




THE AMERICAN IRELAND FUND



HONORING OUR PAST, FORGING THEIR FUTURE

“There is no better example than the champions of The Ireland Funds. You have inspired us, encouraged us, supported us and we have cause to be deeply grateful for your care for Ireland’s peace and prosperity, your faithful vindication of the Irish heritage that long links Ireland and America, and whose contemporary power has been so radically effective. My duty, on behalf of all of the people of Ireland, is to express our warm appreciation and profound gratitude.”

— H.E. Mary McAleese, President of Ireland



The American Ireland Fund is a unique philanthropic organization. By partnering with individuals, foundations, corporations and the Government, The American Ireland Fund helps people in need by supporting worthy projects in both Ireland and the U.S.

For over 30 years, we have been driven by a passionate belief that philanthropy can make a profound difference in society and bring great satisfaction to donors and recipients alike.



OUR HISTORY

In 1976, Dan Rooney, owner of the Pittsburgh Steelers football team and today the U.S. Ambassador to Ireland, along with fellow Pittsburgh-based businessman Sir Anthony O'Reilly, created what was then The Ireland Fund. With a trinity of goals—**peace, culture & charity**—The Ireland Fund appealed for support for Ireland and its people from all Americans, but especially those of Irish descent.

The Ireland Fund and the American Irish Foundation, founded by Irish President Eamonn De Valera and U.S. President John F. Kennedy, merged at a White House ceremony on St. Patrick's Day 1987 to form what is today, **The American Ireland Fund.**

The American Ireland Fund has formed a thriving network in cities across the U.S. The Worldwide Ireland Funds are active in 11 countries around the globe. We are proud to be the vehicle through which **the Irish Diaspora, 80 million people strong**, gives back to the land of their ancestry in a meaningful way.

Over the past 30 years, The American Ireland Fund has raised over \$250 million to advance the work of more than 1,200 organizations helping those in need in Ireland.

We seek out worthy groups on the ground that counter sectarianism, preserve Irish culture, strengthen community development and assist those untouched by the long-gone Celtic Tiger. The American Ireland Fund is proud to support these core areas:

- 17% given to projects of Arts & Culture
- 25% given to projects supporting Community Development
- 41% given to projects involved with Education
- 17% given to projects involved with Peace and Reconciliation Efforts

** represents the three year average for 2006, 2007, 2008*

MUCH HAS BEEN ACHIEVED AND MUCH REMAINS TO BE DONE

Many may not realize the following:

- In Ireland, 14% of the elderly and 20% of children under the age of 14 live at-risk of poverty.
- In Northern Ireland, 94% of children still attend religiously segregated schools.
- Studies in Northern Ireland have shown that children as young as three years old show signs of religious sectarianism.
- In the Republic of Ireland, homelessness has risen dramatically, with children as young as 11 presenting themselves for emergency services.
- Though political strides have been made, violence has continued and the so-called "Peace Walls" in Northern Ireland that separate Protestant and Catholic neighborhoods have sadly grown in height and length.

We see these challenges as opportunities to make a difference.



“ During the first critical years of existence, The Ireland Funds were instrumental in keeping the project operational. That early support from The Ireland Funds was absolutely fantastic.” – Charles Roarty, founder of Energy Action which insulated over 1,200 homes in 2008 for the elderly and disadvantaged.

BRINGING HELP, BRINGING HOPE

“ One constant over the past 20 years has been the support of The American Ireland Fund. Through that we have been able to provide programmes and maintain the fabric of our premises. If we are to survive these challenging financial times we will need that support even more.”

– Paul Brady, Director of the Belvedere Youth Club which serves over 500 at-risk children in inner-city Dublin, one of the most deprived areas in Ireland. Over 500 local children find a haven from a neighborhood that has lost over 140 teenagers to drug abuse in the last twelve years. Support has enabled this project to offer hot meals, sports, drama, computer training and other services.

“ The assistance from The Ireland Funds really helped reap tremendous rewards; it was money that helped us do what we needed to do and essentially was a stamp of approval. It said to other funding sources ‘this is a worthwhile project; this is meaningful and deserves your attention.’ ”

– Pauline Ross, founder of the Derry Playhouse. Founded with just £300 in 1992 it is now considered one of Ireland’s leading Award Winning multi-disciplinary Community Art Resource Centres.



The American Ireland Fund is strategically placed to ensure that grant recipients utilize resources efficiently. Our grant process ensures clear objectives with measurable results and we work closely with donors to identify the areas where their gifts will be most effective. A few examples of the 1,200+ projects we have assisted are:

Barretstown Camp hosts children with cancer and other serious conditions. With assistance from The American Ireland Fund, an additional 1,200 children have been able to participate in the program.

PeacePlayers International brings together children in Northern Ireland through the neutral sport of basketball. Kids from both sides of the religious divide interact in a team setting, breaking down barriers and building friendships. Thanks to lead support from The American Ireland Fund, the number of children able to participate has tripled.

Integrated Education has an integral and vital role to play in building a shared future for the people of Northern Ireland. The Ireland Funds have been proud supporters for more than 25 years. That support has improved school facilities, purchased much-needed equipment for classrooms and enhanced the quality and range of services.

The **AWB Vincent American Ireland Fund Literary Award** has acknowledged contributions to the field of Irish writing since 1972. Winners have included Seamus Heaney, Edna O'Brien and Brian Friel. Past winner Thomas McCarthy said "I have always felt that the Award is an absolutely vital intervention in the continuing life of Irish writing. The Ireland Funds do enormous quiet good in this land all the time, but the Literary Award reminds the world of the clout of The Ireland Funds. It is visible action, and that raises everyone's morale, not least the lucky author."

We have given back over \$4 million to Irish-related causes in the U.S. Funding assists **The New York Irish Center** and its services to the "Forgotten Irish", those who came to NYC for a better life long ago and are now elderly and often isolated. Assistance has supported a Helpline as well as a Seniors Lunch Club. It is another unique way we honor those whose contributions should never be forgotten.



Sen. George Mitchell, 2008 Honoree



Bono, Humanitarian Award Recipient



Pres. Mary McAleese,
Humanitarian Award Recipient

COMMUNITY & CAMARADERIE

We believe that fun and friendship are key ingredients to the recipe for success. In addition to the serious work of philanthropy, The American Ireland Fund is known for bringing people together. Whether it be a black-tie fundraiser, a golf tournament, a Young Leaders' evening celebrating the next generation of leadership, or a unique opportunity to hear a key political figure in an intimate setting, we build community and enjoy a "bit of craic" while achieving great things. We host over 100 events annually attended by over 40,000 friends. We hope you will join us.

DONORS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

The dedication and passion of our donors is the core of what has been achieved over the last three decades. Quite simply, we cannot do our work without them. Donor benefits include tailored giving opportunities, guidance from staff in the U.S. and Ireland when traveling to Ireland, and access to an extraordinary network of global supporters and events. Most importantly, a partnership with The American Ireland Fund provides the opportunity to make a tangible and lasting gift that helps Ireland bridge the past and the future.

"My giving to projects in Ireland has nothing to do with need. In times of plenty and great wealth, need persists. My philanthropy is prompted by a wish to give back and a desire to see Ireland reach her full potential. The Ireland Funds have been a major focal point for the Irish Diaspora to come together, reconnect with their heritage and support good work at home. I am very proud of this and particularly, the work that's been done in supporting the Peace Process."

— John Ryan, American Ireland Fund donor



Liam Neeson, Performing Arts Award Recipient



Conan O'Brien, Young Leaders
Irish Spirit Award Recipient

“My parents were a tremendous influence on me and I wanted to do something to make sure they would always be remembered. Through The American Ireland Fund, I honor them by supporting the work of the Corrymeela Community and Barretstown Camp, advancing two causes that were important to them: peace and children.”

— John Fitzpatrick, American Ireland Fund donor

“We do this because there is a pull to Ireland like no other. It is like an emotional umbilical cord. It brings us back, and it keeps us close.”

— Loretta Brennan Glucksman, American Ireland Fund Chairman and donor

“We are proud to have funded programs to help bring peace to Ireland and to support programs that not only bring neighborhoods together but also bring people together for the common good. Through The American Ireland Fund, we have seen the benefit of investing in the future of the children of Ireland in terms of education and physical and social development.”

— Pat & Shirley Ryan, American Ireland Fund donors

“The American Ireland Fund has done so much in Northern Ireland through its sponsorship of integrated education. Today, as Irish Americans, we must think of education in an expanded sense. We must not educate just the children of our society, but do whatever we can to help educate the adults of Northern Ireland so that the progress that has been made in recent years continues. I urge all of you to do what you can to make our Ireland a better place to live.”

— John Duffy, American Ireland Fund donor



Ireland is an evolving island and The American Ireland Fund has adapted to meet her modern needs. **We have never wavered in our core mission: to support worthy causes which promote peace and reconciliation, arts and culture, and education and community development.**

The United States and Ireland have long enjoyed a special friendship and today there are over 44 million Americans of Irish descent. Through The American Ireland Fund, the pride and generosity of this unique community have made a difference in the lives of thousands of men and women. Our donors are extraordinary people who recognize the opportunity to give back to the land of those that came before them.

We invite you to join us and be a part of the global Irish making a difference together.



“The Ireland I now inhabit is one that these Irish contemporaries have helped to imagine.”

— Seamus Heaney—Nobel Laureate and 1973 AWB Vincent American Ireland Fund Literary Award Winner



WE HOPE YOU WILL JOIN US.



THE AMERICAN IRELAND FUND
the global Irish making a difference together

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To learn more about how you can
make a difference, please contact
your regional representative or
The American Ireland Fund.

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www.irlfunds.org