



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Giant Sand Sculptures Surface in South County to Tease the Return of Atlantis RIsing International Sand Sculpture Competition in 2027

CHARLESTOWN, R.I. – Visitors to South County are getting a sneak peek of what's to come next summer as two spectacular sand sculptures have appeared along Rhode Island's coastline, building excitement for the return of the **Atlantis RIsing International Sand Sculpture Competition**, taking place **June 25–27, 2027**, at **Ninigret Park in Charlestown**.

Commissioned by the **South County Tourism Council**, the sculptures serve as a playful preview of the internationally acclaimed event, which will return after a one-year hiatus. During the break, the Council focused on beautification and site improvements at Ninigret Park to create an even more impressive experience for artists and visitors alike.

Greeting travelers arriving in Galilee is a striking **giant squid** sculpture located across from the Block Island Ferry terminal. The piece was created by internationally recognized sand sculptor **Justin Gordon**, whose work combines fine art, design, and large-scale sculptural installations. Gordon has created award-winning sand sculptures and public art throughout North America, bringing imaginative storytelling and technical mastery to every project.

Meanwhile, beachgoers at Misquamicut Beach can encounter a dramatic **great white shark** sculpture positioned across from the Windjammer. The sculpture was created by **John Gowdy**, a world-renowned sand sculptor with more than three decades of international experience. A retired Atlantic City Fire Department captain, Gowdy has competed and exhibited around the globe, sculpted at the Vatican for Pope Francis, and created commemorative works on the beaches of Normandy honoring the D-Day landings.

"These sculptures are our way of reminding people that Atlantis RIsing is coming back bigger and better than ever," said South County Tourism Council President, Louise Bishop. "We took a year to invest in making Ninigret Park even more beautiful, and we're excited to welcome some of the world's best sand sculptors back to South County next June."

The Atlantis RIsing International Sand Sculpture Competition transforms ordinary sand into extraordinary works of art as master sculptors from around the world compete before thousands of spectators. The family-friendly event features live sculpting demonstrations, interactive activities, food vendors, and the opportunity to watch incredible works of art emerge from nothing more than sand and water.

Visitors are encouraged to stop by both sculptures this summer, snap a photo, and share their excitement as the countdown begins for the return of one of New England's most unique and anticipated events.



Atlantis RIing International Sand Sculpture Competition returns **June 25–27, 2027**, at **Ninigret Park in Charlestown, Rhode Island**. For updates and event information, visit **SouthCountyRI.com**.

About South County Tourism Council

The South County Tourism Council is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the towns of Charlestown, Coventry, East Greenwich, Exeter, Hopkinton, Narragansett, North Kingstown, Richmond, South Kingstown, West Greenwich and Westerly as a single leisure travel destination known as “South County”. For more information, please visit southcountyri.com.

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