



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pete Harckham

Harckham Honors Cortlandt Manor Couple During Irish-American Heritage Month Commemoration

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March 29, 2021

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Peekskill, NY – New York State Senator Pete Harckham commemorated Irish-American Heritage Month 2021 on Saturday, Mar. 27, by honoring a Cortlandt Manor couple, Dan and Siobhán Dennehy, for their substantial contributions to local, state and national organizations regarding immigration and preserving cultural traditions.

“I congratulate our honorees for the wide scope of their remarkable achievements, which includes a tireless advocacy on behalf of new immigrants,” Harckham said. “Dan and Siobhán have made a difference in the lives of countless individuals while demonstrating the possibilities inherent in the American Dream are still possible for longtime residents and newcomers alike. They are exemplary figures in the country’s Irish-American population, and I am proud to partner with them here in the 40th Senate District.”

Harckham presented the Dennehy’s with Senate Commendation Awards during a virtual ceremony aired live on Facebook; to see a video of the event visit <https://www.facebook.com/SenatorPeteHarckham/videos/218829710025833>.

The award ceremony included a quartet of special speakers: State Sen. Timothy M. Kennedy from Western New York, who has worked with the Dennehy’s on immigration issues over the years; Cathal “Chuck” McGreal, chair of the Hudson Valley Irish Fest; Mary Cronin, president of the Lady’s Ancient Order of Hibernians Peekskill Division 18; and Westchester County Legislator Colin Smith.

Smith actually joined the online celebration from Riverfront Park in Peekskill, where the Hudson Valley Irish Fest takes place each year.

Also attending the ceremony were Sue Sheridan, chair of the Peekskill St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee; Clive Cronin, president of the Westchester County Ancient Order of Hibernians; and Brian O'Reilly, president of the Ancient Order of Hibernians Division 18 Peekskill.

The Dennehy's have been longstanding leaders in Westchester's Irish-American community. Dan Dennehy has held numerous positions in the Ancient Order of Hibernians, including serving as National Director from 2016 to 2020; currently, he is the organization's state Immigration Chair. He also founded the Hudson Valley Irish Fest, as well as the Hudson Valley Irish Center, which includes a substantial library focusing on Irish culture and history.

Siobhán Dennehy has served since 2003 as executive director of the Emerald Isle Immigration Center in New York City, which provides assistance and immigration services to both Irish and non-Irish immigrant communities. She has also played crucial roles in organizing the Hudson Valley Irish Fest and running the Hudson Valley Irish Center. And while with the Peekskill Division 18 of the Lady's Ancient Order of Hibernians, Siobhan organized multiple community events for all members of the Peekskill community on navigating the immigration system.

The Dennehy's also organized and participated in relief efforts to aid Irish American communities in affected areas in and around New York City after Hurricane Sandy. More recently, they worked during the coronavirus pandemic with "Irish Americans in Support of Workers: The Meitheal" an organization that provided meals and PPE to healthcare workers in New York City, Westchester, Rockland and Orange Counties. They also worked with "Sláinte 2020," a collective fundraising effort, to assist the Irish American community in the tri-state area during the pandemic.

In thanking Harckham for the Senate Commendation, Siobhán Dennehy acknowledged the support of her husband—"a force of nature," she said—and the first to respond when there is an issue in the community.

Quoting an old Irish saying, Siobhán Dennehy added, "You don't get anything done unless you pull together. It is the friends with us at this event and organizations represented here today that we call upon to help us if we think we can help."

In praising his wife's work on immigration, Dan Dennehy said, "Siobhán has kept the Irish 'golden door' open for every other ethnic group, every person." He added that he and his wife were both humbled by Harckham's recognition during Irish-American Heritage Month.

Irish-American Heritage Month is an annual celebration of the history and culture of the Irish people here in the U.S. Coinciding with St. Patrick's Day on March 17, the celebration spans the entire month of March, and commemorates how the Irish people have influenced and contributed to American society at large.