



## ST. PATRICK'S PARADE COMMITTEE OF WASHINGTON, D.C.

P.O. Box 11584  
Washington, D.C. 20008-0784  
[www.dcstpatsparade.com](http://www.dcstpatsparade.com)

### 2017 Honoree Biographies

#### Grand Marshal – Cody Keenan

Cody Keenan has written with President Barack Obama for nearly a decade, rising from a



campaign intern in 2007 to White House Director of Speechwriting from 2013 to 2017. Through times of challenge and change, he has helped President Obama craft remarks on every topic for every audience – from tiny backyards in Iowa to the biggest stadiums in the country; from a sermon in Selma to the State of the Union Address. In January 2017, he finally got to write his dream speech – welcoming the World Champion Chicago Cubs to the White House. Keenan was educated at Northwestern University and Harvard University, and his wife, Kristen Bartoloni (*also a former White House staffer*), shares his surprise that in 2014, British [GQ](#) named him one of the “Coolest Men Under 38 (And a Half).”

Keenan possesses great passion for public service and after earning his bachelor's degree from Northwestern University he moved from Illinois to DC and started an internship in Senator Edward Kennedy's office, working his way up from the mail room to the legislative staff. He went on to Harvard University to earn a master's degree in public policy and acquired work as a speechwriter for the Obama presidential campaign and ultimately ended up working at the White House with the former president. In Keenan's 2015 Commencement [Address](#) to New York University's Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service's graduating class he said “You made the right choice. Public service is important. It matters... You have chosen a calling that is fundamentally hopeful—because it's full of people who actually believe we can make a difference in this world.”

In an Irish Times [interview](#) with Keenan from March 14, 2016 titled, “Irish-American ‘Hemingway’ crafting message for Obama”, Keenan is described as “a proud Irish



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American from Chicago with roots in Dublin and Cork”. Keenan found inspiration from Irish poets and authors while working on several speeches for the former president and noted the connection and shared heritage of the American and Irish people, “America is the story of people, including the Irish who have gradually fought, toiled, pushed against the system until it became a little better, until it became the America as it should be.” Notable speeches that Keenan collaborated on with Irish connections include Obama’s addresses during the May 2011 visit to Ireland, June 2013 trip to Northern Ireland, the 2015 remarks at the funeral of Beau Biden (former Vice President Joe Biden’s son), and the 2009 eulogy of Senator Ted Kennedy, Keenan’s former boss and an influential figure in his drive as a public servant. Keenan truly has the Irish “gift of gab” and his eloquent writing was expertly used by the former president to help communicate with the American people to clarify and comfort individuals in the local Washington, DC area and nationally through tragedy and triumph.

### **Gael of the Year – Keith Carney**

Keith is the Founder of Hill Irish, a networking organization that is engaging current and former congressional staff of Irish descent. Hill Irish is a non-partisan, non-political, non-denominational; non-profit with two goals in mind: Provide an environment for social activity and networking as well as inform and educate those who want to learn about their heritage (Irishness) and engage more in the Irish American community in Washington and elsewhere. Hill Irish is currently organizing the first Irish Heritage Night with the Washington Nationals. Scheduled for Tuesday, May 2, 2017 there will be a pre-game Irish Festival with Irish dancers, pipers, food and drink throughout the ballpark.



Keith was raised in New York and is a graduate of the University of Maryland. He has been married to his wife Ann for 26 years and has two children; Matthew who recently graduated from St. Mary’s College of Maryland – now working in Baltimore, and Kate



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who is a senior at Bishop Ireton and will attend the University of Cincinnati next year where she will study Nursing as well as play Division 1 Lacrosse for the Bearcats. Keith has been a member of the Commodore John Barry Division of the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) in Washington, DC for 33 years and is a former President of the Division. He was a National Director for the AOH from 2008 – 2012 during which time he created the first website for the AOH and represented all of the southern states membership. In addition, he was the Editor of the Hibernian Digest from 2008 – 2011. The Hibernian Digest is the quarterly newspaper publication distributed to over 35,000 AOH & LAOH members throughout the United States. Keith also served on the District of Columbia AOH State Board as Vice President from 2004 – 2007.

Keith worked on numerous efforts to preserve and bring attention to Irish-American heritage and history. He worked on the formation of the Commodore John Barry Memorial Committee to secure permission and to raise the funds to build the Barry Gate and the Commodore John Barry Memorial at the Naval Academy in Annapolis. He worked on the Robert Emmet Wayside Marker Committee and was involved with the design of the wayside as well as working closely with Jack O'Brien on negotiating with the National Park Service and the Smithsonian Institute to improve the park where the Emmet Statue is located; gaining permission and raising the funds to install the wayside at its current location. Keith also worked with the National AOH and LOAH to install a granite marker to permanently memorialize the Irish victims of the Arsenal Explosion in June of 1864. The memorial is located at Congressional Cemetery honoring the 23 young Irish immigrants who perished in a horrific explosion and fire when a Civil War munitions factory exploded.

Keith has been very active in charitable fundraising in the Washington, DC area helping to raise over a hundred thousand dollars over the past two decades for Churches and Irish causes. Recently his efforts helped raise money for St. Mary's Church in Old Town through the first St. Patrick's Day Hooley last year. He has also recently secured donations to support the Irish Studies Program at Catholic University.

Keith is the President and Founder of FedNet, a credentialed broadcast news organization on Capitol Hill. Founded in 1994, FedNet provides broadcast news coverage of the Senate and House Floor Debates, Hearings and Press Conferences. FedNet was the first broadcast news organization to stream Congress over the internet. FedNet provides news



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content to hundreds of clients including the Washington Post, Congressional Quarterly, Time Warner, Roll Call, the LA Times, McClatchy newspapers and many others. He has overseen all operations since the inception and created the first searchable video database of Congress. FedNet's coverage has included historic events such as multiple Presidential Inaugurals, the Clinton Impeachment proceedings, Annual State of the Unions and multiple Joint Sessions of Congress including the Popes first address to Congress last year.

### **Division Marshal – Ralph Day**

Ralph Day has led the effort to commemorate Irish and Irish-American history in the St.



Patrick's Parade for the past six years. Ralph has organized members of the Ancient Order of Hibernians to build floats for the Parade including a replica of the Barry Gate at the United States Naval Academy and a replica of Dublin's General Post Office where the great Rising began publicly in 1916.

Ralph is a 20-year veteran of the United States Navy where he served as a Surface Warfare Officer. Since his retirement in 1991 Ralph has continued to serve the United States as a contractor for defense services.

In 2011, Ralph was elected as the president of the Ancient Order of Hibernians District of Columbia Board. In that capacity he oversaw the dedication of the memorial to Wexford-born Commodore John Barry, First Flag Officer of the United States Navy, collaborating with Government entities and allied Irish-American organizations throughout the country. His efforts to memorialize our shared ethnic heritage are the essence of the Parade.



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### **Division Marshal – Susan “Susie” Hoffman**

Susan M. “Susie” Hoffman was born in Ft. Wayne, Indiana and grew up in various small towns in the great Midwest. While she is sad to admit that she has no Irish heritage, Susie claims to be an “honorary” Irishman based on the 19 Irish host daughters who have stayed with her family as part of the Washington Ireland Program. Susie has been a host “mum” for the past 13 years as part of the Washington Ireland Program for Leadership and Service (“WIP”), a leading Irish American non-profit focused on building the skills of leaders from Northern Ireland and Ireland. Susie has also assisted with leadership training for the WIP students, leading sessions on mediation and “town halls” on divisive issues. Susie was proud to join the WIP Board of Directors in 2016. Susie has embraced the Irish culture that her WIP interns have brought to our shores, particularly the love of song and a cup o’ tea. She hosts an Irish Sing and Karaoke party each summer for the WIP interns, host families, and friends which has become a highlight of the summer for many. Susie has two adult daughters who enjoyed being host sisters to the Irish interns of the WIP program.



In her “day job”, Susie is Public Service Partner at Crowell & Moring where she promotes, supervises and participates in the pro bono work of the Firm which has garnered awards from both national and local organizations, including the D.C. Bar Pro Bono Law Firm of the year award in 2013. Susie serves as President of the Crowell & Moring Foundation, a separate nonprofit organization, which funds a post-law school fellowship in conjunction with Equal Justice Works, and makes grants to nonprofits that focus on education for at-risk youth. For nearly 30 years, Susie has worked on issues affecting women and children, particularly domestic violence victims, both on the professional and personal levels. Ms. Hoffman has herself represented and supervised other attorneys in child abuse and neglect cases and in domestic violence, adoption and child custody litigation. After graduating from George Washington Law School in 1979, Susie clerked for U.S. District Judge Harold Greene and litigated at Hogan & Hartson where she performed extensive pro bono work.



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Susie currently serves as President of the D.C. Bar Foundation, the largest funder of civil legal services in the District of Columbia, and as Chair of the D.C. Chapter of the Fellows of the American Bar Foundation. She is active on several boards and legal advisory committees for legal services providers, including as Vice-Chair of the Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless, and as a board member of the Association of Pro Bono Counsel (“APBCo”), the Domestic Violence Legal Empowerment and Appeals Project, the Capital Area Immigrants’ Rights Coalition, the Center for Dispute Resolution, and the Washington Council of Lawyers. Susie served as co-chair of the D.C. Circuit Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Services for three years and on the Committee for fifteen years. Her past Bar involvement includes two elected terms on the D.C. Bar Board of Governors and three years as co-chair of the ABA Litigation Section Pro Bono Committee. Susie has received recognition for her work in the public interest, including the Legal Aid Society’s Servant of Justice Award in 2012, Whitman-Walker Legal Services Outstanding Volunteer Mentor award in 1997, the D.C. Law Students in Court Celebration of Service Award in 2013, the John Carroll Society Pro Bono Legal Services Award in 2004 and was a finalist for the March of Dimes Heroines of Washington award in 2015.

### **Division Marshal – John McShane**

John McShane grew up in the Hudson Valley, just north of New York City, and is a



second generation immigrant. His maternal grandparents were from County Sligo and Donegal while his dad's parents came from Armagh. John has been an active member of the St. Patrick's Parade Committee for 25 years and chairs the Photography Committee. He has also worked as a volunteer "staff" photographer for a number of Irish organizations including the Washington Ireland Program, Project



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Children, and the Capital Irish Film Festival and is always willing to help out at various Irish events in the Washington area.

John was a Park Ranger when he went to Cornell University for a Master's in environmental policy and moved to Washington in the 1980's where he worked at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). His work focused on formulating and implementing policies and programs to protect and restore the water quality and ecological integrity of rivers, streams, wetlands, and estuaries. John also served on numerous interagency task forces and committees to advance environmental protection including working with the White House on an Executive Order and the President's American Heritage Rivers Initiative. He is presently serving on a federal advisory committee to develop recommendations for the current Administration on climate change and water resources.