



Dear Graduate and Parents,

We are excited to be celebrating the 24th Annual NYS LEAH Commencement Ceremony And would like to let you know how blessed we are to welcome you to the LEAH Class of 2019. We call this ceremony a “commencement” ceremony rather than a “graduation” ceremony because instead of thinking of this as an *end* of your school years, we consider this a celebration of the *beginning* of what God will be doing in your life.

Please carefully read through the following items of interest so that you can make necessary arrangements for you and your family.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Location/Time:** The commencement ceremony will take place at The Smith Center for the Arts in Geneva, NY on **June 1, 2019**. The ceremony will begin at **4:30 PM** with a slide-show presentation of graduates’ photos. The ceremony will be a stand-alone event and there will be no conference.
- Facility:** Please be advised that The Smith is an historic opera house with comfortable theatre-style seating, a balcony, and is climate-controlled.
- Guests/Tickets:** Guests may enter The Smith after 3:30 PM. **NO TICKETS ARE REQUIRED** for the commencement ceremony. The wheel-chair accessible seating is very limited and is first-come, first served.
- Seating:** The only reserved seats are for the graduates and their parents, so please make arrangements for any other children to sit with someone else.
- Parking:** There is ample parking in a municipal lot across the street from The Smith. Parking is free and there are many handicapped spots available.
- Hotels:** If overnight accommodations are needed, visit www.leah.org to obtain a list of hotels that are extending special rates for the LEAH Commencement Ceremony. Please take note of deadlines and be sure to mention LEAH to obtain the special rate.
- Meals:** Our day is very full, with only time for brief meals/snacks. I suggest you eat

before you arrive or bring a lunch or snacks with you. There will be approximately one hour after the rehearsal and before line-ups when there would be time to grab something to eat. There are several restaurants/cafes located within walking distance but you are also welcome to bring a cooler into the dance studio. There is no food available at The Smith.

DETAILED INFORMATION

Parents & Graduates: In order for this day to run smoothly, everyone needs to be prepared and **ON TIME**. These instructions should answer many of your questions, but there will be a short Q and A at the rehearsal.

Special Needs: Each of you will need to climb a set of stairs to the stage, and then exit down more stairs. There will be volunteers to assist you, but if climbing stairs is a problem for you, or, if you have other needs, please let me know as soon as possible so we can do our best to assist you.

Attire: Please remember that **modesty** is the rule and that this is a special day. **Both** parents and graduates will be on stage for the diploma presentation.

Photos: Each graduate (with parents) will be center stage for a very brief photo opportunity after receiving their diploma. The official photographer will take stage photographs and make them available to order. This year there will be NO taped area in the center aisle in front of the stage or off to the side for the benefit of your guests. Please ask your guests to stay seated, as it will be disrupting to other guests if folks are leaving their seats. **No video cameras are to be set up in the aisles.**

If you have not yet ordered professional portraits, go to:

http://www.lrsiimages.com/leah_conv.html for pricing and order form.

Video of the Ceremony: Due to decreased interest from families, we are **NO LONGER** offering the opportunity to order a DVD of the ceremony. We regret the inconvenience this may cause.

What to bring:

Your Cap/Gown/Tassel/Diploma

****A package with your order will arrive in early May. If you have not received it by May 15th, contact Holly right away.****

Bobby pins to hold cap

Camera, extra film, batteries, and someone to use it!

Brush, comb, tissues

Safety pins (you never know!)

Snacks/Water



Schedule for the day

- 9:00 AM – Graduate Breakfast** – Must have pre-registered – **The Ramada, Geneva Lakefront** located at 41 Lakefront Drive, Geneva, NY 14456. Directions may be found at: www.leah.org/commencement.
- 10:00 AM** – Speakers at Graduate Breakfast – Parents of pre-registered graduates are invited.
The Ramada Geneva Lakefront
- 10:30 AM** – Graduate Breakfast ended.
- 11:00 AM** – Arrive at the **Smith Center for the Arts** and find **restrooms**, or **changing rooms**. There will be signs to assist you. The individual photos are the first event, and you will want to change into your cap and gown.
- 11-12:00 PM** – **Individual photos** taken in The Smith on the stage. If you ordered a portrait package, please do not forget to have your photo taken. The photographer **will be able** to accommodate any who did not previously order portraits.
- 12:00 PM** – Assemble on the **stage** for the **group photos**. Your name will be on a list by height with the tallest graduates closest to stage right. Each group will line up for the photo when directed to do so. Please try to remain quiet so that you can hear and follow instructions. **We cannot wait for you; if you are late you will miss the photo.** Parents: we ask that you exit to the Lobby. The photographer needs the seating area cleared so he does not need to remove you from the photo. Your assistance is appreciated.
- 1:00 PM** – *Or when group photo is completed:* Head directly to the **floor seating**, where the **rehearsal** will take place. There will be volunteers to assist you. Please find your seats as quickly as possible. It will take a while to seat almost 300 people so that the rehearsal can begin on time.
- 1:30 PM** – *Or when everyone is seated:* Rehearsal begins. **Graduates and both parents** should be in attendance unless prior arrangements have been made with Holly. **Please be on time.** If you should arrive late, please quickly and quietly, find, and take your seats.
- 2:30 PM** (approx.) – Rehearsal ends, but remain seated. **Graduates** will be able to view the Pre-Ceremony DVD. This is the only opportunity for the graduates to view the slideshow as they will be lining up when it is shown to the parents and guests. Parents may quietly leave, or may stay. Parents will be viewing the slideshow after they are seated just prior to the beginning of the ceremony
- 3:00 PM** (approx.) - Seating area must be vacated immediately so it can be set up for the ceremony. This is the time to get something to eat.
- 3:30 PM** – **Guests** may enter the Smith for commencement seating.

3:50 PM – Parents line up in the same order as rehearsal in the **second floor dance studio**.

To enter the studio, you must leave the Smith and enter the second door on the right and go up the stairs. There will be a volunteer and signs to assist you. Please follow their directions. You will be entering at **4:10 PM** whether everyone is in place or not. Again, it takes a while to seat 250+ so please be on time. There are only enough seats reserved for parents. Siblings will need to sit with other guests.

4:30 PM – Graduates line up in the same order as rehearsal **downstairs in the Cabaret**. There will be signs and someone to assist you. Tassels should be on the left, you will be instructed as to when to switch to the right.

4:30 PM – Parents have been seated and the Pre-Ceremony DVD begins

5:00 PM – Ceremony begins

6:45 PM (approximately) – Ceremony ends. Recessional begins for graduates with parents following. **Please ask guests to remain at their seats until the parents have exited the auditorium.** When leaving the auditorium, graduates (and parents) are to continue past the main lobby area and exit to the outside to greet guests.



If you have questions, feel free to contact us:

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**** We are heading to Geneva on May 31st. DO NOT use our home number, we will not be home to get your message. Please use Holly's cell number: 585-362-5833 ****