

#GoldenBridges

16th Annual

GOLDEN BRIDGES

Na Droichid Órga
A Time of Transformation
2024 CONFERENCE

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 15TH, 2024



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ERRIGAL PARTNERS:



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Golden Bridges '24 Convenes in Babson College

By Ray O'Hanlon

Golden Bridges returns to Massachusetts this week for its annual exercise of linking Ireland's Northwest with America's Northeast, specifically Boston and Massachusetts.

The 2024 conference is set for Babson College in Wellesley, a short hop from the traditional Boston location. The top rated university specializes in entrepreneurship and business, so is a perfect venue for a conference dedicated to boosting transatlantic links in those very fields.

Golden Bridges, this year taking place on Friday, November 15, will bring together business leaders and civic champions from Northwest

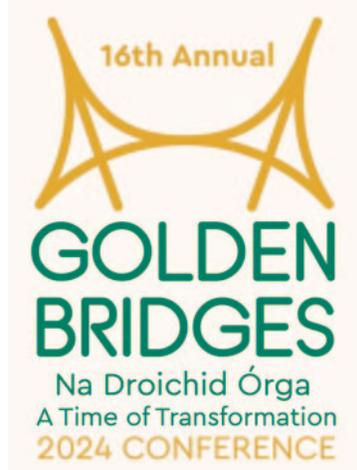
Ireland to forge partnerships with corporations, universities, and Irish American organizations in Boston and right across Massachusetts.

First held in 2008 at the JFK Library, the Golden Bridges gathering, which runs in a conference-luncheon format, is backed by both Invest Northern Ireland and Tourism Ireland.

Connla McCann, conference co-founder, says the Golden Bridges gathering plays a key role in forging partnerships between Northwest Ireland and New England.

"Friendships and alliances built through this conference have proved enduring and mutually beneficial," she said.

"We're thrilled to be holding this



year's conference at the number one university globally for entrepreneurship, Babson College." A highlight of every Golden

Bridges conference is the presentation of the Dave Burke Award. This year the award, in memory of the legendary Irish community activist, will go to John Foley, Principal Attorney at Foley Law Offices, P.C.

In addition to the panel discussions the Babson College gathering will feature a video message from Northern Ireland Economy Minister Conor Murphy MLA.

The ocean-spanning connections that have been forged these past sixteen years have proven to be as resilient as girders holding up a literal bridge.

They will be strengthened anew in Wellesley this week, and throughout the coming year.

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Head of North America
& Australia, Tourism Ireland



Andrea Haughian
Head Invest NI USA



Andrew O'Brien
Partner, Seven Letter



Brian Golden
Attorney at
Keegan Werlin LLP



Cathal Conlon
Vice President of Marketing
& Community Engagement,
New England Revolution



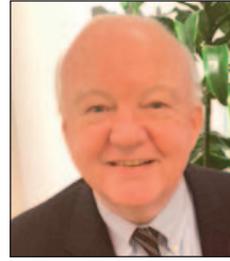
Eugene O'Flaherty
Partner/Ballard Partners,
Washington, DC



Gregory Hanley
Administrator, Town of
Holbrook & Chairman, Quincy
College Board of Governors



John Donovan
Chair of the Boston Belfast
Sister City Initiative



John Philip Foley, Esq.
Attorney at Law



Kathryn Ellis
Director, UMass Innovation
Institute, University of
Massachusetts Amherst



Kevin J. Sullivan
Vice President of Strategic
Corporate Engagement
Babson College



Kyle Darcy
Author



Laura Hamilton
President, BIBA



Martina Curtin
Chairperson
Irish Cultural Centre



Mary Sugrue
Chief Executive,
Irish American Partnership



Maureen Bennett
Partner, Jones Day



Michael Patrick MacDonald
Author of the New York Times
Bestselling memoir, All Souls



Nuala McGowan
Senior Director of Research
Finance & Compliance,
Harvard University



Pat Bench
Founder of Benchmark
Strategies



Robert McCarron
President & CEO, Association
of Independent Colleges and
Universities in Massachusetts



Ryan McDermott
Co-Founder & Partner
of Prism Benefits



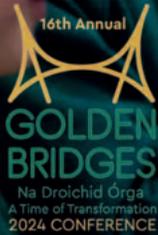
Sean Getchell
Staff Director, Joint
Committee on Election Laws,
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Sean P. Moynihan
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World's Oldest Whiskey Has Many New Labels

By Ray O'Hanlon

Somewhere back in the mists of time the first sip of Bushmills Whiskey was imbibed. And it for sure passed the taste test because 416 years later people are still imbibing - and not just in the County Antrim village that gives the world's oldest licensed distillery its name, but all across the world and all across the United States.

There are two dates in the story of Irish drink gifts to the world that Irish people can point to with ease. Guinness drinkers proudly point to that first batch of the famed stout being poured in 1759. But Bushmills has that beat as any bottle will show. The distillery and its license dates back to 1608.

Now, in 2024, Bushmills looks back proudly to that first year, but is not resting on any laurels. Rather, it is looking to the future with an array of whiskeys that only a distillery with such a proud and lengthy pedigree can offer to whiskey fans around the globe.

"Bushmills is unique," says Matt Klette.

Matt, a native of Kentucky, has an equally unique job title. He is the Bushmills "Head of Whiskey Advocacy for the United States."

Now based in Los Angeles, he goes about the task of promoting the cask - many of them.

"Bushmills, as you would expect for a distiller that goes back over 400 years, has a lot of stock of rare and aged single malts," he says.

And it is indeed the single malt market that Matt and his colleagues are lately focusing on as Bushmills closes in on yet another year in its storied history.

"We have a vast supply of different ages," he says.

No surprise there. Bushmills is able to use that vast and varied stock to offer an array of rare and aged malts each and every year.

One offering that Matt is keen to point to is a "private reserve" in the current inventory that numbers only 780 bottles.

Whiskey ages in barrels. These days those barrels are not just unadorned oak but are also Bourbon, Sherry, Bordeaux, Plum Brandy - and Tequila no less.

The opportunity to vary taste as a result of batches coming out of all these different casks is, according to Matt, "a lot of fun."

Bushmills is lately moving strongly into the single malt market.

"We are authority on single malt," says Matt.

In a previous working life Matt owned and operated bars.

"I remember that virtually nobody had an idea that single malt could be anything other than Scotch," he recalls.

Move over the next door neighbor.

"Now Irish single malt sales are going up and up. People who are not necessarily whiskey fans like Irish single malt at first tasting."

Hence the Bushmills advance into this growing part of the overall market.

If you market your product properly, and your product has a worldwide reputation for quality, you have to be ready to meet rising demand.

Over the decades, indeed centuries, the distillery in the village of Bushmills met that demand. Just a short drive from the world famous Giant's Causeway, the distillery has hosted visitors on tours under its venerable roof.

But now the old has been joined by the new.

In what Bushmills describes as one of the biggest developments in Irish whiskey in over 200 years, the old distillery has a new partner in the next door "Causeway Distillery."

This new distillery will more than double production, "paving the way for the next generation of growth and help to further cement Bushmills positioning as one of the top five single malt producers in the world and the brand ready to take on Scotch in the pursuit of category leadership."

The new Causeway Distillery is "fondly named" after the Giant's Causeway, which is a mere three miles outside



The new Causeway Distillery is shining a light on the wider whiskey world.



The state of the art stills in the new Causeway Distillery.

the village.

Again according to Bushmills: "Staying true to Bushmills heritage, the design and build of the distillery is carefully centered around the optimisation of the distilling process. The introduction of new technologies enables Bushmills to reduce product variability and achieve the same signature flavor each time."

"Bushmills partnered with German company GEA to ensure energy efficiency was at the forefront of the distillery's design and construction. All electricity is certified 100% green by depending on wind and solar energy sources. The Causeway Distillery holds the future of Irish tourism at its helm and plans to introduce an immersive visitor center to welcome tourists from across the globe."

"Staying true" is more than a motto. It is a guiding instruction in an enormously competitive global market where the future beckons, but also brings challenges.

"The Causeway Distillery is bringing us into the future," says Matt Klette.

And that future rests largely with sales of single malt.

"We're well situated to make whiskey for all," adds Matt.

Bushmills is for sure well situated on the global map. It is in a beautiful part of a beautiful island.

But it is also part of a larger conglom-

erate that gives the company the resources to reach into all parts of the world.

Again, according to the Bushmills website: "The potential of Bushmills as a global competitor in the business of single malt has been realized by Juan Domingo Beckmann, founder of Casa Cuervo Tequila."

"Recognizing the same values in Bushmills - family, long standing relationships and generations of spirit makers - that were part of his own experience as an eleventh generation tequila-maker, - Juan Domingo Beckmann identified the long-term growth potential of Bushmills back in 2014, when Proximo Spirits acquired the company."

Being a part of something bigger is a key advantage in a highly competitive market that, in the Irish whiskey world, is seeing new brands coming on stream at an extraordinary rate in recent years.

But when you have over 400 years in your story you are ready for the recent - and the future.

Matt Klette proudly points to the fact that Bushmills is the official whiskey of golf's PGA Tour.

But even with this high profile relationship, Bushmills is charting its own course. It aims to be above par, not below it.

More at www.bushmills.com



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Barry Maloney

Barry Maloney

President, Worcester State University

Barry M. Maloney, Worcester State University's 11th president, has served in this role since 2011. His straightforward charge — to put students first — means providing them an excellent education at an affordable price in a vibrant campus environment, one where students explore their intellectual passions and pursue their professional interests, while gaining transformative leadership experiences.

Under President Maloney, Worcester State University has significantly improved its graduation rate; doubled its fundraising and tripled its endowment; overhauled the physical campus; balanced annual campus budgets; increased grant support; doubled the diversity of its student body; and expanded outside-the-classroom learning opportunities for students. Maloney's Five Points of Action toward a More Inclusive Campus Climate, initiated in 2016, has resulted in gains in faculty diversity and better systems for addressing bias. Due to sound fiscal management, the campus has kept tuition and mandatory fees to just over \$10,000 a year for commuting students.

Knowing that academic success correlates with deeper connections to the campus, Maloney ensured that construction of a new residence hall and Wellness Center moved forward. The 150,000-square-foot Sheehan Hall opened in 2014, adding 400 beds and bringing Worcester State undergraduate residential population to about 40%—roughly double what it was in 2000. When the \$52.6 million, 101,000-square-foot Wellness Center opened in September 2016, it completed a 10-year, \$200 million dollar investment in new and renovated facilities that have transformed the campus.

Under President Maloney's leadership, The Princeton Review has consistently named Worcester State University a "Best in the Northeast" and U.S. News & World Report has ranked WSU in its regional "top tier." Worcester State University has also launched new academic programs; was named to the President's Honor Roll for Community Service; and was noted as one of the nation's most "environmentally responsible" campuses.

In 2019, Massachusetts Commissioner of Higher Education Carlos Santiago named Maloney to the statewide Equity Advisory Committee and Worcester Mayor Joseph Petty appointed Maloney to chair the Worcester Advisory Committee for Diversifying the Teacher Workforce.



Gareth Doherty

Gareth Doherty

President Maloney serves on governing boards of the Worcester Business Development Corporation, the Worcester Regional Research Bureau, the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce, St. Vincent Hospital, and the American Antiquarian Society and is a corporator for the Greater Worcester Community Foundation.

Gareth Doherty is an Associate Professor of Landscape Architecture and an Affiliate Faculty member in the Department of African and African American Studies at Harvard University. His work centers on designing landscapes that are equitable for both people and the environment. Doherty addresses issues such as social justice, identity, cultural spaces, and the human impacts of climate change.

Using a method he calls "landscape fieldwork" Doherty explores and documents stories about landscapes that haven't been formally recorded. He has written several publications on this topic, including *Paradoxes of Green: Landscapes of a City-State* (University of California Press, 2017) and the forthcoming, *Landscape Fieldwork: How Engaging the World Can Change Design* (University of Virginia Press, 2025).

He is also working on new publications focusing on African landscape architecture. At Harvard, Doherty has taught in the departments of Urban Planning and Design, Anthropology, and African and African American Studies, and more recently at the Harvard Extension School. He has held leadership positions within the Department of Landscape Architecture, including serving as the MLA Program Director, and he currently leads the Critical Landscapes Design Lab.

Research projects by Doherty are often set in Islamic and postcolonial societies, including regions in Brazil, West Africa, and the Arabian Peninsula. Originally from Carndonagh, with maternal roots in Derry, Doherty was the Principal Investigator on the award-winning "Atlas for a City-Region" project, sponsored by Derry City and Strabane District Council and Donegal County Council.

He earned his doctorate from Harvard University and holds landscape architectural degrees from the University of Pennsylvania and University College Dublin. Prior to that, he studied at Carndonagh Community School and St. Patrick's Boys' National School. He has completed several landscape architectural projects and is affiliated with professional organizations in Nigeria, the US, and the UK.



John Buckley

John Buckley

John R. Buckley, Jr. was elected as Plymouth County Register of Deeds in November 2000. He is an attorney, licensed to practice law in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Prior to being elected Register, Mr. Buckley was a partner in the Brockton law firm of McCluskey, Yunits and Buckley. In 1992, Mr. Buckley was elected to the board of Plymouth County Commissioners. He served four years on that board, including two years as Chairman.

Mr. Buckley has also served as an Assistant City Solicitor for the City of Brockton, an Administrative Assistant to the Mayor of Brockton and a Legislative Assistant to Congressman Brian Donnelly in Washington, D.C.. Register Buckley is a graduate of Boston College High School, Phillips Exeter Academy, Tufts University and The New England School of Law. Register Buckley is the Past President of the Massachusetts Registers of Deeds Association.

Rep John Lawn

Massachusetts State Representative

Born and raised in Watertown, State Representative John Lawn graduated from Merrimack College in 1991. He has represented the 10th Middlesex District—which includes parts of Watertown, Waltham, and Newton—since 2011.

Lawn, whose parents came to Boston in the early 1960s — his mother from Sligo, and his father from Donegal — proudly carries on the traditions of his heritage as the Chair of the American Irish State Legislative Caucus. Last year, under Rep. Lawn's leadership, the Massachusetts delegation sent a group of more than 50 participants to Ireland to join legislators from every state to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement.

Additionally, Rep. Lawn serves as the House Chair of the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing. He lives in Watertown with his wife Shannon and five children.

John Philip Foley, Esq

Foley Law Offices, Boston

John Philip Foley has been a Massachusetts lawyer for over 30-years. For the past 25-years, John has been the principal attorney at Foley Law Offices, P.C., a downtown Boston law firm specializing in U.S.



Rep John Lawn

immigration law.

In that time, John has helped thousands of individuals enter the U.S. legally and he has been with them as they became Legal Residents or Green card holders first and later U.S. citizens.

Even with a busy law practice, John has been active with a number of Irish and Irish-American organizations. John was a member of the Board of Directors and General Counsel at the Irish Cultural Center in Canton, Massachusetts for nine years. In that time, John assisted with the development of a zip line ropes course on the Canton campus and brought professional rugby, musical groups and other entertainers to the ICC.

At the request of the Irish Consul General, John helped organize the committee that negotiated an agreement with the Massachusetts Resources Water Authority to cite and build the Great Hunger Memorial on Deer Island, where hundreds of Irish men, women and children died and are buried in unmarked mass graves. John later assisted the Massachusetts Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) place two memorial tablets on Deer Island in memory of those Irish who survived the Great Hunger and the crossing of an ocean only to die in a quarantine station less than a mile from Boston.

John was the Massachusetts coordinator for Lawyers Alliance for Justice in Ireland for more than ten years. As a member of the national group of lawyers and judges concerned with the rule of law in Northern Ireland, John assisted with the legal appeals of a number of controversial Diplock Court cases in Northern Ireland, he coordinated visits to prisons to meet republican prisoners unjustly convicted without trial by jury and he was an international observer of the contentious 12th of July parades by the Orange Order.

John worked closely with Civil Rights lawyer Rosemary Nelson until she was killed outside her home in Lurgan by a car bomb in 1999. John testified to the international tribunal looking into Rosemary's murder and provided first-hand evidence of the dangers she faced as a lawyer in Northern Ireland.

John is also one of the founders of WWW.GetIrishPassport.com an on-line service that assists Irish-Americans obtain Irish citizenship so they can live and work in Ireland and carry an Irish passport.

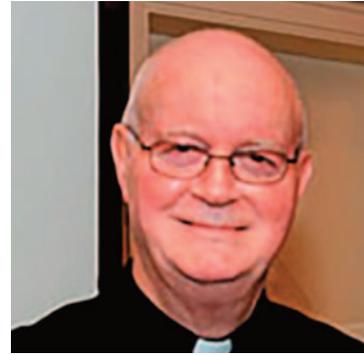
GOLDEN BRIDGES HONOREES



John Philip Foley, Esq



Sr Mary Turley pbvm



Fr Myles Kavanagh CP

Sr Mary Turley pbvm

Director, The Flax Trust

Dr. Sr Mary Turley pbvm, of the Presentation Sisters, a teacher by profession, came to Ardoyne in North Belfast at a time when the troubles were escalating. She took up a teaching position in St Gabriel's Secondary School, joined The Flax Trust. She co-founded Flax Trust / America with Fr Myles and is described as the tireless, relentless and fearless promoter of Flax Trusts Projects (reconciliation through economic and social development) at home and abroad in the USA.

In 1995 with the help of individuals from both communities (including Fr Myles) Mary set up Bannside Development Centre in Obins Avenue in Portadown which had suffered from all aspects of social and economic deprivation – Bannside was the catalyst for change.

This practical economic regeneration ini-

tiative still today not only creates a conducive business climate but also serves to bridge the religious divide and promote mutual understanding.

Company directorships have included, the Royal Group of Hospitals, Belfast; Ian Gow Memorial Trust; Novatech; Greater Craigavon Partnership; Bannside Development Agency Ltd the Nano Nagle Center, Cork; presently Flax Trust – Belfast, Flax Trust/America; Brookfield Business Center; School for Social Enterprises in Ireland; Bannside 2000 Ltd.

Mary has been described by the late Edna O'Brien as 'elegant efficiency'!

Fr Myles Kavanagh CP

Chairman, The Flax Trust

Dr. Fr. Myles Kavanagh C.P., a Dubliner and member of the Passionist Order founded the Flax Trust in 1977. Passing the derelict

Brookfield Mill on the Crumlin Road in his Parish of Holy Cross almost daily he thought that with investment the site could be used to help the people of the local area from both sides of the religious divide. Gathering a group of movers and shakers around him they turned Brookfield Mill (150,000 sq ft) into the largest and strongest community economic development project in Northern Ireland, providing training, education, arts center, art gallery, theatre, dance studio and a small business incubation project on the site. This led to the building of a local shopping mall, a supermarket, healthcare center, pharmacy, florist shop and Pittsburgh Bar & Restaurant.

In the late 80's in a joint venture with Bombardier Aerospace he developed the derelict Belfast Co-Operative department store into a 180,000 sq ft 'neutral' city center

block. Interpoint has housed the Patton Police Commission; the Northern Ireland Justice Review; the Novatech Initiative which developed new technology-based ventures through a unique process of technology transfer and licensing; Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL); initiated Ulster Community Investment Trust, now known as Community Finance Ireland.

In 1982 he and Sr Mary Turley went to the USA and with help from Irish America the Flax Trust / America was born as a 501(c)3.

His vision for a better social and economic future for the local area had Myles founding Flax Trust Housing Association to provide high standard housing in an area which was overcrowded and living in pre and post war housing. As Chairman of FHA he oversaw the building of sheltered accommodation for the elderly in 1995 and in 1998 accommodation for homeless youth with training and life skills as part of this project (Foyer).

The School of Social Enterprises in Ireland (2005) Flax Trust/Ulster University alliance continues to be devoted exclusively to leadership, management and business development for the social economy sector.

In 2013 the Flax Trust Arts project was set up (FISCA) providing opportunities for all schools in North Belfast from both sides of the divide to compete for music bursaries in a Christmas Concert in Belfast City Hall. Many concerts were performed in Holy Cross Church, North Belfast and several musical shows with the proceeds going to nominated charities.

Under his guidance The Flax Trust continues to change lives in North Belfast.



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Alison Metcalfe



Anne Marie Conlon



Dr Joanne Gallagher



John Healy OBE

Alison Metcalfe

Head of North America & Australia, Tourism Ireland & Chair, European Travel Commission, USA Chapter

Alison has responsibility for leading Tourism Ireland's Marketing Strategy and Operations in the US, Canada & Australia. In June 2017, Alison also assumed responsibility for Tourism Ireland's operations in Australia/New Zealand. She also serves as Chair of the European Travel Commission (ETC), USA Chapter since 2017. ETC is the non-profit organisation responsible for the promotion of Destination Europe as the worldwide number one tourist destination in third markets.

Anne Marie Conlon

Head of Economic Development with Donegal County Council

Anne Marie Conlon is Head of Economic Development with Donegal County Council and works closely with a range of partners including Derry City and Strabane District Council on initiatives which are instrumental in highlighting the economic potential of the North West City Region.

Anne Marie leads a dynamic and talented team who work in promoting the region as a great place to live, work, invest and do business in; offer a range of property solutions to help businesses grow and scale and who collaborate with partners and stakeholders to enable key sectors to grow and thrive in the region.

Anne Marie has a strong background in economic development, communications and public administration and holds an MS in Innovation Management and BA (Hons) Business Studies from Ulster University.

Dr Joanne Gallagher

Head of Faculty of Science and Health, ATU Donegal

Dr Joanne Gallagher has worked in academic, research and managerial roles in the higher education sector in Ireland for over twenty-five years. Joanne holds a PhD in Molecular Cell Biology, MSc in Biological Science (DCU), MSc in Industrial Pharmaceutical Science (RCSI) and a BSc Honours in Microbiology (University of Galway). Following the completion of her

PhD Joanne joined the staff of the Department of Medicine and Therapeutics in University College Dublin where she worked as a Postdoctoral Scientist in the Conway Institute, and as a Special Lecturer with the Department of Pharmacology.

Dr Gallagher left UCD to take up a position with the Health Product Regulatory Authority where she worked as an Immunological Assessor in the area of vaccine authorisation at an Irish and European level. During her time with the HPR she was a registered expert at the European Medicines Agency in the areas of immunology and rheumatology.

In 2006 Joanne returned to her native Donegal and joined the Department of Science in ATU Donegal where she worked as a lecturer and principal investigator and in 2014 was appointed Head of Department of Science. Dr Gallagher is a Ministerial appointment to the Veterinary Council of Ireland since 2018 and is the current Chair of the statutory Veterinary Education and Training committee. In 2024 Joanne was nominated by the Technological Higher Education Association and appointed as a board member of Donegal Education and Training Board.

Dr Gallagher was appointed Head of Faculty of Science and Health in December 2020 and joined the senior management team of ATU. As Head of Faculty she is responsible for the strategic direction, development and management of the Faculty of Science and Health in ATU Donegal. As a member of the ATU senior management team she is involved in the wider strategic management of the University as it works towards achieving the objectives of its first strategic plan, delivering world class, regionally embedded education provision in West and Northwest of Ireland. Joanne is committed to the provision of third level educational opportunities in the region and has been instrumental in leading and securing ATU's bid to be the second provider of Veterinary Medicine Education in Ireland.

John Healy OBE

Chair Invest Northern Ireland

John Healy OBE is a highly experienced senior executive with 30 years of experience in the technology sector, mostly gained in the financial service industry. He

has extensive experience in leading global teams, developing strategy and delivering solutions to address business and technology issues.

He was the Managing Director of Allstate NI, where he served from January 2016 to December 2022. Before Allstate, John held the position of Service Centre Head for Citi's near shore technology and operations centre in Belfast.

Most recently, John was Chair of the Software Alliance, the industry-led representative voice of the £1.7 billion software industry in Northern Ireland.

He serves on several boards including being Chair of the Fellowship Advisory Board at the Centre for Democracy and Peace Building, he is a member of the Council of Ulster University and is on the Board of Business in the Community. He is past-President of the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce.

John Kelpie

Chief Executive Derry City & Strabane District Council

John Kelpie has been Chief Executive of the Derry City and Strabane District Council since April 2015. He initially led on the establishment of a new Council as a result of a programme of local government reform in Northern Ireland, with a new, larger geographical area and a range of additional powers, functions and responsibilities than its predecessor Councils. John designed an innovative, flexible and responsive staffing structure with a clear vision and purpose to develop a 'thriving, prosperous and sustainable City and Region with equality of opportunity for all'.

John has led on international best practice examples of place-based leadership within the cross-border North West City Region and the establishment of inclusive, strategic growth partnerships and plans. Recently he also led a City Partnership in securing the largest ever government investment package into the City and Region with the circa £293m City Deal and Inclusive Future Fund to drive innovation and regeneration in Derry and Strabane.

A Derry native and family man, John enjoys hill walking when he manages to secure some free time.

John McLaughlin

Chief Executive of Donegal County Council

John G. McLaughlin grew up in Redcastle, Co. Donegal and was educated at Carndonagh Community School and the Regional Technical College in Letterkenny. He graduated with a degree in Civil Engineering from University College Galway in 1986. He spent a short time working for University College Galway and Westmeath County Council before taking up an appointment in California, USA where he spent 13 years working in engineering and construction. He joined Donegal County Council in 1999 where he worked in the National Roads Office in Donegal Town at Executive Engineer and Senior Executive Engineer level. In 2001, he was appointed Director of Roads and Transportation and held that role until July 2020, when he took up the position of Chief Executive of Donegal County Council.

Mayor Cllr Lilian Seenoi Barr

Mayor of Derry City and Strabane District Council

Lilian Seenoi Barr is a prominent Kenyan Irish political and community activist known for her commitment to social justice, equality, and human rights. Born in Kenya, Lilian's early life was shaped by the challenges and inequities she observed in her Maasai community, sparking a passion for advocacy that would guide her life's work.

In her late twenties, Lilian relocated to Derry/Londonderry, where she quickly became an influential figure in local politics and community activism. As the Founder and Chief Executive Officer at the North West Migrants Forum, she played a pivotal role in advocating for the rights and integration of migrants and minoritised minorities. Her work at the Forum involved developing programmes that addressed issues such as racial discrimination, social inclusion, and community cohesion.

Lilian's political career gained significant momentum when she joined the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP). Her dedication to public service and her ability to connect with diverse communities led to her election as the Chair of the Derry SDLP District Executive. In 2021, she was co-opted into the Derry



John Kelpie



John McLaughlin



Mayor Cllr Lilian Seenoi Barr



Martina Curtin

City and Strabane District Council, marking a significant step in her political journey. Demonstrating her growing influence and popularity, Lilian was subsequently elected in 2023 as one of the SDLP Councillors for the Foyle District Electoral Area.

Beyond her political engagements, Lilian is known for her grassroots activism. She has organised numerous campaigns and events aimed at raising awareness about issues such as racial inequality, Nighttime economy, Women's Health and Housing. Her efforts have not only brought about tangible changes in her community but have also inspired many others to take up the mantle of activism.

Lilian Seenoi Barr's contributions to political and community life have been recognised with several awards and honours. Her work continues to inspire and empower individuals and communities, making her a formidable force for positive change. Through her tireless efforts, Lilian has demonstrated the profound impact that dedicated activism and compassionate leadership can have on society.

Lilian Believes this is our time to build a more inclusive, prosperous, and vibrant Derry City and Strabane District. She wants to be a mayor for everyone, one who is accessible and one who will lead with hope. Lilian Has chosen BUDS Club as her charity of the year and will fundraise and promote the work of this organisation during her term in the Guildhall.

Martina Curtin

Chairperson Irish Cultural Centre

Martina is the Founder of CHC Home Care, a boutique style home care agency that allowed people to remain safely in their homes while receiving nursing care. She grew the business organically to a multimillion dollar company until it was acquired by a publicly traded corporation in October 2020. Martina serves as Board Chairperson of the Irish Cultural Centre of Greater Boston and is the first female to hold this position. She's an active member of the New England Council, Irish Network Boston, Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce and Co-founder of Mná Mheiriceá.

In 2019 she was an honoree at the Irish Echo Small Business Impact Awards honoring Irish American entrepreneurs and

business leaders receiving the Care Ambassador Award. Martina has a deep fondness for her beloved Co. Clare where she was born and raised. She is an avid outdoors person and has completed three Boston Marathons.

She received the 2024 Impact Award for her Executive MBP program at Suffolk University's Sawyer Business School. Martina resides in the Back Bay with her husband Craig.

Her motto to live by is, "Goals are achieved through hard work, high standards and surrounding yourself with good people."

Professor Malachy Ó Néill

Director of Regional Engagement at Ulster University

Professor Malachy Ó Néill is Director of Regional Engagement at Ulster University (since August 2021), taking responsibility for relationships with key stakeholders including governmental agencies, councils, trusts and other relevant authorities on behalf of the institution. He was awarded a Personal Chair in Irish (2020) and was Provost of the Magee Campus in Derry (2016-21) and Head of the School of Irish Language and Literature (2012-17). He has played a central role in a range of strategic initiatives for the University including City and Growth Deals (UK Government), Shared Island (Irish Government), the inception of a School of Medicine (opened 2021), the development of the North West Cross-border Tertiary Cluster (with FE/HE partners) and the accreditation of Derry/Strabane as a UNESCO Learning City Region.

He was awarded a National Teaching Fellowship in 2019, the highest accolade in UK Higher Education and is a Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Authority. He was appointed to the Department for Communities' Irish Language Strategy Expert Advisory Panel in 2021 was a member of the Irish Government's Review Board of the Official Irish Language Standard (2016). He was editor of *An tUltach* (2008-10) and his research includes modern Irish pedagogy, the Ó Néill dynasty and Irish language theatre and he is Lead Investigator (Northern Ireland) in the c.€4million Shared Island social capital research initiative with NUI Galway,

University of Limerick and Atlantic Technological University. He is a Board member of the Causeway and Derry Chambers of Commerce and Temporary Chair of the Governing Body of North West Regional College.

Professor Ó Néill enjoys close ties with the Donegal Gaeltacht, having spent many years in Machaire Rabhartaigh and Gaoth Dobhair facilitating courses for teenagers and adult learners of Irish. He resides in his native parish of Ardboe, Co. Tyrone, with his wife Ursula and their three children, Proinsias, Tomás and Sorcha.

Cllr Niamh Kennedy

Mayor of Donegal

Cllr Niamh Kennedy was first elected to Donegal County Council in 2014 and became Cathaoirleach in June 2024. She previously worked in the fishing industry with a background in health and safety and administration management. As a Small & Medium Enterprise Business owner and director she has considerable interest in the development and promotion of local industry.

A former member of Killybegs Community Council, she has been actively involved in all aspects of community life and chaired the Liaison Committee which successfully prevented the downgrading of Killybegs Community Hospital.

She currently sits on the following *Donegal County Council Committees: Donegal Municipal District Committee Corporate Policy Group Donegal County Council Value for Money Committee Donegal Tourism Associate Members Committee Board of Donegal Tourism Fisheries Committee Donegal Local Community Development Committee*

Cllr Kennedy represents Donegal County Council on the following bodies: *Board of Donegal 2040 Strategic Development Committee Northern Western Regional Assembly*

She is the first independent woman councillor to be elected as Cathaoirleach and the fourth female chairperson in the 125-year history of the Council.

Michael Patrick MacDonald

Author of the New York Times Bestselling memoir, All Souls

Michael Patrick MacDonald is the author of the New York Times Bestseller, *All Souls: A Family Story from Southie* and the acclaimed *Easter Rising: A Memoir of Roots and Rebellion*. He has won the American Book Award, a New England Literary Lights Award, and an award from the Gustavus Myers Center for the Study of Bigotry and Human Rights in North America.

After losing four siblings and seeing his generation decimated by poverty, crime, addiction, and incarceration, MacDonald became a leading Boston organizer, launching anti-violence initiatives including gun-buyback programs and support networks for survivors. He continues to work in Boston, Belfast, and North Inner City Dublin with survivor families, educators, and youth workers, using his restorative justice coalition-building curriculum, *The Rest of the Story*.

In 2019 he received a Fulbright U.S. Scholar Award to teach at Queen's University, Belfast. He is Professor of the Practice in Northeastern University's Honors Program and writes and speaks on topics ranging from Race and Class in America to Transforming Trauma to Voice, Agency, and Leadership.

Siobhán Ní Ghadhra

Cathaoirleach Údarás na Gaeltachta

Siobhán Ní Ghadhra is a two-time EMMY Award Winner and has numerous credits for both animation and live-action productions throughout her career. She began her career at Roger Corman's Irish film studios in 1998 and after working with various production companies, established Danú Media along with John Brady in 2014.

She is currently Executive Producer on *Ros na Rún*, one of Ireland's longest running TV drama series. Siobhán produced the Tween Drama Series entitled *Saol Eila* for TG4/Coimisún na Meán in 2022, and is in post-production on a new Cine4 film entitled *Báite*, due to be released in 2025. Danú Media has been successful in accessing development funding, both for single projects and for

Continues on page 12

GOLDEN BRIDGES SPEAKERS



Professor Malachy Ó Néill



Cllr Niamh Kennedy



Michael Patrick MacDonald



Siobhán Ní Ghadhra

slate development and are bringing a number of projects to market currently.

In 2021, Danú Media established Atlantic Academy, a new training entity for the TV and Film Industry and in December 2021 was announced by Screen Ireland/Fis

Éireann as the lead organisation for Crew Academy West, as part of the National Talent Academies initiative. Danú Media is also the promoter of Gréasán na Meán/Skillnet.

Siobhán was appointed as

Cathaoirleach of Údarás na Gaeltachta in June 2024. She is a current member of the Board of TG4, of Ardán and of the Creative Europe Desk in Galway. She previously sat on the board of the Blue Teapot Theatre Company and the External

Strategy Board for NUIG. Siobhán was a Board member of Broadcasting Authority of Ireland from 2010-2015 and was presented the NUIG Alumni Award for Arts and Media in 2016.

GOLDEN BRIDGES CONFERENCE AGENDA

**Venue: Sorenson Dining Room,
Babson College, Wellesley, MA**

Friday 15 November 2024

11:30am-2:30pm Conference Luncheon

Emcee: Ray O'Hanlon, Editor Irish Echo

All Souls At 25: A Reading by Michael Patrick MacDonald

Presentation of the Dave Burke Award to John Foley, Principal Attorney at Foley Law Offices, P.C.

Presented by Patrica Burke

On Common Ground: Collaboration that Empowers across Ireland's North West City Region

Chair: Martina Curtin, Chair Irish Cultural Centre Greater Boston;
Co-Founder Mna Mheiricea

Panel: Cllr Lilian Seenoi-Barr, Mayor of Derry City and
Strabane District Council
Cllr Niamh Kennedy, Mayor of Donegal
John Kelpie, Chief Executive Derry City and
Strabane District Council
John G. McLaughlin, Chief Executive Donegal County Council

Video Message

Economy Minister of Northern Ireland, Conor Murphy MLA

Building an Innovation Driven Economy with National and International Reach

Chair: Malachy O'Neill, Director of Regional Engagement, Ulster University

Panel: Anne Marie Conlon, Head of Economic Development,
Donegal County Council
John Healy, Chair, Invest Northern Ireland
Siobhán Ní Ghadhra, Cathaoirleach Údarás na Gaeltachta
Dr Joanne Gallagher, Head of Faculty of Science and Health,
ATU Donegal

Linking the Wild Atlantic Way and the Causeway Coastal Route

Alison Metcalfe, Executive VP – North America, Tourism Ireland in
conversation with Ray O'Hanlon, Editor of the Irish Echo

The Story of Bushmills

James Adams, Bushmills Ambassador, Boston

Bushmills Whiskey Tasting

Buíochas ar Leith/Special Thanks

To Babson College for hosting the 2024 Golden Bridges Celebration

DELIVERING SUSTAINABLE FUTURES



ulster.ac.uk



ATLANTIC TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

The Atlantic Technological University (ATU) is the largest multi-campus university on the Island of Ireland. This year ATU will launch our Strategic Plan 2024 – 2028, focused on enabling education, engaged research and regional development through a connected approach. Our Strategic Plan underscores our commitment to sustainable economic, social and cultural development, both within our region and beyond. Through collaborative research initiatives and community engagement, we strive to make a meaningful impact on society while providing our students with a supportive environment to thrive.

With over 26,600 students and 8,000 graduates annually, our diverse programmes cater to various interests and career paths. Last year, we welcomed St. Angela's as our ninth campus, enriching our academic offerings.

Spread across Galway, Mayo, Donegal and Sligo, our nine campuses offer over 690 academic programmes, offering an array of courses to suit everyone.

Find out more at www.atu.ie



BUSHMILLS PROFILE

Bushmills, the world's oldest licensed whiskey distillery, has been forging its own path in the whiskey world since 1608. Along the north coast of Ireland, where arctic storms rage against jagged cliffs and where the crisp waters of the River Bush cut through volcanic rock, generations have passed down an ancient distilling tradition. Bushmills is named for the mills that made the barley and the River Bush, which remains the water source to cut the whiskey to proof today.

Made, matured, and bottled on site (the first in Ireland to do so), Bushmills is renowned for its unrivalled single malt legacy as the world's most awarded Irish single malt whiskey. 100% malted barley is dried in fresh, filtered air – never peated – and the whiskey is always triple-distilled, never double-distilled, like Bourbon and Scotch.

Bushmills is the only Irish distillery consistently aging single malt over 10 years and consistently using 2 or 3 barrels in the maturation process. These rigorous standards of quality and craft are prevalent in its leading blended whiskey portfolio as well, which boast the highest single malt content of any Irish whiskey blends.

Having survived famines, prohibition, pandemics, fires and even World War II bombings, Bushmills has always blazed its own trail over the centuries. Bushmills is the first to do it, and second to none.



INVEST NI

Invest NI is the economic development agency for Northern Ireland, a business-friendly region with a world class reputation for innovation. With teams all over the world, Invest Northern Ireland is responsible for growing the local economy by helping new and existing businesses to compete globally and by attracting foreign direct investment to Northern Ireland with a particular focus on sectors such as financial services, cyber security, advanced manufacturing and life and health sciences.

North America is Northern Ireland's greatest source of Foreign Direct Investment with companies such as Citi, IBM, Rapid7, Imperva and Aflac having established centers of excellence in the region, benefiting from a highly skilled and educated workforce, superb infrastructure, competitive costs and Invest NI support programs. We work in partnership with councils in the North West to support local businesses and attract investment to the region. International companies such as Seagate, Alchemy, Allstate, Terex and FinTru have flourished in the North West thanks to its pro-business environment, quality of life and strategic importance as a gateway to EU and GB markets.

Following the UK's exit from the European Union, Northern Ireland continues to have access to the GB and the EU markets for goods. It is the only location where businesses can operate free from customs declarations, rules of origin certificates and non-tariff barriers on the sale of goods to two of the world's largest markets.

Invest Northern has a network of offices across the Americas, including New York, Boston, Chicago and San Francisco in the US, Toronto in Canada and Mexico City and Santiago, Chile in LATAM. Invest NI is committed to continuously driving growth and innovation across the North West. Golden Bridges is a remarkable opportunity to nurture existing and new partnerships across the Atlantic and to showcase the North West region as an incredible place to live, work, study, visit and invest

<https://www.investni.com>



IRELAND NORTH WEST Unlock Global Growth Opportunities – Invest in Ireland's North West City Region

Who We Are?

Ireland's North West City Region is the fourth-largest population hub on the island

of Ireland, uniquely positioned at the crossroads of the UK and EU markets. Our strategic cross-border location provides seamless access to a combined market of 5.14 million people.

The region encompasses the areas governed by Derry City and Strabane District Council and Donegal County Council, home to 350,000 residents. With a proven track record in attracting Foreign Direct Investment, the North West is already home to over 40 international businesses that leverage our strategic advantages to serve global markets.

Why Invest in the Ireland Northwest Region?

Why Invest in Ireland's North West City Region?

📍 **Strategic Location:** Enjoy unfettered access to both EU and UK markets, making the region an ideal gateway for international trade.

👥 **Skilled Talent Pool:** Benefit from a highly skilled, educated, and loyal workforce that provides a robust talent pipeline for your business needs.

🌐 **World-Class Digital Connectivity:** Direct access to the US and Europe through advanced high-capacity fibre optic cables ensures superior digital infrastructure.

🏢 **Established Industry Clusters:** Thrive within dynamic clusters in RegTech, FinTech, MedTech, and Advanced Engineering, offering a collaborative ecosystem for innovation.

🔬 **Research & Development Excellence:** Leverage state-of-the-art Research and Innovation Hubs supported by leading third-level institutions and private sector partners.

🏠 **Pioneers in Remote & Hybrid Working:** The region leads in embracing flexible working models, ensuring access to a broad and adaptable workforce.

🤝 **Collaborative Environment:** Benefit from strong partnerships with Government Departments, Local Authorities, the Chamber of Commerce, and academia, all committed to your success.

🚀 **Agility in Skills Development:** We offer tailored education and skills programs designed to support the specific needs of investing companies, ensuring a smooth integration and operation.

Invest in Ireland's North West City Region – where strategic location, skilled talent, and a collaborative business environment come together to fuel your global ambitions.



IRISH AMERICAN PARTNERSHIP

IRISH AMERICAN PARTNERSHIP

Dedicated to connecting Irish America and friends of Ireland to their heritage through targeted giving – the Partnership invests in education, community development, and peace initiatives across the island of Ireland. Since their inception in 1986, supporters have raised over \$57 million for young people and communities, North and

South, empowering and educating the next generation of global leaders. The Partnership provides targeted grants to schools, provides university access scholarships, funds education centers for homeless youth, supports peace and reconciliation initiatives in Northern Ireland, and champions Gaelic games, Irish arts, culture, and more.

www.irishap.org

#InvestinginIrelandsFuture www.irishap.org



TOURISM IRELAND

*"Tourism Ireland in North America:
Connecting the Diaspora and
Driving Tourism"*

Tourism Ireland is the national agency dedicated to promoting the island of Ireland as a leading travel destination. Through the campaign "What Fills Your Heart with Ireland," we invite travelers worldwide to experience Ireland's stunning landscapes, vibrant cities, and unique cultural heritage. Our mission is to share what makes Ireland special, from its rugged coastlines and charming towns to the rich history that resonates with visitors of all ages.

As an organization, we're committed to supporting Ireland's economy through tourism, and our efforts have a substantial impact. In 2023, Ireland welcomed over 8 million visitors, who contributed €6.4 billion to the economy. With an average stay of 7.6 nights, our visitors immerse themselves deeply in the Irish experience, supporting local businesses and communities throughout the island.

We also place a strong focus on connecting with the Irish diaspora, particularly in North America. Our team in New York builds meaningful connections through events and programs tailored to Irish-Americans and their communities, celebrating shared heritage and fostering pride that inspires visits. Whether travelers come to explore their roots or experience something new, Tourism Ireland ensures that Ireland is always a place that fills hearts, invites exploration, and creates lifelong memories for all who visit."

<https://www.tourismireland.com>



Údarás na Gaeltachta

ÚDARÁS NA GAELTACHTA

Údarás na Gaeltachta is the State agency responsible for the economic, social and cultural development of Ireland's Gaeltacht regions - areas where the Irish language is still spoken as a community language.

The organisation's primary mission is to preserve and promote the use of Irish as the principal language of the Gaeltacht while simultaneously fostering sustainable economic development in these regions. Údarás achieves this through a variety of initiatives, including:

- Attracting investment and supporting local businesses

- Providing grants and financial incentives for job creation
- Developing infrastructure and business parks
- Implementing the State's language planning process
- Supporting an extensive community development network
- Promoting tourism in Gaeltacht areas
- Providing the gteic network of digital co-working spaces

Údarás na Gaeltachta covers seven Gaeltacht regions across counties Donegal, Mayo, Galway, Kerry, Cork, Waterford, and Meath. These areas face unique challenges, including rural depopulation and limited economic opportunities. By focusing on sectors like technology, marine resources, creative industries, and tourism, Údarás aims to create sustainable employment while preserving the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht.

The agency is governed by a 12-member

board appointed by the Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. With headquarters in Na Forbacha, Co. Galway, Údarás maintains regional offices throughout the Gaeltacht to ensure close collaboration with local communities. As a key player in Ireland's language revitalisation efforts, Údarás na Gaeltachta continues to adapt its strategies to meet the evolving needs of Gaeltacht regions, balancing economic development with cultural preservation in an increasingly globalised world.

<https://udaras.ie/en>

ULSTER UNIVERSITY

Ulster University is extraordinary. As one of the most complex large institutions within the UK, successfully maintaining a dual focus on research and teaching while actively driving exemplary social mobility and civic engagement. We are a university that spans a region of great potential and



great passion. Our focus on People, Place and Partnership tasks that passion with a purpose: to deliver Sustainable Futures for All.

As a multi-campus university, with campuses in Derry~Londonderry, Coleraine and Belfast, we are a physical and transformational presence across this place, deeply connected to these communities and intrinsic to all our futures. Across all campuses Ulster University is working to build the leaders of tomorrow – those who will shape the future of our communities, industries and wider society for the next generation.

In the North West teaching strengths on our Derry~Londonderry campus are shaping future leaders in the areas of life & health sciences, business, cinematic arts, Irish, music, drama, computing, engineering, nursing and law. It is also home to the School of Medicine and Northern Ireland's only Paramedic Degree Course. Whilst on the Coleraine campus, the focus is on areas such as biomedical sciences, geography and environmental science, psychology, pharmacy, English, history, media and journalism, travel and tourism, and teacher training.

Ulster University is playing a vital role in shaping the next generations of entrepreneurs, innovators, and change-makers to be the leaders of the future.

Visit www.ulster.ac.uk/twenty-five and meet the 25 emerging leaders <https://www.ulster.ac.uk>

LOOKING BACK AT GOLDEN BRIDGES 2023

Golden Bridges Marks 15 Years

It was a celebration of historic links and a boost for economic and business relationships between Ireland Northwest and both Boston and Massachusetts. And last year at the Seaport Hotel in Boston the annual gathering for the Golden Bridges conference was an opportunity to mark fifteen years of building and sustaining those forged links. This year's conference featured keynote speaker Joseph Kennedy III, President's Biden's Special Envoy to Northern Ireland. Here are some of the faces and memorable moments of Golden Bridges XV.



Consul General of Ireland in Boston Sighle FitzGerald.



Innovation Panel Discussion: Stephen Gillespie, Derry City and Strabane District Council, Andrea Haughian, VP Americas Invest NI, Kevin Sexton, Alpha Innovation Centre, Chair Martina Curtin, Christina McAlinden of Laniveen and Sian Farrell of StimOxyGen with Garry Martin, Director of Economic Development Donegal County Council.



Artist Lisa Garlock with her tapestries celebrating contribution of John Hume and Tip O'Neill to the peace process.



Special Economic Envoy Joseph Kennedy meets Irish stalwarts from Lawrence, MA, Billy O'Sullivan and Patricia Burke.



The Co Donegal delegation greets Special Economic Envoy Joseph Kennedy III.



IRELAND'S NORTH WEST
CITY REGION

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on the North West City Region



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District Council
Comhairle
Chathair Dhoire &
Cheantar an tSraha Báin
Derry Cille & Strabane
Districc Council



Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall
Donegal County Council

In conjunction with The Executive Office Northern Ireland and The Irish Government

