

# IrishEcho LABOR AWARDS

2021



**Irish Labor Awards 2021**  
**Friday 5 November**  
**The Edison Ballroom**  
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# Labor's Future in a United Ireland

This year, 2021, marks the centennial of the treaty between Great Britain and Ireland, which solidified the partition of our great ancestral homeland, tearing apart not just an island, but families, communities, and the Irish people. Over the past hundred years, this artificial border imposed by a power across the sea has led to civil war, violence, and unspeakable loss in both the North and the South. While the Good Friday Agreement brought peace, and a merciful end to decades of conflict, 23 years after it was signed, the island-wide vote on the status of the border has yet to be held, and this hideous partition remains. As the implementation of Brexit continues to wreak havoc on both the North and the South, and the

COVID-19 pandemic continues to sicken and kill people on both sides of the border, one thing has become crystal clear: the time for a border vote is now.

As always, those who wish to put off the vote will use any and every argument they can to stall it and maintain the unacceptable status quo. But justice delayed is justice denied, and basic justice demands that after centuries of occupation, 100 years of partition, and 23 years of a still-incomplete peace process, the people of Ireland must be allowed, finally, to decide their fate.

At the same time, the stubborn persistence of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to widen the chasm between the haves and the have-nots on both sides of the border. Those at the very bottom of the economic ladder continue to

face poverty, hunger, and homelessness; those at the very top have seen their net worth soar; and many companies are now using the pandemic as the latest excuse to slash wages, cut benefits, and worsen working conditions.

Once again, James Connolly's immortal declaration that "the cause of labour is the cause of Ireland, and the cause of Ireland is the cause of labour," rings true. The need for both a strong labor movement and a free and united Ireland is as great today as it ever has been. Only a powerful trade union movement can help workers rise up against the latest assaults on their rights. And only a free and united Ireland will enable all of its children, Green and Orange, North and South, Protestant and Catholic, to work together to solve problems, rise to challenges, and seize opportunities across the Emerald Isle.

The nine leaders profiled in these pages are strengthening both the cause of labor and the cause of Ireland.

Our Labor Leader of the Year, Gary LaBarbera, is not only one of the best labor leaders in the trade union movement today, he has been my good friend and brother for decades, and he is one of the finest human beings I know. He is a smart, strategic, tough, and tenacious working-class warrior who knows how to build political alliances that advance the interests of working people. His work promoting project labor agreements (PLAs) in both the public and private sector has created tens of thousands of good, family-supporting, middle-class union construction jobs. He has worked tirelessly to ensure that the tremendous opportunities offered by the building trades are available to everyone, regardless of race or gender, helping to make New York City's building trades unions some of the most diverse and inclusive in the country. Long a champion of strong worksite safety regulations, he led the charge for Local Law 196, which mandates 40 hours of site safety training for all workers on major New York City Department of Building projects, and 62 hours for supervisors. Horrified by the needless and preventable death of 22-year-old Carlos Moncayo in the

collapse of an unreinforced trench in 2015, Gary has helped spearhead the push for Carlos' Law, which would increase the maximum penalty for such criminal negligence from \$10,000 to half a million dollars. Gary shares our Irish fighting spirit, our passion for justice, and our commitment to leaving things better than the way that we found them.

*"As always, those who wish to put off the vote will use any and every argument they can to stall it and maintain the unacceptable status quo. But justice delayed is justice denied, and basic justice demands that after centuries of occupation, 100 years of partition, and 23 years of a still-incomplete peace process, the people of Ireland must be allowed, finally, to decide their fate."*

Like Gary, the eight other individuals profiled in these pages are fighting the good fight on behalf of all working men and women. They share not only Irish blood, but the deep conviction that all workers deserve living wages, family-supporting benefits, safe work places, and the ability to build better lives for themselves and their families. I am awed and inspired by their dedication, devotion, and commitment to the cause, the purpose, and the mission of the trade union movement. I am honored to call them my brothers and sisters, and privileged to call them my friends.

**Terry O'Sullivan,**  
General President,  
Laborers' International Union  
of North America



Gary LaBarbera



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## 2021 IRISH ECHO LABOR AWARDS

Congratulations to  
Labor Leader Honoree

### Gary LeBarbera

President, Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York



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# 2021 IRISH LABOR AWARDS HONOREES

## Gary LaBarbera

**Building and Construction Trades Council  
of Greater New York, President  
New York State Building and Construction Trades Council,  
President**

Gary LaBarbera has served since 2009 as president of the Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York, an organization comprising local affiliates of 15 national and international unions representing 100,000 working men and women in New York City. In 2021, Mr. LaBarbera was elected President of the New York State Building and Construction Trades Council, which is comprised of 15 local building trades councils, 12 district councils and state associations, and 135 local unions and represents 200,000 tradespeople across the entire state.

*2021 Labor  
Leader*

Since assuming his position as President of the New York City Building Trades, Mr. LaBarbera has embarked on ambitious negotiations for project labor agreements (PLA) to provide labor cost savings to advance major public and private projects at risk of stalling due to the economic recession. These efforts have resulted in excess of \$100 billion in public sector project labor agreements with the City of New York and the New York City School Construction Authority, saving taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars. This includes a landmark PLA with the New York City Housing Authority that is providing men and women across the five boroughs with a path to middle-class careers in the building trades through their pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs, as well as a monumental PLA with the City of New York that connects individuals from low-income neighborhoods to union pre-apprenticeship and direct-entry programs, leading to an estimated \$1 billion in wages and benefits for target communities during the first full year of the program. Mr. LaBarbera also forged a historic agreement with the City as part of its Build It Back program that ensured Sandy-impacted residents represented no less than 20% of those employed in rebuilding efforts.

In addition to his work with the public sector, Mr. LaBarbera has helped bring approximately \$100 billion of private work under project labor agreements in New York City, creating tens of thousands of union construction jobs in the process.

Under Mr. LaBarbera's leadership, the building trades have become a model of inclusivity – with the majority of New York City's union construction workers now being minority men and women. Mr. LaBarbera continues to work to expand these opportunities to every corner of the city, launching the Apprenticeship Readiness Collective to enhance access to union apprenticeship programs in historically marginalized communities and forging alliances with community groups.

Prior to his tenure as president of the Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York, Mr. LaBarbera served organized labor in several other capacities, including as president of the New York City Central Labor Council, president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters Joint Council 16, and president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters Local 282.

Having been actively involved in the Teamsters since the early 1980s, Mr. LaBarbera was one of the first members of Local 282 to graduate from the Labor Studies Program at Cornell University's School of Industrial Labor Relations in 1994.

Mr. LaBarbera is founder and chairman of the board of the New York City chapter of Helmets to Hardhats, an organization that has placed over 1,100 veterans in careers in the construction industry across the five boroughs since 2013. He also is president and chief executive officer of the Edward J. Malloy Initiative for Construction Skills, which has placed more than 2,100 individuals from underserved areas throughout New York City into apprentice programs.

Mr. LaBarbera is currently a vice president of the New York City Central Labor Council, a vice president of the New York State AFL-CIO, and a vice chairman of the New York Building Congress. He serves on the New York City Regional Economic Development Council and the Exploited Worker



Task Force as an appointee of Governor Andrew Cuomo. Mr. LaBarbera was nominated by Governor Cuomo to the Port Authority Board of Commissioners in 2017, serving on the Operations Committee. And, in 2020, Mr. LaBarbera was appointed to Governor Cuomo's New York Forward Re-Opening Advisory Board.

Mr. LaBarbera has championed worker safety and protections for both union and non-union construction workers during his leadership of the building trades, leading the charge in 2017 to pass Local Law 196, which according to the NYC Department of Buildings, has led to a significant decline of 26% in worksite injuries. In 2019, Mr. LaBarbera was a chief advocate in support of "Carlos' Law" to enhance worker protections and worksite accountability.

Moving forward, under the direction of Mr. LaBarbera, the building trades will play a leading role in addressing challenges shaping the country's future, including the development and revitalization of its critical infrastructure and efforts to support the state recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, Mr. LaBarbera was successful in enshrining into law critical labor standards, including prevailing wage standards, on all large-scale renewable energy projects across New York State, ensuring a just transition for New York's working men and women in the renewable energy industry. Mr. LaBarbera will continue to focus on introducing new innovations to the construction industry that will drive continued growth and ensure the organization's affiliated unions remain equipped to successfully compete in a rapidly changing environment.

In addition to his numerous business commitments, Mr. LaBarbera is actively involved in several charities and educational programs, and is a member of the board of directors of the Boy Scouts of America – Greater NY Council, the Ronald McDonald House and the Metropolitan Outreach Project.



# THE BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL OF GREATER NEW YORK

**BEST WISHES AND  
CONGRATULATIONS**  
TO OUR FEARLESS LEADER

**GARY LABARBERA**

*PRESIDENT, BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION  
TRADES COUNCIL OF GREATER N.Y.*

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# Labor Coalition Marks Four Decades

By Ray O'Hanlon

The four words in the acronym hint at the endurance and success. Irish, American, Labor, Coalition.

The first three words are descriptive. The fourth denotes the binding together of the other three.

The Irish American Labor Coalition is an organization bound together as a result of the pioneering work of some of the greats of Irish American Labor, of American Labor.

And it has been working for peace, justice and a reunited Ireland for four decades.

As Belfast-born and IALC co-founder Jim Devine of the Communication Workers of America recalls: "At the Concord Hotel Resort in the Catskill Mountains I attended a New York State AFL-CIO meeting for all the NY unions. The organizations represented about two and a half million workers and they had a foreign policy statement which they wanted supported.

"It was similar to the one I opposed successfully with the Communications Workers of America at their conference in Detroit so I decided I would oppose it and speak on Ireland and justice. A few AFL leaders heard what I had planned to do and they took me aside and asked me not to address the issue openly at the conference. They said if I was willing to hold off, I would be invited to address the executive council in a private session after the main event. I took a chance and agreed.

"After the conference everyone had left the hotel in a rush to get home and I sat alone in a room in an almost empty hotel for over an hour waiting for my chance to address the council. Eventually they called me in to a very large meeting room with the leaders of all the major unions in the state. I knew nobody and didn't know what to expect but I thanked them for the opportunity. I spoke of the struggle for justice in Ireland and spoke of the oppression of my own family. The reception I got was extraordinary and a group of the leaders asked me to join with them to form an organization to challenge British oppression in Ireland. Together we formed the Irish American Labor Coalition with a board of directors made up of the most fiercely serious and active pro-Irish labor leaders."

Those early board members



The memorial to James Connolly in Troy, New York.  
PHOTO COURTESY JIM DEVINE.

included Teddy Gleason, president of the International Longshoremen's Association, Bill Treacy of the Operating Engineers, John Lawe, national president of the Transport Workers Union, Danny Kane of the Teamsters, and Mickey Maye of the Teamsters.

Teddy Gleason took on the presidency of the new organization and the IALC was on its way.

It would be the 1981 Hunger Strikes that would propel the IALC into the broader consciousness of the Irish America, and indeed Washington, D.C. Paul O'Dwyer was now legal counsel, Paschal McGuinness of the carpenters, Michael Mann of the AFL-CIO, and who had been born into Dublin's Jewish community, and Ed Cleary of the building trades were by now reinforcing the ranks.

In Washington, there was John Sweeney of the SEIU, Tom Donahue of the AFL-CIO and Michael Brennan of the Ironworkers.

This was a coalition to be reckoned with and it was quickly spreading its wings. In short order there were committees in Chicago (Margaret Blackshere, teachers); in Detroit, Mike Kerwin, (UAW); in Boston, Marty Foley (Mass. AFL-CIO); and in San Francisco, Jack Henning (California Labor Federation).

The early years found the coalition in the front lines of the MacBride Principles Campaign which was aimed at ending employ-

ment discrimination in Northern Ireland. By the 1990s the issues on the front burner included a visa for Gerry Adams and the appointment of a U.S. Special Envoy to Northern Ireland.

At an Irish American Presidential Forum in Manhattan in April, 1992, Democratic presidential candidates Bill Clinton and Jerry Brown promised a visa, an envoy, and if elected president, to support passage of federal MacBride Principles legislation.

The IALC was one of the leading organizations in what would be the campaign to ensure that these promises would be kept. That campaign would ultimately be directed at the administration of President Bill Clinton.

After the first Adams visit to the U.S. in February, 1994, the IALC and others learned that Sinn Féin leaders were working on a package of proposals to make possible an IRA ceasefire.

The IALC's Joe Jamison, along with Bill Lenahan, became members of what became the Connolly House Group, which represented U.S. constituencies and organizations that had worked for the visa victory, constituencies which, in Sinn Féin's view, had some influence with the Clinton administration.

The rest, as they say, is history. But history rolls on. The IALC, now the James Connolly Irish American Labor Coalition, together with other leading Irish American organizations, has yet much work to do. The

peace and political process is itself troubled. Brexit, to put it mildly, has been a giant spanner in the works. Ireland is still divided, even if the border is no longer immediately obvious to the eye.

IALC President Joe Jamison, writing in the Irish Echo to mark the IALC's 30th anniversary, described the coalition thus: "The IALC is a labor committee linked to a community. It seldom has worked by itself. For more than a decade, Teamster Mike Maye worked tirelessly, all summer, convening Irish community organizations to build Irish Solidarity Day, a day of protest outside the United Nations building in Manhattan focused on injustice in the Six Counties.

"In the Mike Quill era, James Connolly, icon of socialist republicanism, was honored each year on May 12, this to politically educate a mostly Irish TWU. Cold War politics ended that.

"In 1987, with the TWU's John Lawe elected grand marshal of the New York St. Patrick's Day parade, the IALC revived the tradition. Thanks to the work of Jim Devine of CWA, in 1987 Connolly's statue was unveiled in Troy, New York, a city where Connolly had lived and organized.

"The large Connolly banner has become a regular sight in the St. Patrick's Day and Labor Day parades, led by the Local 3 Electricians Sword of Light pipe band. Back in Ireland, meanwhile, the IALC, along with Irish and Scottish unions, funded a statue of Connolly outside Liberty Hall in Dublin.

"Classical republicanism has not been neglected by the labor coalition. The family of Wolfe Tone is buried in Brooklyn's Greenwood Cemetery. In 1997 the IALC restored the family gravesite, with the president of Ireland, Mary Robinson, headlining the ceremony.

"Irish American political activism will certainly revive if the next stage involves the biggest question: Irish reunification.

"The workers' struggle for economic justice, and the Irish struggle for unity and independence, are both democratic struggles. As long as there are Irish people in the U.S. working class and its unions, there will be space for an Irish-American Labor Coalition, or something like it."

And indeed there is.



# **LEADERSHIP, COMMITMENT, TEAMWORK AND SERVICE HELP BRIDGE THE WAY TO CONSTRUCTION EXCELLENCE**

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# 2021 IRISH LABOR AWARDS HONOREES

## Joan Corey

**City and State of residence:** Woburn Massachusetts

**Current Company & position:** Teamsters Local Union No. 25, 544 Main Street, Boston, MA 02129 - Business Agent.

**Family:** Married to James Corey

Joan Corey is a Business Agent for Teamsters Local Union No. 25 in Boston, who organized herself and her coworkers into the union in 2009. Ms. Corey has held this elected position since 2014. Joan is proud and humble to serve as the first female business agent in the great history of Local 25.

In this role, she manages daily business matters and acts as liaison between union members and employers. She negotiates contracts in both the public and private sector and represents workers in public safety, public schools, public works, health care, and in the warehouse division. She also represents the International Brotherhood of Teamsters National Negotiating Committees in the Airline Division.

Before becoming a business agent, Ms.

Corey served for two years, beginning in 2012, as a Trustee on the Teamsters' Executive Board. Ms. Corey previously worked as the City of Woburn's Assistant Assessor/Appraiser. It was during this time that Joan was engaged in a successful organizing campaign of City Department Heads and Professional Staff into the Teamsters union.

Ms. Corey currently serves as Chairperson of Teamsters Local 25 Women's Committee, member of Joint Council 10 New England Women's Committee, and the Teamsters Local 25 Autism Committee and Fund Clerk.

Additionally, Ms. Corey serves on the Board of Directors of Massachusetts Development Finance Agency. Through collaborations the goal is to help create jobs, increase the number of housing units, revitalize urban environments, and address factors limiting economic growth including transportation, energy, and infrastructure deficiencies.

Ms. Corey has a bachelor's degree from Emmanuel College and Construction Management Program credits from Northeastern University.

Joan lives in Woburn, Massachusetts with her husband James.



## Richard McSpedon

**City and State of residence:** Pleasantville, NY

**Current Company & position:** Local # IBEW Business Representative

**Family:** Wife, Maura; children Molly, Jack, Claire and Dermot

**First Job:** Newspaper boy

**What it taught me:** When you take on a job people depend on You.

**Best advice you could give someone starting out:** Be on TIME!!!!

**What changes do you think the labor movement could improve on, in today's economy?** 1) Focus on membership development. member education on all issues pertaining to their livelihood as well as encourage members to run for elected office. 2) Educate the public on the pros of being a union member, stop the they have too much rhetoric and create the I want that too...

Richard F. Mc Spedon. Jr. was born to Richard and Anne Mc Spedon in 1968 in Yonkers, NY. He lived in Hastings on the Hudson with his two sisters and a brother before marrying his wife of nineteen years, Maura. They now reside in Pleasantville, NY with their four children-Molly, Jack, Claire and Dermot. He is active in his community as both a Little League and CYO Coach. Richard graduated from Archbishop Stepinac High School in White Plains in 1986. He then attended Coastal Carolina College in South Carolina before being sworn in as a member of Local Union No. 3, IBEW in July 1992. He worked in both Supply Division in Midtown Electric, Tremont Electric and in the ADM Division for L.K. Comstock before entering our Apprentice



Program where he graduated from Harry Van Arsdale, Jr. School of Labor Studies at Empire State College (SUNY) in March 1998. He went onto be a Journeyman and Sub-Foreman.

In 2002, he became a Shop Steward and has worked with seven Business Representatives in the Bronx, Midtown and in Transit where he was last

positioned at the World Trade Center Transit Hall. He belongs to several Affiliated Clubs of Local Union No. 3 -Bronx Acorn Club, Catholic Council, Colony Club and the Westchester Mechanics Association where he was president from 2003-2006.

In 2006, he was nominated and elected to the Executive Board of Local Union No. 3 which represents 30,000 members, a position he held through elections for 10 years. In 2015, he was honored by the Staten Island Electrical Club as their Man of the Year.

In 2016 he was appointed to Business Representative of Southern Westchester and is delegate of the Westchester Putnam Building and Construction Trades Council, as well as a Vice President of the Westchester Putnam Central Labor Body (AFLCIO).

He was a delegate of the 38th IBEW Convention in 2011 and a Delegate/Sergeant at Arms in St. Louis at our 39th IBEW Convention this last September. In 2017 he became a member of the Sustainable Port Chester Alliance (S.P.C.A.).

In December of 2017, he was appointed to Westchester County Executive elect George Latimer's Transition Team. In March of 2018 he was named Allied Union Club of Queens Man of the Year. In January of 2019 he was appointed the Westchester County Industrial development Agency (IDA) as well as Westchester County Economic Development Agency (EDA).

In 2020 he was named Aide to the Grand Marshall of the Yonkers St Patrick's parade.

Richard Mc Spedon has been active in trade union issues and political campaigns throughout his twenty-seven (27) year career.



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# 2021 IRISH LABOR AWARDS HONOREES

## Martin Lydon

**City and State of residence:** Queens, NY

**Current Company & position:** Director of Civil Service Affairs for the New York City District Council of Carpenters.

**Family:** Married to Vanessa Napolitano-Lydon.

**First Job:** Apprentice carpenter, renovations jobsite at the former Sheraton Russell Hotel (Park Avenue 37th street).

**What it taught me:** My first job taught me my trade, to be a skilled and productive carpenter. I learned too, and just as importantly, how to communicate with the people I worked with and the people we worked for. I learned how the most successful people in the Construction Industry brought many different people and opinions to a consensus. to move forward productively... and that is still true today.

**Best advice you could give someone starting out:** Take personal responsibility. Even in the very beginning of your career you have control over being on time, setting personal goals to learn your trade well and building your reputation as a reliable individual. The NYC Construction Industry is tough but offers great opportunities to people who are determined to succeed. For Carpenters and all tradespeople, it is critically important to work together, to support each other and your union.

**What changes do you think the labor movement could improve on, in today's economy?** The Labor Movement has been the driving force for working class families in NYC and our nation. Working Class families who are organized and politically active in their communities play an important role in reducing income inequality in



our city. We must continue in the success of our past.

Inclusion and acceptance of all working people has made the labor movement stronger economically and politically. We must guard

against any persons who try to divide working class people in any way. Our economy thrives when working class people are working together on the jobsite and at the ballot box.

Martin Lydon is the Director of Civil Service Affairs for the New York City District Council of Carpenters – the largest construction union in New York City with over 20,000 members. In 1986, Martin joined the New York City Carpenters Union, Local 608, as an apprentice. He graduated as a Journeyman Carpenter and went on to hold the position of Shop Steward before being elected as a local union delegate to the District Council.

In 1995, Martin proudly joined the New York City workforce as a carpenter, bringing with him his union training, experience, and high-quality of craftsmanship. In 2003, he was appointed to the position of Assistant Director of Civil Service Affairs at the New York City District Council of Carpenters, and in 2019 Martin was promoted to the Director position, where he proudly represents New York City's Civil Service Carpenters, Dockbuilders, Ship Carpenters, and Riggers working in 16 City agencies throughout the five boroughs.

Martin also holds leadership positions at several labor organizations, including the New York City Municipal Labor Steering Committee, the Civil Service Coalition of Building Trades and Municipal Unions, and the New York State Employee Conference.

Martin is one of six children born to Martin and Theresa Lydon, who are from County Mayo and County Clare in Ireland. He attributes his strong work ethic and self-integrity to his parents and family. Martin lives with his wife, Vanessa Napolitano-Lydon, in Queens, New York.

## Richard Tolson

**City and State of residence:** Margate, New Jersey

**Current Company & position:** President-Tolson Consulting/ Labor management; Vice- Chair- Casino Reinvestment Development Authority Board Member - William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at Stockton University

**Family:** Sonya T. Bertini-wife; Antoinette DiMeglio-step daughter; Mikel C. Bertini-step son

**First Job:** Bricklayer

**What it taught me:** Hard work and craftsmanship

**Best advice you could give someone starting out:** Your future is unlimited and determined much by one's own actions!

**What changes do you think the labor movement could improve on, in today's economy?** Better outreach to immigrant populations



Richard E. Tolson, Vice Chairman,

Casino Reinvestment Development Authority  
1976 graduate of Ocean City High School  
BA in Labor Studies- AFL-CIO

National Labor College- Silver Springs, MD  
Former member Atlantic/Cape Workforce  
Investment Board

Board member New Jersey State Economic  
Development Authority 2007-2014

Vice-President New Jersey State  
Building Trades Council 2006-2020

Vice-President New Jersey State AFL-CIO  
2006-2020

Director- International Union of Bricklayers and  
Allied Craftworkers, New Jersey 2006-2020  
Board Member William J. Hughes Center for  
Public Policy-Stockton University 2008-current  
Board Member Casino Reinvestment Development  
Authority-2012-current; Vice-Chair-2018-current  
Born and raised in Ocean City. Currently resides  
in Margate. Married to Sonya T. Bertini. 2 grown  
children, Antoinette and Mikel.





North America's **Building Trades** Unions

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**is pleased to join the Irish Echo  
in honoring the  
President of the Building & Construction  
Trades Council of Greater New York and the  
New York State Building & Construction  
Council,**

**Gary LaBarbera**

**and all of the 2021 Labor Award honorees.**

**We appreciate Gary's steadfast leadership and  
dedication to creating opportunities for Building  
Trades members and their families  
throughout all New York.**

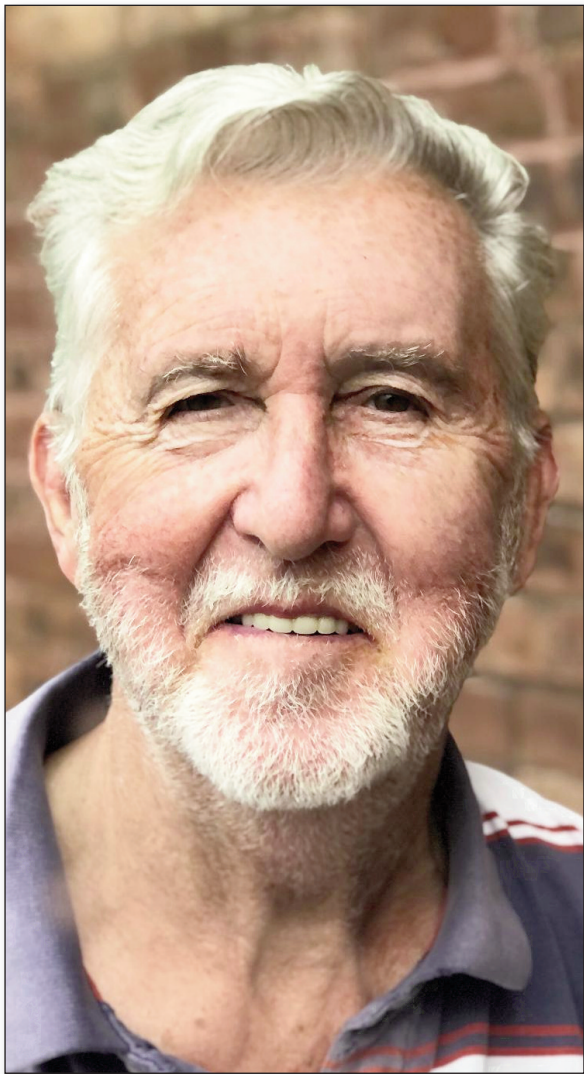
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Washington, DC 20006**



# 2021 IRISH LABOR AWARDS HONOREES



## Jim Devine

**City and State of residence:** Hoosick Falls, NY  
**Current Company & position:** Retired  
**Family:** My wife is Bonnie Devine and I have three children with my first wife Margaret. They are Christine, Theresa and James Thomas (JT)  
**First Job:** First job was with New York Telephone.  
**What it taught me:** A light heart, an easy smile and a willingness to work opens many doors.  
**Best advice you could give someone starting out:** Be a willing worker, grateful for all you currently have and keep an eye out for opportunities drifting by. They will occur but you have to be watching and ready, willing and able to take a chance when they show up.  
**What changes do you think the labor movement could improve on, in today's economy?** In any economy unions could do a much better job of supporting each other across all boundaries. Just because it may not be your union in a life and death struggle national action, strength and support should flow hard and fast to those in need.

Jim Devine of Belfast left Ireland for America in 1964 aged 20. He got a job in Manhattan at New York Telephone Company and in 1969 he transferred to Troy in upstate New York.  
Jim found the local union representative unwilling to challenge management so he became a union steward and challenged them himself. Within four years he was elected local president. At no time had he any idea where all his activity

might lead.  
Within a couple of years, he had made a name for himself on the floor of conventions challenging national leaders on their foreign policy statements. His focus was on Ireland and the conflict there.  
In NY he teamed up with John Lawe of the TWU, Teddy Gleason of the ILA and formed the Irish American Labor Coalition (IALC). They were joined by Bill Tracey of the Operating Engineers, the Teamsters, the Firefighters, the Sand Hogs and many others.

The team was active and determined. They met monthly and using the MacBride Principles focused on disrupting the flow of money to businesses in the North of Ireland that had employment discrimination.  
Another major focus was getting Sinn Fein representatives permitted to enter America and share to other side of the Irish story. Both missions were extraordinarily successful.

During his tenure, while at a meeting in the East Wing of the White House in 1990, he shut the meeting down, refusing to hear any discussion and led the Irish delegation on a walk out. This was after he found out that other Irish invited guests were in the building and not allowed entry to the meeting because of a call from the State Department.

Jim has always believed that attacking the revenue stream of his corporate opponents was the most effective way to get their attention and has shown it to be true in many of his dramatic successes.

## Jay Frasier

**City and State of residence:** Weymouth, MA  
**Current Company & position:** Business Agent, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers L.U. 103  
**Family:** Wife Darleen & twin boys Joshua & Jameson  
**First Job:** Paper Boy  
**What it taught me:** An honest day's work for a honest day's pay  
**Best advice you could give someone starting out:** Find something you love and figure how to make a living doing it.  
**What changes do you think the labor movement could improve on, in today's economy?** Our image - we do a ton of things for the community and never promote it.

Jay was sworn-in in 1999 and graduated the apprenticeship program at Local 103 in 2004. Upon graduating Jay received the Charles A. McCarthy, Jr. award in recognition of his dedicated service as an apprentice. Immediately upon graduating Jay was hired at the Joint



Apprenticeship Training Center as an instructor. In 2008 Jay was elected to the Examining Board at Local 103. In 2017 he ran for and was elected to the Executive Board at Local 103.  
Shortly after being elected to the Executive Board, Jay was appointed by Business Manager and Financial Secretary Lou Antonellis to a Business Agent position. Being sober 23 years, he was tasked to tackle the growing opioid crisis and started a recovery program for the membership at Local 103.  
In 2019 Jay was awarded the Business Agent of the Year by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers for his work with the recovery program and the well being of the membership.



# LiUNA! LOCAL 78

NEW YORK CITY, NEW JERSEY & LONG ISLAND

SUPPORTS THE WORK OF

## The IrishEcho's 11<sup>th</sup> Annual IRISH LABOR Awards And the 2021 Labor Leader Gary LaBarbera

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MASON TENDERS DISTRICT COUNCIL OF GREATER NEW YORK  
LiUNA  
AFL-CIO



# 2021 IRISH LABOR AWARDS HONOREES

## Brianne Conlan

**City and State of residence:** Great Neck, New York

**Current Company & position:** Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc., Senior Staff Investigator, Law Department (Litigation Center of Excellence)

**First Job:** I worked for our family real estate business and at a local farm stand.

**What it taught me:** Treat others how you would want to be treated. It is never too late to learn something new, think outside the box, accept challenges, and take risks. But most importantly, operate with integrity and do not forget where you started - be accountable, work hard, and smile.

**Best advice you could give someone starting out:** Life is short, explore opportunities and find work you enjoy with a great organization and people. Ask questions and seek advice, be willing to listen and learn, and most importantly – respect and help others.

**What changes do you think the labor movement could improve on, in today's economy?** Skilled trade training and careers have driven this country for centuries and create a rewarding future. Creating awareness around the opportunities available in the skilled trade industry, to those entering the workforce and career changers, is important. Finding skilled trade opportunities can be critical in building your career and future success.

Brianne Mary Conlan was born on Long Island and raised by her parents (Alexandra and Kevin D. Conlan) with four younger siblings – Caroline, Patrick, Joseph, and Clare. Brianne's parents and grandparents played a pivotal role in her appreciation for Irish heritage, family, community, and the Church. Her grandparents resided on Castle Hill Avenue in the Bronx, formerly known as Unionport, where her father, aunts, and uncle were



raised before moving to Long Island. They descended from early Irish immigrants (County Tyrone) who, before taking residence in New York, worked as laborers and plumbers.

Brianne grew up as a parishioner and active member of St. John the Evangelist Church in Riverhead. She attended St. John's school, until high school, and subsequently attended and graduated from Riverhead High School in 2003. Brianne re-located to Pittsburgh, PA and worked for a publishing company as a layout editor. She joined the Franklin Park Volunteer Fire Department and became an active volunteer firefighter, responding to emergencies and assisting the community through volunteering. Brianne later returned to New York and worked for a technology company in Manhattan, before accepting a position with GEICO Insurance Company in 2009. While working for GEICO, Brianne was promoted through the ranks of their claims and litigation

unit. She earned a bachelor's degree in Business and Economics and a Master of Business Administration from Empire State College, participated in Lean Six Sigma initiatives, and volunteered with Last Chance Animal Rescue to foster rescue dogs.

In 2016, Brianne accepted a position as a Staff Investigator in the Law Department for Consolidated Edison. She works with all levels of staff, including union and management employees. Brianne is one of the co-chairs and member of the Law Department's Diversity and Inclusion Council. The Council spearheads initiatives that promote a diverse and inclusive work environment to foster the company's values of safety, customer experience, and operational excellence. The members of the Council host virtual lunch events, book challenges, promote diversity and inclusion training, deliver an engaging newsletter, and fundraised to support the Mott Haven Fridge in the South Bronx. Brianne is the 3rd Vice President and on the Executive Board of the Emerald Society of Consolidated Edison, which is also an employee resource group. She is an integral part of the Emerald leadership team, she manages the newsletter, collaborates with organizing social and fundraising events, and promotes all Con Edison employee resource groups.

Brianne is a volunteer with Team Rubicon, a veteran-led organization, which assists the community with disaster recovery and damage mitigation. Over the past year during the COVID-19 pandemic, Brianne volunteered with Team Rubicon on the "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" feeding program and the resettlement of families from Afghanistan brought to the United States. Brianne recently completed a second master's degree in Cybersecurity from Utica College.

Brianne is humbled and grateful for the recognition of the Irish Echo's 2021 Irish Labor Ambassador Award.

## Alice O'Neil

**City and State of residence:** Glen Rock, New Jersey

**Current Company & position:** United Federation of Teachers UFT District 71 Representative

**Family:** Married to Robert McCue

**First Job:** Housekeeping

**What it taught me:** To be thorough and detailed!

**Best advice you could give someone starting out:** Take the most difficult task and be kind to your colleagues as a kind word goes far.

**What changes do you think the labor movement could improve on, in today's economy?** To ingrain how essential pension benefits are as well as our healthcare rights.



Alice O'Neil is proud to be a New York City public high school teacher and the UFT District 71 Representative for Manhattan.

She began as a Per Diem Substitute teacher in 1997 and was offered a position at Park West High School located in Hell's Kitchen. In 2004, she along with 8 other colleagues from PWHS founded Food and Finance High School. After serving as a UFT Chapter Leader for 7 years, she became the UFT District 71 Representative. Working alongside 39 Union brothers and sisters brings daily joy and triumphs. Alice married her PWHS Chapter Leader Robert McCue who recently retired after 36 years. Alice and Bob are eternally grateful to have met at work as did their parents Kathleen and the late Charlie O'Neil and the late William and Marie McCue who are always in their hearts.



Best wishes .....



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Laborers' International Union of North America  
General Secretary-Treasurer  
& New England Regional Manager  
**Armand E. Sabitoni,**  
on behalf of LIUNA's New England Region,  
*proudly congratulate*  
Building & Construction Trades Council  
of Greater New York President  
**Gary LaBarbera**  
on being honored with  
the 2021 Labor Leader Award at this  
year's 11th Annual Irish Labor Awards.



**LIUNA!**  
*Feel the Care*  
NEW ENGLAND LABORERS





# New York City and Vicinity District Council of Carpenters

## THE NEW YORK CITY & VICINITY DISTRICT COUNCIL OF CARPENTERS

IS PROUD TO CONGRATULATE 2021 LABOR AMBASSADOR

# MARTIN LYDON

Director of Civil Service

New York City and Vicinity District Council of Carpenters

AND ALL HONOREES IN THE

## 11<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL IRISH ECHO LABOR AWARDS



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**TEAMSTERS LOCAL UNION NO. 522**

**IS PROUD TO SUPPORT  
THE IRISH ECHO  
&  
CONGRATULATIONS  
TO AWARD RECIPIENTS & HONOREES**



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ATALANTA SOSNOFF CAPITAL IS THE PROUD SUPPORTER OF THE



# 11th Annual Irish Echo Labor Awards



HONORING

**Gary LaBarbera**

Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New  
York, President New York State Building and Construction  
Trades Council, President

## 2021 Labor Ambassadors

**Brianne Conlan**

*Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc., Senior Staff  
Investigator, Law Department (Litigation Center of Excellence)*

**Jay Frasier**

*Business Agent, International Brotherhood  
of Electrical Workers L.U. 103*

**Joan Corey**

*Business Agent for Teamsters  
Local Union No. 25 in Boston*

**Richard Tolson**

*President - Tolson Consulting/Labor management; Vice-Chair Casino  
Reinvestment Development Authority; Board Member –  
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**Jim Devine**

*Founding Board member, Irish American  
Labor Coalition. Past President  
Communications workers of America Local 1116*

**Martin Lydon**

*Director of Civil Service Affairs for the  
New York City District Council of Carpenters*

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*Local 3 IBEW Business Representative*

**Alice O'Neil**

*Co-Chair of the United Federation of  
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**Jerry Thunelius**

*Managing Director  
Senior Fixed Income  
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jt@atalantasosnoff.com*

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ro@atalantasosnoff.com*

**Olga Talens**

*Marketing Associate  
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**Tonianne Russo**

*Asst. Vice President  
(212) 878-7563  
tar@atalantasosnoff.com*

**Lorena Severino**

*Administrative Assistant  
(212) 878-7655  
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**UNION CARPENTERS AND CONTRACTORS  
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**Congratulations to Labor Ambassador  
Martin Lydon  
Director of Civil Service Affairs  
New York City & Vicinity  
District Council of Carpenters  
And all of tonight's honorees**



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# ***Congratulations Gary LaBarbera***

*on your  
2021 Labor Leader Award*

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***Congratulations to all the Honorees***





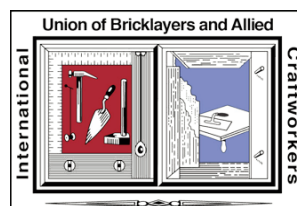
# CONGRATULATIONS RICHARD TOLSON

The Irish Echo

2021 Labor Ambassador

New Jersey Casino Reinvestment Development Authority Vice Chair

*Also, best wishes to all the Ambassadors!*





## SALUTE TO TERRY O'SULLIVAN

President LiUNA

## CONGRATULATIONS TO GARY LABARBERA

Labor Leader for 2021 Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York,  
President New York State Building and Construction Trades Council, President

## COMING SOON

*P.D. Murphy's Irish Pub inside Jim Whelan Boardwalk Hall.*

*We hope to see you in Atlantic City!*





# ***The United Federation of Teachers***

Salutes

## ***The Irish Echo***

on its

## ***11th Annual Irish Labor Awards 2021***

We join in celebrating  
the work and accomplishments of the  
2021 Labor Ambassador,  
our own Alice O'Neil,  
UFT Manhattan High School  
District Representative.



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# NEW YORK STATE LABORERS

We are proud to celebrate the  
**IRISH ECHO**  
**11<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL**  
**IRISH LABOR AWARDS**

Congratulations to this Year's Honoree  
**2021 IRISH LABOR LEADER**  
**GARY LABARBERA**  
BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION TRADES  
COUNCIL OF GREATER NEW YORK, PRESIDENT  
NEW YORK STATE BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION  
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**KEYNOTE SPEAKER:**  
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***HONORING  
GARY LaBARBERA***



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# ***Congratulations to our good friend in Labor Gary LaBarbera***

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Tel: (914) 423-4031

Best Wishes to my friends at the  
IrishEcho on the occasion of celebrating your  
Annual Labor Awards

I join you in celebrating this year's honorees:  
Gary LaBarbera, Brianne Conlon, Jay Frasier,  
Joan Corey Jim Devine, Martin Lydon,  
Alice O'Neil, Richard McSpedon and  
Richard Tolson

Thank you for your commitment to promoting  
and preserving the Irish heritage and traditions,  
and contributing to the cultural richness of  
New York State.



**Congratulations**  
*to Teamsters Local 25 Business Agent*  
**Joan C. Corey**  
*along with all the*  
*2021 Irish Echo Labor Award Recipients*



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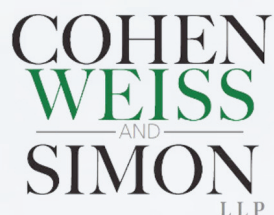
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## CONGRATULATIONS

*to our good friend*

**Gary LaBarbera**

*and*

*All the Honorees*



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## INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING ENGINEERS LOCAL 4



*Congratulates*

### THE 2021 IRISH ECHO LABOR LEADER HONOREES

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MARTIN LYDON, RICHARD McSPEDON, RICHARD TOLSON AND ALICE ONEIL**

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#### Training Coordinator

Michael J. Carey



## ***Best Wishes and Future Success***

*From*

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Stratford, Connecticut***

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President

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**Teamsters Local 1150**

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***The Entire Membership of Local 926***





## *Congratulations*

### **2021 Labor Leader**

#### **Gary LaBarbera**

Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York, President; New York State Building and Construction Trades Council

#### **Martin Lydon**

Director of Civil Service Affairs for the New York City District Council of Carpenters

and all the Honorees during this year's  
**2021 Irish Labor Awards**

**Scott Corneby**  
President

**John F. O'Hare**  
Managing Director





*is proud to join The Irish Echo  
in honoring  
2021 Labor Leader*

***Gary LaBarbera***

***Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York,  
President***

***New York State Building and Construction Trades Council,  
President***



# Congratulations Gary LaBarbera

Best Wishes to Irish Echo  
From All of Your Friends at Segal



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AND  
CONGRATULATIONS TO AWARD RECIPIENTS AND HONOREES

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The Executive Board, Members and Staff of  
**Construction and General Building Laborers' Local 79**  
are proud to support the

## ***11<sup>th</sup> Annual Irish Echo Labor Awards***

***Congratulations to All Honorees***



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# **DOCKBUILDERS TIMBERMEN**

## **Local Union No. 1556**

**of Greater New York, New Jersey and Vicinity**

PILE DRIVING  
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DOCKBUILDING  
BUILDING FOUNDATION  
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**Congratulations and Best Wishes to**



**MARTIN LYDON**



**Director of Civil Service Affairs  
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**We salute your years of dedicated Union  
advocacy and are honored to work  
with you and the District Council**



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Representing our members and the community throughout the Western United States, Hawaii and Guam.

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Congratulations to Executive  
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**2021 Irish Echo  
Labor Award Winner**

Sincerely,  
The Emerald Society Officers



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2021



**Irish Labor Awards 2021**  
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**240 West 47th Street, New York NY**



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Laborers' International Union of North America  
General Secretary-Treasurer  
& New England Regional Manager  
**Armand E. Sabitoni,**  
on behalf of LIUNA's New England Region,  
*proudly congratulate*  
Building & Construction Trades Council  
of Greater New York President  
**Gary LaBarbera**  
on being honored with  
the 2021 Labor Leader Award at this  
year's 11th Annual Irish Labor Awards.



**LIUNA!**  
*Feel the* **Care**  
NEW ENGLAND LABORERS





# GRAND COUNCIL OF UNITED EMERALD SOCIETIES INC.

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REORGANIZED IN 1975

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THERE IS NO STRENGTH WITHOUT UNITY

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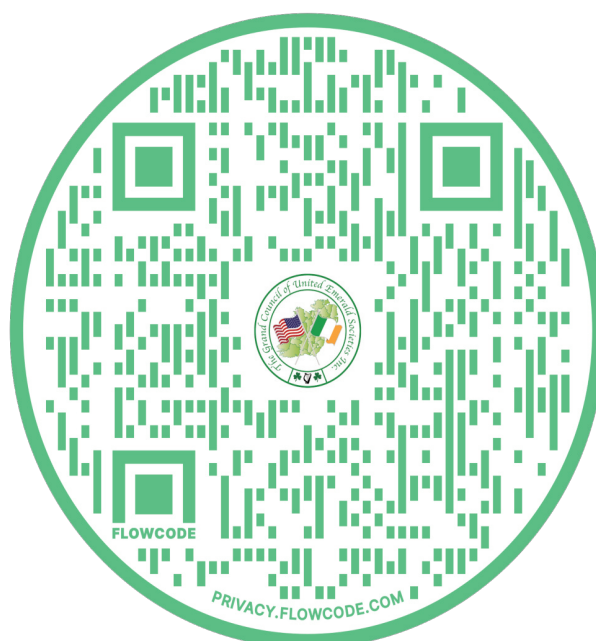
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are proud to support

**The Irish Echo**

and congratulations to our brother

**Gary LaBarbera**

on being honored as Irish Labor

Leader of the Year



**WE BUILT THIS CITY**



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# Congratulations to the 2021 IRISH LABOR AWARDS HONOREES

**and wish The Irish Echo  
continued success**



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**Long Island Public Service Employees**

**UNITED MARINE DIVISION  
INTERNATIONAL LONG SHOREMEN'S ASSOCIATION  
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**International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers  
Administrative District Council of New Jersey  
Locals No. 4 & 5**

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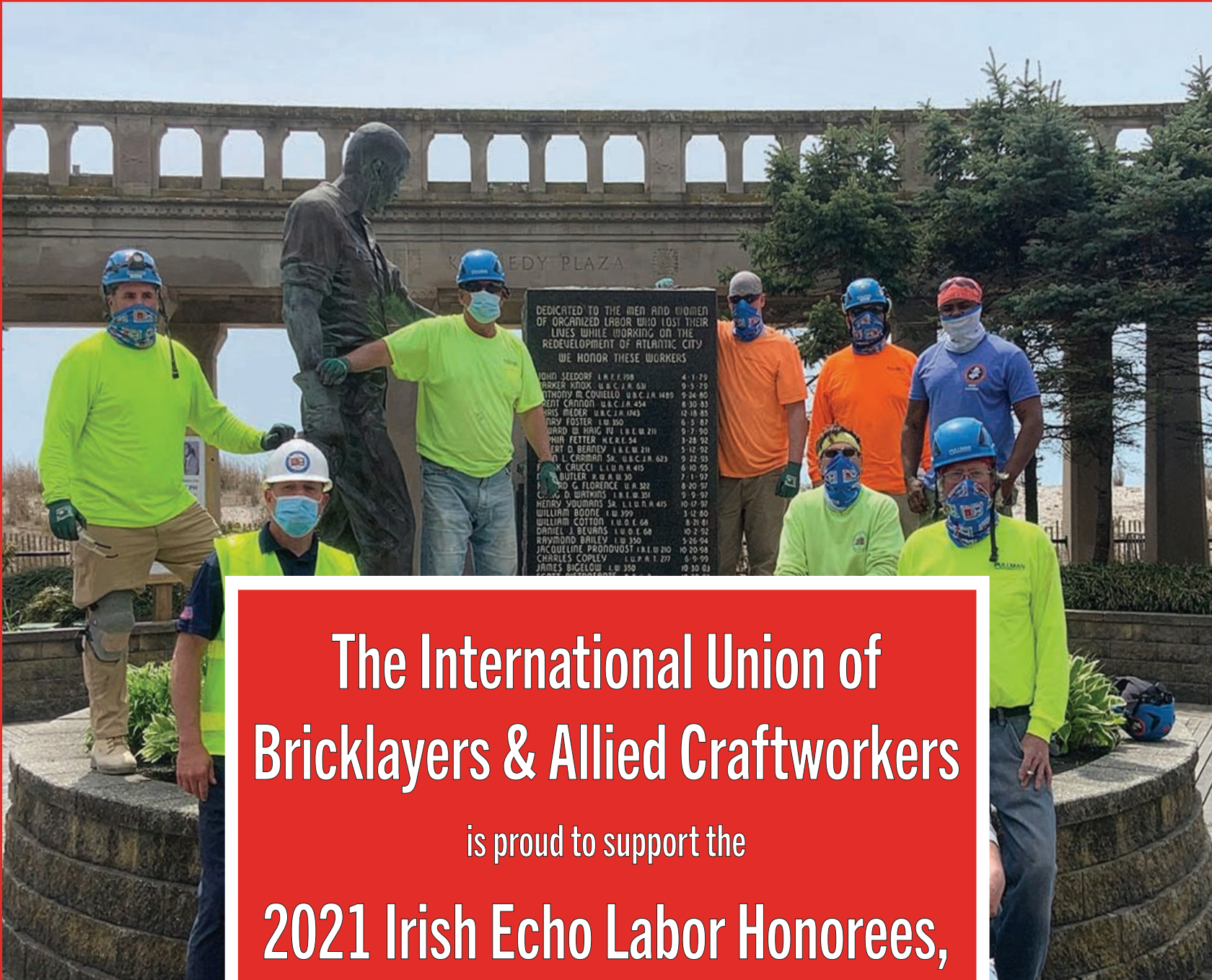
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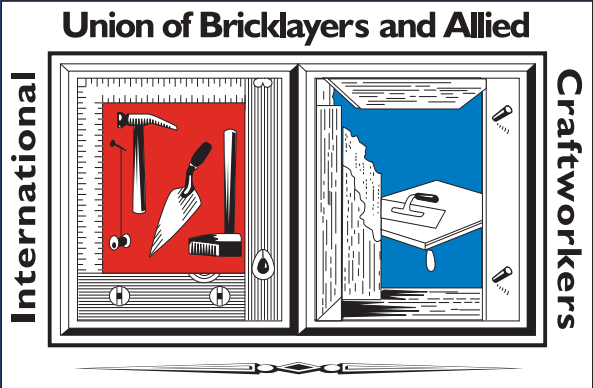




The International Union of  
Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers  
is proud to support the  
2021 Irish Echo Labor Honorees,  
and offers a special note of congratulations to BAC's own  
**Rich Tolson.**

**Timothy J. Driscoll**  
President

**Carlos Aquin**  
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**Robert Arnold**  
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**Jeremiah Sullivan, Jr.**  
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# Congratulations to all our honorees

## **2021 Labor Leader Gary LaBarbera**

Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York, President;  
New York State Building and Construction Trades Council, President

## **2021 Labor Ambassadors**

### **Brianne Conlan**

Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc., Senior Staff Investigator, Law Department  
(Litigation Center of Excellence) and VP of the Emerald Society of Consolidated Edison

### **Jay Frasier**

Business Agent, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers L.U. 103

### **Jim Devine**

Retired (he teamed up with John Lawe of the TWU, Teddy Gleason of the ILA  
and formed the Irish American Labor Coalition (IALC).)

### **Joan Corey**

Teamsters Local Union No. 25 - Business Agent

### **Martin Lydon**

Director of Civil Service Affairs for the New York City District Council of Carpenters

### **Richard McSpedon**

Local 3 IBEW Business Representative

### **Richard Tolson**

President - Tolson Consulting/Labor management; Vice-Chair Casino Reinvestment Development Authority;  
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### **Alice O'Neil**

United Federation of Teachers District 71  
Representative and Co-Chair of the United Federation of Teachers Irish Studies Committee