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**DOWNTOWN BOATHOUSE REACHES MILESTONE –  
HALF A MILLION KAYAKERS ON THE HUDSON**

*The 500,000<sup>th</sup> kayaker launched from the Pier 26 Boathouse in Hudson River Park*

**NEW YORK, NY (June 30, 2022)** – Hudson River Park’s longest-operating non-motorized boating organization, the Downtown Boathouse, announced that it had launched its 500,000<sup>th</sup> kayaker from Hudson River Park’s Pier 26 Boathouse. The kayaker hailed from Buffalo, New York, and like all 499,999 kayakers who preceded her, she was able to enjoy her adventure on the river for free thanks to the Downtown Boathouse and its partnership with Hudson River Park.

The Downtown Boathouse was established in 1994 with a mission of encouraging safe public use of New York City’s harbor waters and providing residents with increased recreational opportunities. From inception, it has sustained its commitment of operating an all-volunteer program, enabling it to deliver its programming at no cost to the public. The no-fee programming structure is facilitated by the Hudson River Park Trust building and maintaining the Pier 26 boathouse and dock.

“On behalf of the Hudson River Park Trust, we would like to extend our congratulations to the Downtown Boathouse for introducing half a million kayakers to the Hudson River and New York’s coastal waters,” **said Noreen Doyle, President and CEO of the Hudson River Park Trust.** “Together with our other boating partners, the Downtown Boathouse plays a crucial role in extending our mission of making the Hudson River accessible, and in fostering an environmental interest in our diverse river ecosystem.”

The Downtown Boathouse launched its signature free public programming for 100 members of the public in 1995 on Pier 26 when the pier was still owned by the NYS Department of Transportation. When the Trust began redeveloping Pier 26 for public park use, the Downtown Boathouse continued operations from Piers 40 and 96, expanding its program for more kayakers to enjoy. In 2014, the Downtown Boathouse was able to return to Pier 26, into the newly built boathouse where the program continues to grow and introduce incredible numbers of recreational boaters to Hudson River Park’s Estuarine Sanctuary each year. Downtown Boathouse also operates programs from Governors Island.

Hudson River Park is home to four purpose-built non-motorized boathouses located at Pier 26, Pier 66, Pier 84 and Pier 96. Together with an additional space at Pier 40, these boathouses host kayaking, outboard canoeing, stand-up paddleboarding, sailing, kayak polo, rowing, and boat-building, each operated by a different boating organization and Park partner. By offering direct access to the Hudson River and its coastline, the Park’s boating programs encourage environmental stewardship and educate visitors about the importance of New York’s ecological

habitats. Collectively, the boathouses have been instrumental in getting thousands of people paddling, rowing and sailing in the Hudson River for the first time, in large measure, for free or at low cost and making non-motorized boating an egalitarian recreational activity.

"The Downtown Boathouse tries to enable as many people to go kayaking on New York Harbor as our resources allow, and as is safe to do so," **according to Graeme Birchall, President of the Downtown Boathouse.** "The Downtown Boathouse is a participant in the LOCAL OUTDOOR recreation movement. In an increasingly urbanized world, we believe that the residents of densely populated cities need to be able to safely and affordably access their local outdoors, which for New York City is New York Harbor,"

The Downtown Boathouse is located at Hudson River Park's Pier 26 in Lower Manhattan. One of the pier's signature features is the Tide Deck, an engineered representation of a rocky tidal marsh used for educational and ecological programming. The pier also features a sunning lawn, a sports court for children's play, and multiple lounge areas for enjoying river views. This important riverfront access point helps support the events and activities offered by the River Project, the Trust's environmental education and scientific programming arm, for more than 30,000 kids and adults every year.

In addition to its boating programs, from May through November Hudson River Park offers a jam-packed lineup of fun and family friendly programming, from Wetlab Look-ins and tours of the Pier 26 Tide Deck to bike lessons for kids and Big City Fishing. The Park also hosts a number of events that celebrate movement, music and dance, including free fitness and dance classes on the waterfront, the acclaimed Blues BBQ Festival and Jazz at Pier 84.

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### **ABOUT HUDSON RIVER PARK**

Hudson River Park, which extends from Chambers Street to 59th Street along Manhattan's west side, is the longest riverfront park in the United States. This free, urban recreational oasis is home to award-winning skate parks, playgrounds, sports fields, gardens and nature exhibits, boating and maritime activities, art installations, and myriad year-round events that celebrate the diverse cultures and neighborhoods along its shores. The Park, which transformed four miles of decaying piers and parking lots into a premier New York City destination for local residents and visitors alike, plays a critical role in protecting the Hudson River ecosystem. For more information, please visit [www.hudsonriverpark.org](http://www.hudsonriverpark.org), or follow the Park on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram at [@HudsonRiverPark](https://www.instagram.com/HudsonRiverPark).