

In Association with

# IRISH

# options

19th Annual

# 40

# UNDER

# 40

A celebration of Irish and Irish Americans who have distinguished themselves in their respective fields of work before reaching the age of forty.

Friday, February 27th, 2026

Club101, 101 Park Ave, New York



Guest Speaker:  
NY State Senator  
Patricia Fahy



# 40 Under 40 Marks Nineteen

By Ray O'Hanlon

The Echo's annual 40 Under 40 Awards has reached the age of nineteen. The 2026 awards event is set for Club 101 in the Kalikow Building, Park Avenue, Manhattan on Friday, February 27.

It will convene for what will be the 19th gathering and celebration of excellence for award winners yet to reach the landmark age of four score.

This year's awards being the nineteenth annual, the grand total of award winners since the event's inception now equals 760.

That total number of award winners to date makes for a lot of living, work, accomplishment, ambition, hope, and dreams.

The awards celebrate all of these and more. And they are, we hope, as much a spur for the future as they are a recognition of each winner's present and past.

Our award winners have already blazed trails through their lives that bring credit to themselves, their families, their commu-

nities, Ireland, Irish America, and the United States of America.

The awards are not given on the basis of specific jobs, vocations or achievements, but rather cover all possible career bases and pursuits and are prompted by nominators who see in each award winner a reason, or reasons, as to why he or she stands out at a time of life when the aforementioned landmark age has yet to be reached.

The varied careers, and the different places our award winners call home, is now a familiar aspect of 40 Under 40. The awards are national and international, personal and shared. And we believe they wear the passing years well. And the Irish Echo is proud to play host in what is our 98th year of publication.

So congratulations to all this year's award winners. You have traveled far but have yet a long way to go. We wish you continued success each and every day.



## CONGRATULATIONS!

*Cheers to*  
PRESIDENT  
**CRAIG O'HALLORAN**  
& SECRETARY  
**JULIANNE COX**

AND ALL THE  
2026 IRISH ECHO  
40 UNDER 40 HONOREES

[chicagoireland.org](http://chicagoireland.org)



# Options



Harley Semple



Sasha Doyle

Options is delighted to congratulate  
**Harley Semple and Sasha Doyle**

on their nominations for the 2026  
Irish Echo 40 Under 40 Awards.

Their leadership, dedication, and outstanding  
contributions to our company and the wider  
community make us incredibly proud.

Wishing them the very best as they vie for this  
well-deserved recognition!

## Darragh Gannon

**Place of birth:** Ireland.

**Where do you live?** Washington DC.

**Current company and position?** Georgetown University/Associate Director of Global Irish Studies.

**First job and what it taught me?** My first official job was as Curatorial Researcher to the historic 'Proclaiming a Republic: the 1916 Rising' centenary exhibition at the National Museum of Ireland. It taught me the true value of Mark Twain's famous quote: "find a job you enjoy doing, and you will never have to work a day in your life".

I will be forever grateful to my colleagues at the National Museum of Ireland for making my first employment opportunity such a creative, collaborative, and culturally significant experience.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** As a historian of modern Ireland and the Irish diaspora, it is a daily privilege to bring to life – through books, lectures, and media appearances – the rich heritage of the Irish-American relationship.

I'm passionate about sharing the legacies of Irish-American history with the next generation of political, civic, and community leaders. At Georgetown University, I teach courses on Irish history - from the Great Irish Famine to the Good Friday Agreement – to over 200 students annually. Many of these School of Foreign Service students will become future US diplomats.

Beyond the classroom, I am an enterprising



ambassador for Irish history across the Atlantic. Appointed by the Smithsonian Museum as an expert on their Celtic Voyage cruise, I serve as a heritage guide and cultural commentator for American tourists on their premier journey across Ireland. Many of these visitors have

subsequently developed a life-long interest in Irish culture.

As we approach America's 250th birthday, finally, I have taken on the role of Lead Historian to IrishAmerica250, a nationwide initiative to celebrate and commemorate the historic achievements of the Irish-American community. Supporting the invaluable work of the Irish Embassy, community groups (such as the Ancient Order of Hibernians/Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians), and cultural institutions (such as the American Irish Historical Society), I am committed to making 2026 a year to remember for the Irish-American community.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:**

I once enjoyed an incredible night out with Andrea Corr and Michael Flatley...that's all I'm willing to state on the record!

**D**arragh Gannon proudly serves as Associate Director of Global Irish Studies at Georgetown University and Ireland Funds Fellow at the Princess Grace Library, Monaco. He has published three landmark books on modern Ireland: Proclaiming a Republic: Ireland, 1916, and the national collection; Ireland 1922: independence, partition, civil war; and the award-winning Conflict, Diaspora, and Empire: Irish nationalism in Britain, 1912-1922. A former Fulbright scholar, he is a regular commentator on Irish affairs for international media, including BBC, RTE, Irish Times, and TIME. Passionate about the history and future of Irish-America, Darragh serves as Lead Historian to the nation-wide IrishAmerica250 program.



## Mallory McSweeney

**Place of birth:** Chicago.

**Where do you live?** Chicago.

**Current company and position?** I am a Meeting & Events Manager at CBRE, overseeing internal and external programming, sales, operations, and business development for two dynamic meeting and event spaces. I am also a licensed real estate broker with Compass, primarily representing my husband's residential development company, Cashel Homes.

**First job and what it taught me?** My first job was at the Taste of Chicago, working at the legendary Reilly's Daughter booth. That summer role introduced me to the hospitality and events industries and, unbeknownst to me at the time, set the course for my career. The experience strengthened my ability to thrive in a fast-paced, public-facing environment and taught me the satisfaction that comes from long, demanding day of "graft". It also pushed me outside my comfort zone - joining a team of strangers as a fairly shy teenager challenged me to build relationships quickly, a skill that has proven invaluable throughout my career.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** Growing up in Chicago's Irish community, among both newcomers and long-established families, I was steeped in the culture from an early age. I love connecting with people and supporting the city's Irish

organizations, in deference to my roots (Galway, Limerick). I currently serve on the Board of Directors of the Irish Fellowship Club of Chicago and have previously held leadership roles with Ireland Network Chicago, the Irish March for You Committee, and the Young Irish Fellowship Club of Chicago, where I served as President. I've also had the fun honor of judging both the Chicago Rose Selection and the Chicago St. Patrick's Day Parade Queen Contest. I often play the role of connector, helping newly arrived Irish transplants find the right people and resources as they establish themselves in Chicago. Having lived in both Galway and Dublin, I understand how meaningful each connection can be when starting a new chapter and building community. My Donegal-born husband and I are lucky enough to travel to Ireland several times a year, most recently to celebrate our son's baptism in his home parish.

**M**allory McSweeney is a Meeting and Events Manager at CBRE, tapping into her strong background in hospitality, real estate, and client engagement. Prior to joining CBRE, she built her career in Chicago's hospitality industry, holding roles in Event Sales, Marketing, and Business Development. In addition to her work in events, Mallory is a licensed real estate broker with Compass. She studied History at Marquette University and Irish Studies at the University of Galway. Mallory is proud to be from the South Side of Chicago and was overjoyed to welcome her first child, Philip, this past May.

## Rory Schulte

**Place of birth:** Great Falls, MT.

**Where do you live?** Great Falls, MT.

**Current company and position?** I am very fortunate to have bought my family business in my hometown of Great Falls, Montana. Schulte's 38th Street Store and Coffee House have been a locally owned gas station/convenience store and coffee shop, right in the heart of the neighborhood I grew up in, since 1989. My parents started the business, and my wife, Holli, and I bought out their long-lasting business partner in 2016. In 2022 my parents were ready to retire so we bought them out and are sole owners of what we consider to be a great tradition and staple in our community.

**First job and what it taught me?** My first job, as you could probably guess, was at the family store. Prior to being old enough to work as an employee behind the counter, in our family you were always old enough to bag ice. Probably around the summer between 4th and 5th grade I began my first job bagging ice for

\$ .25/bag. We had an ice machine in the back, bags that needed to be stamped, filled, tied up and stocked. The lesson learned from that job was very simple - be accountable to the work you've committed to do.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** I was raised in a big Irish/Italian Catholic family. Growing up in that type of family comes with great pride. I was always raised to be proud of my heritage(s) and be proud of where you come from. I have always been proud to be Irish, but the AOH has been a place where I could dig deeper into my ancestry and heritage, lead other Irish Catholic men to embrace their heritage, and help take care of our communities. I believe the core of the Irish culture is taking care of our families, and our communities. To embrace our Irish heritage means that we step up and strive to take care of those two things to the best of our ability every day. This is the core values of the AOH, of my business, and what I strive to have as a core value every day.

**Something people would be surprised to**



**know about me:** Being from a town in Montana, owning a business, working in

the AOH, and lending a helping hand to my amazing wife Holli in raising our twin girls, Briana and Gracie, it would seem like it would be a stretch if I told you that my college degree is from the School of Film and Photography at Montana State University. I studied to be a Director and Actor. I then spent three years living in Los Angeles "chasing the dream" until Holli and I decided it was time to move home and start a family.

**R**ory Schulte is a husband, father, business owner, and Veteran. Rory comes from an Irish/Italian Catholic family and is a proud member and (youngest) National Director of the Ancient Order of Hibernians. He spent 6 years in the Montana Air National Guard with a deployment overseas in 2009. In 2011, he graduated from Montana State University with a Bachelor's Degree in film. After graduation he spent 3 years in Los Angeles "chasing his dream" until he moved back home with his future bride. He now resides in Great Falls, MT and has twin girls, Gracie and Briana.



Ancient Order of  
**HIBERNIANS**  
Irish • Catholic • American



# Congratulations

to all the award recipients.  
We are especially proud of the  
following honorees who are  
Brother Hibernians as they  
represent Irish America in their  
respective communities:



Rory Schulte



Justin Maloney



Daniel McNamara



Emmett Brewer

**Special thanks to the Irish Echo for their leadership  
and continuous presence in the Irish Community.**

The AOH is the voice of Irish America and proud to have members in all fifty states.  
Please consider joining us at [AOH.COM](http://AOH.COM)

**Sean Pender, AOH National President**

**Visit [WWW.AOH.COM/Join](http://WWW.AOH.COM/Join)**

## Siobhan Ainsworth

**Place of birth:** New York.

**Where do you live?** Massapequa Park, NY.

**Current company and position?** As CEO and President of Long Island Igloos, I oversee every facet of the business, from marketing, branding, and networking to client relations and event execution. My role spans website management, social media content creation, contracts and invoicing, insurance and safety compliance, and ensuring exceptional client satisfaction. I work closely with clients to bring their vision to life, blending creativity with logistics, and I'm equally comfortable behind the scenes strategizing as I am on-site overseeing installations. I am extremely proud of how far we've come over the last 6 years and how we've grown from backyard parties to premium installations at Wollman Rink, Rockefeller Center, Americana Mall, Hilton, and more.

**First job and what it taught me?** I started my first job when I was 15, clearing tables at a neighborhood restaurant in Massapequa Park. I did this on Thursday nights after commuting to and from Dominican Academy, an all-girl catholic high school on the upper east side. It was humbling, fast-paced, and formative, teaching me to value and respect every person's role and to take pride in earning every dollar through effort and teamwork.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** I embrace my



Irish heritage through both pride and practice. My husband is from Castlebar, and my grandparents all hailed from Roscommon and Leitrim, roots that deeply shape who we are as a family. My husband, two sons,

and I hold dual citizenship, with eight passports in our home, four American and four Irish. We return to Ireland as often as we can. It's incredibly important to me that my children know where they come from and feel connected to their history. My grandmother's father was an Arigna coal miner, and visiting the Arigna Mining Experience together last summer was a powerful reminder of the resilience and strength in our lineage. When we're not in Ireland we stay connected through sports, Sunday fry ups, and music.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** People are often surprised to learn that despite my outgoing and bubbly personality; I'm a true introvert at heart. I genuinely recharge with peace and quiet, preferably with a cup of Barry's tea in hand. And when it comes to a pint, it's Guinness or nothing.

Siobhan Ainsworth, a second-generation Irish American, is the founder, CEO, and President of Long Island Igloos. She and her husband, Neil, started the company in 2019 just four months prior to COVID. Their igloos bring warmth and creativity to gatherings, transforming spaces into luxury pop-up experiences for private, corporate, and branded events. With deep roots in Castlebar, Roscommon, and Leitrim, Siobhan embraces her Irish heritage and instills that same pride in her two sons, Patrick and Declan. Siobhan enjoys quiet moments with a cup of Barry's tea or a perfectly poured pint of Guinness.

## Tori Stewart

**Place of birth:** Ramelton, Co. Donegal.

**Where do you live?** West Palm Beach, Florida.

**Current company and position?** Graduate Intern in Wealth Management at Stifel.

**First job and what it taught me?** My first unofficial job was painting the fences around the house every summer with my brother during primary school break but I my first official job was at 16 working in a local café taking orders, clearing tables and washing dishes. This job taught me the value of hard work. Working in hospitality can often be demanding, and learning to work well under pressure & communicate effectively with coworkers and customers as a teenager has been an important role in shaping my career path and work ethic. For as long as I can remember my parents instilled in me the vitality of hard work and perseverance. Both parents being self-employed, I became commercially aware very early on. Being able to immerse myself in the workings of a business as a child has been a pivotal part of my learning journey. I wouldn't be where I am now had I not had these experiences.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?**

My Irish heritage is a massive part of who I am and even more so since moving to the US. Nothing compares to the music, culture & community. As a teenager, I was part of an Irish singing group, while I'm not a fluent speaker, I'll never forget those melodies taught to me. The support from the Irish community in the US is like no other and makes moving here so much easier. Attending events held by Irish organizations, such as Women With Ambition, where I've been able to connect with like-minded Irish women in the US has been invaluable during my time here. Having moved here from Belfast, a highlight moment for me was attending New York New Belfast. It felt like I was right at home!

I try to embrace my Irish identity everyday no matter how small - a special mention to the bottle of Mi Wadi sitting at



my work desk being a wee reminder of home.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** Something that often surprises people is that my sport growing up was rugby. I played for Letterkenny Rugby Club, starting in minis & following onto ladies' youth. The club is named

after another Ramelton native, Dave Gallagher, who served as the first ever captain of the All Blacks, allowing Letterkenny RFC to be the only other rugby club in the world to use the fern on its crest!

Tori Stewart is 23 years old, from Ramelton, Co. Donegal. She studied Business Economics at Ulster University, Belfast. During her time at university, she worked for the UU Development & Alumni Department, focusing on stakeholder & alumni engagement. Ready to utilise her academic background in economics, she moved to the US on the Graduate Visa in April. Initially in New York, she made the move to Florida and now serves as a Graduate Intern at Stifel in Palm Beach Gardens, working under Financial Advisor, Michael Brewster. She holds several music certifications from the Royal Irish Academy of Music and Trinity College London.

## Chelsea Hoy

**Place of birth:** Denver, CO.

**Where do you live?** Chicago, IL.

**Current company and position?** Trinity Irish Dance Company - Associate Artistic Director, Choreographer, and Dancer.

**First job and what it taught me?** One of my first jobs was assistant teaching Irish dance classes at the Wick School of Irish Dance, where I trained as a child. In addition to lessons in how to engage and manage a group of young people, this job helped shape my technical understanding of the form!

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** I have celebrated the rich traditions of Irish culture since I was

a young child through the art form of Irish dance - one of percussive prowess and aerial grace with limitless possibility. Now, building upon Trinity Irish Dance Company's pioneering legacy, I am grateful to continue to carve a space where Irish history and traditions are kept alive through forward-looking, integrity-filled dance experiences - always with a reverence toward our ancestors and a bold vision to evolve.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** While I have dedicated my life to celebrating Irish dance through the performing arts, my family tree does not contain ties to Ireland. In fact, while my feet and my heart are Irish, my ancestral roots are strongly Norwegian.

Associate Artistic Director of the internationally acclaimed Trinity Irish Dance Company, thirty-year-old Chelsea Hoy has been shattering previous notions of what is possible for Irish dance; a dynamic choreographer and performer at the forefront of evolving this cultural form with integrity and innovation.

A leader in the international dance community, her work has been celebrated by audiences and critics worldwide from NYC to Tokyo, Hoy has played a pivotal role in bringing Trinity's mission of female empowerment to the forefront, focused on saving Irish dance from the over commercialization that has become synonymous with the form.



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ON RECEIVING THE  
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40 UNDER 40**



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**BRENT BOOKER  
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**MICHAEL F. SABITONI  
GENERAL SECRETARY-TREASURER**



## Seamus Keane

**Place of birth:** Louisburgh, Co. Mayo Ireland.

**Where do you live?** New York City.

**Current company and position?** Co-Owner of The Trinity Gym New York City.

**First job and what it taught me?** My first job was working in the bog, cutting and footing turf. It taught me the value of hard work in the most literal way possible — long days, physical labor, and the understanding that effort is something you bring with you, not something you wait for. It also taught me early that some things are completely outside your control ... like the weather!

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** I embrace my Irish heritage by

staying connected to the Irish community in New York and by returning home several times a year. Here in the city, I stay involved with local Irish groups and make a point of supporting them through the work we do at The Trinity Gym. A big part of our mission is giving back through fitness events, and we often choose Irish organizations like the Aisling Center, Sláinte 2020, and others to benefit from those efforts.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** Most people are surprised to hear that I studied Finance and actually worked on Wall Street when I first moved to New York. After a year, I realized it wasn't for me and quit to become a fitness trainer instead. Definitely a big change — but the best decision I ever made.

Seamus Keane is the co-founder of The Trinity Gym in Long Island City, where he blends personalized coaching, community, and a deep commitment to helping people live healthier lives. Originally from Ireland, Seamus studied Finance and even worked on Wall Street before realizing his true passion lay in fitness and people, not spreadsheets. He left the corporate world to become a trainer and has since built a thriving boutique gym known for its 1:1 and small-group coaching. Seamus stays closely connected to the Irish community in New York and regularly supports organizations like the Aisling Center and Sláinte 2020.



## Zach McCue

**Place of birth:** Thousand Oaks, CA.

**Where do you live?** Cranford, New Jersey.

**Current company and position?** Chief, Intergovernmental Affairs Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

**First job and what it taught me?** My first job as a teenager was working at a local restaurant, where I learned the value of hard work and that there's no substitute for hustle. I also learned how to be part of a team, supporting others when they needed help and asking for help when I needed it

myself. Along the way, I had a lot of fun and met some incredible people.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** I grew up on the Jersey Shore and as a kid attended the Belmar St. Patrick's Day parade braving the elements every year. My uncle played the bagpipes so I have fond memories of parades and Irish festivals. As an adult, I get to celebrate my Irish heritage with my wife, who is a first generation American. Her parents are from County Cork and we've been blessed to take our children to Ireland to meet all of their Irish aunts, uncles and cousins.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** I play two musical instruments.

Zach McCue serves as Chief of Intergovernmental Affairs at the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey, leading government relations and community engagement across the agency's airports, bridges, tunnels, rail, and seaport facilities. He oversees coordination with elected officials and public partners to advance major capital, operational, and policy priorities. Previously, Zach spent a decade working for U.S. Senator Cory Booker, as Deputy State Director and Senior Advisor, managing infrastructure, transportation, environment, and energy policy. He also worked for Senator Frank Lautenberg and a regional environmental nonprofit. Zach is a proud Penn State graduate and New Jerseyan.



## Daniel Mc Namara

**Place of birth:** St. Louis, MO.

**Where do you live?** Tampa Bay, FL.

**Current company and position?** Hawk Operations Inc. - Senior Accounting Director.

**First job and what it taught me?** My first job was as a golf caddy in the summer at the age of 13. With me standing a towering 4'11 and weighing 80 lbs. soaking wet, the golf bags were as big as I! The job really instilled in me the value of an earned dollar and to "eat what you kill". I would arrive at 6:00 am and could be there for 5 hours only to not get selected by any golfers that day, pocketing \$0!

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** I embrace and honor my Irish heritage by staying close to the traditions and values

that have been passed down through my family. As a proud member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, I have the opportunity to celebrate and promote our culture, support charitable efforts, and share in the sense of community that has always defined the Irish experience. It keeps me connected not only to my ancestry, but to a living, vibrant tradition. We have a vast diaspora that is recognized globally as having spread goodwill throughout the world so with the cultural dilution currently taking place in our Motherland combined with the ancestral connection decaying with the younger generation of Irish Americans, I heed the call to ensure the Celtic spirit survives and prospers.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** I was born with bright red hair and webbed toes.

Danny Mc Namara was born in St. Louis, MO to Michael Mc Namara and Mary Flanagan where he spent his early childhood throwing candy from the "Flanagan Paint" float in the Dogtown St. Patrick's Day parade. Growing up an avid soccer player, he ultimately earned a scholarship to play in college. He has been a licensed Real Estate Broker since the age of 23, holds a Certified Property Manager (CPM) designation and has spent his career working in investment real estate. Danny resides in the great state of Florida and is expecting his first child in May.

## Emmett Brewer

**Place of birth:** Austin, Texas.

**Where do you live?** Austin, Texas.

**Current company and position?** Student at the University of Texas at Austin.

**First job and what it taught me?** I served as a High School Volunteer for the Texas Dept. of Information Resources. My internship helped me to develop my professional communication skills and taught me the intricacies of the Texas government with respect to the state's digital infrastructure and cybersecurity posture.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** I am an active member of my local Ancient Order of Hibernians division (Travis County Division #1, Austin TX). I enjoy celebrating my Irish heritage by participating in and assisting with the local social events that we put on.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** is that my family has a long history of membership in the AOH. My third-great-grandfather and second-great-grandfather were officers in their local AOH division in Galveston, Texas, and they also served as state officers for the organization during the late 1800's and early 1900's. Ten years ago, my parents helped to re-establish the AOH and LAOH divisions in Austin, allowing me to deeply engage with Austin's Irish community. My father, who is also a member of the AOH division for Austin, Texas, has held some of the same officer roles that my ancestors held at the state level.

An eighth-generation Texan, Emmett Brewer is currently an undergraduate student at the University of Texas at Austin, where he

studies Computer Science and Plan II, an interdisciplinary liberal arts honors major.

On campus, Emmett serves as an Engineering Officer for the Information and Systems Security Society student organization. Beyond campus, he enjoys rock climbing and caving around Texas. Emmett is a sixth-generation member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, an organization with which his family and ancestors have deep connections. He earned the Eagle Scout award and has won a Black Badge at DEF CON, the world's largest hacking conference.





Invest Northern Ireland is delighted to congratulate our friend and colleague Julianne Cox on her award and all Top 40 Under 40 honorees



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# IRISH 40 UNDER 40 - 2026

## Maura English

**Place of birth:** Cleveland, Ohio.  
**Where do you live?** Cleveland, Ohio.  
**Current company and position?** Currently I am a Field Account Manager at UMR, a UnitedHealthcare Company.  
**First job and what it taught me?** My first job was with a small business in an unfamiliar industry, which taught me how to adapt quickly and learn on the fly. I started as a research analyst but soon found myself leading a major tech-based project with no prior IT or software development experience. To succeed, I had to build trust across departments, communicate clearly with executives and technical teams, and keep everyone aligned under tight deadlines. This experience strengthened my ability to lead diverse teams, solve complex problems, and stay resilient under pressure.

Later, I transitioned into a sales role, where I managed over 300 accounts and generated more than \$120 million in leads. That shift taught me important skills such as relationship-building, negotiation, and excellent client service—skills that remain central to my success today. Overall, I learned resilience, strategic thinking, and how to turn challenges into opportunities, which continue to shape my approach in account management.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?**



I embrace my Irish heritage through lifelong involvement in cultural traditions and community organizations. I began Irish dancing at age four with the Theresa Burke School of Irish Dance, competing at the Championship level in competitions across North America at feiseanna, as well as the Midwest Oireachtas, North American Nationals, and All Irelands. I also taught younger dancers, sharing my love for the tradition and skill of Irish dancing.

Growing up at the West Side Irish American Club in Cleveland, I was constantly surrounded by Irish cultural events. I danced at ceilis, listened to live Irish bands, attended and performed at the Cleveland Irish Culture Festival, watched my cousin's Gaelic football matches and much more. I marched in the Cleveland St. Patrick's Day Parade every year from my childhood days into my teenage years. And I now serve as the Cleveland GAA delegate to the United Irish Societies, helping organize the annual parade.

In 2019, I joined Cleveland St. Pat's—St. Jarlath's GAA as a founding member of the ladies' Gaelic football team and later transitioned to Camogie. Over the years, we have won two national championships at the USGAA Nationals – one in each sport. Today, I serve as Vice Chair on the club's Executive Board, promoting Irish sports locally.

Throughout my involvement in these various Irish organizations, I've met many inspiring leaders John O'Brien Sr, John O'Brien Jr, Vincent Beach and most recently Marilyn Madigan, which led me to join the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians. I am passionate about connecting LAOH with local organizations, including those I support through the City Mission where I serve on the Associate Board, to strengthen community ties and celebrate my Irish culture.

**Something people would be surprised to**

**know about me:** One of my hobbies is keeping solitary bees, specifically mason and leafcutter bees. Unlike honeybees, solitary bees don't live in hives; each female builds and provisions her own nest. I provide shelter and nesting materials for them which is referred to as a "bee hotel."

The solitary bees are incredibly docile and rarely sting. Also, they are among the most efficient pollinators. One leafcutter bee can do the pollination work of dozens of honeybees.

It's a simple, low-maintenance hobby with a big impact—helping the environment, boosting garden yields, and supporting biodiversity.

**M**aura English is a Field Account Manager at UMR, a United Healthcare company, where she delivers strategic solutions for 50 organizations and 24,000 members—driving operational excellence and client success. As a player on the Cleveland ladies' Gaelic football and camogie team she is a two-time USGAA national champion. Maura blends leadership with cultural pride by serving as Vice Chair of the Cleveland GAA, Recruitment Chair for The City Mission, and is a member of the Cleveland St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee, LAOH, and West Side Irish American Club. She is motivated by a deep commitment to service, community, and culture.

## Craig O'Halloran

**Place of birth:** Dublin, Ireland.  
**Where do you live?** Chicago, Illinois.  
**Current company and position?** Global Professional Services Leader and Design Manager at Gensler.  
**First job and what it taught me?** At the ripe old age of 12, I landed my first gig as a store attendant at a family friend's deli and wine shop. Saturdays were spent stocking shelves, sweeping floors, and helping customers, basically doing everything short of sampling the wine (which, at 12, would have been off-limits). It was my first real lesson in connecting with people outside of family and friends, customers and coworkers who were much more senior.

I learned the value of hard work, the pride of making my own money, and the importance of treating everyone with kindness. That last lesson paid off in a big way: years later, one of those customers introduced me to the architecture industry—my dream career. Funny how sweeping floors can lead to building them.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** When I moved to Chicago, I didn't know a soul. The Irish community became my support network, a home away from home. I joined Ireland Network Chicago (INC), and in 2024, I was honored to be elected President for a two-year term. INC is a not-for-profit organization and one of Chicago's largest Irish-affiliated

networks, connecting newcomers and established professionals through social, cultural, and charitable initiatives.

This opportunity has given me incredible ways to stay deeply connected to my heritage, and dare I say, even strengthened it. From working with the Irish Consulate and Irish American Heritage Center, to marching in the Chicago St. Patrick's Day Parade, to hosting events with sporting legends Peter O'Mahony and Niall Quinn, to fostering discussions on topics including the African American Irish Diaspora and the future of AgriTech and FoodTech, the Irish community covers a lot of ground. And I couldn't be prouder to be part of it.

Under my leadership, we've focused on growing our membership, strengthening our internal structure, building local partnerships, legacy planning, and continuing to support our charity partners—Irish Community Services and Concern Worldwide—while always preserving what makes INC unique: its role as the cultural heartbeat of Chicago's Irish community.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** I nearly gave up on my architecture dream before it truly began. While in university, I worked part-time in a wine shop (although not the one where I was employed as a child, apparently, I have a theme). After graduating in 2011 with a degree in Architectural Technology, Ireland was still feeling the aftershocks of the 2008 financial crash. So, alongside my first full-time

architecture position, I kept my college job at the wine shop for a little extra cash.

Fast forward to a year later: hours at the architecture firm started slowing, so I picked up extra shifts at the wine shop. One day, a conversation with the shop owners led to meeting a winemaker from New Zealand. Next thing I knew, I had a job offer for a harvest season, with the potential to turn it into a career in the wine industry. Flight booked, accommodation sorted, visa secured. I was ready to trade construction sites for vineyards.

Then came a phone call from an architecture practice in London. Just like that, the plan to make wine in New Zealand was out, and I was packing my bags for the UK, back on the path that brought me to where I am today. So yes, I almost became a winemaker... but architecture won by one perfectly timed phone call.

**C**raig is passionate about designing flexible, inspiring spaces that seamlessly integrate architecture, interior design, and branding. Based in Gensler's Chicago office, he has led teams on projects around the world, delivering strategic, creative design solutions. Deeply committed to his local community, Craig is active in professional leadership, including Ireland Network Chicago. He is a Fellow and Chair of the Americas Center for the Chartered Institute of Architectural

Technologists and was named Architectural Technologist of the Year in 2023. Outside of the office, Craig and his wife, Maren, are avid travelers, attempting to visit all 50 U.S. states and 50 countries.





*Officers and Members of  
Laborers' Local 223  
Would like to Congratulate*

*Business Manager Patrick J. Walsh*

*On being recognized as one of the  
40 under 40 Honorees  
by the Irish Echo*

## Martha Mahoney

**Place of birth:** Albany, NY.

**Where do you live?** Albany, NY.

**Current company and position?** Senior Attorney, Office of the New York State Attorney General Letitia James.

**First job and what it taught me?** My first job was a server at an ice cream and hamburger stand called Ross'. It taught me the values of teamwork, customer service, hard work, responsibility, treating people equally, and enjoying the experience at work. It was owned by a closeknit family who I got to know well, which also enhanced the experience. I loved connecting with customers, getting to know our regulars, and learning about their lives. I even reconnected with a distant relative by happenstance.

I would later find that this love of connecting with others (and improving their lives) is the throughline for what motivates me in later positions I've held in government and public service.

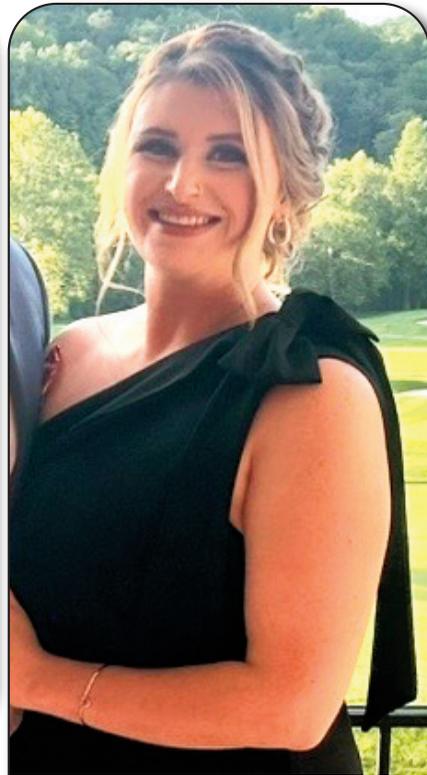
**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** The Irish are known for their lighthearted honesty, authenticity, kindness and storytelling. I try to carry this spirit with me in my social and professional relationships. I come from a big Irish Catholic family and have fond memories of being together around the holidays and hearing stories from family. Although I don't host a lot of events, I try to bring a sense of warmth, welcoming, and belonging to gatherings. I also love music, especially hearing live music, and try my best to enjoy the moment!

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** I'm super passionate about local government and neighborhood quality of life matters. It marries my love of connecting with people/solving their problems with my love of law and policy. It makes the policy process personal and relational with super tangible results.

Martha Mahoney serves as a Senior Attorney in the Office of the New York State Attorney General, where she pursues plaintiff affirmative civil litigation. Previously, Martha served as Chief of



Staff/Counsel to NYS Assemblymember Patricia Fahy and an Assistant Corporation Counsel for the City of Albany. Martha serves as 6th Ward Leader for the Albany County Democratic Committee, Vice Chair for the Albany Board of Zoning Appeals, Board Member of the Washington Park Conservancy, and Member of the ACBA CLE subcommittee. She enjoys running, volunteering, and gardening. Martha is an alumna of Albany Law School and the University at Albany.



## Katie Ryan

**Place of birth:** Bronxville, New York.

**Where do you live?** Astoria, Queens.

**Current company and position?** Con Edison - Sr Specialist. I work in Cross Commodities and coordinate work between Con Edison and Westchester Municipalities.

**First job and what it taught me?** My first job was working as cashier at Tibbett's Brook Park. Working for a Westchester County Park as a teenager taught me patience, responsibility and how to adapt when situations change.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** I embrace my Irish heritage every day. I am lucky to have been brought up with my grandmother by my side, Rose Hanratty Ryan, who was born and raised in County Louth. I was largely involved in the Irish community growing up through Irish dancing and Irish music competing at different levels. I continue to stay involved through the Con Edison Emerald Society, Participating in yearly St Patrick's day parades and grand council meetings. On a smaller level I wear my claddagh ring every day to remind myself of my rich Irish heritage.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** I played in a Ceili band and played multiple instruments growing up. I played the tin whistle, the flute, the harp, the piano accordion and the fiddle.

Katie Ryan born in 1995 to parents John Ryan of Con Edison and Karen Ryan CSEA Yonkers public schools. Katie grew up Irish dancing and playing Irish music. Katie graduated from Sacred Heart High School. She received an associate's degree at Westchester Community College. Katie started working for Westchester Parks. She worked at The Limited and was promoted as a store manager. She then worked at PPS as a subcontractor. Katie joined Con Edison in 2020 as a supervisor. She was promoted to Sr Specialist. Katie's in the Con Edison Emerald Society; she continues to show pride in her heritage.

## Malachy Taplin

**Place of birth:** LaCrosse, Wisconsin.

**Where do you live?** Portland, Maine.

**Current company and position?** The Maine Irish Heritage Center in Portland, Maine. Executive Assistant.

**First job and what it taught me?** I worked as a landscaper in southern Maine during the summer months of high school. It was a tough job – heavy equipment, early mornings, hot days. It taught me the value of staying hydrated and getting a good night's rest, but more importantly I learned

just how rewarding it feels to put your full effort into a project - be it trimming hedges or mowing a dozen acre property.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** After receiving an MA in Global Governance from Luiss School of Government and l'Institut Européen, I visited my family in Ireland for a month. When I came back to the US, I found myself missing the culture, the music, and the people deeply. It was then that I found the Maine Irish Heritage Center - a small, beautiful, deeply historic cultural center in

Portland, Maine. They had a job opening and I jumped to get involved. I've been working hard to ensure that every artist, every diplomat, and every volunteer that walks through our doors gets a familiar Irish welcome. Outside of work, I've joined the Young Irish Leaders association with the Charitable Irish Society, I'm trying to learn a number of Irish folk songs, and I'm working hard to expand youth engagement, build community, and foster young Irish professionals across the Eastern seacoast.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** I have a deep love for woodworking! I've found a number of beautiful pieces of furniture in dumpsters or on the side of the road and fully refinished them.

Malachy Taplin is from South Berwick, Maine. He holds a BA in Political Science from Clark University and an MA in Global Economic Governance and Public Affairs from Luiss School of Government and l'Institut Européen. He has worked with food banks, political campaigns, and research organizations. As the executive assistant for the Maine Irish Heritage Center, Malachy manages donor & member relations, volunteer coordination, and event coordination while uplifting Irish culture and arts in Portland, Maine. When he isn't working, he's visiting his dozens of cousins in Ireland, exploring local performing arts venues, or experimenting with new recipes at home.





# NIBureau

Northern Ireland Executive  
North America

## **Northern Ireland Bureau**

The Northern Ireland Bureau is honoured to support the Irish Echo's 40 Under 40 Awards.

As the Northern Ireland Executive's diplomatic mission in North America, we are committed to promoting international engagement, economic prosperity and cultural development.

We are proud to celebrate the 2026 cohort of outstanding people who help Northern Ireland deliver these aims.

**Get in contact with us at:**

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## Jane McCooley

**Place of birth:** Armagh, Northern Ireland.

**Where do you live?** Weehawken, New Jersey.

**Current company and position?** Morgan Stanley Executive Director and Chief of Staff to the Chief Information Officer, Enterprise Technology & Services.

**First job and what it taught me?** My first real job (beyond a few weeks) was as a Sales Associate at Abercrombie & Fitch in Cape Cod, MA, during a J1 summer. It taught me the importance of process, governance, punctuality, and excellent customer service.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** I am very involved with many of the amazing organizations that connect the Irish in America to home and enable us to embrace our Irish heritage in a meaningful way. I am the Founder of Liberty Gaels Camogie Club, and was Chairperson for nearly a decade. I am the Founder & CEO of Women with Ambition ("WWA"), a professional network for Irish and Irish-American women.

WWA provides a space for women across industries to form a meaningful network, with aspirations to grow across the US. WWA's offerings include peer mentorship, large networking events, and opportunities to learn from expert guest speakers. It has pioneered, among other initiatives, the WWA Female Founder Expo and a Golf Society.

I am a 2025 Fellow for the Centre of Democracy & Peace Building Leadership Fellowship, which brings together political, business, and civic leaders in support of the peace process and to enhance the prosperity of Northern Ireland. I am the Global Ambassador for AwakenAngels, the first and only all-island of Ireland women-led investment syndicate with the aim of democratizing angel investing for women; I serve as Co-Chair of the Young Partners Board of Irish American Partnership, and I am



also part of the Cooperation Ireland USA and CMRF USA Boards.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** I very recently pivoted from Legal to Technology after many years as a Lawyer, and I am loving it so far!

Jane McCooley is Executive Director and Chief of Staff at Morgan Stanley. Prior, Jane was an Associate at Davis Polk. From Armagh, Jane studied Law with French Law (UCD and Toulouse), Master of Law (Cambridge University), an Executive MBA (Quantic), and worked at the European Commission and Freshfields (Brussels). Honors: Irish Echo Community Champion 2022; Irish America Business 100 2023, 2024, 2025; Irish America Wall Street 50 2023, 2024 and 2025 (Keynote Speaker); Irish America Legal 100 2023; "Women of Ireland" 2025 Leadership; Second place 2025 International Irish Businesswoman of the Year at IMAGE PwC Businesswoman of the Year Awards.

## Colin Flynn

**Place of birth:** Auckland, New Zealand.

**Where do you live?** Boston MA.

**Current company and position?** Vice President & Wealth Advisor, JPMorgan Chase.

**First job and what it taught me?** My first job was as an extra on a film set. As a child, my mother and sisters drove to Montana to visit my father, who was a theatrical Teamster working on "The Horse Whisperer". My sister Shannon and I ended up working as extras for the day. That experience planted two seeds that have stayed with me ever since—a love of storytelling and an early curiosity about investing. I took the money I earned and bought shares of Boeing because I loved airplanes, and I've spent the rest of my life refining both my appreciation for stories and how capital can help bring them to life.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** Our Irish heritage has been a constant in my life, across both hemispheres. From Irish dancing with my sister Shannon at a school assembly in New Zealand when I was six, to Gaelic football throughout my childhood and teens—first with the Rangers under Dennis Twomey and later representing New York at the Féile Peile na nÓg in Galway—it has always been a source of identity and connection. In college, my study of Irish history was shaped as much by conversations with my father and uncles as it was by formal coursework. In my twenties, that connection continued through volunteering with the Rockland County Ancient Order of Hibernians alongside Tom Leavey. Today, my Irish heritage remains deeply rooted, particularly through St. Barnabas in the Bronx with Father Brendan Fitzgerald, St. Columbkille in Brighton, Massachusetts with Father Richard Fitzgerald, Sacred Heart in Yonkers, New York with the Friars, The Friendly Sons of St. Patrick - Westchester with Richard O'Neill Sr. and The Charitable Irish of Boston alongside Jim Foley. It's a heritage rooted in community, service, and faith—one I carry with me in everything I do.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** I pray the rosary daily and serve as Founder and CEO of Hills and Thrills Productions, Inc., a 501(c)(3) entertainment company using the power of



storytelling to raise monies for charity and create upward mobility for artists and entertainment professionals. Our most recent feature film, Ciao Mama, had its world premiere in June at the Dances With Films festival at the Chinese Theatre in Hollywood, where it won the Audience Award, and later had its East Coast premiere in October at the Chelsea Film Festival in New York City. Through the project—and with the support of our donors, family, and friends—we helped provide upward mobility to more than a dozen artists and entertainment professionals, while raising funds for the American Cancer Society and a scholarship in memory of our producer and co-lead actor, Johnny Wactor, whose life was tragically taken shortly after filming.

Colin Bernard Flynn is a Vice President and Wealth Advisor at JPMorgan Chase, where he advises individuals, families, and entities. Born in Auckland, New Zealand to parents Kevin (Theatrical Teamsters 817) and Joanne (Registered Nurse), Colin was educated at Fordham Preparatory School before earning his degree from Colgate University. He is the Founder and CEO of Hills and Thrills Productions, Inc., a 501(c)(3) entertainment company using storytelling to raise funds for charity and create upward opportunity for artists and entertainment professionals. Deeply rooted in his Irish heritage, Colin remains active in Irish cultural, faith, and charitable organizations throughout the Northeast.

## Harley Semple

**Place of birth:** Omagh.

**Where do you live?** Manhattan - New York.

**Current company and position?** Options Technology - Vice President, Strategy and Operations.

**First job and what it taught me?** Part-Time Roots in Omagh: My initial part-time roles were in my hometown of Omagh, working at Sally's Bar. There, I learned to thrive in fast-paced, high-pressure environments, honed my customer service abilities and discovered the joy of building genuine connections - all while having lots of fun.

**Stepping into the Corporate World:** I joined CME Group in Belfast in data analytics. This role introduced me to professional corporate dynamics, underscored the importance of data accuracy and integrity, and exposed me to the intricacies of global financial markets.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** Strengthening Community Ties: I actively support Irish-run events in both Manhattan and Belfast, ensuring I remain closely linked to the vibrant Irish community on both sides of the Atlantic.

**Mentoring the Next Generation:** I enjoy meeting young Irish professionals arriving in New York City, offering guidance on their careers and introducing them to valuable contacts within my network.

**Promoting Educational and Career Opportunities:** I



maintain strong ties with my uni - Queen's University

Belfast - most recently as a featured alumnus in their anniversary campaign - where I highlight the exciting career paths available in the thriving fintech hubs of Belfast and New York City.

**Regular Returns Home:** I'm fortunate to travel back to Ireland quarterly for work, which allows me to stay immersed in the culture and reconnect with family and friends. I never tone down my distinctive Tyrone accent in any Wall Street meeting!

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** Was a showjumper from 3 years old and first had the opportunity to represent Ireland showjumping for the national team at 7 years old.

From Omagh, Co.Tyrone, Harley is a prominent leader in New York's fintech sector and a former showjumper who represented Ireland. After earning First-Class Honors from Queen's University Belfast and following her role at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange in Belfast Harley joined Options Technology in 2019, relocating to New York to spearhead Americas growth and post-pandemic operations.

She has integrated three major acquisitions and lead teams in launching global data platforms. Harley champions diversity setting up the Options Women in Fintech initiative and remains a dedicated mentor. Outside of work, she enjoys New York's social scene and staying active with solidcore!



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“ I would like to thank our community, without their on-going support we wouldn't be in business since 1989. I would also like to thank the AOH for putting their trust into me as a National Director. Lastly, I have to thank my wonderful wife, Holli, for running the house while I get the pleasure of working with the AOH.”

— Rory Schulte

### *"The Best Fried Chicken West of the Mississippi"*

## Meagan McGough

**Place of birth:** Burlington, Vermont, USA

**Where do you live?** Northport, New York, USA.

**Current company and position?** The McGough Academy, Owner & Director

PRINE Health, Director of Business Development and Marketing.

**First job and what it taught me?** My very first job was as a babysitter, and it played a surprisingly important role in shaping the career I've built as a dance teacher. Babysitting taught me patience, responsibility, and how to connect with children in a way that made them feel safe, understood, and encouraged. I learned how to communicate clearly, manage different personalities, and create fun, structured activities that kept kids engaged.

Those early experiences naturally carried into my work in the studio. When I began teaching dance, I recognized the same skills at play, guiding young dancers through challenges, motivating them with positive reinforcement, and adapting my teaching style to match their needs. Babysitting gave me the foundation for strong classroom management and the confidence to lead with empathy.

In many ways, caring for children was my first introduction to teaching. It taught me how to nurture growth, inspire creativity, and support kids as they discover what they're capable of. Those lessons have stayed with me ever since and are a big part of why I chose to pursue dance education as my career.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** I embrace my Irish heritage every day through the traditions I share with my family and the way I teach Irish dance here in the United States. Growing up, our home was filled with

the customs, stories, and celebrations that kept our Irish roots alive. Whether it was gathering for holidays, listening to traditional music with my Grammy and Poppy, or honoring the values passed down through generations, these traditions gave me a strong sense of identity and belonging.

Teaching Irish dance allows me to carry that heritage forward in a meaningful way. In the studio, I get to celebrate the artistry, history, and spirit of Irish culture with each new group of dancers. I love introducing students to the rhythms, discipline, and joy of the dance style, and showing them how it connects to a larger cultural story. Sharing these traditions in the U.S.

not only keeps my heritage alive for me, it helps pass it on to others and builds a community that appreciates and celebrates Irish culture. Through both my family traditions and my work as a dance teacher, I'm able to honor where I come from while helping inspire the next generation.



**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** Something people are usually surprised to learn about me is that even though I'm a dance teacher, I was incredibly shy when I was younger, and dance is what brought me out of my shell.

**M**eagan is a results-driven business development leader with over a decade of experience turning market insights into sustainable growth. She holds an MBA from the Smeal College of Business at Penn State. As Director of Business Development at PRINE Health, she recruits board-certified physicians and clinicians dedicated to exceptional

patient care. Outside of work, Meagan teaches at the McGough Academy of Irish Dance, mentoring young dancers and celebrating her Irish heritage. She lives on Long Island and supports youth in the arts through her family foundation. She is passionate about community health and cultural education in her daily work.

## Justin Maloney

**Place of birth:** Woodbury, New Jersey.

**Where do you live?** Fort Worth, Texas.

**Current company and position?** Political Strategy Manager at West Fort Worth Management.

**First job and what it taught me?** My first official job was at American Eagle. It was a brand-new location in the outlet mall a 5-minute walk from my neighborhood. We started with a bare store and built it out, walls, shelving, furniture, decor, and all. It taught me how satisfying seeing a finished product born out of hard work and collaboration with dozens of people from different backgrounds can be. Working retail also taught me early on how to face failure and how to recover from it. Failing to sell a customer a complete outfit when they only came in looking for jeans gave me a great jump on preparing for encounters with voters that aren't interested in buying a candidate that I'm selling.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** As the Texas Hibernians Secretary, DFW Michael Collins Division Sentinel, and Irish American Society of Dallas member, I do my best to build up the community on a daily basis. Whether that's by organizing, bringing new ideas to the table, educating those around me, or supporting others in DFW who also take interest in their heritage. Irish American history is all around us, and I think it's important to celebrate that. We are part of the most prolific diaspora in human history, we owe it to those before us, who lived much tougher lives than us, to keep the tradition, language, and culture alive and thriving.

Above my desk in my office is a framed version of the infamous "Irish Need Not Apply" posting. It's a reminder of what my family and so many others fought through when they first came to America and a good motivator to never take anything for granted. Now in 2026, cities all across America shutdown every March to celebrate St. Patrick and the contributions Irish Americans have made in this country. I think that's an amazing testament to the work ethic of those that came before us and is something I try to embody every day.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** In 2023 I rescued a Half Bluetick Coonhound - Half Bloodhound. He was the runt of his litter and born with symmetrical alopecia, but is as fierce as a lion. Given his breed is the state dog of Tennessee, I named him "Leb," short for my hometown of Lebanon, TN.

**J**ustin Maloney is a political consultant living in Willow Park, Texas. Maloney has managed campaigns and legislative efforts primarily in Texas, but has worked with legislators, candidates, and activists across the country and in DC. Maloney, originally from the Philadelphia area and raised in Middle Tennessee, has long cherished his Irish heritage. He presently serves as the Secretary for the Hibernians of Texas and has been active with the AOH DFW division and Irish American Society of Dallas since arriving in the metroplex in 2021.



## Niamh Reilly

**Place of birth:** Newry Co Down Ireland.

**Where do you live?** Sunnyside, Queens.

**Current company and position?** Chief Financial Officer at H&L Ironworks. A steel fabrication and installation construction company in midtown Manhattan.

**First job and what it taught me?** I worked in the local chip shop, Mac's Takeaway in Knockbridge Co Louth. It was my first introduction to the service industry. At the ripe age of 16, I was thrown into the deep, taking orders, cooking even and managing all different types of people and situations. It quickly taught me to be outgoing and energetic but also assertive when dealing with customers. Traits that I still carry in my current position today.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** With the GAA! Over the past few years, I've completely emersed myself into the GAA community. From playing the game, to having varies roles on committees. My role over the past few years was chairperson for my beloved club Manhattan Gaels. A Gaelic Football club with both men's and ladies teams. Even though we are firstly a GAA club, the community stretches to social nights, run clubs, trad nights and in the very near future we hope to have Irish language lessons.

At every chance I get, I am recruiting for the club. Whether you have played your whole life or never even heard of the sport before, we welcome everyone and all levels. Being Irish is something special, and



being part of the GAA community, no matter where your from, will always act as a home away from home. It's your family out here.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** Plays classical music on the piano.

**N**iamh hails from Knockbridge, Co Louth. She emigrated to New York in December of 2016, with the expectations of staying for a year. Now nine years later, she is still happily living in Sunnyside Queens. After a chance meeting on St Patrick's day, she reluctantly joined Manhattan Gaels in 2018 and hasn't looked back since. From playing to managing to chairing, whatever is needed she will do. While the GAA is her first love, she's involved with multiple charities. Co-organizing the Ashling Murphy walk in 2022, raising over \$35,000 for Women's Aid, to volunteering and fundraising for Solace House.

# THE EMERALD SOCIETY OF CONSOLIDATED EDISON COMPANY OF NEW YORK, INC.

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## Irish Echo

### 40 Under 40 Award 2026

Congratulations to:

# Katie Ryan

We are all so proud of you!

### Congratulations to all the award winners!

Fraternally,

*The Emerald Society Officers*

# Congratulations

to  
**Assemblyman Bill Moen**  
and  
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And  
all the 40 Under 40 honorees of 2026

**Assemblyman Chris Tully**  
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Congratulations to

*Niamh Reilly*

on this well-deserved recognition of your  
tireless commitment to the Manhattan Gaels  
over the years. We are extremely grateful for all the  
time and energy you selflessly devote to serving the  
New York Irish Community – especially the GAA Community.

*Go raibh mile maith agat!*

From your  
Manhattan Gaels family





**Sincere Congratulations to my niece Meghan Manning  
on her well deserved award!**

**Love you – Margaret**

Congratulations  
**Meghan**

on this wonderful  
tribute of the  
under 40's recognition  
of all your outstanding  
achievements !!

**Love Uncle Patrick**





## Amy Coppola

**Place of birth:** Rochester, NY.

**Where do you live?** Rochester, NY.

**Current company and position?** Dunleavy Irish Dance, Owner.

**First job and what it taught me?** My first job was working the switchboard at the Our Lady of Mercy Motherhouse. It was there I learned reliability and responsibility - skills that have stayed with me ever since. The Sisters would bring me a peanut butter cookie and a root beer every shift, and though I only earned \$4 an hour, they also provided tuition assistance, which I truly credit for shaping my success. Getting to know the Sisters of Mercy personally taught me the value of community and gratitude. Their support showed me how powerful education is, and how far you can go when someone believes in your future.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** Irish culture is woven into every part of my life - through dance, music, and community. I founded Dunleavy Irish Dance to promote Irish culture in a vibrant, welcoming, and accessible way, helping dancers appreciate both the beauty of Irish dance and the tradition it comes from. I am truly enamored with the Irish arts, and it is my greatest joy to celebrate, preserve, and pass them on to the next generation.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** When I'm not training my Irish dancers, I'm outdoors training my Doberman! The same patience and discipline I use in the studio definitely come in handy - and the dog treats help, too!

Amy Coppola is the owner and founder of Dunleavy Irish Dance and an ADCRG-certified adjudicator. She holds degrees in Business and Athletic Training from the Rochester Institute of Technology, blending strategic leadership with a deep understanding of movement and performance. Irish dance is Amy's lifelong passion, and she is known for inspiring students to believe in themselves - developing both the athleticism and artistry essential to the craft. A recipient of the IDM Global Excellence in Teaching Award, Amy continues to promote Irish culture in a vibrant, welcoming, and impactful way.



## Amber McCulloch

**Place of birth:** Englewood, Colorado.

**Where do you live?** Aurora, Colorado.

**Current company and position?** I work independently as an audiobook narrator for multiple different authors, with my titles all available through Audible. I am also the primary parent for our three special needs children, our five-year-old son and our three-year-old twins, and an active advocate for patients with rare liver diseases like myself.

**First job and what it taught me?** I was a fitting room attendant at American Eagle at the Park Meadows Mall when I was fifteen years old. It taught me how to find and compliment the unique beauty in every person, how to be patient, how to be prudent with when to speak up and when to hold my opinions, and the importance of a smile and a kind word in every encounter.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** The two biggest things that I do to embrace my Irish heritage is participate in my local Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians chapter and continue my studies of the Irish language. I currently have my A2 certification in the TEG in the Irish language, and hope to continue my studies through at least B2 proficiency in the next decade. Through my local LAOH I march in the annual St. Patrick's Day parade, attend regular heritage masses, share family memories and take opportunities with other Irish-Americans in my area to learn about the ways in which our own families passed down the memories of the diaspora to today. I pass these memories to my own children as well.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** I am autistic, and I have been line dancing near weekly since I was twelve years old. While not directly related, the routines and patterns of the dance form are regulating to my neurotype, and I am good at picking up new dances because of my autistic pattern recognition!

Amber McCulloch is a mother of three in Aurora, Colorado who narrates audiobooks and advocates for other liver disease patients like herself across the country. She comes from a proud Irish-American family that traces itself through the Madden clan of Galway, and participates in her local Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians chapter.

pride in my Irish heritage is central to who I am as a person. I was raised by a family deeply rooted and well-connected to our Irish roots and traditions, most notably by my Pop-Pop, who set the standard for what it means to be a proud Irishman. Growing up, my uncles, Chris and Kevin Foy, both represented the Irish National Baseball team, which, to me as a young kid, might as well have meant they played for the Yankees. That inspiration and connection to something that is so uniquely Irish-American led me, years later, to my work with the Irish American Baseball Society, where I have helped develop the first entirely Irish-American Baseball team, the Irish Wolfhounds, connected with countless Irish organizations around the country, spoken at the Irish Consulate in New York, and even stood on the field at Yankee Stadium to induct Jack Curry into the Irish American Baseball Hall of Fame. I have found that by doing my small part to share my Irish pride, I have opened countless doors, shared wonderful experiences, and connected

with great people I would never have otherwise, and I wouldn't give that up for the world.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** I am a surprisingly good chef. During COVID, I embarked on a mission to learn how to cook, and I haven't stopped since. I've learned that one of the greatest joys in life for me these days is a compliment on a meal I've cooked for someone else.

Patrick Smith was born and raised in Massapequa, New York, on Long Island, and currently resides in Alexandria, VA, with his girlfriend Peri. He graduated from York College of Pennsylvania in 2016 and has since built a career in Talent Acquisition, currently with alliantgroup, a global professional services firm. He also serves as the Vice President of Cultural Affairs & Outreach for the Irish American Baseball Society, an organization dedicated to spreading Irish pride, educating on the Irish impact, and strengthening Irish-American relations through baseball.



## John R. Howley

**Place of birth:** Glastonbury, Connecticut.

**Where do you live?** New York City.

**Current company and position?** Bunaitheoir (Founder) and Uachtarán (President) of GAELTACHT NYC, a New York organization that has facilitated 60+ Pop-Up Gaeltachts (gatherings of Irish speakers) and continues to host bi-weekly events supporting the city's Irish language community. GAELTACHT NYC welcomes Gaeilgeoirí of all backgrounds and fluency levels. @gaeltachtnyc

**First job and what it taught me?** My first job was on a local flower farm in Connecticut. Farming, even when growing sunflowers and zinnias, is challenging; weeds sprout, beetles munch, and weather rarely cooperates. Flower farming therefore taught me the powers of perseverance and patience. I learned to confront obstacles without fear, adapt quickly, and stay committed to long-term goals.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** The Irish language is at the heart of how I express and experience my heritage. Raised on the music of Clannad and Mary Black, I grew up aware of Gaeilge. I seized on the opportunity to study the language at Glucksman Ireland House and, since then, Irish has become my functional second language. I'm proud to maintain friendships and professional relationships entirely through Irish. I speak Irish most often at the Pop-Up Gaeltachts that I organize through GAELTACHT NYC. Every two weeks, I join a circle of Gaeilgeoirí in pubs and cultural spaces across New York City. It's a privilege to be part of this vibrant community and to help create a space where our network can share conversation and laughter.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** I am an actor who works predominantly in TV and film. If you want to see me bloody and brawling drug dealers, stream my debut horror movie "Bleeding" on Amazon Prime Video, or wherever you buy movies. I also lead the upcoming TV series "Perfect Sundays," a family drama about dairy farmers in rural America.

John R. Howley is an Irish language advocate and actor based in New York City. As the bunaitheoir (founder) and uachtarán (president) of GAELTACHT NYC, he has built a community of 500+ members and has partnered with the Irish Consulate, the New York Public Library, and other institutions. His acting work includes the lead role in "Bleeding," a Cineverse feature named one of The New York Times' "Five Horror Movies to Stream Now," as well as the TV series "Perfect Sundays." A Columbia University graduate, he earned three collegiate awards for excellence in performance and scholarship.



## Patrick Smith

**Place of birth:** Long Island, NY.

**Where do you live?** Alexandria, VA.

**Current company and position?** Senior Talent Acquisition Associate - alliantgroup & VP of Cultural Affairs and Outreach - Irish American Baseball Society.

**First job and what it taught me?** My first job was as an Usher at Jones Beach Theater on Long Island. I worked there every summer from the age of 14 until 23, moving up along the way from the ticket gate to Usher Supervisor. I learned how to interact with people from all walks of life, which prepared me to handle conflict, become comfortable communicating, and appreciate the value of taking on new challenges. I learned that if you set your mind to something and give it your best effort, no matter the difficulties, the results will follow. Of course, I also learned how to enjoy work when a band I wanted to see rolled through town!

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** My

# Congratulations Meghan



Congratulations Meghan  
on this fabulous honor  
from the Irish Echo!

As your star continues to rise in both life and work at JPMorgan Chase we are so proud of all your accomplishments over the years. You have always been a shining star among us.

Irish eyes are smiling down on you from your Grandparents, and cheers are being raised from family and friends from here to across the pond!

We are so happy for you and take great pride in all you have achieved for this award, and for being the smart, fun, loving and compassionate person who we love.

*Mom, Dad and Daniel*

## William Moen, Jr.

**Place of birth:** Stratford, New Jersey.

**Where do you live?** Bellmawr, NJ.

**Current company and position?** Assemblyman, 5th District State of New Jersey.

**First job and what it taught me?** My first job was selling shoes for Modell's Sporting Goods at my local mall in Southern New Jersey. I was a junior in high school and selling shoes -- in fact, selling nearly anything -- improves your social skills and forces you to rethink the concepts of success and more importantly, rejection. I think that experience, at such a young age, helped to shape my long-term perspective on those concepts. I would highly recommend that experience of "selling" for any teenager.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** I am extremely proud of my Irish heritage. Through an indentured servitude contract from 1883 (that my family has preserved), I learned that my great-great-grandfather, Michael J. Moen, lived in south County Armagh, near Belleeks. He served for three years as a blacksmith apprentice in Corromannon in exchange for passage to the United States in 1886. In 2018, I had the pleasure of visiting the property where my family once lived. It's a memory that I will never forget.

With my heritage in mind, during my time as a Camden County Commissioner, I worked to help support a local community's efforts to launch an annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. Gloucester City, held their first parade in 2016, and just celebrated their 10th parade in 2025. I had the pleasure of serving as the Grand Marshal of the 2019 Parade. Additionally, as a member of the New Jersey State Legislature, I was proud to cosponsor the law that created the "New Jersey-Ireland Trade



Commission" and was lucky enough to be appointed to that trade commission upon its creation. In September 2025, the NJITC carried out our first delegation visit to Ireland, where we visited Dublin, Barretstown, Cork and Cobh.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me.** In 2001, I was a part a group of teenagers from

Runnemede, NJ, who had the opportunity of a lifetime to travel to Berlin, Germany, and be the team to represent the United States in the NFL's 2001 Flag Football World Championship tournament -- and not only did Team USA compete, but we defeated Team Canada to win the world championship! Winning was a great honor, but as I look back at this time in my life, it was surreal to have the chance to travel across the Atlantic Ocean and meet friends from all around the world. It built the foundation that allowed me to better understand diversity and different cultures -- just two weeks before the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. These life lessons have absolutely helped form my appreciation and respect for the differences that are within each and every one of us - at home and abroad. This unique opportunity has also fueled my interest in travel and my passion in ensuring that our youth are afforded opportunities to learn about different cultures and to see the world.

**B**ill Moen, Assemblyman for New Jersey's 5th District since 2020, has focused on environmental justice, transportation improvements, and millennial issues. Since 2022, he has served as Deputy Majority Leader, and beginning in 2024, was appointed Chairman of the Assembly Tourism, Gaming and Arts Committee. Previously, he served as an elected member of the Camden County Board of Commissioners and worked for U.S. Senator Cory Booker as South Jersey Director. A lifelong Camden County resident and strong advocate for veterans, he also championed bipartisan efforts to expand workforce training and economic opportunity. Moen holds a B.A. from Rowan University and an MPA from the University of Pennsylvania and now serves as Executive Director for Workforce Development and Innovation at Camden County College.

## Aoife Griffin

**Place of birth:** Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.

**Where do you live?** Boston, MA.

**Current company and position?** Based in Boston, I am working to advance the future of Irish traditional arts & culture through multiple leadership roles. I serve as Director of the Boston Comhaltas Irish Music School, where I am working to expand access to high-level music education and supporting the next generation of Irish tradition bearers. I am the co-founder & Vice President of Mhá Mheiriceá, empowering Irish-American women through connection, wellness and shared heritage. I am also the CEO & founder of The Cultúr Co., where I provide strategic guidance & marketing services to Irish artists, festivals, and cultural organizations across the diaspora, helping Irish culture thrive globally.

**First job and what it taught me?** My first job was in the local Spar shop and filling station in County Roscommon. It taught me the value of showing up on time with respect, responsibility, and a good attitude no matter the task. I learned how to build relationships with people from all walks of life, the importance of community, and most importantly... how to properly sweep a floor - There was no Hoover in that store!!! That experience at the young age of 15 grounded me in the belief that good leadership begins with service, and a good leader is someone who is hard working, willing to pitch in and do the work alongside their team.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** Irish heritage isn't something I switch on. it's the heart of who I am. I live it through music, language, community, and the way I care for others. As a fiddle player and educator, I pass on the rhythms and music of Ireland to musicians young & old, helping them find their place in the tradition.

I speak as Gaeilge whenever I can, and I create welcoming spaces where people feel a sense of belonging and pride in their identity whether they're Irish-born or discovering their Irish roots for the first time. By leading, teaching, advocating, and connecting, I hope to reflect the contemporary Ireland I love: warm, creative, resilient, and thriving across the diaspora.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** I take care of a gentleman living with dementia and Alzheimer's in our local community. This experience has taught me patience, presence, and what truly matters



in life, and the importance of building a village around those in vulnerable situations. It keeps me grounded in kindness and reminds me that giving back is a privilege. Since moving to the U.S., I've learned that age doesn't define friendship. Some of my closest friends, allies and greatest supports here have decades more life experience than me, and I truly treasure those intergenerational relationships.

**A**oife Griffin is a fiddle player, educator, and cultural leader from Co. Roscommon, dedicated to nurturing the future of Irish traditional arts and the global Irish diaspora. Based in Boston, she serves as Director of the Comhaltas Boston Irish Music School, expanding access to high-level music education and supporting emerging talent. She co-founded Mhá Mheiriceá, empowering Irish-American women through cultural connection and leadership, and is the CEO of The Cultúr Co., a strategy and marketing consultancy helping Irish artists, festivals, and cultural organizations worldwide. Aoife also volunteers as Chairperson of Irish Network Boston and champions Irish identity through creativity, community & culture.

## Patrick Walsh

**Place of birth:** Boston.

**Where do you live?** Boston.

**Current company and position?** Business Manager Laborers' Local #223 LIUNA!

**First job and what it taught me?** My first job was at the age of 15 I worked as a caddy at William Devine Public Golf Course. I was a member of Boston's Caddy Scholar program and for part of the day we would learn the rules of the game of golf and caddy while the rest of the day we would be in an educational program. I learned hard work through physical labor as well as self-discipline. Golf is the only sport that you can call a penalty on yourself.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** I embrace my Irish Heritage by educating my children about where our family comes from and the history of Ireland. I recently introduced my son to Gaelic Football and Hurling at the Irish Cultural Center in Canton, MA.



**P**atrick J. Walsh became a third generation Construction Craft Laborer when he joined the ranks of Laborers' Local Union 223, an affiliate of the LIUNA. Because of his dedication and commitment to his fellow Laborers, Pat was elected to the position of Sergeant-at-Arms for Local Union 223, and he held that position for seven years until being elected to the Executive Board. Later that year, he was elected to the position of President of Local Union 223. In 2024 Pat became Business Manager of Local 223. Mr. Walsh also presently serves as a Trustee on the Massachusetts Laborers' Annuity Fund.

# GREATER BOSTON BUILDING TRADES UNIONS



CONGRATULATIONS TO  
**PATRICK WALSH**  
ON THIS WELL-DESERVED HONOR.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to the labor movement and for fighting every day for the working class.

Congratulations to all of this year's inspiring  
40 Under 40 honorees.

## Brian Rooney

**Place of birth:** Dublin.  
**Where do you live?** Marblehead, MA.  
**Current company and position?** Principal at FinanceBoston.  
**First job and what it taught me?** Working on farms in North Co. Dublin. The more enjoyable jobs were planting pumpkins and picking potatoes, and the toughest was picking stones from a field. At the age of 14, I learned the value of a day's work and if you work hard and do a good job, you will get the phone call to come back tomorrow.  
**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** Living in Boston that is not hard, whether it's GAA at the ICC in Canton or meeting friends for lunch or a pint in The Druid or The Dubliner. When I first arrived in Boston in 2009 a lot of Irish people helped me out either with work or friendship, and because of this I try to pay it forward and look for opportunities where I can help someone else out. The Irish in Boston are good at looking out for each other and it's just keeping that tradition alive.



**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** I was two-time U-19 badminton champion of my secondary school (Coláiste Choilm Swords)!

**B**rian Rooney (37) is a Principal at FinanceBoston and primarily responsible for originating debt and equity for real estate investors and developers in the Boston area. With 12 years experience in real estate finance, Brian has a proven track record in

capitalizing a wide array of property type and developments including multifamily, office, retail, and pre-development land. A native of Lusk, Co. Dublin, Brian received his Bachelor's degree in Accounting & Finance from the National College of Ireland and a Master's in Business Management from Maynooth University.

## Julianne Cox

**Place of birth:** New York City.  
**Where do you live?** Chicago.  
**Current company and position?** Invest Northern Ireland, VP, Business Development, Foreign Direct Investment.  
**First job and what it taught me?** My first job was babysitting. It taught me life skills like responsibility and patience. It also set me up to be able to manage unpredictable situations!  
**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** I was raised in Kerry. I grew up loving Irish literature and plays. My bookshelf is filled with books by my favorite Irish authors which I read and re-read - writers like Sally Rooney, Anne Enright, Donal Ryan, Colin Barrett, and Claire Keegan. All my family is based in Ireland so I travel back and forth between Chicago and Ireland on a very regular basis! Embracing my Irish heritage is also an important part of my role at Invest Northern Ireland where I promote Northern Ireland as a location for US firms to build a team.  
**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** I love sad books, music, and plays. I really appreciate the deeply tragic plays of Martin McDonagh.



**J**ulianne Cox is the VP of Business Development for Invest Northern Ireland based in Chicago. In her role, she supports U.S. companies to establish successful operations in Northern Ireland. She grew up in Kerry but also has strong

ties to Roscommon. Julianne did her undergraduate degree at Trinity College Dublin and then moved to Belfast to undertake her master's degree in the law school at Queen's University Belfast. Julianne is mom to two little girls - Layla and Adeline. She enjoys bringing them on adventures to Ireland to visit family and take in the Island's breathtaking beauty.

## Meghan Manning

**Place of birth:** New York, New York.  
**Where do you live?** New York City.  
**Current company and position?** I am an Executive Director and Senior Strategy Manager at JPMorgan Chase, currently leading a global initiative focused on improving employees' experiences through new and emerging technologies. My team partners with senior business leaders to introduce new technologies to employees across the firm and to empower individuals and teams to shape new ways of working together.  
**First job and what it taught me?** My first job was babysitting. It taught me responsibility, patience, creativity...and the art of compromise!  
**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** A deep sense of pride in my heritage was instilled in me at a young age by my grandmother, from Tralee, Co. Kerry, and grandfather, from Innishannon, Co. Cork. The Kerry-Cork banter (and rivalry!) was of course always present in their home, but more importantly were perspectives that shaped how I view the world and examples that I look to follow each day.

They were incredibly hardworking individuals, who came to New York with little but built a meaningful life and were incredibly generous towards others - teaching me both the value of hard work and importance of sharing your blessings with others. Their home was a revolving door of visitors from near and far and I grew up with what I believe is the uniquely Irish perspective that there are no strangers in life, only friends you haven't met before.

The Irish news was always playing in their house and their interest in politics inspired my studies in international relations and belief in the power of individuals to shape a better society for themselves. And their active involvement in their community set an example that I've carried into each chapter of my life, including by serving on the Notre Dame Club of New York Scholarship Board and most recently by joining the Co.

Kerry P&B Association of New York.

I also embrace my heritage in how I spend my time with family and friends - whether that is attending GAA viewing parties, games in Gaelic Park, where my grandfather hurled for Cork, or catching sessions around the city. My mother instilled me with a love and deep appreciation for the arts and we spend time together attending theater shows and art exhibits, which I also view as embracing our heritage.

To be Irish is to grow up surrounded by storytelling, music, and creative expression, and to know the power these hold to enrich our lives, understand history, and connect across generations. Finally I embrace my heritage through my personal connection back to Ireland. I'm fortunate to have dual citizenship and view Ireland as home, and look to visit family and friends as often as possible.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** I'm a thrill-seeker! My father, uncle, cousin and I recently climbed outside The Edge in NYC, which is the highest open-air building ascent in the world. We had a blast and the views hanging atop 1,200 feet were absolutely incredible!

**M**eghan is an Executive Director at JPMorgan Chase, where she has spent over 15 years in strategy and transformation roles. She worked in Warsaw, Poland to launch a new corporate centre, helped launch the firm's Office of Disability Inclusion, and is a Rising Star Award recipient for the Women's Bond Club. She has degrees in Political Science and Art History from the University of Notre Dame, where she studied at The Keough-Naughton Institute and University College Dublin and interned at the Houses of the Oireachtas. She currently resides in NYC where she enjoys spending time with family and friends.



# CONGRATULATIONS



To our very own Katie Schmidt  
on being honored as part of  
The Irish Echo's 2025 Under 40 Awards  
What an incredible achievement!

**Katie, we are very proud of you!**

-Your loving family: The Campbells and The Coopers



## Aaron Durnion

**Place of birth:** Manhattan, New York.

**Where do you live?** Mount Olive, New Jersey.

**Current company and position?** I work for Valley Bank headquartered in Morristown, NJ. I am a Commercial banker holding the title of First Vice President and have been with Valley for just over 12 years.

**First job and what it taught me?** I worked at a rest stop as my first job when I was 14 which involved everything from serving coffee and ice cream, to working in the kitchen and cleaning. I worked with people from the ages of 14-70+, people from different countries and people that had never left the state of New York. Some of the individuals I worked with were struggling to get by on their wages and yet were some of the hardest working people I have met to this day. It taught me to never judge a person based off of what they do as circumstances beyond our control can often dictate a person's situation. This was something my parents had expressed to me and my siblings, however experiencing it firsthand was what made it take hold.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** I grew up playing football at Paddy's Field and Gaelic Park in the

Bronx and continue to love the sport today including introducing it to my Italian-American Mother-in-Law who is now a proud Tyrone supporter. I love Irish music and my two little ones are quickly learning to love it as well, while my sister Leigha also performs herself which has definitely helped! We have a close group of family and friends that has supported each other for close to 40 years through good times and even more so through the bad times. There is nothing more Irish than that.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** I lived in Fermanagh for 6 years without picking up an accent.

Aaron was raised in the Bronx prior to moving to Rockland County, NY. He and his family then moved to Fermanagh after the passing of his father, Francis, and eventually attended the University of Ulster in Derry studying business. After graduating from university with honors Aaron moved back to the US to pursue a career in finance. Aaron is now is married with two children, Ronan and Kennedy, living in New Jersey.



## Sasha Doyle

**Place of birth:** Belfast.

**Where do you live?** New York – Manhattan.

**Current company and position?** Managing Director of North American Support at Options Technology.

**First job and what it taught me?** My first job was working part time in Boots when I was 16 during my final few years of school and then working as an IT intern at TotalMobile during my year out in industry at university which was a tech development company based in Belfast.

Both of these roles taught me a powerful mix of people skills and technical mindset - a foundation that my leadership and professional role have built on today. The skills and qualities that I learnt from both my roles in retail & an IT development company was resilience and emotional intelligence - staying calm during difficult interactions, developing patience and professionalism and learning not to take setbacks or criticism personally. Other skills that I was able to take from these early roles to what my career is today is time management and prioritization - juggling multiple tasks during busy periods, learning to work efficiently under pressure and understanding the importance of reliability and punctuality.

Collaboration and teamwork were another set of skills

I gained that I have taken with me into my role today. Managing a team of 50 and being an escalation point for

major clients in North America comes more naturally to me because of the people-management and problem-solving skills I developed in my previous roles.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** I embrace my Irish heritage by ensuring that I return home to Ireland throughout the year to visit my family and of course eating all the Irish food I can get by frequenting Butcher Block every so often! I am proud to be part of Options Technology that supports and has strong connections to Irish businesses both here in the US and in Ireland, helping them grow and connecting with likeminded individuals that have made the same journey.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** My golf coach was Michael Bannon (Rory McIlroy's coach!!)



Sasha Doyle is originally from Bangor and made the move to New York City in February 2022, marking the start of an exciting new chapter. She has worked with Options Technology for the past six and a half years, growing into her current role as Managing Director of North American Support - a position that reflects both her experience and dedication.

Outside of work, Sasha enjoys swimming, has a strong interest in fashion, loves going to the cinema and listening to Taylor Swift on repeat. These passions help her unwind and bring balance to her busy life in the city.



## Colin Lerner

**Place of birth:** Long Island.

**Where do you live?** Brooklyn, NY.

**Current company and position?** New York City Public Schools, High School Special Education Teacher.

**First job and what it taught me?** My first job was as a bus boy in a restaurant on Long Island when I was in high school. I worked with my cousin and it taught me what it meant to actually work. Things moved fast and for the first time I had real responsibility and people relied on me. Granted, it was for bread, but still, I played a role and people's night out suffered if I didn't do my job. I won't say I enjoyed that job but I am grateful for the responsibility and life lessons that it taught me at a young age!

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** I embrace my heritage by trying to always remember the sacrifices that were made to allow me to lead a good life. The importance of honesty, hard work and humor were taught to me

and I try to pass these beliefs to my students and hopefully one day to my own kids. Also... my wife and I had our first date on St. Patrick's Day.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** My wife and I have a tradition of always trying to visit an Irish pub in every country we travel too. We have been to Irish pubs in Morocco, Vietnam, Germany, Indonesia and Japan!

Colin has taught special education in the NYC public schools for 12 years. He also serves as the chapter leader for his school's UFT chapter and works after school for the UFT doing pension consultations for retirees. A second-generation teacher, Colin has dedicated himself to helping the youth of New York City in whatever way he can. He is a lifelong New York Rangers fan and hopes to one day watch a Stanley cup parade with his father. He lives in Brooklyn with his partner where they enjoy watching Jeopardy and eating cheesecake.

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**Congratulations to Our  
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**PATRICK WALSH**

Business Manager, Local Union 223 - Boston, MA

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**DONATO A. BIANCO, JR.**  
LIUNA Vice President and  
New England Regional Manager

**FRANK MARCHESE, JR.**  
Executive Director

**LIUNA!**  
*Feel the Power*

## Enda Crowley

**Place of birth:** Dublin.

**Where do you live?** Upper West Side, NY.

**Current company and position?** Senior Vice President, Project Executive at Clune Construction.

**First job and what it taught me?** My first job was working at a Centra supermarket in Dublin. It taught me the fundamentals of work ethic early on — showing up on time, dealing with all kinds of people, and staying calm when the queue stretched halfway down the shop. Between stocking shelves, manning the till, and learning the true importance of a good cup of tea on a long shift, it gave me a real appreciation for hard work, teamwork, and customer service — lessons that have stayed with me ever since.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** By holding onto the Irish traits that travel well — a strong work ethic, a sense of humor in challenging moments, and an appreciation for community. I stay connected to home, enjoy a good conversation as much as a good plan, and try to approach everything with a bit of Irish perspective and optimism.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** I never had any interest in moving to New York growing up. I arrived very reluctantly, convinced I'd last about six months. Thirteen years later, I'm still here — and now I can't imagine living anywhere else. Clearly, my ability to predict the future needed some work.

Enda Crowley, originally from Dublin, moved to New York in 2012 to join Clune Construction as an Assistant Project Manager, shortly after the firm opened its New York office. Over the past 13 years, he has grown alongside the company, advancing through the ranks as the business expanded. Today, Enda serves as Senior Vice President, overseeing the Estimating and Project Management divisions in New York. After arriving on an H-1B visa, he became a U.S. citizen in 2024. Enda lives on the Upper West Side with his wife and two children.



## DJ McCaffery

**Place of birth:** Secaucus, New Jersey, USA.

**Where do you live?** Secaucus, New Jersey, USA.

**Current company and position?** Director of Stadium Operations- Red Bull New York/Sports Illustrated Stadium

**First job and what it taught me?** My first role as Manager of Training Facility Operations for the New York Red Bulls taught me the importance of leadership, organization, and accountability in a fast-paced, high-performance environment. I learned how to manage daily operations, coordinate across departments, and solve problems quickly while supporting athletes and staff. The experience reinforced the value of preparation, clear communication, and adaptability—lessons that shaped my work ethic and laid the foundation for my career in sports and facilities management.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** I was raised with a deep appreciation for my Irish American heritage, shaped by my maternal grandparents who were born and raised in Belfast, County Antrim, and emigrated to the United States in the 1950s. Their resilience, determination, and adaptability continue to influence my work

ethic, teamwork, and people-centered leadership. Beyond my daily responsibilities, I actively mentor emerging professionals and support Irish organizations, including Irish Network NYC and the Rutherford Irish American Association, as a way to give back to the community and honor the values passed down through my family.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** Was recently selected as an honoree to the Irish America Magazine Business 100 list in 2025.

DJ McCaffery serves as the Director of Stadium Operations for Sports Illustrated Stadium, home of the New York Red Bulls and Gotham FC in Harrison, NJ. In this role, he oversees all facets of facility management, including trade labor, maintenance, cleaning, control room operations, operational technology, incident tracking and reporting, capital projects, guest experience, and parking and traffic logistics. DJ has led the execution of hundreds of events, including international and domestic soccer matches, concerts, American football, lacrosse, and rugby — highlighted by one of his favorite events, USA vs. Ireland Rugby in 2017.

## Alexander Marion

**Place of birth:** Syracuse, New York.

**Where do you live?** Syracuse, New York.

**Current company and position?** City Auditor, City of Syracuse.

**First job and what it taught me?** My first job was an internship US Senator Chuck Schumer's local office while I was in high school. I was one of the youngest interns they had hired. The Senator and his team showed me that working harder accomplishes so much: being the first to arrive, last to leave, always willing to volunteer. Those are lessons I carry with myself today as an elected leader and for which I am very grateful.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** Being Irish American is a part of my identity I think of every day, and it's so easy to celebrate our heritage right here in Syracuse. Whether it's enjoying great Irish live music or patronizing local Irish restaurants and businesses

- like Kitty Hoynes, Blarney Stone, Cashel House, and Coleman's - I am lucky to be in a community that embraces its historic ties to Ireland.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** I am the youngest elected official in Syracuse city government.

Alexander Marion serves as the Syracuse City Auditor. First elected on 2023, he leveraged his office's broad mandate to promote transparency, equity, and competence. Alex has successfully advocated for over \$10 million in increased state aid, worked to improve bike and pedestrian safety, stood up for tenants' rights, and drawn attention to serious challenges, including vacant house fires and retirement costs.

Alex served as an aide to the former Mayor of Syracuse and in the New York State Senate. He received his undergraduate degree in Government from St. John's University and a Master's in Public Administration from Baruch College.





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## Chyanne Holmes

**Place of birth:** Belfast.

**Where do you live?** Washington D.C.

**Current company and position?** Northern Ireland Bureau North America, Deputy Director.

**First job and what it taught me?** My first public service job was as a Parliamentary Advisor in Stormont - right out of university so it was both daunting and exciting! It was where my passion for public service began. It was where I learned that even the smallest decisions can have a profound impact on people's lives, and make a real difference. It gave me a sense of purpose. The role taught me the value of listening, collaboration, and integrity in shaping policy for a better society for us all. It laid the foundation for my career.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** I embrace my Irish heritage by proudly sharing Northern Ireland's story with North America. Growing up in Belfast gave me a deep appreciation and pride for our people, culture, creativity, and resilience. Today, I channel my pride into my work - strengthening our partnerships across North America and showcasing our capabilities in the arts, business, research, and education through impactful events, strategic programme initiatives, and meaningful engagements. I'm passionate about supporting our artists, our innovators, and our next generation leaders and telling the story of

our home - one that is dynamic, full of talent and opportunity. And in everyday life, I keep my connection with home alive by weaving it into the little things I do - sharing stories about home with whoever will listen (recently it was a bus driver in Canada!), introducing friends to our music, food, films and traditions, or connecting with others from home to celebrate our heritage.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** I practiced Karate and Taekwondo for years. I can still throw a decent roundhouse kick, although these days I mostly stick to diplomacy instead of sparring!

Chyanne Holmes is Deputy Director of the Northern Ireland Bureau in Washington D.C., driving initiatives that strengthen Northern Ireland's political, economic, and cultural ties across North America. With over a decade of experience in diplomacy and strategic engagement, she played a key role during Brexit and COVID-19 while based in Brussels, leading campaigns and building global networks at the UK Mission to the EU. Her earlier work in the European Parliament and NI Executive Office advanced Northern Ireland's international profile. Today, Chyanne spearheads the Bureau's transatlantic outreach, building partnerships that amplify Northern Ireland's influence and opportunities across North America.



## Daniel Keaveney

**Place of birth:** Co. Leitrim Ireland.

**Where do you live?** Scottsdale, Arizona.

**Current company and position?** Gilbane Building Company, Vice President, Business Leader - Southwest.

**First job and what it taught me?** My first job was sweeping floors for my dad and uncle on construction sites. It taught me the importance of the little things and always thinking one step ahead of who you are helping.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** My life revolves around my Irish Heritage. From food to sport to annual trips back to see family. I support local Irish Hibernians and cultural centers to provide assistance with the local community.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** I met my wife on a blind date.

Daniel Keaveney was born in Sligo General Hospital to a family rooted in County Leitrim, Ireland. His family immigrated when he was young, seeking better opportunity abroad. He grew up in Rhode Island, attending both high school and college there. At 20, he joined Gilbane, launching a global career building iconic buildings. Through this work he has traveled extensively, shaping skylines around the world. He met his wife in Milwaukee on a blind date arranged by coworkers. Today, they share their life with a five-year-old Bernese mountain dog, a beloved companion in their family story.

## Kathleen Schmitt

**Place of birth:** Euclid, OH.

**Where do you live?** Euclid, OH.

**Current company and position?** Music Director of Saint John Vianney Parish in Mentor, OH.

**First job and what it taught me?** My first job was as a busser at the Irish American Club, East Side in Euclid, Ohio. I learned to work hard, work as a member of a team, and serve my community with joy. Most importantly, I learned that every job, regardless of how glamorous or unglamorous, is important and necessary.

**How do you embrace your Irish heritage?** Publicly and currently, I embrace my Irish heritage through volunteering with organizations that support our culture in Cleveland. I am a delegate of the Irish American Club, East Side for the United Irish Society, which executes the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Cleveland. My role with the parade includes singing the national anthem, selecting the judges, and marshaling. I also volunteer at the Cleveland Feis and look forward to again helping with maintenance of the Irish Cultural Garden. I've been known to share my singing, keyboard skills, and accordion skills at various events.

Personally, I enjoy showing off the Irish dancing skills I acquired from Murphy Irish Arts to my toddler and singing every Irish song I know. And in my extended family I enjoy learning about Ireland's history, anecdotes from family members' Irish and Irish American experiences, and visiting my cousins in Ireland

whenever I have the chance.

**Something people would be surprised to know about me:** I remember every musical and show choir choreography from high school.

Kathleen Schmitt is the second of seven children of Chris & Kathleen Cooper. She and her husband, Jason Schmitt, are the proud parents of Madelyn. Kathleen received her Bachelor & Master of Music from Cleveland State University. She was the Music Director at St. Thomas More and Department Chair of Performing Arts at Saint Joseph Academy. She is currently the Music Director at Saint John Vianney. Kathleen is involved with the United Irish Society, Irish American Club East Side, and the Cleveland Feis among other organizations. Recently, she was honored as the Inside Co-Chair of the 2025 Cleveland St. Patrick's Day Parade.



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ON HER NOMINATION.

*Wishing her the best of luck  
from everyone at H&L Ironworks*

**Congratulations to All 2026  
Irish Echo 40 Under 40  
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◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆  
**Special  
Recognition of  
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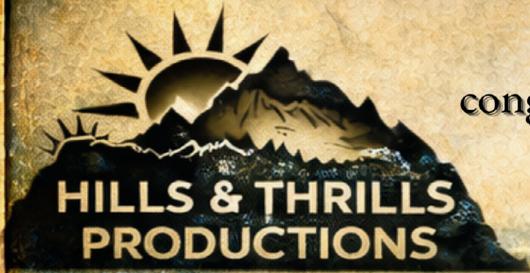
Learn More About the Irish Business Organization at [IBONewYork.org](http://IBONewYork.org)



# Congratulations to the 2026 Irish Echo 40 UNDER 40 [HONOREES!]

In Loving Memory of  
Edward & Mary Flynn  
Irving "Mike" and Patricia Anne Loughlin

Hills and Thrills Productions Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit entertainment company on a mission to use the power of storytelling to raise funds for charity and create upward mobility for artists and entertainment professionals.



Hills and Thrills Productions Inc.  
congratulates all of the outstanding Irish Echo  
40 Under 40 honorees!  
*Thank you for your leadership and inspiration!*

### *Go Raibh Maith Agaibh!*

- 🍀 Fr. Brendan Fitzgerald - St. Barnabas Parish, Bronx
- 🍀 Fr. Richard Fitzgerald - St. Columbkille Parish, Boston
- 🍀 The Friars - Sacred Heart Parish, Yonkers
- 🍀 Msgr. Kevin J. O'Leary - Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Boston
- 🍀 Richard B. O'Neill & The Friendly Sons of St. Patrick - Westchester
- 🍀 Denis Twomey & the New York Rangers Gaelic Football Club
- 🍀 Tom Leavey & the Ancient Order of Hibernians - Rockland County, Div 5
- 🍀 Jim Foley & The Charitable Irish of Boston
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# IRISH America 250

Darragh Gannon is Assistant Teaching Professor of Irish History/Associate Director of Global Irish Studies at Georgetown University, and Ireland Funds Fellow at the Princess Grace Library, Monaco. He is the lead historian and Director of the Historical Advisory Committee of Irish America 250.

Before joining Georgetown he served as Head of Irish Studies at University College Dublin and AHRC Research Fellow at Queen's University Belfast. Prof. Gannon is a former Curator at the National Museum of Ireland. He is also a former Fulbright scholar. He has been awarded major international research fellowships at the University of Melbourne, the University of Toronto, and New York University.



**Congratulations, Enda!**  
We are proud to celebrate Enda Crowley on his well-deserved recognition as one of the Irish Echo's 40 Under 40. His commitment to excellence, his integrity, and the energy he brings every day make Clune Construction a better place.

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# Comhghairdeas!

TO OUR SISTERS WHO ARE RECOGNIZED FOR  
THEIR COMMITMENT TO  
FRIENDSHIP, UNITY, & CHRISTIAN CHARITY  
IN THEIR COMMUNITIES & THEIR PROFESSIONS

**Maura English** - Cleveland, OH - Division 5 & 10  
**Amber McCulloch** - Denver, CO - Division 1



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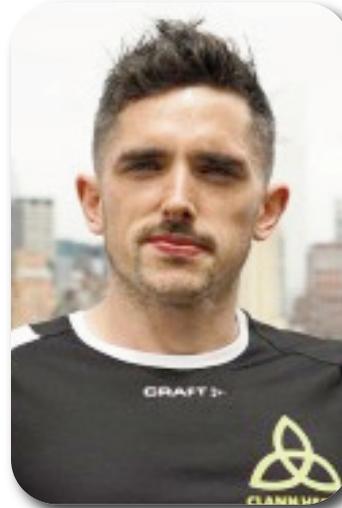


## COMHGHAIRDEACHAS

*Congratulations to Aoife Griffin  
& all of the honorees on being  
recognized in this year's 40 U 40 list!*

*From all of your friends and  
colleagues at*





Congratulations to **Seamus Keane**,  
**Niamh Reilly** and all the  
40 Under 40 Award Winners



Congratulations and thank you to  
Associate Artistic Director

**Chelsea Hoy**

for being named to  
the 2026 40 under 40

*All passes, art alone endures*

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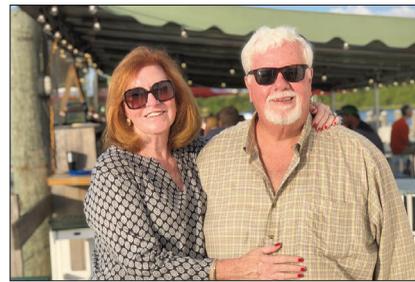
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# Congratulations to Meghan and all the 40 Under 40 Honorees this year

LOVE FROM TIM & JOAN



Congratulations, Mallory McSweeney  
and all 2026 Irish 40 under 40 honorees from



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Meghan,  
Congratulations  
on this incredible  
achievement. You are a  
wonderful ambassador for  
Irish America. We are so  
proud of you and your  
accomplishments.



Love,  
*The Batt and Maletta Families*



## **Congratulations to Seamus Keane**

**on your nomination for Irish Echo 40 Under 40 People's Choice Award**

We are very proud of you and always thankful of your support over the years.

**Further congratulations to all the nominees**

Team Aisling always welcomes new members! To join our club or get our gear for your upcoming races, please visit **teamaisling.org** or email **info@teamaisling.org**



## Congratulations to **Colin Flynn and Malachy Taplin** of Charitable Irish Society

*Colin and Malachy were founding members of our Young Leaders Council in 2025 and we thank them for their support. We can think of no one more deserving of this award than Colin and Malachy!*

**"Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí"**

**Charitable Irish Society**

America's Oldest Irish Organization - Established 1737

**"With Good Will Doing Service"**

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Join today and march with us in the St. Patrick's Day Parade in South Boston on March 15th, 2026!

Congratulations to the Irish Echo's 40 Under 40 Honorees  
**Heartfelt congratulations to Seamus Keane**  
for his well-deserved recognition and years of support.

Warm congratulations as well to

**Jane McCooey and Aoife Griffin**

on this remarkable achievement. Wishing all honorees a wonderful evening.

*Catherine and Linda*



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# Congratulations

On behalf of  
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and the men and women of the  
New England Region,  
we proudly congratulate  
Business Manager of LIUNA Local 223

**PATRICK WALSH**

on being honored by THE ECHO  
with its prestigious

**40 UNDER 40 AWARD**



**PATRICK WALSH**

Business Manager of LIUNA Local 223

This well-deserved recognition celebrates Patrick's outstanding leadership, dedication, and commitment to advancing the labor movement. Through his tireless advocacy, he has strengthened his local, empowered his members, and contributed meaningfully to the continued growth and success of the New England Region. Patrick Walsh represents the very best of the next generation of labor leadership, and we are proud to stand with him as he is recognized among the rising leaders of Irish America.

**LIUNA!**

*Feel the Power*

# We congratulate all our Award Winners

**Harley Semple** – Young Tech Ambassador Award

**Rory Schulte** – Big Sky Country Irish Ambassador Award

**Patrick Walsh** – Leader of Tomorrow Award

**Julianne Cox** – Trans-Atlantic Investment Ambassador

**Jane McCooey**- Bridge-Builder Award

**Enda Crowley** – Building America Award

**Niamh Reilly** – Laoch Spóirt Award

**Colin Flynn** – Business Ambassador Award

Siobhan Ainsworth

Emmett Brewer

Amy Coppola

Sasha Doyle

Aaron Durnion

Maura English

Darragh Gannon

Aoife Griffin

Chyanne Holmes

Chelsea Hoy

John R Howley

Colin Lerner

Seamus Keane

Daniel Keaveney

Martha Mahoney

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