

February 23, 2009

**GRADUATION INFORMATION FOR
PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF STUDENTS
GRADUATING IN DECEMBER 2008/
MAY 2009**

Dear parent or guardian of Manhattan School of Music graduate candidate:

Congratulations! You have contributed to the success of your Manhattan School of Music student: that is a huge accomplishment. Thank you for all you have done to facilitate their graduation and their love for music.

You are being sent this information because you have been identified by the Registrar's Office as the parent or guardian of a December 2008 graduate or a May 2009 candidate for graduation. Your student has been sent this information and the forms they need to complete. We have asked them to read all enclosed information carefully and have reminded them that it is essential that they complete various forms and meet deadlines to ensure they have a proper place at graduation and in the commencement program. I am hoping that this information will help you to guide and encourage them to take care of all tasks related to graduation. There is also information that should help you plan for this special day. All students who are graduating in December 2008 or May 2009 need to complete the Commencement Participation form.

All candidates for graduation are cordially invited to attend **Manhattan School of Music's 83rd Commencement**, to be held on **Friday, May 15, 2009**, at the **Riverside Church**, 490 Riverside Drive, New York City, at **1:30 p.m.** So that you may plan for the occasion, this memo summarizes important information, including dates and times of the graduation events. The students are responsible to meet all deadlines associated with the graduation ceremony. It is our hope that this information will help you, the family of the graduate to motivate your graduating student to meet all deadlines and due dates.

Forms

Commencement Participation Form and Diploma Application Form

All students who graduated in December or who are graduating in May must complete both the **Diploma Application Form** and the **Commencement Participation Form** to ensure that names are printed correctly in the program and on the diploma. ***It is critical that the formal name is written identically on both forms.*** The students have been told to **turn both forms in by March 27, 2009.** The Commencement Participation Form should be turned into the Office of Student and Residence Life and the Diploma Application Form should be turned into the Registrar.

Tickets

Ordering Tickets

The commencement ceremony is a ticketed event and **all guests must have a ticket to attend.** Graduate candidates must complete the **Commencement Participation Form** and turn it into the Office of Student and Residence Life by **Friday, March 27, 2009 to request tickets.** Graduates can request up to 8 guests to attend the commencement ceremony. As guests, you can not request tickets. Your graduating student has been told to request the tickets for their guests and to keep all sets of parents and guardians in mind as they order tickets.

Students living outside the New York City area have been asked to e-mail or call Melanie Dorsey, Associate Director of Student and Residence Life, at mdorsey@msmny.edu or (917) 493-4588 to **complete the Commencement Participation Form by Friday, March 27, 2009.** If graduating students complete the form over the phone, by e-mail, or by fax, it is their responsibility to confirm with Melanie that the information was received clearly, correctly and on time.

Picking up tickets

Graduating students pick up their tickets between Tuesday, April 21, 2009, and Thursday, April 30, 2009 in the Office of Student and Residence Life to ensure that all guests receive tickets prior to the day of the ceremony. The graduating students have the responsibility of forward their tickets to the appropriate guests in advance of the ceremony. Graduate candidates who do not turn in the completed Commencement Participation Form by the deadline will not be able to pick up tickets. Tickets not picked up before May 1, 2009, will be made available to other graduate candidates on May 11, 2009 in the Office of Student and Residence Life.

Late guests are not guaranteed seating. All ticketed guests are encouraged to arrive by 1:15pm so that others in the audience are not disturbed.

Caps and Gowns

Ordering academic attire

Graduation candidates are requested to dress in academic attire, including cap, gown, and appropriate hood, to participate in the commencement ceremony. Manhattan School of Music will provide academic attire for graduating students who order and measure for attire by Friday, March 27, 2009. Graduation candidates are requested to dress in comfortable nice looking attire with shoes that are easy to walk in.

Any graduation candidate who is not in the New York City area should call Melanie Dorsey at (917) 493-4588 by March 27, 2009, so that she can make arrangements to order the appropriate academic attire for them.

Measuring for academic attire

The Office of Student and Residence Life will measure students who are graduating for the proper cap and gown between February 5, 2009 and March 27, 2009. **Those who order and or measure for academic attire after March 27, 2009, will be charged a late fee of \$25.**

Picking up academic attire

Academic attire may be picked up by graduating students in a location to be determined May 11–14, 2009, from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Students are strongly encouraged to pick up their cap and gown prior to the ceremony. Those who wait until the day of the event to pick up their attire will do so in room 102 in the school building.

Returning academic attire

After the ceremony, the Office of Student and Residence Life will be open for one hour to accept the return of the cap, gown, and hood to room 102 and the hallway outside of Greenfield. The final deadline for the return of all caps, gowns, and hoods is Monday, May 18, 2009 at noon to the Office of Student and Residence Life. Graduating students will be charged a \$25 late and postal fee for gowns turned in after Monday, March 18, 2009 at noon. Additional charges will be made for any academic apparel that is not returned.

Announcements and rings

Personalized graduation announcements and rings can be ordered through Jostens. The announcement is an effective way to let family and friends know about this accomplishment. Personalized graduation announcements and/or rings can be ordered by contacting Jostens directly at www.jostens.com/college or 1-800- 854-7464 between 7:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Photos

A professional photographer from Chappell Graduation Images will be photographing the Commencement, and we encourage you to take advantage of the photos offered from Chappell Studio. Graduation candidates are asked to arrive by **11:00 a.m. on Friday, May 15, 2009**, to pose for individual cap and gown portrait photos in the Assembly Hall of the Riverside Church. The portraits will be taken from **11:00 p.m.–1:00 p.m.** The professional photographer will also take a photo of each graduate as he or she crosses the stage. Proofs will be sent to each graduate 7–10 days after the ceremony. Chappell's web site can be accessed at www.gradimages.com and their customer service number is 1-800-424-3686.

Guests will not be allowed to stand in the aisles or at the stage to take photos. Also, tripods and the use of flash are not allowed. Hand-held audiovisual recording devices are permitted, but guests are asked to come with extra batteries, as there will be no power sources available.

Rehearsal

There will be a rehearsal for all graduation candidates from **3:00 p.m. to approximately 4:00 p.m. Thursday, May 14, 2009**, in Ades Performance Space. A pizza party for all those who participate in the rehearsal will be held immediately following the practice.

Lineup prior to the ceremony

Graduation candidates will enter the Riverside Church through the Claremont Avenue entrance (91 Claremont Avenue) and will proceed to Assembly Hall to check in and line up. **Students who are graduating should arrive by 12:30 p.m.**, as they need to check in and the line starts moving at 1:00 p.m. The ceremony will start promptly at 1:30 p.m. Graduates do not return to the line up area after the ceremony, so they are advised not to bring any bags or personal items to the ceremony. **Guests are not permitted to enter through the Claremont Avenue entrance and are not allowed in the lineup area for the graduation candidates.**

Duration of the ceremony

The ceremony will last approximately two and a half hours.

Seating for guests

Guests enter through 490 Riverside Drive entrance of the Riverside Church. Doors will open at 1:00 p.m. for ticketed guests with mobility impairments or other special needs. All other guests with tickets will be seated at approximately 1:05 p.m. Please allow extra travel time to accommodate the time needed to find parking and to deal with other issues related to congestion. All guests are encouraged to arrive no later than 1:15 p.m., as **late guests are not guaranteed seating** and will be allowed to enter only as space allows and only at designated times.

Reception

Following the ceremony, you and your graduating student are invited to a reception to celebrate their accomplishment. A reception for Bachelor degree recipients will take place in the Mitzi Newhouse Pavilion and a second reception for all other graduates will occur in the Ades Performance Space. I hope you can attend this reception, as it is a nice way for graduates, families, and friends to meet and congratulate one another.

The Commencement Program

Graduating students are invited to check their name, listed on the draft of the commencement program, to make sure it is correct, by visiting the Office of Student and Residence Life April 20-24, 2009.

Make your mark as alumni!

Graduating students are encouraged to **pre-register now** for the newly launched Alumni Online Community! This free service allows alumni to network with other alums, maintain contact info, share news, and stay connected to MSM. Students may contact John K. Blanchard, Director of Alumni Affairs/Web Site Content Manager for more information at jblanchard@msmnyc.edu.

Graduation Gifts and Diploma Frames

The Campus Store stocks a wide assortment of gifts as well as custom diploma frames suitable for preserving your hard-earned certificate. The store's graduation selection includes fine picture frames, School blank note cards, key rings, letter openers, coasters, pens, wine glasses, men's and ladies' watches, as well as sweatshirts & T-shirts. Purchases prior to graduation may be arranged by contacting Luis Plaza, Campus Store Manager, at (917) 493-4031 or campus-store@msmnyc.edu. The Campus Store is located just past Borden Hall.

Flowers

If you would like to order from a local florist in advance of the ceremony, Academy Floral Co. is located at 2780 Broadway, at the cross streets of Broadway and 107th Street. They can be contacted at www.academyfloral.com or by emailing the owner at sal@academyfloral.com. Embassy Florist is located at 2458 Broadway, at the cross streets of Broadway and 91st Street, and may be reached at (212) 724-8604 or (212) 724-8253. Embassy Florist can be reached at www.embassyflowers.com. For contact information about additional florists, please feel free to email our office at studentlife@msmnyc.edu

Hotels, Directions, and Parking

Please contact us at Studentlife@msmnyc.edu by May 4, 2009 if you would like a copy of the list of hotels, travel directions, or parking garages.

Please arrive early to secure parking. Parking may be available on the side streets surrounding Manhattan School of Music, especially on Riverside Drive, but since it is a workday for many, on-street parking may be limited. Please pay special attention to parking signs to ensure you or your guests are not ticketed during the ceremony.

Things to do in NYC

We have compiled a list of things to do in the city so you can plan a weekend visit to make this graduation weekend memorable. Please email Studentlife@msmnyc.edu to request a copy of the list. In addition, please make every effort to attend The American Musical Theater Ensemble performances of *And the World Goes Round: the Songs of Kander and Ebb*, on Thursday, May 14, Friday, May 15, or Saturday, May 16, at 7:30 p.m. in John C. Borden Auditorium. Carolyn Marlow is the Director of the American Musical Theater Ensemble. For more information about tickets, please contact the MSM Ticket Office at 917 493-4428 or concertinfo@msmnyc.edu.

Questions?

If you have any questions, please feel free to call Melanie Dorsey, Associate Director of Student Life, or me, Cathy Raynis Meeker, PhD, Director of Student and Residence Life. Melanie Dorsey can be reached at (917) 493-4588 or at mdorsey@msmny.edu. I can be reached at (917)493-4457 or craynis@msmny.edu. You can also look at the Manhattan School of Music web site www.msmny.edu for more information.

Thank you, and congratulations!

Cathy Raynis Meeker, PhD
Director of Student and Residence Life