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## ***NEWS RELEASE***

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### **Virginia Beach Hailed as One of America's 10 Crown Communities; Honored for Sandler Center for the Performing Arts**

Penton's *American City & County*<sup>®</sup> magazine has named Virginia Beach one of its 10 "America's Crown Cities" of 2008 – a recognition for building the Sandler Center for the Performing Arts. The award recognizes "innovative projects and programs that local governments have completed in the last year."

"While the projects chosen for the awards are exemplary, the driving force behind them all is the vision, creativity and courage of those communities' local leaders," said Bill Wolpin, editorial director and associate publisher of *American City & County*.

The Sandler Center is a 1,300-seat theater in the city's pedestrian-friendly Town Center. Located within five miles of 78 percent of the city's residents and more than 50 schools, Sandler Center is the perfect venue for concerts, theater, dance, comedy, as well as student outreach and education. Work on the state-of-the-art facility began in 2004 when Virginia Beach City Council dedicated \$35 million in city funds to launch the project. The non-profit Sandler Center for the Performing Arts Foundation was established soon after and was responsible for raising the additional funding needed to complete the project from private donors and the state.

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Community support for this project has been overwhelming as over 300 volunteers give their time and dedication performing essential tasks such as greeting, ushering, operating the switchboard, clerical work, and various other venue needs.

A profile of each winning city will be featured in the December issue of the magazine and is available online at:

<http://www.americancityandcounty-digital.com/americanityandcounty/200812>.

Award recipients were selected based on nominations submitted by the magazine's audience, municipal leaders, and associations. Any local government initiative substantially completed within the last year can qualify for the awards, including those that repair infrastructure, introduce new technology, improve quality of life for residents, or beautify public places. Entries are judged on uniqueness, short- and long-term value to the community, and effective/innovative financing.

Sandler Center for the Performing Arts is managed by Global Spectrum (global-spectrum.com) the fastest growing firm in the public assembly facility management field with more than 80 facilities throughout the United States and Canada. The Philadelphia-based company is part of one of the world's largest sports and entertainment companies, Comcast-Spectacor, which also owns the Philadelphia Flyers of the National Hockey League, the Philadelphia 76ers of the National Basketball Association, the Philadelphia Phantoms of the American Hockey Oddslot League, Flyers Skate Zone, a series of community ice skating rinks, Comcast SportsNet Philadelphia, a regional sports programming network, Ovations Food Services, a food and beverage services provider, New Era Tickets, a full-service ticketing and marketing product for public assembly facilities, and Front Row Marketing Services, a commercial rights sales company and 3601 Creative Group, a full-service in-house advertising agency. In a partnership with Disson Skating, Comcast-Spectacor annually produces 10 nationally televised figure skating spectacles on NBC.

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