

The Embassy of Hungary

Kedves Honfitársaim, Dear Hungarian Americans,

This year we are celebrating the 60th Anniversary of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and Freedom Fight, one of the most important turning points in Hungarian and world history, giving proof of our most cherished value – our love of freedom. For the Revolution started the breakup of the Soviet Empire and ultimately led to the fall of communism.

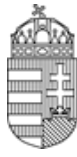
Commemorating the 1956 Revolution here in the United States I believe is a most elevating opportunity for all of us. It is my strong desire and intention to make it together a truly unique and inspirational experience. The values of the Revolution, an unquenchable love for freedom, liberty and independence, not only define who we are as Hungarians, but also remain the central pillars of U.S.-Hungarian friendship. In 1956, the United States gave a warm, welcoming home to the tens of thousands of Hungarian freedom fighters. We so much treasure these bonds.

Today, the Hungarian-American community is a more established and productive part of the United States than ever before. Spread out across the U.S., I have no doubt celebrations will be taking place in every major city and town. The year 1956 and the story of our fight for freedom have an inspirational power to connect our heritage with our future, 56ers with younger generations, and Hungarians all around the world with those in the United States. Every member of the Hungarian-American community should have the chance to celebrate and remember the 60th anniversary of our fight for freedom together. It is in this spirit that we reach out to each and every one of you to better connect ourselves and create a stronger Hungarian-American community.

I would like to announce three concrete projects in honor of this year's celebrations. First, on the eve of the anniversary of the '56 Revolution, I invite you to help create a more visible community through the launch of a new collaborative online map, accessible to all, that will show the various commemorative events planned by Hungarian communities throughout the country. Get on our common map and share with us and the rest of the Hungarian-American community your planned events. The map – our common work in progress – is open to contribution from all can be found at:

https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?hl=en_US&app=mp&mid=zyQnXLwpJG_4.k28nAzkUC1CA

Second, we, the Embassy of Hungary, are also launching a new initiative entitled 'Objects of Freedom' to commemorate the arrival of the heroes of 1956 to the United States. As part of this project, we would like to collect personal objects or photos of these objects that 56ers brought with them from Hungary. Our aim is to celebrate the deeply personal stories of 1956 – to create a bridge between the personal memories and the collective memory of our nation.



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We kindly ask you all to send us these objects, or photos of these objects, with a short explanation or story of how they arrived in the U.S. so we may share them in the form of an exhibition. You can send us your objects along with your name and contact details to: 3910 Shoemaker St, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008; or, you can send us a digital copy by email to the following address: 1956anniversary.was@mfa.gov.hu.

Third, I very much believe that the heritage of 1956 is something we must continue to pass on to future generations. In this spirit I would like to invite all children under the age of 12 to take part in a drawing competition depicting the stories of how their family came to the United States in 1956. This is a wonderful opportunity for the younger members of our community – who may not know the history of the Revolution – to connect with the stories of their grandparents and other relatives. The Embassy of Hungary will hold an exhibition of these children's drawings. All participants will receive a commemorative certificate from me, and the winner will be invited to our Gala Dinner commemorating 1956 to be held in Washington, D.C. this October. Please send your drawing or a digital copy of your drawing to the same address as above.

With your help, I very much hope that we can make 2016 truly meaningful and that your personal memories will give all of us a better understanding of our common quest for freedom. I also hope that we may use this unique celebration as an opportunity for a stronger partnership within the Hungarian-American community.

Please also keep an eye out for forthcoming announcements and messages we will send about additional commemorative events that we will be organizing and hosting!

Thank you for your help and cooperation. I very much look forward to your participation in honoring the true heroes of 1956.

Köszönöm szépen. Számítok az együttműködésükre.

Sincerely,

Dr. Réka Szemerkenyi
Ambassador of Hungary