



# THE IRISH AMERICAN PARTNERSHIP

## THE FOURTH ANNUAL *Nollaig na mBan*

### WOMEN'S CHRISTMAS BREAKFAST CELEBRATION



Top row L-R: Ambassador David O'Sullivan, Ambassador Melanne Verveer, Partnership Executive Director Mary Sugrue, Monique Choiniere, Susan Davis, Mary Mellor; bottom row L-R: Mary Robinson, Ambassador Anne Anderson, and Nick Robinson



Mary Robinson keynoting The Irish American Partnership's Nollaig na mBan (Women's Christmas) Breakfast Celebration on January 6, 2016

## Partnership Hosts Mary Robinson at Nollaig na mBan 2016

**Keynote Speaker Mary Robinson** delivered poignant remarks on the importance of women's leadership, reflecting on her term as President and UN High Commissioner of Human Rights, and her own experience with Nollaig na mBan. Growing up, Robinson remembered the day fondly as a celebration of the hard work her mother and grandmother performed not only during the Christmas season, but throughout the year. As President, she used the day as an opportunity to visit a women's prison in Dublin and freely mingle with the inmates, exchanging stories and gaining a deeper understanding of some of Ireland's deepest societal problems.

At the event, **the Partnership donated \$12,000 to the Mary Robinson Centre**, Ireland's first Presidential Library and Museum, located in Ballina, Co. Mayo. The Centre will serve as a permanent reminder of the importance of female leaders in Ireland's history, bringing international tourism to Mayo and serving as an educational resource for students across the globe.

Anyone interested in being a benefactor of the Centre should contact the Partnership for more information, including naming opportunities.



Breakfast sponsors Frank and Carol O'Brien (right) pose with Mary Robinson (center), their daughter Bridget, and their granddaughter Claire (left)



Chaplain of the U.S. House of Representatives Reverend Patrick Conroy, S.J. with Mary Robinson



The Host Committee with Mary Robinson



Ambassador Melanne Verveer addresses the audience



Ambassador Anne Anderson introduces Keynote Speaker Mary Robinson



Carol and Bridget O'Brien present a check for \$12,000 to the Mary Robinson Centre

## Nollaig na mBan 2016 Benefits The Mary Robinson Centre in Ballina, Co. Mayo

Over the past four years, The Irish American Partnership has been re-inventing the old Irish tradition of Nollaig na mBan, or “Little Women’s Christmas” by highlighting female leaders who have made an impact in their communities. While the origins of the celebration harken back to rural Ireland, when families would express thanks for women’s labor over the holiday season by sending them off to the pubs for a day of festivities with their mothers, sisters, and friends, the Partnership has reclaimed the day as a broader celebration of women’s contributions to society. The breakfast is held each year on January 6th, the day of Nollaig na mBan in Ireland.

Special thanks to Mary Robinson, Ambassador Anne Anderson, and Ambassador Melanne Verveer for their remarks, as well as Breakfast Committee Chair Monique Choiniere for her support.