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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Monroe County and the City of Rochester Welcome Harriet Tubman Statue to George Washington Square Park

Rochester, NY – Monroe County Executive Adam Bello, Rochester Mayor Malik Evans, and members of the Harriet Tubman Bicentennial Celebration Committee celebrated the unveiling of the “Harriet Tubman – The Journey to Freedom” statue at Rochester’s Washington Square Park. The statue is traveling to various communities across the nation in honor of the 200th anniversary of Harriet Tubman’s birth. Monroe County and the City of Rochester are among the sponsors that helped bring the statue to Rochester.

“Harriet Tubman is the epitome of an American hero. Her bravery, conviction and endless fight for equality will forever be an inspiration to us all. Her name is synonymous with the Underground Railroad,” **said Monroe County Executive Adam Bello.** “From Susan B. Anthony to Frederick Douglass, Rochester’s history is filled with change makers who fought for equality. This statue is a welcome addition to that rich history. As we close out our county’s bicentennial celebration, it’s so fitting that we also celebrate Harriet Tubman’s bicentennial.”

“I want to thank the Harriet Tubman Bicentennial Committee and its sponsors for their work to bring the ‘Harriet Tubman – Journey to Freedom’ to Rochester,” **said Rochester Mayor Malik D. Evans.** “Harriet Tubman was the epitome of the strength and resilience that continues to be the legacy of Black women in America, from the bonds of slavery to the highest offices in the land. Rochester is the city of Frederick Douglass and was an important waystation on the Underground Railroad, so I encourage all of our residents and visitors to come see this beautiful sculpture and further understand a critical chapter in the history of our nation and our city.”

The nine-foot tall, 2,200 lb. monument statue was sculpted by Oscar and Emmy-winning artist Wesley Wofford and has traveled throughout the year 2022. It’s most recent stop was at Auburn, New York, the city that Tubman made her permanent home. The work of art features Harriet Tubman in mid stride, hustling towards freedom with a youngster in tow. It portrays the courage, physical determination, and contributions of black women throughout history.

Tubman is a world-renowned abolitionist, human rights activist, suffragist and freedom seeker. After escaping enslavement in 1839, Tubman is credited for leading hundreds of slaves to freedom via the Underground Railroad. Western New York was filled with stops or stations where enslaved people were given food, rest and changes of clothing during their journey. A main stop in this road to freedom was [Rochester.](#)

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“The temporary installation of this inspiring statue provides an opportunity for Rochester and the surrounding communities to learn about the proud heritage of Black and White abolitionists and suffragists in Upstate New York, and celebrate Harriet Tubman’s life as a political activist, leader in the Underground Railroad, and as a nurse, scout and spy for the Union Army during the Civil War,” **said Jacqueline Sprague, Project Director for the local Harriet Tubman Bicentennial Celebration Committee.** “We encourage families, businesses, community organizations, faith-based, schools and government offices to elevate the importance of this history to help bridge the gap in understanding the value of contributions of African American citizens.”

“Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad are significant pieces of Rochester’s long and storied history of standing up against injustice and fighting for equality for all,” **said Congressman Joe Morelle.** “I join our entire community in honoring Tubman’s bicentennial and the profound legacy she has left behind. May her relentless commitment to the causes of freedom and equality continue to serve as an inspiration to us all for years to come.”

The statue unveiling kicks off a two-month long celebration of events in the community run by the Harriet Tubman Bicentennial Celebration Committee to honor Harriet Tubman’s birth and her lasting legacy.

An opening ceremony will be held at the Rochester Museum & Science Center this Sunday, September 4th from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. It is free and open to the public. For the full calendar of Harriet Tubman events happening throughout the area, go to tubmanroc.com.

The traveling exhibit will be displayed at Washington Square Park until October 31.

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