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Mayor

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PRESS RELEASE

City of Schenectady Announces Inaugural ILLUMINOCITY Holiday Lighting Promotion

National Grid is presenting sponsor for season-long promotion that launches in tandem with the Schenectady Holiday Parade on Nov. 20

Promotion features decorating contest to benefit Schenectady County nonprofit organizations

SCHENECTADY – Mayor Gary McCarthy announced Schenectady’s inaugural holiday lighting promotion, ILLUMINOCITY, at a press conference held earlier today. The mayor has invited downtown properties to light up their buildings to celebrate the return of the Schenectady Holiday Parade and create a festive atmosphere in the city all season long.

Mayor McCarthy said, “Schenectady is widely known as the Electric City, and there is no better time of year than the holiday season to celebrate that moniker. ILLUMINOCITY will encourage more people than ever to visit downtown to eat, shop, and play, as well as demonstrate community pride in our city.”

National Grid is the presenting sponsor for ILLUMINOCITY. “National Grid is proud to be a part of the ILLUMINOCITY celebration in Schenectady,” **said Laurie Poltynski, National Grid Regional Director**. “Over the past several years, we have replaced thousands of streetlights in downtown with energy efficient LEDs and deployed new municipal Wi-Fi access points, all while setting up the city for future energy savings and the ability to add new services to make the city safer and brighter.” She added, “Our partnership with Mayor McCarthy and the City of Schenectady has shown brightly, and this celebration is a symbol of what we have accomplished together, as well as a look to future progress.”

Ray Legere, co-chair of the ILLUMINOCITY planning committee, said, “ILLUMINOCITY was created to unite community leaders, businesses, and residents in a holiday festival of lights to celebrate the rich history of Schenectady and support the county’s brightest lights, our nonprofit organizations.” To that end, participating properties will partner with local nonprofits in a friendly, but competitive, decorating contest. The public and a panel of judges will select winners in a variety of categories, including People’s Choice via the Daily Gazette website. Other categories include Most Creative, Schenectady Pride, Technical Challenge, Most Animated, and The Griswolds (think National Lampoon’s Christmas Vacation!). Cash prizes will be awarded to the nonprofits partnered with winning properties.

Following is a sample of business/nonprofit pairings to date:

- Bear and Bird Boutique + Gallery / CREATE Community Studios
- Galesi Group / Capital Region Aquatic Center
- Great Flats Brewing / Boys & Girls Club of Schenectady
- Habitat ReStore Schenectady / Housing: Supportive Housing
- ICPD / City Mission of Schenectady
- Jay Street Collective / Electric City Barn
- Katie O'Byrne's / Jack's Place
- Lil Rita's Café / APF (Animal Protective Foundation)
- Meier Law Firm / SAFE, Inc.
- Moisture Salon / Things of My Very Own
- Mopco Improv Theatre / Hamilton Hill Arts Center

- New Schenectady, LLC / The Schenectady Foundation
- Palette Café & Redburn Development Partners / YWCA NorthEastern NY
- Pioneer Bank / Miracle on Craig Street
- Schenectady ARC / Schenectady ARC
- Schenectady Trading Company / Schenectady Greenmarket
- SUNY Schenectady Community College / Schenectady County Community College Foundation, Inc.
- Take Two Café / Schenectady Business and Professional Women's Club
- Wedgeway Barbershop / Crossroads Center for Children

Jim Salengo, executive director of the Downtown Schenectady Improvement Corporation, said, “The 2021 holiday season is going to be brighter than ever in Downtown Schenectady. With the return of the Schenectady Holiday Parade, more downtown lighting with ILLUMINOCITY and other outdoor décor, and great local businesses ready to welcome customers for holiday shopping, there’s no better place than downtown to be now through the New Year.”

Todd Garofano, executive director of Discover Schenectady, said, “Visitors to Schenectady will be delighted and thrust into the holiday spirit with this new winter attraction, ILLUMINOCITY. Discover Schenectady is thrilled to support our local businesses and the missions of our local nonprofit organizations through this effort.”

ILLUMINOCITY will have its big reveal the night of the 2021 Schenectady Holiday Parade on November 20th and wrap up right after the New Year. Prizes will be awarded at a special ceremony in January 2022.

National Grid is presenting sponsor for ILLUMINOCITY. Additional sponsorship support is provided by MVP Health Care, Pioneer Bank, and Union College. For more information, visit <https://downtownschenectady.org/portfolio/illuminocity2021/>.