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GOVERNOR ANDREW M. CUOMO

**GOVERNOR CUOMO ANNOUNCES OPENING OF \$9.5 MILLION FACILITY AT  
SARATOGA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**

*New Year-Round Education, Community Gathering and Event Space, Concession  
Areas and Restrooms Welcomes SPAC and Live Nation 2021 Audiences*

*Photos Available [Here](#)*

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced the official opening of The Pines@SPAC, a \$9.5 million renovation project at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center, a world-class arts and culture destination located in Saratoga Spa State Park, that improves visitor services and creates new four-season event space.

"For decades, the Saratoga Spa State Park has attracted visitors from across the state and around the world," **Governor Cuomo said**. "This project is another major step forward in the renewal of this great park and provides needed renovations to the Saratoga Performing Arts Center that will further cement it as a critical economic and cultural driver in the Capital Region."

"Saratoga Spa State Park draws tourists and visitors from across the globe to experience everything the Park has to offer -- from world-class arts and culture venues and performances to outdoor recreation and family fun," **said Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul**. "With support from New York State and Live Nation, The Pines@SPAC will continue to bring economic activity and top-tier artists to the Capital Region."

New York State provided \$1.5 million in grants from Empire State Development and State Parks, awarded through the Governor's Regional Economic Development Council initiative. The funding was secured in 2019 and demolition began in October of the same year, with the new facility planned to welcome audiences in June 2020. Additional support was provided by Live Nation.

When SPAC was forced to cancel its 2020 season as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the new spaces in the facility enabled the Center to welcome the community to its campus in a safe, socially distanced way. From July to December, 10,000 people, 50 people at a time, came to SPAC for wellness, film, culinary and art-based events.

The project restored park-like aesthetics to the grounds and opened up original site lines from the Route 50 Gate to the Victoria Pool. It provides brand new and vastly expanded restrooms and concessions areas - and new measures for safety and security. In addition, it provides new spaces for gathering outside of the amphitheater: The Julie Bonacio Family Pavilion; The Pines Terrace; and the Nancy Di Cresce Education Room at The Pines, SPAC's first year-round space for education and community outreach.

The main concession building includes a second-story, offering year-round event space with the Nancy DiCresce Education Room to support and encourage expanded educational programming, audience development and community engagement activities. The exterior facade of the upper level includes a glass and aluminum storefront design, allowing guests to walk out onto a rooftop terrace facing the amphitheater. The enclosed portion of this building provides climate-controlled space for events, and the lobby atrium leading to the second floor features the rich history of SPAC as well as space for revolving displays of local artwork. Currently on display is an exhibition from the Tang Teaching Museum.

The second building added new restroom and concessions facilities, and created more open, useable space to improve guest movement throughout SPAC. Infrastructure systems and utilities were modernized to support the new buildings and surrounding public space. Upgraded pedestrian walkways improve access between the amphitheater lawn and the main plaza and provide easier paths for travel throughout the venue.

In the center of the main plaza a new open-air covered pavilion enhanced the park aesthetic, while restoring the original sight lines from the Route 50 bridge to the Victoria Pool.

**Saratoga Performing Arts Center President and CEO Elizabeth Sobol said,** "Nowhere is SPAC's transformation more dramatically evident than in the presence of our new Pines@SPAC facility. The project began with the intent to replace aging concessions and bathroom facilities - but quickly expanded its scope to align with our new mission. In celebration of nature and our unique place within, the new facilities opened up original site lines, restoring a beautiful Park aesthetic to our campus; to

accommodate our growing education program, the Nancy DiCresce Education Room serves as our first year-round indoor gathering space; and as part of our role as a communal gathering place, the beautiful Julie Bonacio Family Pavilion has now become the beating heart of our Pines campus. We are grateful to the Governor, Empire State Development, Live Nation and Parks for their generosity and collaboration."

**Live Nation Regional President Jimmy Koplik said,** "Attending concerts at SPAC is an essential part of summers in upstate New York. We are grateful for our partnership with SPAC to connect fans with their favorite artists in this spectacular venue. With these tremendous enhancements to the customer experience, we look forward to many more great nights of live music under the stars at SPAC."

**Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Commissioner Erik Kulleseid said,** "For 50 years, Saratoga Performing Arts Center has been the go-to place for arts and culture, attracting visitors from around the globe for its world-class performances. We look forward to working with our partners at SPAC, Live Nation to make Saratoga Spa State Park an even more exciting and welcoming place to enjoy the great range of performances for many more audiences to come."

**Empire State Development Chief Operating Officer and Executive Deputy Commissioner Kevin Younis said,** "The concerts and performances at Saratoga Performing Arts Center are just some of the attractions that welcome residents and visitors alike to Saratoga Spa State Park each year. This project complements our placemaking efforts in the Capital Region and across the state, as The Pines@SPAC will help to improve the visitor experience and further support year-round programming and education at this world-class venue."

**Capital Region Economic Development Council Co-Chairs Ruth Mahoney, KeyBank Market President, and Dr. Havidán Rodríguez, University at Albany President, said,** "On behalf of our fellow Council members, we are excited to celebrate the opening of this new and unique space. The Pines@SPAC will help to welcome visitors back to SPAC and the Saratoga Spa State Park, supporting the tourism and creative economies and helping to rebuild these sectors in the post-pandemic world."

The park improvements reflect Governor Cuomo's commitment to revitalizing the State Park system as part of his NY Parks 2020 initiative. In 2019, State Parks completed a \$1.75 million project to renew the SPAC amphitheater's aging balcony ramps and lighting with an elegant and safe entryway. The new railing system's contemporary aesthetic better integrates with the amphitheater facade which was upgraded in 2012.

Under NY Parks 2020, more than \$18 million has been invested in Saratoga Spa State Park, including modernizing the Peerless Pool bathhouse, which consists of new facilities around the complex to improve the visitor experience - a one-mile paved accessible walking trail loop, a new disc golf course, a sensory pollinator garden and accessible, colorful and engaging playground. Other projects include opening the new

Creekside Classroom environmental education facility, preserving the park's historic campus buildings and adding new pavilions, trails and playgrounds.

**Senator Daphne Jordan said,** "Summertime means Saratoga, and there's no place better than SPAC to enjoy the very best in world-class arts, entertainment, and culture. Today's announcement is terrific midsummer news for Saratoga Springs, Saratoga County, and our greater Capital Region. Improved visitor services, a new, four-season event space, restoration of park-like aesthetics to the grounds, opening up of original site lines from the Route 50 Gate to Victoria Pool, brand new and vastly expanded restrooms and concessions areas, are just some of the latest wonderful additions to SPAC, a beloved venue where so many great memories have been and will continue being made. I'm especially thrilled that SPAC's outdoor performance venue will be operating at full capacity this summer because there's nothing better than an outdoor summer concert at SPAC. This is a great project, these are wonderful developments and I encourage everyone to enjoy all that SPAC has to offer this summer."

**Assembly Member Carrie Woerner said,** "I would like to express my thanks to Governor Cuomo for his continued focus on investing in our State Parks. These new buildings at SPAC have modernized the infrastructure and provided much needed new spaces for arts education and programming in the Saratoga Spa State Park."

Live Nation Entertainment is the world's leading live entertainment company comprised of global market leaders: Ticketmaster, Live Nation Concerts, and Live Nation Sponsorship. For additional information, visit <https://www.livenationentertainment.com/>.

The Saratoga Performing Arts Center, located in the historic resort town of Saratoga Springs in upstate New York, is one of America's most prestigious summer festivals. Its tranquil setting in a 2,400-acre park preserve surrounded by hiking trails, geysers, and natural mineral springs draws vacation crowds and arts connoisseurs each year for immersive experiences of performances by resident companies New York City Ballet, The Philadelphia Orchestra, The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the Frehofer's Saratoga Jazz Festival, Opera Saratoga, and concerts by Live Nation. SPAC also hosts CulinaryArts@SPAC events in addition to imaginative programming such as the popular "SPAC on Stage" series and Caffè Lena @ SPAC.

SPAC is a 501c3 charitable organization. Donations and proceeds from fundraising events benefit the Center's children's education programs and support the vibrancy of its classical season. For more information visit [spac.org](http://spac.org).

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation oversees more than 250 parks, historic sites, recreational trails, golf courses, boat launches and more, which are visited by 78 million people annually. For more information on any of these recreation areas, visit [www.parks.ny.gov](http://www.parks.ny.gov), download the free [NY State Parks Explorer mobile app](#) or call 518.474.0456. Also, connect on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

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