



New York City Department of Education
Emerald Society
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Donna M. McGuire, President



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Donna M. McGuire

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June 1, 2024

Dear Fellow Emeralds,

On behalf of the Officers and Executive Board of the New York City Department of Education Emerald Society, we thank you for your continued support and fellowship throughout this 2023-2024 academic year.

As you know, the Emerald Society has been celebrating Irish culture with our members and promoting collegiality, community, and unity among our colleagues in the New York City Department of Education for more than 50 years! From the onset, we have been inclusive of our Irish and honorary Irish brothers and sisters of the UFT, CSA, Local 94, and Local 891! As a custom, we celebrate our heritage and recognize, and honor the contributions of all its educational community members within the NYC public schools.

During each event, we extend one hundred thousand welcomes to you, or Céad mile fáilte! Over the past four years as President, we introduced new initiatives and activities planned with your input and feedback. We navigated throughout the pandemic, with creative virtual offerings such as Irish trivia nights, trivia through the decades, virtual award and honoree celebrations, hosted ceol and conversations with many Irish notables, like Colin Broderick, Andy Cooney, Donie Carrol, Niall O'Leary, Andrew Vickers, The Woods Family Band, and our own Cheryl Ann McCullagh, and Michael Howley. We teamed up with The Fighting 69th Irish whiskey to share a virtual night of local NYC history, about the local 69th Regiment Armory and the founding of this Irish whiskey with Chris Leskowitz, Whiskey Master and Colonel James Tierney (Retired) who led the discussion. Earlier this year, we were grateful to be one of their last private parties in the infamous Garryowen Club, at the 69th Regiment Armory, before closing their doors for a five-year renovation project. Our virtual tastings were so popular, that we continued to offer it with the Flagship Brewing Company, a locally operated brewery from Staten Island. All fun and creative ways to connect during the pandemic!

Once we could safely gather again, we continued to host our traditional scholarship dinner dance at Terrace on the Park. Although our 50th dinner dance was postponed at the beginning of COVID-19, we continued to celebrate virtually, and then we celebrated in style when it was safe to do so again! With our events and fundraising efforts, we have raised many scholarships for deserving students to apply toward their college expenses. At our dances, we honor the efforts of those going above and beyond in our city schools. This past March marked our 52nd annual Scholarship Dinner Dance, and it was a true success! Our Executive Board meticulously planned to provide an event that would honor our people and the sights and sounds of Irish tradition and culture. It was a sold-out event and we believe our dinner dances will continue to get larger with membership that will continue to support our society and scholarship efforts.

Our society has been gathering at many Irish establishments in NYC, often with live music or trivia, brunches, and happy hours, and this has provided a way for us to meet and connect. We have enjoyed meeting up with 27 other Emerald Societies, as we are all part of the Grand Council of United Emeralds. We connect during the St. Patrick's Day Parade, the annual GCUE Irishman of the Year dinner, and even on the Celtic Cruise, a fundraiser for the Emerald Isle Immigration Center.

For the past four years, our Executive Board has worked to connect with you through social media; we have redesigned our website and now offer multiple options to pay your annual dues and to attend events.

As I conclude the end of my second term, I am happy and proud of the growth and momentum our NYCDOE Emerald Society has shown. I am confident that we will continue to grow as a cultural organization as Ms. Stacy Livingston takes the reign as President effective July 1, 2024.

I look forward to seeing and connecting with all of you at the upcoming year's events!

Sláinte,

Donna McGuire

President