

Speech on November 19, 2009, by Hudson-Fulton-Champlain
Quadricentennial Office's Executive Director Tara Sullivan at
Marist College's Quadricentennial Finale Celebration

On behalf of New York Governor David Paterson and New York's First Lady Michele Paige Paterson, I bring great thanks and recognition to the countless contributions that Marist and the HRVI have made to New York's 400th!

Together we have experienced over 1500 festivals and celebrations commemorating the world changing discovery of Henry Hudson

There are welcome banners in our airports and 20,000 quad flags are flying

At the Quadricentennial event River Day, we had over 120,000 spectators on the river front, 1500 boaters and over 100 events

There were not one, not two or three, but 6 huge barges that brought the NYC Harbor the most spectacular fireworks in the world for the Quadricentennial July 4th

With grand fanfare we hosted the Royal couple, Prince Willem Alexander and Princess Maxima at the Governor's mansion, Albany City Hall, at the 1609 Exhibit at the New York State Museum, and aboard the intrepid in NYC

In New York City, we celebrated the opening of the Dutch Pavilion in Battery Park, Harbor Day with festivals in all of the waterfront parks, historic vessel parades including the replica ship Half Moon, and a Dutch commemorative beer competition!

The replica Dutch ship Onrust was unveiled and launched for the first time in June 2009 at the Great River Day Flotilla traveling its christening voyage up the river. Thanks to NYS quad support and over 200 volunteers, this replica of the first ship built in America, will sail the Hudson from now on...with educational programs onboard.

The Crown Point Lighthouse, built for the 300th celebration in 1909, was refurbished, its beacon lit and shining again on Lake Champlain, and reopened at the grand Festival of Nations with our Canadian and Vermont neighbors.

Our greatest legacy project of all, we opened the longest elevated walkway in the world, Walkway Over the Hudson, a true-to-life “park in the sky”, now a world spectacle, a world destination

We have had more than a quarter million visitors in less than 2 months surpassing our highest hopes for a new economic engine for the valley while also commanding a spotlight for the spectacular environs that we are working to preserve in the valley.

And finally, in honor of the great people who were here before Henry Hudson, at the Ellis Island Immigration Museum, we opened the largest exhibit of artifacts, traditional crafts and ceremonial objects in the country of the Lenape people of the Delaware tribe.

None of this would have been possible without the collaborative work of the communities of the valley and the special partnership that the Quad office has had with Marist and the Institute.

It is Professor Van Dyke’s Public Relations classes that helped our office when our marketing budget was zeroed out by the legislature due to the dire state fiscal problems-thanks to those students; we were able to deliver Quad graduation packages to the valley colleges and high schools. Many current senior capping projects assisted us with PR for promoting the Walkway and the grand opening in October.

The Hudson River Valley Institute allowed us to co-sponsor the New York 400 Conference-highlighting the many and great Hudson Valley authors as well as devoted much of their publications to archival and historic commemorative writings.

Marist dedicated its 2009 graduating class to the Quad where Governor Paterson was so gratified to be the keynote speaker
And among many more commemorative happenings on campus, the great Quadricentennial Poughkeepsie Regatta was spectacular!

What a year we have shared! And Marist, HRVI, I can tell you first hand, that you have been our greatest partners!!!

To the fabulous students that we have worked with for two years, Colonel Jim Johnson, Professor Mark VanDyke, Dr. Tom Wermuth, and College President

Dennis Murray who has become one of the most notable Hudson Valley champions,

Thank you for making history!