



# THE IRISH AMERICAN PARTNERSHIP

*Supporting Education & Community in Ireland, North & South*

# 2017

*April*



Students at Scoil Naisuinta Inis Meain in Co. Galway

## 100 DIRECT GRANTS TO SCHOOLS IN 2017

Since our founding in 1987, the Partnership has been focused on education. We believe it is the best way to build a prosperous future for Ireland, North and South. Over the years, we have funded many educational initiatives, supporting science teaching, university access, employment learning, and so much more. But we keep coming back to one of our original programs: **direct grants to primary schools.**

The direct grants program was born out of early conversations with the Irish Department of Education, which indicated that rural primary schools were in desperate need of library books. Located far from the main cities, these villages did not have central libraries where the students could rent reading material. The Partnership began giving grants to rural schools to build libraries and stock them with exciting, age appropriate literature for their students

in the early 1990s, and has continued the program ever since. Today, schools still report that the need for library books is as strong as ever.

As Principal Irene O’Keeffe of Coolick National School in County Kerry explained, rural schools often don’t have the funds to update their libraries for decades, resulting in dated selections and unwelcoming environments. She was thrilled to receive a Partnership grant to purchase new books and revamp the old library, making it inviting for students.

This year, the Partnership is reaffirming our commitment to the direct grants program with an ambitious goal to **disperse grants to 100 primary schools.** This influx of funding will have a tangible impact on an entire generation of Irish youth, building their literacy skills at a formative time.

### INVEST IN THE NEXT GENERATION

Please consider making a donation in support of the Partnership’s work for Ireland, North and South. Donors may select a specific school, village, town, or county as a recipient of their gift.

### *A note...*

Last April, we released a publication commemorating the centenary of the 1916 Easter Rising. It highlighted some of the creative ways Irish schools celebrated the occasion and showcased the student written “proclamations for a new generation.” I hope you enjoyed reading them as much as I did.

The proclamations were filled with the best of Ireland: compassion, ingenuity, resilience, and hope. The students did a wonderful job envisioning a strong, fair, and peaceful Ireland; now, it is up to us to provide them with the resources to realize their ambitions.

**This is why, in 2017, we have set out to give grants to 100 deserving primary schools across Ireland, North and South.**

These grants will make an enormous impact, equipping schools with library books, science supplies, and new technology to help every student achieve their full potential.

Please help us kick off the next 100 years with an investment in 100 schools.

Buíochas (thanks),

*Mary Sugrue*



Students at Glengormley Integrated Primary School in Northern Ireland

## GIVING BACK TO THE LAND OF THEIR ANCESTORS



### CHARLIE DONAHUE: ARAN ISLANDS

Charlie Donahue understands the immense impact a gift can have on a rural school. A second generation Irish-American, Mr. Donahue is passionate about giving back to his grandparents’ native Inis Oirr. Over the past twenty years, Charlie and his wife Nancy have annually supported four primary schools on the Aran Islands while also sponsoring the six local GAA teams. 15 years ago, Charlie and Nancy sponsored the expansion of the Inis Mór GAA pitch, allowing athletes ages 6-29 to play on the island rather than having to travel for their games. The local teams are so thankful that, to this day, their jerseys read “O’Donncha of Boston” in tribute to Charlie and Nancy’s patronage. Charlie has had many opportunities to visit the schools and meet the GAA athletes, who could not be more appreciative of his support.

*“The children are absolutely delighted with the new equipment and it is opening their eyes to the wonders of science in the world around them.”*

-Orlaith Breathnad  
Principal  
Scoil Naisuinta Inis Meain  
Aran Islands, Co. Galway



### KATHLEEN REGAN ROBERTS: COUNTY KERRY

Kathleen Regan Roberts has always felt a pull towards Ireland and loves to reconnect with her heritage on frequent trips back. She has a special appreciation for rural life, experiencing its challenges and joys on her farm in the United States, and is eager to preserve the rural way of life in Ireland. Kathleen traces her ancestry back to County Kerry. She knows that rural schools are the heart of the community and has generously supported both Tiernaboul National School and Coolick National School in County Kerry.

*“You may be miles away and an ocean apart but you are very close to our hearts. You have given a breath of educational life to many little minds and bodies here in Killarney”*

-Conor Gleeson  
Principal  
Tiernaboul National School  
County Kerry

## THE IRISH AMERICAN PARTNERSHIP DIRECT GRANTS TO SCHOOLS PROGRAM

### WHAT IS THE PARTNERSHIP’S DIRECT GRANTS PROGRAM?

The Direct Grants to Schools program is at the heart of the Partnership’s work towards empowering the next generation of Irish youth. These modest grants are given straight to the schools for immediate use in procuring necessary supplies. Most direct grants go to small rural schools, but some benefit DEIS (disadvantaged) city schools.

### WHAT ARE THE FUNDS USED FOR?

The funds are sent to schools to be used for library books and science materials, but they may also be used for other educational supplies on a case-by-case basis. Some schools, for instance, desperately need a school counselor or money to save their music program. We believe that the principals know their schools’ needs best, and are guided by their suggestions for funding.

### WHAT IS THE AMOUNT OF THE GRANT?

The grants are modest in size but make a transformative impact on the schools they benefit. Grants range from \$500-\$10,000 depending on the size of the donor’s gift.

### HOW ARE THE FUNDS TRACKED?

Principals are asked to answer a questionnaire with details about their school and how the funds are used. They are also asked to submit receipts and pictures of the purchased materials with students using them.

### IF I MAKE A GIFT LESS THAN \$500, CAN IT STILL BENEFIT A PARTICULAR SCHOOL OR COUNTY?

Yes! The Partnership will wait until enough donations come in for that county or school and pool the contributions to send a minimum of \$500 directly to the school. We do this to ensure schools have enough funds to make a meaningful purchase that will benefit their students.

### MAY I SUGGEST A SCHOOL FOR FUNDING?

Yes! The Partnership encourages donors to suggest schools for funding.

### ARE NAMED SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE?

Some donors wish to honor their ancestors with a named scholarship or annual gift to the school they attended. These are immensely appreciated by the schools and allow them to budget with the gift in mind, creating a sustainable impact. Scholarship programs can be crafted based on consultation with the school, donor, and Partnership staff. Named endowment opportunities are also available; please contact Mary Sugrue at [mary@irishap.org](mailto:mary@irishap.org) or (617) 723-2707 for more information on these unique and impactful giving opportunities.

### I AM VISITING IRELAND AND WOULD LIKE TO PRESENT MY GIFT TO THE SCHOOL. IS THERE AN OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO?

Yes, there is. The Partnership can help arrange a visit with the school you would like to fund. Please note that the Partnership needs to receive your gift before scheduling a meeting with the school.



Alderman Ed Burke with students at Labasheeda National School in Co. Clare after presenting a direct grant to the school

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PARTNERSHIP**

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**On behalf of the rural schools,  
students, teachers, and parents,  
Thank you for your generosity**



*Tibohine National School,  
Tibohine,  
Castlerea,  
Co Roscommon,  
Tél: 094 9870729.  
04/11/2016*

Dear Mary,

Firstly, apologies for this tardy reply. We received your kind donation in 2015 and we were absolutely thrilled. Our finances were extremely tight and as a new Principal I needed money to make my mark on the school and deliver what I promised in the interview. Due to your generous donation I was able to do this. As promised money was spent on both science and literacy materials and the children are excelling in both areas as a result of the fantastic resources we are able to purchase.

In September 2014 when I first undertook the position of Principal in Tibohine N.S. we had 36 children on the roll with two mainstream teachers. This past September we have 60 students along with a third mainstream teacher and two special needs assistants. Our school is growing from strength to strength and I owe a lot to your foundation for giving me the start I wanted.

We are currently fighting with the Department of Education for an extra classroom in the school. Space is limited with the additional staff and children. A very kind man in the community donated a piece of land beside the school for us to develop. We held fundraisers in the community however we are unable to come up with a sufficient amount to avail of this kind gesture.

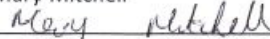
We are extremely grateful for the generous contribution to our school as the photos will show. We have only recently purchased an i pad so that is the reason we had no photos to send to you until now. If you have any additional funds available to help us on our development journey we would be most grateful. We are halfway there but unfortunately at a standstill. The Department are not interested in funding small country schools. They would prefer to see them closed. They do not realise that the school and the youth is the essence of the community and without the children, our beautiful villages and the spirit of rural Ireland would be lost.

I mentioned in my last email that my brother serves in with the US army. He is currently working with the US Embassy and has moved base to Florida. I hope to visit him and his family in the New Year.

Thank you for your support. You do not realise how much it means to our school.

Is Mise le Meas,

Mary Mitchell

  
Principal

## The Irish Legacy Society

*“I chose to make a Legacy Gift to the Irish American Partnership to honor the sacrifice and perseverance of my mother, who left her home of Cork City alone at the age of 12 to make a better life in America. My mother taught me courage, dedication, and the importance of a good work ethic. By making a Legacy Gift in her honor, I have given the children of Cork City opportunities my mother never had: the chance to better themselves through a strong education and contribute to Ireland’s economy for decades to come.”*

-General P.X. Kelley, USMC (Ret.)  
Former Commandant of the Marine Corps  
Chairman Emeritus of The Irish American Partnership



### BENEFICIARY OF GENERAL P.X. KELLEY’S LEGACY GIFT:

*“We find making ends meet here in our school very difficult on a daily basis and generosity such as yours is so very much appreciated”*

-Nickie Egan  
Principal  
North Presentation Primary School  
Cork City

## JOIN THE IRISH LEGACY SOCIETY

The Irish Legacy Society is the Partnership’s planned giving program. It offers an opportunity to honor one’s Irish heritage without drawing upon current assets. After notifying the Partnership of the intended gift, supporters will join a group committed to sustaining the Partnership’s mission far into the future. Gifts can be designated to a specific county, village, town, or Partnership program.

There are many ways to give a planned gift, and most have benefits for current taxes or financial planning arrangements. Common examples include making a bequest to the Partnership, adding the Partnership to one’s will, or designating The Irish American Partnership a whole, partial, or residual beneficiary of one’s estate, retirement plan, life insurance policy, donor advised fund, or trust.

Named endowments are also available for those wishing to establish a long-term investment in a program, town, village, county, or cluster of schools. This will create a steady stream of income for a place close to your heart, ensuring it will have the resources to thrive for decades to come.

For more information about bequests or named endowments, please contact Mary Sugrue at [mary@irishap.org](mailto:mary@irishap.org) or (617) 723-2707.

*The above is for informational purposes only; please consult with your attorney and financial adviser before making any decisions regarding planned giving.*

# Cultivating the Next Generation of Irish Poets

This year, the Irish Government launched a five-year initiative aimed at promoting arts and culture throughout Ireland. Named Creative Ireland, the program has 5 pillars:

1. Enabling the creative potential of every child
2. Enabling creativity in every community
3. Investing in creative and cultural infrastructure
4. Ireland as a center of excellence in media production
5. Unifying Ireland's global reputation

Creative Ireland seeks to build upon the national pride, sense of identity, and celebration of the Irish arts cultivated by the 1916 centenary commemorations across the globe. It is a strategic initiative to ensure that creativity remains at the heart of Irish life, and that Ireland continues to produce a rich cultural heritage for generations to come.

**The Partnership has launched a poetry program that complements Creative Ireland's first pillar: enabling the creative potential of every child.** This exciting new initiative, facilitated by Poetry Ireland, will send seasoned poets to rural schools to lead workshops on poems about emigration and the diaspora. Called Oileán (Irish for Island), the program is centered around Ireland's unique island status and its large diaspora population.

Poetry Ireland will place writers in residence at schools along the Western seaboard of Ireland, where they will work with children from the surrounding primary schools for 10 weeks. During this time, **the children will pen their own poems about emigration and the diaspora, and, in doing so, reflect on their own Irish identity.** Participating students will be able to present their final work at a yearly

*Every word told and re-told.  
Handed over, held close, longed for and feared.  
Each page six crisp inches of New England snow.  
At the end a name: half signature, half salt*

-Eavan Boland  
"The Emigrant Letters"

showcase held at Poetry Ireland's headquarters in Dublin.

Oileán was funded by the proceeds of the Partnership's annual Nollaig na mBan breakfast in Washington, D.C. The program honors 2017 keynote speaker Ambassador Anne Anderson, whose love of poetry and tireless work on immigration reform was the inspiration for Oileán. It serves both as a tribute to the Ambassador's esteemed career and to her own Nollaig na mBan memories with her mother, from whom the Ambassador inherited her love for poetry.

**Keep an eye out for the students' poems, which will appear in future Partnership publications!**










In 2017, the Partnership's poetry program will benefit:

**300 students**  
**12 schools**  
**4 writers**


*Will they meet us on the runway, and welcome us home with great cheers?  
And will the men in power and the bankers, give us back our long, lost years?  
Now my generation's leaving, a generation going away,  
A generation that didn't cause this mess, but the generation that has to pay.*

-Anthony McDermot, age 26  
"My Generation: a poem"

Dear Ms Sugrue.       

We hope you are well.

All of us in third and fourth class in Brierfield NS would like to thank you very much for all of the Science Equipment you gave to us. You are a very generous person. We are looking forward to learning all about and using the equipment in our Science class.

Thanking you,  
All of the students in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Class 



## THE IRISH AMERICAN PARTNERSHIP

The Irish American Partnership works to empower the next generation of Irish leaders by supporting educational initiatives and community development programs. The Partnership provides forums for visiting leaders from Ireland to speak in the U.S., connecting Irish-Americans with their heritage and promoting economic development through tourism, trade, and mutual exchange.

“Thank you very much for your very kind donation of €500 towards science equipment. We are delighted with our new science equipment. We have a model of a human eye, a model of the digestive system and also lots of stuff to help us with physics and Biology. Both myself and all of my classmates are very thankful. Science is a very exciting subject for us and this equipment will make it even more enjoyable.”

-Thomas Crowe  
6th Class  
Brierfield National School  
Co. Galway



Pupils at St. Caillin’s National School in Fenagh, Co. Leitrim with boxes of new books purchased with a Partnership grant



*Will you help us reach 100 schools in 2017?*

You may direct your gift to a particular school, county, village, town, or to one of the Partnership's programs.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Gift Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

BY CHECK: Please make checks payable to The Irish American Partnership.

BY CREDIT CARD:

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Billing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**You may also donate online at [www.irishap.org/donate](http://www.irishap.org/donate)**

The Irish American Partnership is a 501(c)3 charitable organization. Your contribution is tax deductible to the extent permitted by the law.

**Thank you for your support.**



**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Monday, June 5:** Chicago Golf Tournament, **Beverly Country Club**

**Monday, June 12:** Newport Golf Tournament, **Newport Country Club**

**Monday June 12:** Albany Golf Tournament, **Schuyler Meadows Club**

**September 11-14:** Irish Invitational Golf Tournament, **Dublin, Ireland**