



Impact Report

SPRING 2020 APPEAL

Answering Ireland's Call

University Access alumni on the frontline of the pandemic battle

Pieta House

Removing the stigma of emotional crisis in Irish society

Limerick Leader

CEO Michael Dowling on heading up New York's COVID-19 emergency management



INVESTING IN THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS

Our members have always recognized the importance of technology in education, providing funding for resources to rural and disadvantaged schools so that all children can fulfill their potential.

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SHINE A LIGHT

Pictured above: President of Ireland Michael D. Higgins and Sabina Higgins outside Áras an Uachtaráin, the President's official residence on April 11.

They joined the 'Shine Your Light' campaign, lighting lanterns to bring light into darkness in a gesture of global solidarity and hope.



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Dear Friends,



Ní neart go cur le chéile—we are stronger together.

It is a simple truth, but a powerful one. This sentiment has guided the Partnership's work for more than thirty years, but is perhaps more important now than ever.

Spring is a time of renewed optimism in Ireland, as we all reemerge from a long, rainy winter to green fields and budding flowers. Though this spring has been unlike any other, a sense of unity and solidarity has still sprung up even in the darkest of places, illuminating the best of our humanity.

Throughout this **Impact Report**, you will read stories of courage and perseverance from people across Ireland who are prevailing in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. These stories, which would be impossible without your generosity, all share a common theme—connection.

Here at the Partnership, we reaffirm and restore American connections to Ireland. Everyday, we witness the undeniable power of connecting people to the places and people they hold dear. It is this principle of belonging that is crucial to resilience in the face of adversity, and that lies at the heart of the Irish and American spirits.

Challenging times like these help us to take stock and focus on the things that matter most. For the Partnership, that means the people who make up our entire community across the United States and Ireland. We are so grateful for our wonderful supporters on both sides of the Atlantic who are committed to working together to educate and inspire the next generation of Irish leaders.

From teachers who find creative ways to reach their students from afar, to hardworking doctors, nurses, and others on the frontlines who care, nurture, and bring Irish humor to those in need, all prove the old Irish adage true—there is no strength without togetherness, ní neart go cur le chéile.

During these challenging times, the Partnership remains steadfast in our mission to build a more peaceful, prosperous, and inclusive Ireland. We know that together, we will build an Ireland where all can thrive.

Míle buíochas, a thousand thanks,

Mary Sugrue
CEO, Irish American Partnership



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PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE COPING WITH THE PRESENT

Continuing to support rural and disadvantaged schools

Since the closure of all schools in Ireland and Northern Ireland as a result of the pandemic in early March, the dramatic shift from classroom instruction to online learning has led to an increased reliance on education technology.

In recent years, the significant rise in the use of technology in Irish education at all levels advances an increasing range of opportunities for young people. Recognizing the importance of technology in education, particularly in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) subjects, the Partnership was at the fore of this movement, providing funding for resources to rural and disadvantaged schools so that all children can fulfill their potential in the digital age.



Of the more than \$200,000 the Partnership granted to individual schools in 2019, the majority was used to enhance technological resources, from purchasing tablets and laptops for classroom use to installing broadband.

This investment not only promotes digital literacy and the development of critical 21st century skills, but has also helped prepare many underfunded schools for this unexpected disruption and transition to remote learning.

From posting lessons online to tweeting out STEM experiments for students to try at home, many teachers have found creative and tech-savvy ways to stay connected to their pupils and to ensure that children are still learning. Disparities remain, however, and educational resources and digital training vary, from school to school, and from teacher to teacher.

Despite the best efforts of teachers, not all students are in a position to learn remotely. One in five Irish students lacks sufficient broadband at home, and many do not have tablets or laptops to complete their lessons. This is especially pronounced in the rural and underprivileged communities that the Partnership serves.

THE PARTNERSHIP REMAINS COMMITTED TO EQUIPPING EDUCATORS WITH THE RESOURCES NEEDED TO EDUCATE AND INSPIRE THE NEXT GENERATION, EVEN FROM AFAR. NOW MORE THAN EVER, TEACHERS AND STUDENTS IN IRELAND NEED OUR SUPPORT.



ACCESS STUDENTS ANSWER IRELAND'S CALL

Ever since she first picked up a rugby ball, Linda Djougang has grown accustomed to lining up against sizable opponents in the scrum. But the fearless prop on Team Ireland's front row now finds herself toe-to-toe with her most intimidating foe yet—an international pandemic.

Djougang has traded her uniform and cleats for scrubs to join a new team of healthcare professionals on the Irish frontline to tackle COVID-19.

In her final year of her nursing course at Trinity College Dublin, Djougang's placement at Tallaght Hospital dramatically changed in the face of the escalating global and national health crisis. Long days of juggling rugby trainings with lectures have been replaced by grueling thirteen-hour shifts on one of Dublin's designated COVID-19 wards.

For a young nurse, being thrust into action amidst a pandemic of this severity is daunting. But, just as her attitude on the pitch and in the classroom has made Djougang an impactful player for Ireland, her persistence and unwavering positivity has made her an invaluable asset.

"It's the exact same thing as I do on the rugby pitch," Djougang insists.

"I'm representing my country. I always feel so privileged to be in this position to help... for me, I have a duty to answer my country's call."

Djougang is quick to point out that this opportunity would not have been possible without the Trinity Access Program (TAP), which seeks to widen access and participation to third-level education for under-represented groups.

Having immigrated from Cameroon at the age of nine with no English, a nursing degree may have been entirely out of the question if not for the supports afforded to her by TAP. Five years after receiving the call notifying her of her acceptance to the program, Djougang is now set to embark upon her dream career at a time of urgent need, inspiring

fellow citizens of her adopted nation.

Across the pond, propelled by his biotech education made possible by the access program at Dublin City University, Dr. David Dowling is part of an initiative out of Boston Children's Hospital to develop a coronavirus vaccine for the elderly, who have been particularly hard hit by the virus.

Coronavirus is not the only public health emergency the Bray native is taking on. As the Principal Investigator in the Adjuvant Discovery and Development Lab, as well as an instructor in pediatrics at Harvard Medical School, he is also spearheading the development of a vaccine to protect people with opioid use disorder and prevent overdoses.

Like Djougang, Dr. Dowling credits his third level education for equipping him with the tools and knowledge to make the world a better place, explaining, "I always wanted to apply science to solve problems and now I am working at the epicenter of two huge epidemics, the opioid crisis and COVID-19."

THANKS TO THE GENEROSITY OF OUR MEMBERS, THE PARTNERSHIP IS PROUD TO PROVIDE CRITICAL FUNDING TO STUDENTS LIKE DJOUGANG AND DR. DOWLING THROUGH UNIVERSITY ACCESS PROGRAMS ACROSS THE ISLAND OF IRELAND.

Partnership grants to Trinity College Dublin, Dublin City University, University College Cork, Queen's University Belfast, and Ulster University have an immediate and transformative impact, ensuring that an equal opportunity is afforded to all students to reach their full potential.



Michael Dowling at Ahalin National School, Limerick

LIMERICK LEADER

In Michael Dowling's home province of Munster, there is an old Irish saying: *Beidh lá éile an bPaorach*—we will live to fight another day.

For the West Limerick man tasked by New York Governor Andrew Cuomo with galvanizing the hospital sector's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, this sentiment has become somewhat of a rallying cry.

Preparing hospitals in what has become the world's epicenter of the epidemic is no short order. But Dowling, the CEO of the state's largest healthcare provider, Northwell Health, and dear friend of the Irish American Partnership, is no stranger to adversity.

Born just outside the rural town of Knockaderry, Dowling grew up without many material benefits in a modest house without electricity, heat, nor running water. Yet never for a second did his mother allow him to believe that he could do anything less than he set his mind to, instilling within her eldest son the extraordinary power of education.

In his keynote address at the Partnership's 2019 New York Business Leaders Breakfast, Dowling emphasized, "There is no limit to what you can learn and the more you learn, the more opportunities show up, the more possibilities."

Dowling was able to share this inspirational wisdom with the current pupils of his former primary school, when he returned to Ahalin National School last summer to present a Partnership grant to establish a musical instrument loan scheme creating opportunities for students of all backgrounds.

"WE ARE IN MANY WAYS SEEING THE BEST OF HUMANITY . . . HOW FORTUNATE WE ARE TO HAVE PEOPLE WITH THAT COMMITMENT, THAT COMPASSION, THAT COURAGE TO DO WHAT IT IS THEY'RE DOING EACH AND EVERY DAY TO PROTECT THE REST OF US."

Michael Dowling, *Face the Nation* (April 5, 2020)



Reflecting on his own illustrious career he concluded:

"EDUCATION, FOR ME, HAS BEEN KEY TO WHATEVER SUCCESS I HAVE HAD."

The road that led to Dowling's current position was by no means a straight or an easy one, but education was his passport to any progress. From humble beginnings, to his time as a dockworker upon immigrating to America in 1968, to his time in academia and in public service, it is this diverse professional experience and commitment to education that gave Dowling unique insights into the obstacles faced by people across all walks of life.

Though he is concerned with macro logistics of beds and ventilators as he does the crucial work of martialing medical resources in this battle, healthcare, for Dowling, remains personal. It is this empathetic approach that makes him one of the most thoughtful and compassionate leaders in the industry, especially in this time of dire need.

Though an ocean away from Knockaderry, the fortitude of Dowling's Irish upbringing still shines through in his determined resolve in the face of the current crisis:

"The healthcare system is resilient. We will handle this. And it's important for people to understand this: you don't quit. You don't retreat. You don't put up the white flag. You are going to win."



In these times of heightened anxiety, the threat posed to our mental health cannot be underestimated.

Emotional trauma induced by social isolation, economic strife, and health concerns is palpable for many. These challenges can be particularly difficult to overcome for those already struggling with mental illness.

Fortunately, organizations like Pieta House are available to answer the call and offer additional support in these exceptional circumstances. It was founded in 2006 as Ireland's first suicide and self-harm prevention organization by Senator Joan Freeman, the Partnership's 2020 Nollaig na mBan honoree in Washington, D.C.

**"IT IS IMPORTANT TO KNOW HOW THE IRISH —
WHEREVER THEY ARE, THINK OF THOSE IN DISTRESS."**

— Senator Joan Freeman

By providing free, therapeutic services to people in the acute stages of distress and their families, Pieta House aims to bring about a world where suicide, self-harm and stigma have been replaced by hope, self-care, and acceptance.

Now with 15 centers across Ireland, as well as two centers in New York, Pieta House has provided more than 58,000 people with free, face-to-face professional intervention and even more bereavement counseling in its fourteen years of existence. These efforts have been further supported by their confidential 24/7 crisis helpline, and in the time of coronavirus, counseling over the phone and online resources that promote mental wellness.

Pieta House was also the inspiration for the annual Darkness Into Light walk, which aims to support those bereaved by suicide. From humble beginnings, Darkness Into Light has grown into an international movement, with 200,000 people taking part in 200 locations across 16 countries and 5 continents in 2019.

This past January, the Partnership awarded a \$10,000 grant to Pieta House in support of the organization's life-saving services, and their work with children in particular.

Now more than ever, the Partnership is proud to support Pieta House in its efforts to reach out to vulnerable people who may be struggling to cope, and make all of us aware of our personal capacity for resilience.

IN HER OWN WORDS

SENATOR JOAN FREEMAN

Freeman is an Irish psychologist, mental health advocate, and politician. She is the founder of Pieta House, Ireland's first suicide prevention organization.

Due to the loss of a loved one to suicide, I started Pieta House to help those in suicidal distress or who engage in self-harm. Suicide was such a shameful secret for so many. Even the word 'committed' suicide conjures up an act that was either criminal or even sinful.

It was important to provide a service outside of a psychiatric setting that would help people who were reacting to a life event. This was the most important aspect—the discovery that anyone could take their lives—it was not down to suffering from years of mental health issues, indeed most people that attempted suicide did so because they felt unable to cope with strong feelings that would result from – marital breakdown, unemployment, bullying or loss.

When I was growing up, you would rarely hear about the occurrence of suicide within the community. In Ireland in 2020 – the people of this country have embraced the fact that life can be difficult leading to the unnecessary taking of a very necessary life.



Because of this, people around the country have contributed and fundraised to help open 15 centers around our island – ensuring that the vision of a service being available to everyone within 100 kilometers materialized.

“I WAS ASKED TO BE THE VOICE FOR MENTAL HEALTH IN OUR SOCIETY IN THE SENATE. THIS GAVE ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO REPRESENT THE DOWNTRODDEN, THE NEGLECTED AND THE VOICELESS ON A POLITICAL STAGE.”

I believe that mental health should be introduced to children from their very first year at school. The skills needed for life are areas such as resilience, positivity, self-belief, respect for self and others and of course hope—that no matter what happens in life that hope surpasses all fears and looks to the future.



MAUREEN O'HARA COLLECTION

Maureen O'Hara was Ireland's first Hollywood icon, starring in over fifty films over the course of her remarkable seventy-year career. To honor this fierce leading woman and champion of Irish causes, O'Hara's grandson gave back a prized relic of his grandmother's favorite film, *The Quiet Man* (1953), to her beloved homeland.

The iconic jaunting cart, featured in several memorable courting scenes in the academy award-winning film in which O'Hara starred opposite John Wayne, was donated through the Irish American Partnership to the Foynes Flying Boat & Maritime Museum. Her grandson was delighted that the historic sidecar could be returned to a place dear to his grandmother's heart, and join a collection of her prized possessions in a new exhibition wing named for O'Hara at the Limerick museum.

2020 LEADERSHIP MISSION

We invite you to join the Partnership’s 2020 Leadership Mission in Ireland from October 4 – 7, 2020. This trip is designed to give participants a greater understanding of the Partnership’s work in Ireland, North and South.

The four-day Mission will include members of the Partnership’s Board of Directors and leading supporters from across the U.S. and Ireland. Our group will visit and evaluate Partnership programs including schools, projects, and community development organizations.

Leadership Mission participants gain exclusive, high-level access to senior government officials as we are hosted for private meetings at Government offices including the Office of the Taoiseach, the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Departments of Education, North and South, the Northern Ireland Assembly at Stormont, and Belfast City Hall.

In addition to program visits, the 2020 Mission will include thought-provoking presentations and informative roundtables with prominent speakers and experts.



“We come from different places, but Ireland is where we come together and have the honor of seeing where the investment is going. I am energized to go back and do more.”

- MICHAEL CLUNE, CHAIRMAN

A highlight of this international gathering is the presentation of 2020 grants to programs that we are proud to support. During our 2018 Mission, we disbursed \$170,000 to 16 education and community programs across Ireland. We hope you can join us and witness the magnitude of your impact on Irish communities.

WWW.IRISHAP.ORG/2020MISSION



CAN WE COUNT ON YOUR SUPPORT?

CONNECT, GIVE BACK, AND CHANGE YOUNG LIVES WITH TARGETED IMPACT GRANTS

Yes, I am pleased to support the Irish American Partnership’s work to empower and educate!

We encourage donors to select a school, region, or community program as the recipient of your philanthropy.

You can make a secure donation online at your convenience at www.irishap.org/donate

Enclosed is my check in the amount of _____ (Please make checks payable to the Irish American Partnership.)

Please accept my gift in the amount \$2,500 \$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$100 other _____

I wish to make my gift in honor of / in memory of (Name) _____

Credit card number _____ Exp. date _____

Name _____ Signature _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone _____

I will make a gift through my Donor Advised Fund (DAF). I would like to make this a recurring monthly gift.

I would like to know more about planned giving with the Irish Legacy Society. Enclosed is my company’s matching gift form.



IRISH AMERICAN
PARTNERSHIP

CREATE A LASTING LEGACY FOR IRELAND

YOUR GIFT CAN BENEFIT GENERATIONS TO COME

The Irish Legacy Society is a special community of forward-thinking supporters who have invested in the future of the Partnership's transformative mission through a planned gift or provision in their estate plans.

The Irish American Partnership is on hand to assist you in identifying the best options to fulfill your philanthropic vision. Through bequests, charitable trusts, life insurance, retirement plan designations or other gift arrangements, members of The Irish Legacy Society share in our goal to educate and empower.

Connect, give back, and change young lives while preparing for tomorrow in a way that works with your financial plan.

If you have already included the Partnership in your estate plans, please let us know. We would be delighted to welcome you into The Irish Legacy Society.

And thank you for the profound difference you make in the lives of Irish children and their communities.



JOIN THE IRISH LEGACY SOCIETY

We invite you to learn more. Please contact:
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E mary@irishap.org

WWW.IRISHAP.ORG/LEGACY

Why Support the Partnership?

Grassroots and Broadly Based

Every gift matters. You can support and honor your heritage in a way that works best for you.

Donor Appreciation

The Partnership deeply values all members of its community and takes care to facilitate their vision.

Personalized Impact

We encourage you to select a school or organization that is meaningful to you and your family. Your gift makes you a partner in their success.

Invest in the Next Generation.

Whether a deferred gift, a one-time transformative gift, or steady gifts each year, your generosity has life altering impact at the grassroots level in Ireland.

How to Give.

DONOR-ADVISED FUND

Please contact your DAF administrator to request a grant for the Irish American Partnership (reference EIN 22-2801642).

To designate your gift please reference the school or organization name.

BY CHECK

Please make payable to the Irish American Partnership and mail to:
Irish American Partnership
15 Broad Street, Suite 210, Boston, MA 02109

BY CREDIT CARD

Give securely online at www.irishap.org/donate or simply phone us at (617) 723 2707

BY WIRE TRANSFER

Through Eastern Bank
195 Market Street, Lynn, MA 01901
Account Number: 601755823
Electronic Routing Number: 011301798
For international wires: SWIFT CHASUS33

GIFT OF STOCK

The Partnership's account details are:
Fidelity Investments, DTC # 0226
Account # Z47-953237
Please contact us at (617) 723 2707

We can also facilitate giving through mutual fund transfers, matching gifts, and memorial and honorary gifts.



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