



## PRESS RELEASE

### **PATRICK J. KENNEDY TO RECEIVE SOBER ST. PATRICK'S DAY® EMERALD SPIRIT AWARD AT 12TH ANNIVERSARY VIRTUAL CELEBRATION**

Kennedy will receive the Sober St. Patrick's Day Emerald Spirit Award at its kickoff event on the morning of March 17, 2023

Then after marching in New York's St. Patrick's Day Parade, Sober St. Patrick's Day® hosts its marquee alcohol-free, family-friendly festival of world-class Irish music and dance.

**New York City – February 23, 2023**— New York's ultimate family-friendly St. Patrick's Day event, Sober St. Patrick's Day® moves to a convenient new venue for its 12th anniversary, steps from the start of the St. Patrick's Day Parade. The festivities begin with the new Pre-Parade Emerald Spirit Award Reception honoring former Congressman Patrick J. Kennedy who will deliver remarks about the recent uptick in alcohol misuse in the U.S. and its collateral effects on American families, especially for growing numbers of young people. The focus then shifts to 5th Avenue for Sober St. Patrick's Day's second march in the historic parade before closing out the evening with its marquee, multi-faceted, alcohol-free festival that "reclaims the day" with Irish music, dance, storytelling, and literature.

Sober St. Patrick's Day® Celebration begins March 17, at 11am in the undercroft of the Church of Our Saviour (59 Park Ave. & East 38th St.) for the Pre-Parade Emerald Spirit Award Reception which all are welcome to attend. The welcome also is extended to anyone who'd like to march in the parade under the Sober St. Patrick's Day® banner. The evening's grand celebration of all things Irish runs from 5pm to 7pm. More information and tickets are available at [HERE](#).

CELEBRATING

IRISH CULTURE

ST. PATRICK

HEALTHY & SAFE CELEBRATIONS

## **Sober St. Patrick's Day® Emerald Spirit Award Honoree**

The Sober St. Patrick's Day® Emerald Spirit Award is presented annually to a career professional to honor extraordinary dedication and devotion to improving the lives of family members of alcoholics and addicts - the frequently overlooked demographic affected by this disease. Sober St. Patrick's Day® Board of Directors could not have chosen a more deserving Emerald Spirit Award honoree than former U.S. Representative and founder of the Kennedy Forum, Patrick J. Kennedy.

“As an Irish American and recovering alcoholic, I’m thrilled to reclaim the spirit of St. Patrick’s Day with this alcohol-free event,” said former congressman Patrick J. Kennedy. “Celebrating community, culture, and wellbeing is just what our country needs in this moment of mental health and addiction crisis.”

During his time in Congress, Patrick J. Kennedy co-authored the landmark Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (Federal Parity Law), which requires insurers to cover treatment for mental health and substance use disorders no more restrictively than treatment for illnesses of the body, such as diabetes and cancer. Among other initiatives, Kennedy is the co-founder of Psych Hub, the most comprehensive online learning platform on mental health, substance use, and suicide prevention topics in the world. In 2013, he founded The Kennedy Forum, a nonprofit that unites advocates, business leaders, and government agencies to advance evidence-based practices, policies, and programming in mental health and addiction. In 2015, Kennedy co-authored the New York Times Bestseller, “A Common Struggle: A Personal Journey Through the Past and Future of Mental Illness and Addiction,” which details a bold plan for the future of mental health care in America. In 2017, he was appointed to the President’s Commission on Combating Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis.

## **About Sober St. Patrick's Day®**

Sober St. Patrick's Day's® mission is to reclaim the true spirit of St. Patrick's Day by changing the perception and experience from an occasion for binge drinking and other misuses of alcohol to a celebration of the richness of Irish culture and the legacy of St. Patrick. It is a 501(c)(3) organization. Please visit [www.soberstpatricksdays.org](http://www.soberstpatricksdays.org) for more information.

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