

20th Anniversary

GOOD FRIDAY AGREEMENT

Community Programs in Northern Ireland

The Partnership has supported dozens of community development initiatives in Northern Ireland over its decades of involvement. Recently, it funded the Northern Ireland Human Rights Fund, Youthlink NI, Children in Crossfire, and the 174 Trust, four organizations working to realize the goals of the Good Friday Agreement.

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Seamus Heaney Poem

During The Irish American Partnership's 1992 Peace Dinner in Boston, esteemed Northern Irish poet Seamus Heaney penned a poem entitled "Peace in Northern Ireland," which serves as a testament to the Partnership's work promoting peace in Northern Ireland.

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Honoring Family Legacies Through Direct Grants

One of the most impactful ways to give back to Ireland is through a direct grant to the school you or your ancestors attended. The Partnership has been facilitating these grants since before the GFA, cultivating grassroots peace in Northern Ireland.

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Cementing the Peace

Your support is vital in cementing the tenuous peace in Northern Ireland. Learn more about the impact of Partnership grants during the aftermath of the GFA and how to support Northern Ireland today.

read more on page 4



Students at Forge Integrated Primary School in 2005. The Partnership has been supporting integrated education for 25 years.

Celebrating 20 Years of Progress

The twentieth anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement provides an opportunity to celebrate progress in Northern Ireland and reflect on the work that remains. The Partnership has been standing side-by-side with Northern Ireland for twenty-five years, supporting schools and community programs seeking to advance the ideals of the Good Friday Agreement. Originally, the Partnership would give equal grants to controlled and maintained schools to purchase books and school equipment. These Protestant and Catholic schools were often located just around the corner from one another, yet were a world apart—separated by barbed wire fences and mutual distrust. However, as Northern Ireland evolved, embracing integrated schools and shared education, the Partnership grew with it. Today, the Partnership annually gives a grant to the Integrated Education Fund while also continuing to support schools of both traditions.

The Partnership supports numerous community development organizations such as 174 Trust, the Northern Ireland Human Rights Fund, Children in Crossfire, Youthlink NI, the Ulster American Folk Park, and the Pushkin Trust. These programs do amazing work in bringing communities together and building trust, compassion, and a shared future. Twenty years ago, when the

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

Celebrating 20 Years of Progress

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Good Friday Agreement was signed, civil society was overshadowed by violence. Now, it has been given the space to flourish, with truly remarkable results. The Partnership is proud to support these initiatives.

In the past five years, the Partnership has given 58 schools grants for cross-community activities. These grants are transformative in impact, as the Principal of Millburn Primary School in Derry attested:

“On behalf of Millburn Primary School I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Irish American Partnership members for your very generous intervention in providing a bursary for our school. It is of crucial importance that our children are provided with opportunities to consider their own and the identities of others, developing a culture of respect and mutual understanding in our Province. This investment in the education of our children undoubtedly provides a firm foundation on which these and future generations can become active contributors in the development of a successful, sustainable blueprint for Northern Ireland, as a whole.”

**-Mrs. Sharon Lamont
Principal**

Want to know more about the Partnership’s work for Northern Ireland?

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 www.irishap.org

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Board members Liam Connellan and Sir Bruce Robinson at the RDS Primary Science Fair Belfast. The Partnership sponsored the Fair’s expansion to Belfast in an effort to promote STEM education and cross-community learning.

Over 25 Years of Building Community in Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, the Partnership funds community initiatives that promote peace, integration, and reconciliation. Below are a few examples of the incredible Partnership-supported organizations working to realize the objectives laid out in the Good Friday Agreement:

The Northern Ireland Human Rights Fund is a fund dedicated to realizing the objectives of the Good Friday Agreement. It has three goals: (1) embed a culture of rights throughout Northern Ireland, (2) build a fair and just society based on the principles of equality and respect, and (3) consolidate the peace process by delivering the commitments on human rights and civic participation made in the Belfast/ Good Friday Agreement. The Partnership was pleased to provide a grant of \$30,000 in support of this fund.

Youthlink NI exists to provide support and training for youth workers and peace building and reconciliation experiences for young people. It is the only forum in Northern Ireland where the four churches co-operate formally in the service of young people. The Partnership has funded numerous university scholarships for disadvantaged Northern Irish students through Youthlink.

Children in Crossfire is devoted to creating a world where every child can reach his or her potential. The Partnership supports their “Educating the Heart” Program, which aims to provide teachers with the skills and confidence to instill emotional awareness, critical thinking, and reduced bias, thus enhancing the overall capacity of students to develop as compassionate citizens and change-makers. In 2017, the Partnership funded compassion training at 9 schools.

174 Trust is a nondenominational Christian organization serving primarily North Belfast. Their mission is to build a strong, just, and peaceful society by fostering open dialogue and providing vital social services to those most at need. The Partnership has been supporting their efforts to bring communities together for over a decade.

Peace in Northern Ireland

There is cynical definition of peace which says that it is merely the suspension of war
One of the paradoxical blessings of the past two and a half decades of Northern Ireland's history has been an emergent vision of peace as a creative condition in which cultural, political and doctrinal differences can be actively confessed and intelligently contested. The word has passed through a phase when it seemed to belong in the realm of wishful thinking, it has attained a new and robust reality in the common mind, offering to challenge the artist and entrepreneur alike and intimating the genuine possibility of a better life.

The typically generous commitment of the Irish American Partnership to the practical development of this positive mood could not be more welcome or more timely.

-Seamus Heaney

Written on the occasion of The Irish American Partnership 1992 Peace Dinner in Boston

Honoring Family Legacies through Direct Grants

For over 30 years, the Partnership has encouraged Irish Americans to honor their ancestry through investing in Ireland's future. Partnership supporters have the unique opportunity to give back to the school they or their family members attended, preserving their relationship to Ireland for decades to come. Many donors choose to present the grants in person, bringing along the next generation of their family to instill the value of their Irish ancestry. Direct grants show Irish students that their relatives in America continue to care about them, building the Irish American relationship far into the future.

Seven years after the Good Friday Agreement, Partnership member Joseph P. McParland traveled with his daughter Mary Kate McDonnell and granddaughters Maura and Meghan McDonnell to St. Patrick's Primary School in Derry to present a Partnership grant of \$3,000 to Principal Martin Coyle (right) and two St. Patrick's student representatives, as pictured above. **This grant demonstrated that Irish America had not forgotten Northern Ireland after the Good Friday Agreement.**



Today, many Partnership donors support schools or organizations in Northern Ireland with annual gifts, building grassroots peace. Education has been the greatest gift passed down from one generation of Irish to the next; continuing this legacy is a meaningful way to acknowledge the benefits of the Irish emphasis on education and pay it forward. The Partnership staff works with donors to create individualized giving solutions, including scholarships, named endowments, annual sponsorship, or one-time gifts.

Interested in sponsoring a school in Northern Ireland? Contact CEO Mary Sugrue at mary@irishap.org for more information.

A TALE OF TWO SCHOOLS: BEECHFIELD AND ST. MATTHEW'S



Partnership members in the garden of Beechfield Primary School in Belfast, 2004. St. Matthew's is visible behind the peace line.



Partnership members on the other side of the peace wall at St. Matthew's Primary School, Belfast 2004

While the peace agreement was taking root, the Partnership took great care to evenly balance grants to Catholic and Protestant schools. For the first decade of the agreement, cross-community educational initiatives did not hold public support, so the Partnership met the communities where they were and provided grants for school improvement and educational materials.

Protestant Beechfield Primary and Catholic St. Matthew's Primary School were two of the Partnership's 2004 grant recipients. Located on the short strand in East Belfast, students at these schools lived through the sectarian violence that persisted far after the Good Friday Agreement was signed.

Through their Partnership grants, these schools started to rebuild their facilities, creating a peaceful and safe environment for students to learn—the first step towards permanent peace in Northern Ireland.

In many ways, physical change is the easy part. Learning to trust is far more difficult. Change is slow; over 90% of schools are still divided by religious affiliation. However, we see the progress everyday—cultivated by the teachers, students, organizations, and communities willing to have tough conversations and act with compassion.

The Partnership has stood with the people of Northern Ireland since the troubles and will continue to support them on their path to durable peace.

HOW TO SUPPORT THE PARTNERSHIP'S WORK IN FURTHERANCE OF THE GOOD FRIDAY AGREEMENT

1. Make a one-time gift via cash, check, or card in honor of the Good Friday Agreement by putting "GFA20" in the memo or comment box
2. Make a recurring gift in support of a school, town, community program, or county online at www.irishap.org/donate
3. Donate stock through the Partnership's broker, Fidelity Investments: DTC # 0226, Partnership's Fidelity account # Z47-953237
4. Give through a Donor Advised Fund: the Partnership's Tax ID number is 22-2801642

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