

OPENING CONVOCATION: FINNFEST 2026

September 17, 2026, 5:00 PM

- 5:00 PM Greetings and welcome to FinnFest 2026
 “Hidden in Plain Sight” 2026 Festival theme
 In honor of the 250th anniversary of US Declaration of Independence
 Emcee Erik Brown, FinnFest USA Board of Directors
- 5:05 PM Reading of FinnFest’s official Inclusion statement.
 David Leifer, FinnFest USA Board of Directors.
- 5:10 PM National anthems of Finland & USA.
 Suomi 100 Choir, Eeva Savolainen-Director, will sing the anthems.
 Audience will be encouraged to join in.
- 5:20 PM Greetings and Welcome:
 K. Marianne Wargelin, FinnFest USA President.
 Steve Riedel, Honorary Consul of Finland.
 Hannakaisa Andersson, Cultural Counselor, Embassy of Finland.
- 5:30 PM Order of the White Rose of Finland Award
 Knighting Ceremony for Beatrice Ojakangas.
- 5:40 PM Finland 100 Choir performs with Eepi Ursin.
 Kesäpäivä Kangasala, Zacharias Topelius, poet; Gabriel Linsen,
composer.
 Born of the Forest, Eepi Ursin, poet and composer.
- 5:55 PM Poetry recited in honor of Beatrice Ojakangas.
 Jim Johnson, poet.
- 6:05 PM Rollcall: Finland and Finnish American historic anniversaries in 2026.
 James Ojala and Liam Reidy, FinnFest USA Board of Directors
- 6:10 PM Music: Karri Miettinen, aka Paleface
 “Finlandia Hymn,” English language words used in Finnish American
communities
 Finnish American IWW song
- 6:25 PM Final comments from Emcee, Erik Brown
- 6:30 PM Reception begins.

