



DISCOVER ALBANY



Beyond Conventional
Annual Report

2022

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Board of Directors

Executive Committee

Leola Edelin, Chair

General Manager, Renaissance Albany

Sonya del Peral, 1st Vice Chair

Owner/Manager, Nine Pin Ciderworks, Partner

Todd Reichelt, 2nd Vice Chair

General Manager, Albany Marriott Hotel

Melissa Carrier, Treasurer

Director of Sales, Total Events

Jeff Mirel

Executive Vice President, Rosenblum Companies

Jill Delaney

President/CEO, Discover Albany

Directors

Lori Anctil

The College of Saint Rose

Mark Bardack

Ed Lewi Associates

Carm Basile

Capital District Transportation Authority

Mark Benson

University at Albany Athletics

Nick Boulas

Hilton Garden Inn-Albany Med

Matthew Cannon

Albany County Airport Authority

Mike Chain

Crowe Plaza Albany - The Desmond Hotel

Kyle Dzembo

Prestige Hospitality Group

Peter Gannon

United Way of the Greater Capital Region

Trent Griffin-Braaf

Tech Valley Shuttle

Tammis Groft

Albany Institute of History & Art

Mohammed Hemmid

Hampton Inn & Suites Downtown

Kevin Johnson

Palace Theater

Shannon Licygiewicz

Albany Capital Center/ASM Global

Linda Neil

Tri City Hotels

Lucas Rogers

Albany County Executive's Office

Sherrene Zachow

Hilton Garden Inn Albany/SUNY Area

Ex-Officio

Daniel McCoy

Albany County Executive

Anthony Capece

Central Avenue Business Improvement District

Mark Eagan

Capital Region Chamber

Peter Crummey

Colonie Town Supervisor

Sean M. Maguire, AICP, CECd

Colonie Economic Development

Hon. Kathy Sheehan

Mayor - City of Albany

Georgette Steffens

Downtown Business Improvement District

Sarah Reginelli

Capitalize Albany Corporation

Letter from the Chairwoman



As Board Chair for Discover Albany, I am delighted to welcome you to our Annual Celebration of Hospitality Excellence and present this 2022 Annual Report. Our team has worked diligently and collaboratively to support our continued recovery and we see great things on the horizon.

This past year continued to pose new challenges with many ups and downs, and as a result, the work done by the Bureau continued to look like a blend of pre-pandemic efforts with Covid-era tactics. The team resumed normal operation, but took away many lessons from the last few years which continue to be useful, practical and relevant. Our sales and services teams worked with re-engaged clients to reimagine their events and bring back a full calendar of meetings and events.

As we look toward 2023, Discover Albany's Board of Directors will be working closely with the staff and leadership to continue to innovate and think outside of the box. Our financial stability remains on solid ground and our commitment to our community has continued to grow and strengthen.

I encourage each of you to be more engaged with Discover Albany in 2023. Download our Discover Albany App. Ensure your listing is up to date. Collaborate with your fellow partners. Together we can maximize all that our incredible region has to offer. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve and I look forward to another successful year with my fellow board members.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leola Edelin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Leola" being more prominent than the last name "Edelin".

Leola Edelin

General Manager, Renaissance Albany

Letter from the President



Dear Friends and Partners,

I continue to have such pride for our destination and the people who make it a wonderful place to live, work and play! It has been my privilege to work with our Discover Albany team, Board of Directors and many wonderful partners throughout 2022. It was refreshing to have a much more normal year than we've experienced in a while. I am so grateful that we have come through this storm and are now once again finding success together.

Our amazing team at Discover Albany has strived to reinvent what it means to be in Destination Marketing and Management Organization (DMO), weaving together elements of pre- and post-pandemic tourism concepts that we have found work best for everyone in Albany County.

As the DMO, Discover Albany brings together organizations that serve all aspects of the visitor experience – including lodging providers, attractions operators, restaurants, and retailers – so that they can share insights into what makes their community stand out as a tourism, meeting, sports, convention, and film destination. Through careful planning, Discover Albany, along with our thoughtful, diverse, and hard-working Board of Directors, works to ensure strategic, long-term success and strong economic impact for businesses in Albany County.

We are proud of the work we accomplished throughout 2022, as you will see in this report. Film Albany and the Discover Albany Sports Commission are grateful for the recognition of our organization with formal proclamations declaring Discover Albany as the official commissions for Albany County, empowering inspiring our team to continue their hard work. Our Cultural Heritage and Tourism (CHAT) partners have developed programming and experiences that will help our partners to continue drawing more visitors.

Our organization is robust, we are well rounded, and we look at Albany County like a puzzle that we can help solve – selecting each piece carefully and thoughtfully to ensure the greatest experiences for clients, visitors, and residents alike.

With that, it is with great pride that I present to you our 2022 Annual Report.


Jill Delaney
President/CEO, Discover Albany

Hospitality Excellence Award

PROFESSOR ANTHONY STRIANESE HOSPITALITY EXCELLENCE AWARD

"The Toby"

Albany's Hospitality Industry is an essential component of the Capital Region's economic vitality. The Professor Anthony J. Strianese Hospitality Excellence Award is the only honor developed solely to recognize excellence in travel and tourism and represents the best of Albany's hospitality culture. There are hospitality professionals around the world who were positively influenced by Professor Strianese and his 40-year career in hospitality, naming the award for Toby is a great honor to his memory.

2023 Recipient:

BRIAN AKLEY

CHAIR | SPORTS FOUNDATION OF THE CAPITAL REGION



"I am truly honored to be selected for the Professor Anthony J. Strianese Hospitality Excellence Award (Toby) this year. But the credit does not belong to me alone. We had an amazing group of volunteers that worked tirelessly to make the Capital Region shine on the national stage. Albany proved once again that it knows how to welcome our guests in a BIG way!"

Brian Akley

Hospitality Grants

Discover Albany announces \$56,550 in funding for the latest round of the Michele L. Vennard Hospitality Grant Program, during a presentation at the 2023 Annual Meeting at the UAlbany ETEC building.

The grant 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 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.

Over the course of the past ten years, the Michele L. Vennard Hospitality Grant Program has awarded 166 grants totaling \$531,350 to organizations that create programs and tourist-attracting events in our community.

2023 Grant Recipients

Albany Barn, Inc.

Albany Center Galleries, Inc.

Albany County Historical Association, Inc.

Albany Institute of History & Art

Friends of Pruyn House

Historic Albany Foundation

Irish American Heritage Museum

Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway
Coalition, Inc.

Musicians of Ma'alwyck, Inc.

New York Folklore Society

Old Songs Inc.

Organization of Adirondack Rowers
and Scullers, Inc.

Park Playhouse, Inc.

Pine Hollow Arboretum

Shaker Heritage Society

Steamer 10 Theatre, Inc.

University at Albany Foundation on
behalf of the NYS Writers Institute

Departmental Accomplishments

Sales & Services Department:

Sales Activities/Tradeshows

The Sales team traveled over 12,000 miles to attend a wide variety of tradeshows and logged 208 appointments with meeting planners. This travel culminated in Discover Albany Hosting a sales tradeshow in our destination for the first time in many years.

Destination East, a tradeshow organized by Northstar Meetings Group, was hosted by Discover Albany and the Crowne Plaza Albany. We hosted 42 meeting planners from New York to Florida to California to Oregon and showcased tours of the NYS Museum, Empire State Plaza, hosted a Politics and Prohibition presentation at CH Evans Brewing, and featured games and Boozy Moo Ice cream at the Yard. The Albany partners totaled 36 appointments.

Partner/Member Activities

The Sales and Services team hosted 5 partner events in 2022. In September we hosted a first-time event on how to bid on Military Reunions in support of our new Social, Military, Educational, Religious and Fraternal (SMERF) sales manager Megan Marriott's efforts.

Destination Services

Destination Services Manager provided for over 100 conferences/events/meetings. The most requested services:

- Food Recovery
- Visitor "things to do" information
- Staffed information booths
- Partner Referrals

Deb Goedeke attended Destination International's Sales and Services Training event in March to sharpen our offerings moving forward.

	2022 Leads	2022 Lead Room Nights	2022 ATTN
Leads	143	57,612	87,034
	Bookings	Room Nights	Attn.
Bookings	43	15,056	45,810

Departmental Accomplishments

Sports Commission:

The Albany County Legislature with support from the County Executive Dan McCoy officially named Discover Albany the Sports Commission for our destination. Initial Steps included:

- Continued Membership in Sports Events and Tourism Association.
- Partnership with 7 other NYS Sports Commissions on the Lead Generation Platform Play Easy.
- Administration of the Capital Region Sports Foundation's Local Organizing Committee in preparation for the Men's First and Second Round Basketball Tournament for the NCAA.

Film Albany:

Film Albany, through local and regional cooperation, has provided a marked impact on the economic vitality of our region. The film commission of Discover Albany has solidified the destination's resume as a legitimate film production option for the television and motion picture industry. This has been accomplished by providing responsive service on inquiries from location and production professionals and collaboration with state and regional colleagues with local permitting agencies.

Film Albany Website Hits for 2022: 6,240

Inquiries/Crew Referrals/Location Recommendations 2022: 257

In 2022, film projects that worked with Film Commissioner Debby Goedeke produced more than 11,000 guest rooms. Additionally, local services, crew, and resources were utilized by all productions that came to Albany County and played a large role in additional



economic spending. The two largest projects were *Gilded Age*, filmed primarily in Albany this year, and *Mother's Milk*, starring Hillary Swank. In addition, the Capital Region provided homes to Showtime and Hallmark. To create regional awareness, Film Albany played a major role in organizing the Capital District & Adirondack Film Alliance and the 2nd Annual Film Industry Day. The alliance is comprised of Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, and Schenectady counties as well as the Adirondack Film Commission.

Departmental Accomplishments

Operations Department:

In 2022, Discover Albany maintained a fully staffed visitors center welcoming guests from around the world.

Programs & Events:

- **Albany Amour:** Historic love stories and cider pairings in partnership with Nine Pin Cider.
- **On the Canals:** Canal itinerary developed on Discover Albany App and promoted through On the Canals website.
- **Tulip Festival:** Tours and Third Annual #518 Tulip Tracker, in partnership with the City of Albany Office of Cultural Affairs.
- **Beers, Bikes and Barges:** Guided bike tour, in partnership with Erie Canal Museum in Syracuse, highlighting the history of beer production along the Erie Canal.



- **Historic Neighborhood Brew Tours:** Downtown, Center Square, and Warehouse District.
- **Albany & the Erie Canal:** A Skyway Tour: Canal stories of industry, impacts on Native Americans, immigration, the Underground Railroad, and current Canal stewardship.
- **Politics and Prohibition Tour:** Juicy local gossip behind the secret speakeasies, the bootleggers who supplied them and the suspected politicians who may have had ulterior motives in keeping Albany a dry town.
- **Empire State Ride:** Visitors Center served as rest stop for 250 cyclists enroute from NYC to Niagara Falls. Also assisted with development of additional Albany stops along the route to a campsite at Shaker Heritage Society.
- **Haunted Tours:** Eerie Albany, Capital Rep's City Séance tour and Historic Albany Foundation's Dark Side of Center Square tour partnerships.



Departmental Accomplishments

- **Scottish Roots in Albany County:** A chat and whiskey tasting with New Scotland Spirits and the ScotlandShop USA.

Community Engagement Initiatives:

- **Creative Placemaking Leadership Summit:** Selected to present a session on Connecting Craft Beer and Local History to Engage New Audiences.
- **ScotlandShop USA:** Discover Albany was featured in a YouTube video highlighting Scottish connections and tourism in Albany during the opening of the ScotlandShop USA.
- **UAlbany:** Developed initiatives with UAlbany to get perspective students more engaged in the community, including staffing a table at UAlbany Accepted Student Open House and assisting with city tour development.
- **Rev250:** Working cooperatively with state historian and Rev250 commission to bring history to life in celebration of the 250th anniversary of America's independence.
- **City of Albany ARPA Grant Program:** Discover Albany has been awarded City of Albany American Rescue Plan Funding (ARPA) to develop an annual Halloween Festival, which will launch in 2023 and will promote a month-long itinerary of varied events. The Festival is based upon a similar event that took place in 1904 & 1905, when the City of Albany was transformed into an enchanted Halloween-Dreamland.



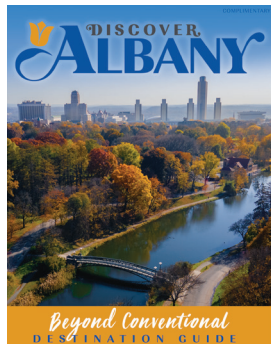
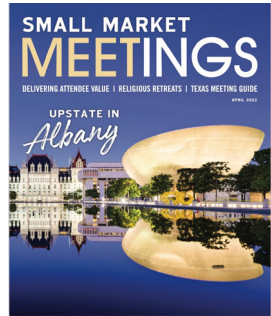
Departmental Accomplishments

Marketing Department:

The Discover Albany marketing team had another successful year of growth. From a return to marketing internationally after the pandemic to a new destination guide that highlighted the best that Albany County has to offer through the eyes of those that live and work here, it was an amazing year showing visitors why they should come to Albany.

Marketing efforts included:

- **Restaurant Appreciation Month:** Another successful Restaurant Appreciation month was celebrated with 80 submissions received and a free partnership given to Albany Ale & Oyster.
- **Small Market Meetings:** Full page ad in the April 2022 NYS Edition with our destination featured on the front cover and in the editorial.
- **New Destination Guide:** Released a new destination guide with the "Discover My Albany" theme highlighting locals that live and work in the towns/cities around Albany County. Every aspect of this guide with the exception of printing was produced in house.
- **New York State Best Experiences Mobile Visitors Center:** Enrolled in the New York State Best Experiences Mobile Visitors Center where our guide was distributed at 9 different expos throughout the year.
- **Brand USA Canada East Spring Multi-Channel Campaign:** Leveraged the Market NY Grant that was given to the New York State Tourism Industry Association (NYSTIA) to include co-op campaign opportunities which garnered 609,135 impressions, 772 hotel rooms bookings, 45 booked flights, and \$117,544 in gross revenue.
- **Interactive Map:** Working with our website provider,



Departmental Accomplishments

Simpleview, we implemented an interactive map of Albany County on Albany.org.

- **#518TulipTracker:** In partnership with the City of Albany, Citizens and the City of Albany's Department of General Services, we ran the #518TulipTracker program throughout the month of April for the third year:
 - » Blogs: 5 blogs with 2,514 Page views.
 - » Instagram #518TulipTracker was used in posts 1,359 times (this includes posts from 2020 & 2021).
 - » The Driving Tour Map was viewed 2,980 times.
- **GoCapNY Collaboration:** Content collaboration with GoCapNY featuring 4 itineraries, and Reels and Tik Tok content.
- **Albany Empire Partnership:** A collaboration with the Albany Empire on the My Albany video series introducing their players to different spots in Albany.
- **EDA Grant Proposal:** Worked with Miles Partnership on the development of an EDA grant proposal for the Capital-Saratoga Region.
- **Smart Meetings:** Ad in the November New York State edition.
- **Albany County Sports Commission:** Developed a logo for the newly appointed Albany County Sports Commission.



WEBSITE:

SESSIONS: 597,349

TOTAL PAGE VIEWS: 1,173,659

TOP TRAFFIC SOURCES:

ORGANIC SEARCH: 245,521

DIRECT: 41,309

SOCIAL: 8,706

REFERRAL: 7,705

PAID SEARCH: 412

SOCIAL MEDIA:

Discover Albany maintained a robust presence on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn. In 2022, we delivered 3,363,770 impressions across social platforms with 151.5K engagements.. We also gained 3,172 followers, a 7.4% increase from 2021.

Departmental Accomplishments

Discover My Albany

To compliment the Discover Albany Destination Guide, we released the Discover My Albany video campaign which ran from July through December 2022. Each month a different video was released that highlighted a different area in Albany County and was hosted by a different local.

Matt Malette: Colonie

FACEBOOK

Reach: 27.4K

Shares: 18

Comments: 54

Reactions: 209

Clicks: 531

INSTAGRAM

Comments: 11

Views: 3,476



Molly Belmont: Helderberg Hilltowns

FACEBOOK

Reach: 17.8K

Shares: 46

Comments: 69

Reactions: 276

Clicks: 547

INSTAGRAM

Comments: 8

Views: 3,343



Jim Gaughan: Guilderland

FACEBOOK

Reach: 5.4K

Shares: 5

Comments: 15

Reactions: 123

Clicks: 378

INSTAGRAM

Likes: 222

Comments: 8

Views: 5,978



Ed & Linda Tremblay: Cohoes

FACEBOOK

Reach: 9.1K

Shares: 88

Comments: 148

Reactions: 620

Clicks: 1.3K

INSTAGRAM

Likes: 81

Comments: 0

Views: 3,063



Angelique Powell: Albany

FACEBOOK

Reach: 1.2K

Shares: 4

Comments: 0

Reactions: 29

Clicks: 51

INSTAGRAM

Likes: 316

Comments: 13

Views: 6,824



Jesse Sommer: Bethlehem, Coeymans, New Scotland

FACEBOOK

Reach: 49.7K

Shares: 406

Comments: 282

Reactions: 1.9K

Clicks: 5.4K

INSTAGRAM

Likes: 597

Comments: 22

Views: 10,432



2022 Financial Report

CONDENSED BALANCE SHEET (AS OF 12/31/22, UNAUDITED)

Assets

Cash & Receivables	\$1,664,600
Receivables	\$372,549
Other	\$45,700
TOTAL	\$2,082,850

Liabilities

Accounts Payable	\$26,377
Other Current Liabilities	\$63,323
Long-Term Liabilities	\$159,834
TOTAL	\$249,534

Net Assets

Unrestricted Net Assets	\$1,653,893
Surplus/Deficit	\$179,423
TOTAL	\$1,833,316

Total Liabilities and Net Assets **\$2,082,850**

2022 BUDGET

INCOME	2022 BUDGET	2022 ACTUAL (UNAUDITED, REVISED)
Earned Income	59,700	86,932
Fees for Services	1,371,550	1,629,041
Grants	106,820	106,764
Investment	26,000	-64,761
Other	100	195,927
TOTAL INCOME	\$1,564,170	\$1,953,903

EXPENSES	2022 BUDGET	2022 ACTUAL (UNAUDITED, REVISED)
Admin Expenses	352,750	353,609
Marketing	302,920	341,987
Personnel	1,104,050	988,131
Other	54,450	90,753
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,814,170	\$1,774,480

SURPLUS/DEFICIT **-\$250,000** **\$179,423**

These financial statements omit the statement of cash flows and substantially all disclosures required by U.S. GAAP. They have not been subjected to an audit or review or compilation engagement, and no assurance is provided on them.

Mission Statement

Discover Albany strengthens the awareness of Albany County as a convention and visitor destination, attracting individuals, families, and businesses from around the world to increase revenue and stimulate economic development and growth for the community.



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