially launched last week with a number of local businesses already contributing to the trend. Historic Cherry Hill, Ten Broeck Mansion, and the Albany Pump Station have already documented their tulips. Capital Region residents are encouraged to contribute their own photos of tulips and gardens using the hashtag **#518TulipTracker**.

"The Tulip Festival is such an important event to the Albany community. It's a way to celebrate the rich Dutch history of the city, a Mother's Day tradition and a fond memory for locals and visitors alike," said Jill Delaney, president and CEO of Discover Albany. "Since Tulip Festival was postponed and Washington Park won't be welcoming the more than 85,000 people it normally does to see the beautiful blooms this time of year, we wanted to find a way to bring the tulips into people's homes. We are happy to be partnering with the City of Albany Office of Special Events and Cultural Affairs to present the **#518TulipTracker** so the spirit of the Tulip Festival can still be celebrated from the safety of our homes."

"For the Office of Cultural Affairs, the biggest reward of Tulip Festival lies in the enjoyment that it brings to so many," said Alay Medina, director of the City of Albany's Office of Special Events and Cultural Affairs. "It's an amazing amount of planning and commitment from the staff; in conjunction with our partners, which includes Discover Albany and presenting sponsor, Citizens Bank, among many others. Despite the postponement, my pride in the Department's creativity and dedication, along with the diverse relationships we've built within the region continues and has never been more relevant, as we navigate this unprecedented time. The **#518TulipTracker**, a component of this year's Virtual Tulip Festival plan, as well as our other varied new initiatives, is a reminder and reflection of the importance of community and the beauty of Albany. We look forward to a bright future, together."

Tulip Festival is a 72-year-old Albany tradition held every spring at Washington Park. Its origins date back to July 1, 1948 when Mayor Erastus Corning II passed a city ordinance declaring the tulip as Albany's official flower. In the spring of 1948, Albany officials asked Queen Wilhelmina of Holland to designate a variety of tulip to be Albany's



official flower. She chose the 'Orange Wonder,' a Mendel strain of tulip, now also known as the "The Tulip of Albany." Shortly after, the Albany Common Council enacted an ordinance establishing a tulip celebration in the City and the first Tulip Festival was held in May 1949.

The City of Albany has postponed the 2020 Tulip Festival due to coronavirus concerns. The festival which was originally scheduled for May 8-10, 2020, has not yet been rescheduled.

For more information about Discover Albany and to view Virtual Tulip Fest content, please visit albany.org.

###

About Discover Albany. *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. Today, the organization is known as Discover Albany. Discover Albany currently represents more than 300 member businesses and assists each year in hundreds of regional meetings. Discover Albany also operates the Discover Albany Visitors Center, Henry Hudson Planetarium, and the Albany International Airport Information Center. The Albany County Convention and Visitors Bureau 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.*

