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Acting Governor Kim Guadagno Welcomes the Return of Miss America Pageant to Atlantic City Boardwalk

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Iconic Convention Hall to Host World Famous Pageant in 2014 and Beyond

Trenton, NJ – Continuing to move forward in making Atlantic City a premiere tourism and entertainment destination, Acting Governor Kim Guadagno today welcomed back the Miss America Pageant to New Jersey and the Atlantic City Boardwalk.

"For decades, the Miss America organization has awarded scholarships to thousands of young women to help further their goals of higher education and achieve their dreams," said Acting Governor Guadagno. "New Jersey is proud to once again host the Miss America Pageant here in Atlantic City. We are confident that Atlantic City's famous boardwalk and variety of restaurants, shops and entertainment venues will showcase the city's vibrancy and attraction to the participants and many visitors that will attend the Miss America Pageant every year."

"We are so very proud to bring Miss America back to her birthplace in Atlantic City," said Sam Haskell, III, the Miss America Organization's chairman of the board. "We are grateful to Governor Christie and his staff for helping make this possible. Throughout the decades, Miss America has evolved into an organization that enables over 12,000 young women to enter and participate in our scholarship program each and every year. Today, Miss America remains an iconic symbol, and our roots have always stayed connected to Atlantic City. Our proud heritage is rich in history, having been named by *USA Today* as one of the Top Ten pieces of Americana remaining in our great country today."

"We now look to the future as we prepare for our most exciting television event ever for Miss America with the support of our network partner, ABC," said Art McMaster, MAO's president and CEO. "The return to Atlantic City will allow us to showcase our Miss America events in the place where it all began almost 93 years ago."

"Miss America is as much a part of Atlantic City as the beach and Boardwalk," said Atlantic County Executive Dennis Levinson. "It is great to see this event come back home. It could not have happened without the leadership of Acting Governor Kim Guadagno."

"I cannot think of a better way to reintroduce the country to Atlantic City," said John Palmieri, executive director of the Casino Reinvestment and Development Authority. "The return of Miss America to Atlantic City is indicative of the tremendous progress CRDA and its partners are making in revitalizing the city."

Board action by the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority (CRDA) and the Atlantic City Convention and Visitors Authority (ACCVa) is expected later this month to finalize the multi-year agreement that brings Miss America back to Atlantic City. The CRDA, ACCVA, and the Atlantic City Alliance (ACA) all played key roles in forging the agreement that will attract even more tourists from around the world to America's premiere gaming and vacation destination.

Since taking Office, Governor Christie has taken strategic, comprehensive efforts to ensure New Jersey continues to be a leading destination for sports and entertainment events. The Governor's actions will result in hundreds of millions of dollars in economic growth benefiting businesses – large and small – throughout New Jersey. Additionally, numerous concerts, tournaments and events are making New Jersey a must-stop venue for sports and entertainment.

The Miss America pageant is the latest of several world-class events to come to New Jersey. New Jersey's MetLife Stadium will host the National Football League's Super Bowl XLVII, February 2, 2014. MetLife Stadium will also host WrestleMania XXIX on Sunday, April 7, 2013, and will include WrestleMania Week activities such as WrestleMania Axxess and Monday Night Raw, both being held at the IZOD Arena. The 2012 season of NBC's "America's Got Talent" television show was held at and broadcast live from the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark. Formula 1 racing is expected to come to Weehawken in June 2014, and the 2014 Special Olympics USA National Games will be held in Mercer County.

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