



# *Celebrating 20 Years*

— FEBRUARY 11, 2023 —



SCAN TO VIEW  
EVENT APP





# WELCOME FROM THE PRESIDENT OF IRELAND NETWORK CHICAGO



Dia dhaoibh a charide, hi folks!

I am honored to welcome you to our Annual Ball as we celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Ireland Network Chicago!

I came to Chicago as a J1-er in 1997 and attended my first Ireland Network meeting in 2003. I continue to be genuinely amazed at the impact this social, cultural and business network has had over the years. We are thrilled this evening to welcome guests from Chicago, the greater Midwest, Boston, New York, Washington DC and a few special guests in from the Emerald Isle!

First and foremost, I would like to thank our Executive Committee for all the hard work and planning for this fabulous evening. Special thanks to Antoinette Cahill and the staff at the iconic Drake Hotel who looked for every opportunity to make this year's Ball better than the year before, and who take great pride in hosting this fantastic annual tradition.

We could not host this event without our generous sponsors and donors, most notably Kerry Group, Ornuia and Gage Hospitality Group. We have fantastic prizes this evening including a trip to Ireland with flights donated from Aer Lingus, and remember, all proceeds from the raffle will benefit Irish Community Services and Concern Worldwide.

As is tradition, tonight we will celebrate a member of the Irish community with our IN Spirit Award. With this being the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, it afforded us an opportunity to reflect on those years, and there is nobody more deserving of this recognition than Senator Billy Lawless. Billy has had a massive impact on the Irish community, locally in Chicago, nationally with his leadership in Washington DC as a proponent of comprehensive immigration reform, and globally as the Senator for the Irish Diaspora. We will hear from the great man himself this evening and hopefully you get the opportunity to shake his hand and congratulate Billy, his wife Anne, and the wonderful Lawless family.

The pandemic highlighted the power of having a network to lean on during tough times and amplified the need to stay connected. I'm proud that in 2022, INC had one of our strongest years ever. We hosted a wide range of events, from IN Conversations with Irish leaders in Commercial Real Estate to uniting the voices of Irish Sporting bodies in the Chicagoland area. We hosted 12 First Fridays at local Irish establishments, which after a couple of years of limited social interaction, offered a comforting continuity for camaraderie and connections. We continued our commitment to community engagement with volunteer outings at Feed My Starving Children and Greater Chicago Food Depository (which we are doing again this month if you are interested in joining!). We hosted roundtables with Irish Ministers, offered discounts to numerous partner events, and of course returned to the Ball in 2022 (after a Covid break in 2021), our annual boat cruise and golf outing. Suffice to say we are looking to do all of this and more again in 2023!

I am excited to continue to work alongside our Executive Director Katie Fitzpatrick and with the strongest and most diverse Executive Committee assembled during our 20-year history, and to see where we can take things from here to lay the groundwork for the next 20 years!

I'd also like to express gratitude to the Irish Government, through their Emigrant Support Programme, for providing INC with a generous grant to make much of this work possible. Very special thanks to Acting Consul General of Ireland, Sarah Keating, and the consular team for being here tonight and for their continued support and belief in our mission!

Finally, thanks to all of YOU who have travelled from near and far to be here this evening to help us celebrate 20 years, to honor Senator Billy Lawless and for doing your part to connect and contribute to the strongest Irish Network in the United States!

Go raibh maith agat, agus bain sult as an oíche...cheers, and enjoy the night!

Ruairi  
President, Ireland Network Chicago

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## ORDER OF THE EVENING

6:30 P.M. CHAMPAGNE RECEPTION

7:45 P.M. WELCOME  
Ruairi Barnwell,  
INC President

7:50 P.M. WELCOME  
Sarah Keating,  
Acting Consul General of  
Ireland in Chicago

7:55 P.M. IRISH AND AMERICAN  
NATIONAL ANTHEMS  
Paddy Homan

8:00 P.M. DINNER SERVICE

9:10 P.M. FOUNDER RECOGNITION  
Katie Fitzpatrick,  
INC Executive Director

9:15 P.M. IN SPIRIT AWARD  
PRESENTATION  
Ruairi Barnwell,  
INC President  
Billy Lawless, 2023 Honoree

9:30 P.M. RAFFLE DRAWINGS

9:45 P.M. LIVE MUSIC  
MixTape FEATURING TINA CRAWLEY

VISIT THE FRENCH ROOM  
TO TAKE SOME PICTURES WITH YOUR  
GROUP IN THE PHOTOBOOTH AND  
POUR YOUR STOUTIE, A PICTURE-  
PERFECT GUINNESS PINT FEATURING  
YOUR SELFIE

12:00 A.M. AFTER PARTY  
The Drake – Club  
International Room

**NEW THIS YEAR!** THE PARTY  
CONTINUES WITH DJ, DANCING AND  
LATE NIGHT SNACKS UNTIL 2AM!



SCAN TO VIEW  
EVENT APP

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR  
ENTERTAINERS FOR CREATING A  
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 THANKS FOR ALL YOU DO!



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THE  
 DAWSON



## 2023 IRELAND NETWORK CHICAGO BALL RAFFLE

TICKETS \$25 EACH | 5 FOR \$100  
 100% OF RAFFLE PROCEEDS BENEFIT:



### RAFFLE PRIZES INCLUDE :

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- Chicago Bulls tickets and autographed jersey
- Chicago Cubs tickets
- Chicago Cut gift card
- Gaelic Storm tickets at Chicago House of Blues
- Chicago's First Lady Cruises passes
- 2 night stay at Clayton Hotel Cardiff Lane - Dublin
- Dingle Sea Safari boat tour
- 2 night stay at Dingle Skellig Hotel
- Overnight stay at The Drake
- Irish Breakfast Box gift card
- 2 tickets to *Lord of the Dance* - Dublin
- Reservoir gift card
- Ticketmaster gift card
- Trinity Irish Dance Company tickets
- Ticket to *Once* performance at Writer's Theatre Glencoe

**THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS!**



OVER 2022 IN CHICAGO RAN A FULL PROGRAM OF EVENTS FOR OUR MEMBERS AND GUESTS. WE HELD 12 FIRST FRIDAY, 3 SIGNATURE EVENTS, 2 IN CONVERSATIONS AND A NUMBER OF ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS, VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AND FAMILY FRIENDLY EVENTS.

A special thanks to the Emigrant Support Programme and Ireland's Department of Foreign Affairs for their generous support which makes many of these events possible.



## JANUARY

**FIRST FRIDAY** The Kerryman

## FEBRUARY

**FIRST FRIDAY** Fado

**SIGNATURE EVENT** IN Ball at The Drake

## MARCH

**FIRST FRIDAY** The Embassy

**IN CONVERSATION** Commercial Real Estate and the Future of Work at DLR Group

**PARTNER EVENT** Chicago Irish Film Festival

**PARTNER EVENT** Irish American Partnership St. Patrick's Day Breakfast

**PARTNER EVENT** Irish Fellowship Club St. Patrick's Day Dinner

## APRIL

**FIRST FRIDAY** LG's

**IN CONVERSATION** An Evening of Music with Martin Hayes in partnership with the American Friends of West Cork Music

## MAY

**FIRST FRIDAY** The Wolfhound

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** Chicago Cut

**SERVICE OUTING** Greater Chicago Food Depository

## JUNE

**FIRST FRIDAY** Celtic Crossing

**ROUNDTABLE** Minister Thomas Byrne

**FAMILY EVENT** Ice Cream Social and reading of Our American Dream with Fiona McEntee at Cone Ice Cream



## JULY

**FIRST FRIDAY** Chicago Brewhouse

**PARTNER EVENT** Bus trip to GAA Semi-finals at Gaelic Park

## AUGUST

**FIRST FRIDAY** Kaiser Tiger

**ROUNDTABLE** Minister Martin Heydon

## SEPTEMBER

**FIRST FRIDAY** Corcoran's

**SIGNATURE EVENT** Annual Summer Boat Cruise on the Chicago River

**SIGNATURE EVENT** Annual Golf Outing at Ruffled Feathers

## OCTOBER

**FIRST FRIDAY** Galway Arms

**SERVICE OUTING** Feed My Starving Children

**PARTNER EVENT** iBAM Gala Awards Dinner at Irish American Heritage Center

**PARTNER EVENT** Mayo Association Dinner at Gaelic Park

**PARTNER EVENT** Galway Fellowship Club Dinner at Gaelic Park

**FAMILY EVENT** Halloween Celebration with Irish Community Services and the Irish Consulate at Chief O'Neills

## NOVEMBER

**FIRST FRIDAY** The Gage

## DECEMBER

**FIRST FRIDAY** Emerald Loop

**PARTNER EVENT** The Ireland Funds Annual Chicago Dinner

**PARTNER EVENT** Pdraig Pearse GAA Club 30th Anniversary Dinner

**PARTNER EVENT** Irish Fellowship Club of Chicago Christmas Luncheon



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Consulate General of Ireland



A chairde,

I am delighted, on behalf of the Consulate and Government of Ireland, to extend very best wishes to the Ireland Network Chicago as they celebrate their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary annual ball.

It is a wonderful achievement to mark 20 years of Ireland Network Chicago, an achievement that is made even more special by the fact that the organisation finds itself in such a strong position at this time.

I wish to take this opportunity to extend my warmest congratulations to all members of the Ireland Network, especially the committee and board responsible for the organisation of tonight's wonderful event. Particular thanks must also go to President Ruairí Barnwell and Executive Director Katie Fitzpatrick for their fantastic work over the last year.

The Ireland Network is an incredibly important part of the Irish community in Chicago providing excellent connections, opportunities and friendship to its members. I am delighted that the Consulate, through the Emigrant Support Programme, remains in a position to provide support to this excellent work. The Network remains a valuable partner to the Consulate and are always a joy to work with in our efforts to support the Irish community here in Chicago.

On a personal note, as this is my final ball during my posting to Chicago, I wish to offer my own thanks to the members of Ireland Network. I am very grateful for the immense support and friendship that the Network has given me over the last four years of my posting.

I wish all at Ireland Network Chicago the very best for the coming year and hope the great success of the last year continues.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'S. Keating', is written over a horizontal line.

Sarah Keating

Acting Consul General of Ireland







# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LETTER



In my ten-plus years as a member of Ireland Network Chicago, I've heard countless stories about what brings one into the fold.

Some, like myself, were pulled in by profession - I had just taken over for the inimitable Tim Reilly at the Irish Consulate and joined the Executive Committee under ~~Liam Neeson~~ **Seamus Byrne**. Others, like my husband Emmett, unknowingly stumbled upon a First Friday and were met with a warm welcome and free drink. But the majority join the Network through word of mouth, and find a happy home for the Irish in Chicago.

Ireland Network Chicago is defined by its people – and perhaps most striking is the ongoing presence of members new and old. You never know who will turn up to a First Friday or IN Conversation, and that is what makes each event so special. Indeed, look around tonight and you will see 20 years of kinship and connections.

Speaking of people in this room, I want to thank the visionaries behind the Network in attendance this evening: **Joe McKittrick**, who continues to be a tireless advocate for our organization as a Committee member, and **Ferdia Doherty, Donal O'Brien, John O'Loughlin** and **Garrett Sheridan**, all of whom are or were on our Advisory Board. I want to express my personal gratitude to Seamus, **Helen Garrahy** and **Imelda Gallagher** for their invaluable counsel when launching the Advisory Board, and to Ferdia and **Garrett Diamond** for their efforts to install an Executive Director and take the Network to the next level.

Truly, every volunteer over the past 20 years has played an integral role in getting this organization and its people where we are today. It's an absolute honor to work alongside President **Ruairi Barnwell**, Treasurer **Nora Walsh** and Secretary **Dede Simon**. And to our Executive Committee and Advisory Board, thank you for ensuring the next 20 years are as successful as the first 20.

I'd also like to acknowledge the crucial role of the many partner organizations that support the growth of Ireland Network Chicago. Thank you for your commitment to the Irish community and support of our mission. And in particular to my friends without whom this Ball would not be the same, **Sarah Keating** at the Irish Consulate, **Paul Dowling** at Irish Community Services, and **Bridget Conway** at Concern Worldwide – how lucky are we?!

Finally, to **Billy Lawless**, the individual who best exemplifies the mission of Ireland Network Chicago: on behalf of the entire Irish community, thank you for your service and leadership.

Tonight is a celebration: a celebration of Billy Lawless, the past 20 years of Ireland Network Chicago, and the next 20.

Whatever road led you here, you will always find a home with Ireland Network Chicago.

Best,

Katie Fitzpatrick  
Executive Director, Ireland Network Chicago

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CEO, Founder  
INC Advisory Board Member

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# IRELAND NETWORK IN SPIRIT AWARD 2023

## ABOUT THE AWARD

Each year, Ireland Network Chicago honors an individual who has made significant and sustained contributions to the Chicago Irish community with the IN Spirit Award. This Award expresses our profound gratitude and appreciation for an individual's incredible service to the Irish community.

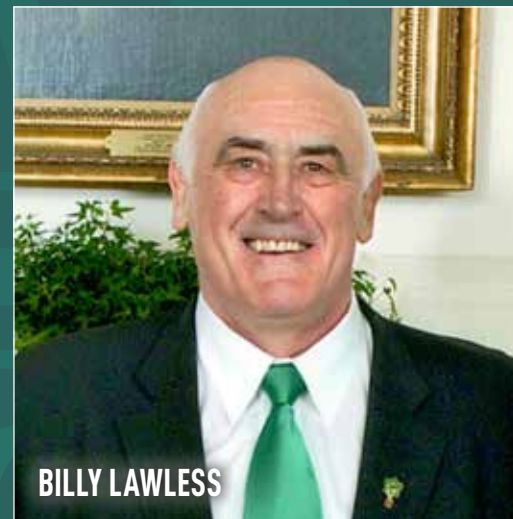
It is our great privilege to honor **BILLY LAWLESS** with the 2023 IN Spirit Award! Billy exemplifies the mission of Ireland Network Chicago.

## ABOUT BILLY LAWLESS

As a businessman, restaurateur, immigration advocate and Senator, Billy Lawless has given a voice to the Irish abroad, provided jobs and resources to Irish in need, and strengthened ties between the U.S. and Ireland.

He exemplifies the mission of Ireland Network Chicago to connect with and contribute to a more vibrant Irish community, and his heartfelt passion, call to service and immeasurable generosity of time and treasures sets an example for us all.

Join us tonight in thanking Billy for all his contributions to Chicago and Ireland.



Billy: You are a TOME of a man and a giant among us. Maith Thu.  
*Ferdia Doherty*

Congratulations Billy on this much deserved award. Thank you for your tireless efforts to support and advocate for the Irish community in Chicago throughout the years.  
*Orla Castanien*

Billy and his family have been a fantastic example of the goodness and generosity of volunteerism and its positive effect on the Chicago Irish community.  
*Rachel McCormac*

Congratulations Billy for receiving the IN Spirit Award. Thank you for your enduring support of IN Chicago's mission and vision these many years. It has always been a pleasure working with you and knowing that you value the IN's continuing efforts to enhance business in the Irish communities.

Go raibh maith agat!  
*Imelda Gallagher & Johnny McEneaney*

Congratulations Billy and thank you for your tireless work to improve the lives of Irish people in Chicago and beyond.  
*Garrett Sheridan*

I'm honored to call Billy Lawless a longtime mentor and friend. I am constantly inspired by his tireless advocacy. As a fellow Irish immigrant and advocate for immigrant rights, I can say from experience that Billy's leadership in immigration reform has been pivotal for the Irish community and immigrant community at large. I am grateful to have worked alongside him in fighting for immigration reform and will forever cherish the wisdom and insight he has given to me as a leader in the field. I could not think of anyone more deserving of this award.

Go raibh míle maith agat, Billy.  
*Fiona McEntee*

The Irish Diaspora campaigned for many years to have a representative in the Irish Oireachtas. Senator Billy Lawless was the first such appointee with specific responsibilities for the Diaspora abroad. Senator Lawless consistently raised issues on their behalf during his service between 2016 and 2020 in Seanad Eireann. His many meetings in Congress and the White House were examples of his diligence and commitment to their cause. He is a worthy recipient of Honour by the Ireland Chicago Network.

- Former Taoiseach Enda Kenny

When I heard Billy was receiving the 2023 IN Spirit award tonight I could not think of any other person in the world that deserves it.

I have known Billy and his wonderful wife Anne for a long time. Here in Ireland we have a word called Meitheal – this is an old Irish word that describes how neighbours would come together to assist in the saving of crops or any other jobs around the farm. In a Meitheal someone takes the lead and gets the job done.

My grandparents and all on my mother's side of the family came from a small parish called Bushypark. It was in that parish that Billy Lawless was born. Billy learnt a lot from his Parents but throughout his life in Ireland he perfected the worded Meitheal. He showed leadership in Farming, Family life, Rowing, Politics and the hospitality industry in Ireland. The apple did not fall far from the tree, just look at Billy & Anne's wonderful family in Chicago they all have the Lawless and O Toole Gene. This is why they lead so well.

I have walked many miles and Journeys with Billy. I know firsthand the work he has done in Chicago, Washington and all over the world. Billy & Anne are very generous with their time and give it freely to assist anybody that needs it or desires it. I remember being in Navy Pier with the undocumented on one visit to Chicago. At that visit Billy was a giant of a man, not physically but morally and the respect he received from government officials was just amazing and well deserved.

I remember the first year Billy came to Chicago; we arrived and then headed to Milwaukee to the Irish Fest. I was broadcasting back to Galway starting at 3am. At about 2am there was a knock on the door. Billy had driven down to participate in the programme. His contribution to the programme was an award winning documentary. Everything he outlined then he achieved for the undocumented and others.

The Spirit of Galway Group that travel every year to Chicago have experienced the wonderful energy that Billy brings to any table in the world. His can do attitude is amazing. Billy never gives up. What he wants to achieve will be done no matter what the cost is. Billy looks out for everyone the rich and the poor. Who you are or the position you hold does not matter. If you need help Billy with Anne are there.

Thank you all for recognising what I have known since my youth, the Lawless genes from Bushypark are in safe hands in the next generation and the Legacy will continue.

*Keith & Joan Finnegan  
Spirit of Galway & the Voice of Galway*

Billy Lawless had always been known to me, having been brought up in Galway,

Upon my arrival in Chicago in 2004, Billy's reputation was well established here as a restauranter, leader and advocate for the Irish diaspora.

I got to know Billy personally through his wife Anne (now one of my best friends) and my admiration has continued to grow from the day I first heard of him.

Billy is a compassionate, hard-working, honorable human being who has always had clear visions of how to help the Irish community living abroad.

He has continuously represented the city of Galway and indeed Ireland itself in the greatest light. In his personal life, his work life and his community and political tasks, Billy has always given of himself one hundred percent. I, myself, am very honored to have been requested by Billy to take over his role as co-chair of Chicago Galway Sister Cities.

We have all benefited in some shape or form from Billy's local and international endeavors.

Receiving the 2023 IN Spirit award is pure justification of Billy's dedication and contribution to helping the Irish Diaspora.

Warmest Congratulations Billy!  
*Nuala Kavanagh, Co-Chair,  
Chicago Galway Sister Cities*



Katie Fitzpatrick,  
Executive Director,  
Ireland Network Chicago

Dear Katie,

As Mayor of Galway City and on behalf of the Members of Galway City Council, I wish to extend sincere congratulations to Billy Lawless Senior as the recipient of the 2023 IN Spirit Award.

Billy Lawless is a formidable man who is utterly dedicated to public service. He has worked tirelessly on behalf of Irish emigrants seeking legalisation in their adopted home, and campaigning for their right to vote in Irish elections while living abroad.

His leadership and commitment to his endeavours has won him many accolades from an honorary doctorate from University of Galway to receiving Freedom of the City of Galway, which is the highest bestowed honour. Galway's award to Billy in May 2015 was made for the following (direct quotation from the presentation scroll); "In recognition of his role in fostering the civic and business links between the sister cities of Galway and Chicago, his promotion and representation of Ireland abroad and his outstanding contribution as a leading activist for immigrant communities in the Unites States".

When Billy Lawless Senior left Galway in 1997 to move to Chicago, we all knew that Galway's loss would be Chicago's gain. Billy, from the day he landed in the United States became a strong advocate for vibrant relations between Chicago and Galway. He has played a phenomenal role in the Chicago Galway Sister Cities body and almost principally as a result of his leadership and drive, Galway City's relationship with Chicago is the strongest, most active and vibrant relationship that we have with any of our sister cities across the globe.

Chicago has witnessed at first hand Billy's entrepreneurial skills. The fantastic restaurants and hospitality business that he has established in Chicago is a fabulous testament to his businesses, especially the wonderful employment he gives in Chicago. Billy, with his wife Anne by his side is rightfully proud of his amazing family and the wonderful strides that they are making in carrying forward his amazing businesses and relationships in Chicago. Now that Billy has partially retired we are delighted that he is spending more time back in Galway City where he is truly at home and where he is held in the highest esteem for his many wonderful achievements.

I join with you tonight in congratulating and thanking Billy for his excellent work promoting US / Ireland relations and Chicago / Galway friendships. The IN Spirit Award is a fitting acknowledgement of his great work and contribution to the Irish Community.

We wish Billy well and we look forward to continuing to collaborate with our friends in Chicago to strengthen and to deepen, even further, the wonderful relationship that exists between our city of the Tribes & Chicago.

Yours sincerely,

Clodagh Higgins,  
Mayor of the City of Galway

25<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Katie Fitzpatrick  
Executive Director  
Ireland Network Chicago

Dear Katie,

I am delighted to learn of the very well deserved nomination of Billy Lawless Senior as the recipient of the 2023 IN Spirit Award.

In my view the award rightfully recognises the contribution of Billy Lawless Senior to US Ireland relations & especially for his work building & developing the close relationship between Galway City & Chicago. Billy Lawless has made a singular contribution as an advocate for migrant rights. He is entrepreneurial, a man of commerce and a highly successful restaurateur, employer and a successful businessman. Billy is a wonderful human being, caring deeply for others; he is also a man of principle, highly articulate, good humour and a ready riposte! Furthermore, Billy has made a fantastic contribution as a Senator in the Irish parliament, supporting many excellent and deserving causes. Billy through his parliamentary work has especially championed the cause of the Irish Diaspora across the globe.

It has been a great pleasure for me, throughout my tenure as City Manager over the last decade in Galway City Council, to have worked with Billy Lawless seeking to grow and expand the wonderful relationship that exists between Galway & Chicago. I wish to acknowledge Billy's great contribution to the Chicago Galway Sister Cities group.

I regret that I cannot be in attendance in person at your celebration on the 11<sup>th</sup> February 2023. I hope you will have a very successful, highly enjoyable night, rightfully recognising and praising our Galway freeman Mr. Billy Lawless Senior.

Yours sincerely,



**Brendan McGrath,**

**Chief Executive, Galway City Council.**



# 2023 IRELAND NETWORK CHICAGO FOUNDERS

**GO RAIBH MAITH AGAT TO THE MANY VISIONARIES, LEADERS AND VOLUNTEERS OVER THE LAST 20 YEARS, THANK YOU!**

## FOUNDERS

Bill Godwin  
Joe McKittrick  
Donal O'Brien

## 1ST MEETING

Ruairi Barnwell  
Seamus Coyle (RIP)  
Ferdia Doherty  
John O'Loughlin  
Karen O'Shea  
Garrett Sheridan

“The Chicago Ireland Network has come so far since those early speculative and sometimes fractious meetings in my office in IDA Ireland. In our wildest dreams we could not have imagined a 20th anniversary party! I would like to wish Chicago Ireland Network every success for the future. Have a great celebration.”

Bill Godwin  
Ireland Network Co-Founder

## PAST PRESIDENTS

Brian Moore | 2007-2009  
Helen Garrahy | 2010-2011  
Seamus Byrne | 2012-2013

Imelda Gallagher | 2014-2015  
Rachel McCormac | 2016  
James Sheehan | 2017-2018

Ferdia Doherty | 2019-2020  
Garrett Diamond | 2021-2022

## FORMER COMMITTEE MEMBERS (NOT ALREADY MENTIONED)

Paul Cronin | 2007  
Maureen Canty | 2007  
Andrew Hallissey | 2007  
Emmanuel Dowdall | 2007  
Sarah Loane | 2007  
Rose Whitehorne | 2007  
John Kenny | 2008  
Brendan Kerlin | 2008  
Karen McMonagle | 2008  
Mary Clare O'Brien | 2008  
George Kelly | 2009  
Edward Galvin | 2010  
Christine Shinkwin | 2010  
Ken Dooley | 2010  
Fiona McEntee | 2010  
Eamon Nash | 2010

Deborah Ryder | 2011  
Kevin Boland | 2012  
Katie Fitzpatrick | 2012  
Maire O'Brien | 2012  
Valerie Wall | 2012  
Joyce McGreevy | 2013  
Ronan Keary | 2014  
Breandan Magee | 2014  
Aine Mallaghan | 2014  
Eamon Byrne | 2015  
Mallory McSweeney | 2015  
Barbara Andrews | 2016  
Diarmuid Moran | 2016

Kristin Curnyn | 2018  
Paul Gillen | 2018  
Tim Groome | 2018  
Mary Kay Marmo | 2018  
Molly McGrail | 2018  
Mairead O'Riordan | 2018  
James Coleman | 2019  
Rory Mone | 2019  
Jenna Orr | 2019  
Mat Gallagher | 2020  
Judy McKeever | 2020  
Jaclynne Madden | 2021  
Marc Morrow | 2021  
Chloe Twomey | 2021

## WITH SPECIAL GRATITUDE TO THE LEADERSHIP OF THE CONSULS GENERAL OVER THE PAST 20 YEARS, INCLUDING

CG Sean Farrell | 2007  
CG Martin Rouine | 2008-2011  
CG Aidan Cronin | 2012-2015

CG Orla McBreen | 2016  
CG Brian O'Brien | 2017-2020  
CG Kevin Byrne | 2021- Present

Acting Consul General  
Sarah Keating 2022 – Present

We apologize for any errors or omissions from this list.

## MCENTEE LAW GROUP CONGRATULATES BILLY LAWLESS!

Thank you Billy for your leadership, mentorship, & friendship!



Here's to 20 more great years Ireland Network Chicago!

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## Congratulations, Billy

From the board and staff of Irish Community Services, congratulations and thank you for your services to the Irish community.



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# CONNECT WITH THE CHICAGO IRISH COMMUNITY ALL YEAR ROUND!

IRELAND NETWORK CHICAGO IS A NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION THAT RAISES THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS EACH YEAR FOR CONCERN WORLDWIDE AND IRISH COMMUNITY SERVICES AND OTHER IRISH-AFFILIATED CAUSES.

INC SERVES AS THE BRIDGE FOR IRISH-BORN, IRISH AMERICANS AND THOSE WITH AN AFFINITY FOR CONTEMPORARY IRELAND TO THE ESTABLISHED BUSINESS AND IRISH COMMUNITIES IN CHICAGO. WE ARE PROUD TO BUILD CONNECTIONS IN THE LOCAL IRISH COMMUNITY AND DELIVER PROGRAMMING AT LITTLE TO NO COST FOR OUR MEMBERS AND PARTICIPANTS..

## JOIN IRELAND NETWORK CHICAGO

### IN MEMBERS CAN ENJOY:

- Free or discounted tickets to IN Chicago events as well as partner events (annual savings of \$1,000!)
- Free drinks and appetizers at First Fridays which are held at Irish establishments around the city
- IN Chicago Restaurant Loyalty Card featuring discounts to local restaurant partners
- Exclusive promotions and offers from members and partners
- Opportunity to share insights with our membership and the wider Irish community
- Access to news and thought leadership from business leaders across IN Chicago, Ireland's Department of Foreign Affairs and our partners
- Option to give back to the Chicago Irish community by serving on the Executive Committee
- Direct connection to the vibrant Irish Chicago business and cultural community
- And much more!

**SCAN THE CODE TO BECOME A MEMBER TONIGHT! OUR ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE IS \$125.**



MEMBERS-ONLY / CHARITY PARTNER EVENT: CONCERN WORLDWIDE LUNCHEON



MEMBERS-ONLY EVENT: BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE WITH MINISTER O'DONOVAN



# PRIDE OF CHICAGO

WE ARE CHICAGO CITY | WE ARE A FAMILY | WE ARE A COMMUNITY

YOUTH SOCCER PROGRAMMING ACROSS THE CHICAGOLAND AREA



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HONORING OUR IRISH HERITAGE

INVESTING IN IRELAND'S FUTURE

Proud to support the **Ireland Network Chicago** 20th Anniversary Ball



IRISH AMERICAN PARTNERSHIP

Congratulations to our friend **Billy Lawless**, 2023 IN Spirit Award Recipient

Clearly see the impact of your giving at [WWW.IRISHAP.ORG](http://WWW.IRISHAP.ORG)





# IRELAND NETWORK CHICAGO COMMITTEE MEMBERS



## **RUAIRI BARNWELL - PRESIDENT**

Ruairi is a Principal at DLR Group, a global integrated design firm, where he leads the Smart Buildings Practice. Originally from Tullamore, County Offaly, Ruairi moved to Chicago in 2000 after graduating from the Dublin Institute of Technology with a BSc in Engineering. Ruairi has been involved with Ireland Network Chicago since its inception in 2003 and has served on the Executive Committee for the past 3 years. Outside of work Ruairi enjoys spending time with his wife Andrea and three daughters Bella, Catelin and Maeve.



## **JERRY BRANSFIELD**

Jerry helps people and businesses with purchasing computers; transferring data from old to new computers (Mac/Windows); training people how to use software, iPad and mobile phones; setting up new offices with computer hardware and printers, telephones (VoIP), and wifi access; and answering any number of tech support questions. Jerry has a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science from Loyola University and a Master's in Science Information from DePaul University.



## **ELLEN CONVERY**

Originally from Crossgar, Co. Down, Ellen moved to Chicago in 2021 after graduating from Queen's University Belfast with degrees in Food Science and Marketing. Ellen is working as a digital marketer for Daniels Health, leading the digital optimization efforts at the company. Ellen spent most of her summers growing up in Donegal learning the Irish Language, and more recently she has picked up Irish classes in her spare time. Ellen first joined the Network in 2019 when she worked in the city as an Intern.



## **RORY CONVERY**

From Belfast, Co. Antrim with family ties to Co. Derry and Co. Fermanagh, Rory Convery grew up in Dubai, U.A.E. He moved to the U.S. in 2009 to attend the University of Notre Dame before moving to Chicago in 2013 to attend Loyola University Chicago School of Law. A member of the Ireland Network since 2013, he joined the Committee in 2020. He is an attorney in the General Counsel's Office of RSM US LLP. A rugby man, Rory played for the University of Notre Dame and continues to spend his summers playing for their alumni 7's team the Krakens. Rory frequently travels back to Ireland to spend time with his family and attend Ireland and Ulster rugby matches.



## **NIAMH FINN**

Originally from Meath, Niamh moved to Chicago in 2017. She is an Activation Marketing Manager at Kerry. In her role, Niamh works cross-functionally among teams to support customers and business development within the Foodservice and Convenience channels. Niamh received her bachelor's degree from UCD in Commerce International and Chinese, and a Master's degree in Global Business Development from DIT. She also holds a teaching diploma in Speech, Drama and Oral Communication from the University of West London. In her spare time she enjoys going for runs along the lake, playing Gaelic football with the Aisling Gaels, trying new bars and restaurants in the city and traveling to new places across the US.



## **MEGHAN LEE**

Meghan is a graphic designer with a strategic approach to branding. She has created marketing collateral for B2B and B2C clients such as the YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago, Vaughan Hospitality Group and the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce, as well as financial services, real estate, and healthcare industries. Meghan has been on the Ireland Network committee since 2021, focusing on branding development and membership growth. She is passionate about donating her time and talent to organizations whose missions align with her values, and making long-lasting connections within the Irish-American community of Chicago.



## **FIONA MCDONNELL**

Originally from Limerick, Fiona first moved to the US in 2019 to complete an MS in Technology Entrepreneurship at the University of Notre Dame. While at Notre Dame, she interned as a Market Analyst at the University's Center for Innovation, focusing on de-risking new technologies and carrying out market analysis. Fiona now works as a Product Marketing Manager at Telnyx, a growing cloud communications platform based out of Chicago, where she works to develop GTM strategies for new products. Since moving to Chicago in mid-2020, Fiona has loved getting to know the city and fellow Irish in Chicago. When not working, she enjoys spending lots of time by the lakefront, going to basketball and football games, and comedy nights around the city. She is excited to contribute to the Irish community in Chicago by working with the Executive Committee to help spread the word about all the events and connections made possible by the INC!



## **MAGGIE MCELDOWNEY**

Maggie is a National Sales Manager at McCormick Place, the largest convention center in North America. She takes pride in the multi-billion dollar economic impact her team has in welcoming convention and tradeshow business to Chicago. She attended the University of Illinois as a Chick Evans Scholar, after caddying at Ridge Country Club on the South Side. Maggie is a proud Beverly native, with Irish roots in Maghera, Co. Derry. Her professional career began in Development, but while representing Chicago on an international platform as the 2016 Rose of Tralee, she developed a passion for promoting tourism in her hometown. Maggie was a Board Member of the Young Irish Fellowship Club, acting as Vice President of Charity, before becoming a member of the Ireland Network. She is also a Board Member of the Mulliganeers, a non-profit organization dedicated to raising funds for children and families in need. She is honored to join this remarkable committee, and looks forward to supporting the mission of the Ireland Network Chicago.



## **JOSEPH MCKITTRICK**

Joe currently works for Citibank as one of their four Senior Relationship Managers for the Chicago market. With over 25 years extensive experience in the financial sector, including Commercial Treasury, Credit, Corporate Trust & Asset Mgt, Joe has still found time to raise two wonderful kids, play golf and currently follows his passion of Cryptocurrency by sitting on the board of a Canadian Blockchain project. Finally, having been one of the Founding directors of the Ireland Network Chicago, Joe is very excited to be part of the committee again and looks forward to taking the IN Chicago to the next level!



## **SHEILA MCNAMARA**

Sheila is a Vice President, Senior Consultant, Investment Risk & Analytics at Northern Trust and has over 11 years of investment experience in the financial service industry specializing in asset allocation, performance, private equity, research, commercial, valuation, credit risk and analytics. Sheila is a Cum Laude graduate of Lake Forest College. She has a Bachelor's in Business and was Captain of the Women's Golf Team. She was also a 3-time National Handball Champion at Lake Forest College. She has an MBA in Finance from Saint Xavier University. Sheila joined IN Chicago several years ago through the Rose of Tralee organization. Her parents are from Valentia Island, Co. Kerry and Lettermore, Co. Galway. She enjoys visiting family and friends in Ireland annually. Sheila has played Camogie with Saint Mary's and Gaelic Football with the Erin Rover's and is very involved in Gaelic Park and is well connected to the Irish community in Chicago.



## **BRIGHDE MULHOLLAND**

Brighde is a Senior Kdb Developer with KX, based in Newry, Northern Ireland, which is a data analysis software developer and vendor. She joined the company after graduating from Queens in Belfast with a BSc in Maths with Statistics and has previously worked in London, Dublin, Newry and Singapore. Brighde first spent time in the US as part of the British Council's "Study USA" programme and studied at the College of St Benedict in Central Minnesota for a year in 2013. She returned to Chicago for a short-term project with work in 2019 and left in early March 2020, not realizing at the time it would be 2 years before she would be back. Originally from Rostrevor in Co. Down, Brighde is glad to be back in Chicago working with the Chicago Mercantile Exchange.



## **NICK MULVANEY**

Nick was born and raised in Dublin, Ireland, leaving home at a young age to play collegiate soccer in William Carey University, Mississippi. Nick moved to Chicago in 2011 to take on the role of Director of Coaching with Chicago Lakefront Attack Soccer Club. In 2013, he was able to rebrand the club as it is today, Chicago City Soccer Club. City has become the first and only Illinois 5 Star Club in the City of Chicago and the first and only USL Academy program in the state of Illinois. Alongside the academy, City launched USL W and USL 2 professional teams provide a true player pathway for players and coaches.



## **PHILIP NELSON**

Philip is an Account Manager at REB Storage Systems International, which is a material handling systems integrator based in Chicago, with a satellite office in Dublin, Ireland. Phil specializes in distribution center pick module & storage system design for clients in the USA and Europe. Phil immigrated to Chicago from Antrim, Northern Ireland, on St Patrick's Day 2016, with his wife Rachel. From high school, he has had a keen interest in rugby, and while in Chicago, has continued his support of the IRFU at local Irish pubs and Soldier Field when on tour. Phil is currently enjoying settling into suburban life after moving from the City to Lombard in late 2021 following the arrival of his daughter, Ella.



## **DAN O'BRIEN**

Dan is an Emergency Room Physician & Medical Director for SCP Health, with deep Irish roots from Ennis, County Clare. He is passionate about Irish history, Chicago Irish history & travel. He resides in Oak Park with his wife Bethany & son Edward, and is an active member of St Giles Parish. He is a graduate & prior Chief Resident at the University of Illinois School of Medicine. He has held various teaching and administrative roles over his years in practice. He is the owner of an area commercial real estate business. He enjoys golfing, listening to live Irish Music, and being a Dad.





# IRELAND NETWORK CHICAGO COMMITTEE MEMBERS (CONTINUED)



## CAHIR O'DOHERTY

Cahir is a native of Derry, Ireland. Immigrated to Chicago via London in 2016. Cahir is the Director of Digital Marketing & Strategy for Ricoh, and is responsible for managing full web development including eCommerce across North America. Cahir gained his Bachelors (with Hons) degree from the University of Liverpool and has a Masters in Science from the University of Ulster. He is married to Meghan (nee Condon), a Beverly native and they have three children, Declan (4), Cormac (2), and Eamon (0).

## CRAIG O'HALLORAN

Craig is a Studio Leader and Design Manager at the world's largest Architecture and Design firm, Gensler. There he comanages a studio of 35 team members made up of architects, interior designers, and brand designers. Craig's work has taken him all over the world, with the repositioning of the Willis Tower here in Chicago a standout project for him. He is currently managing a corporate campus renovation and extension in the suburbs of Chicago, along with multiple new US office locations for a client in the professional services industry. Hailing from Dublin and a DIT Bolton Street alum, Craig arrived in Chicago in 2016 via London. He has set up camp in Lincoln Park with the Galway Arms being his local. You will find him playing and watching anything sport related, while trying all the new restaurants across the city.



## DOLORES SIMON - SECRETARY

Dede is proficient working with C-Suite industry leaders, and currently is in the HR solution human capital world for businesses with Insperity. Her entire career has involved working with C-Suite executives in the Chicagoland corporate, non-profit, or even the international world. She was responsible for the 164 board directors as VP and Board relations for the Chicagoland Chamber, President of the Notre Dame Club of Chicago and now in between times volunteers her time with the Ireland Network group, parish council for Holy Name Cathedral and is an office assistant for the Ronald McDonald House Charities located on Grand Ave. She also opened up the Midwest region for a German extruded building product company called Resysta working with architects, prior to being the Deputy Director for Businesses for our state government. She is most proud and humbled by the success of her three grown children, and relishes being a fun grandmother with her six grandchildren.



## JACKIE THEODORE

Jackie is a Senior Project Manager with Cushman & Wakefield on the Bank of America account managing projects in the retail renovation department. She has more than 15 years of experience managing complex building types, including retail renovations, movie theater renovations, education facilities, high-rise commercial, senior living facilities, public sector outdoor environments and transportation. Jackie was a Board Member and a Forever Green Chair for Young Irish Fellowship for many years and has been a volunteer for Catholic Charities. She is excited to join this organization that strives to bring professionals together while supporting Irish culture!



## MIRIAM WALLACE

Miriam is a global Human Resources executive and a native of County Kerry who lived in London, Dublin and Chicago and spent over 15 years working across the United States, Europe and Asia Pacific while employed at Accenture and Jim Beam Suntory Brands. In recent years, Miriam has partnered with management at local non-profit senior living and hospice organizations to lead talent management initiatives to support growth strategies. While Miriam considers Chicago as "home" she does travel back regularly to Ireland to be with family and can also be found enjoying life by the Atlantic ocean in South Carolina. Miriam takes personal pride in coaching job seekers and recent immigrants with resume/interview preparation and ongoing career mentorship. While Miriam lives on the northside she enjoys a White Sox game and is a big Blackhawks fan!



## NORA WALSH - TREASURER

A native of Dublin, Nora moved to Chicago before enrolling at Loyola University to earn a degree in Computer Science. She works as VP of Investor Relations for Gas N Wash. Nora is a Board Member for Weish4Ever: The Andrew Weishar Foundation, a nonprofit that supports teens and young adults battling cancer. Nora is delighted to be part of this dynamic group that provides a terrific platform upon which to build professional, social and philanthropic connections with other Chicagoans who hold Ireland near and dear to their hearts.



# IRELAND NETWORK CHICAGO ADVISORY BOARD

The Advisory Board is tasked with overseeing the long-term strategic vision and ensuring the continued growth of Ireland Network Chicago. Thank you to the Advisory Board for their dedication and service.

## ORLA CASTANIEN

Orla is an executive coach and leadership consultant passionate about empowering leaders to maximize performance, achieve strategic objectives, and bring more of who they truly are to their careers. Orla is a member of The Exetor Group, a leading consortium of coaches and business professionals. Orla holds a BS in Commerce from University College Galway and a Master of Accounting, University College Dublin.

## GARRETT DIAMOND

A previous President of the Ireland Network Chicago, Garrett is originally from Co. Meath, Garrett and has lived in Chicago on and off for nearly 15 years. A DIT hospitality and Tourism Graduate, Garrett initially spent a number of years in the hotel and bar business in Chicago. He is now working as a Sales and Business Development Representative for Stuart Dean Company in Facilities Services. Garrett spends his time living in Oak Park with his wife Katie and three children, Ciara, Liam and Fiona.

## KEN DOOLEY

A native of Ireland, Ken received a degree in business and finance from Trinity College, Dublin. Ken spent several years in the English and Irish Banking industry prior to immigrating to Chicago in 1994. After a number of years working in banking, Ken made the transition into real estate in 2000 and is one of Chicago's most sought after real estate professionals—consistently ranked among the top 1% of Brokers for closed transactions by the Chicago Association of Realtors.

## IMELDA GALLAGHER

Imelda grew up in Galway and lived in Dublin qualifying as a Barrister before returning to her native Chicago. She is a Project Manager, PMP, specializing in building fiber networks nationally. Imelda served on the IN Committee for over 10 years and as IN President before becoming an IN Advisory Board Member.

## EDWARD GALVIN

Edward has been involved with IN at different times over his past 20 years in the US. A Vice President at Visa, Edward is responsible for North America commercial payments sales and business development. Edward is involved in many other diaspora related communities. He is the President of the Chicago Irish Film festival and has also been involved in the revival of the Chicago Cork Association creating more community in the mid-west area.

## SARAH KEATING, ACTING CONSUL GENERAL, CONSULATE GENERAL OF IRELAND, CHICAGO

Sarah was born in Limerick, Ireland and obtained an undergraduate degree in Law and Irish from University College Cork and a Masters of Law from the University of Limerick. Sarah joined the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in 2017, where her first assignment was to the Human Rights Unit, serving as the Irish Delegate to the EU Working Party on Human Rights. Serving as Vice Consul in Chicago since 2019, Sarah recently took up the position of Acting Consul General. Before her move to the Consulate, Sarah had never visited the Midwest, although she previously completed a J1 in Boston and has family based in the US, mainly on the East coast.

## BRIAN MOORE

Brian has been a member of the Ireland Network since its inception and is a past president. He works in Corporate Finance at Exelon (parent company of ComEd) and lives with his wife Sheila, in Lincoln Park and they have three children Dylan, Julia and Olivia.

## DENIS NEVILLE

Denis Neville, M.Sc. in Food Science and Technology from University College Cork, is the founder and CEO of CoreFX Ingredients LLC. Denis has led commercial and technical development roles in the international food and beverage industries for over 24 years. Denis' business philosophy is built around thought leadership and purpose-based management, always growing through creativity and innovation. CoreFX specializes in the development of disruptive, turnkey "Health through Nutrition" ingredient solutions that nourish and nurture bodies and minds.

## DONAL O'BRIEN

Donal is a partner at Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP where he specializes in mergers and acquisitions. Donal was born and raised in Dublin and went to UCD. Donal is a founding member of the Ireland Network.

## JAMES SHEEHAN

Past President of the Ireland Network, James is originally from Dublin and has been living in Chicago for 21 years. He is a member of the Chicago Association of Realtors and works closely with many of Chicago's top developers on new construction projects throughout the city. Currently residing in Lincoln Square with his wife Adrianna, and two children John Oliver and Catalina Sophia.

## GARRETT SHERIDAN

Garrett Sheridan is President of Axiom Consulting Partners and specializes in working with leaders to develop and execute strategies that drive profitable growth and improve execution. Originally from Dublin, Garrett is a founding member of the Ireland Network.

## NIAMH WHELAN-REITER

Niamh leads North America Marketing at Avanade where bringing focus, creativity and the art of storytelling to help drive growth and business results. With a 25+ career that spans Ireland, France and the United States, Niamh is passionate about helping organizations tap into the power of marketing and communications to drive brand awareness, business value and results. Holds a BS in Business & Marketing Management from Trinity College Dublin.



# CONGRATULATIONS IRELAND NETWORK 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY!

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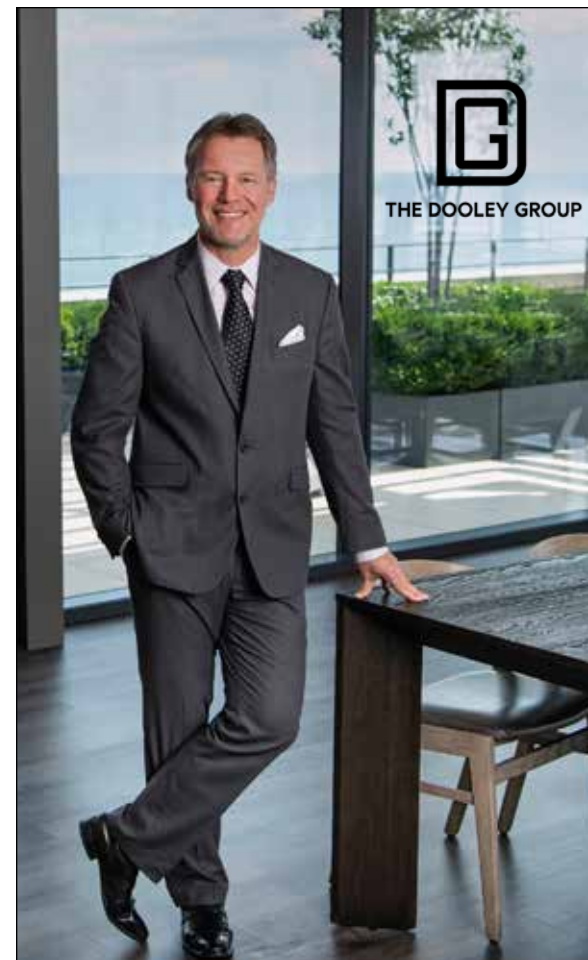
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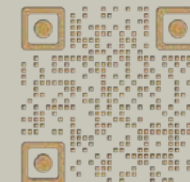
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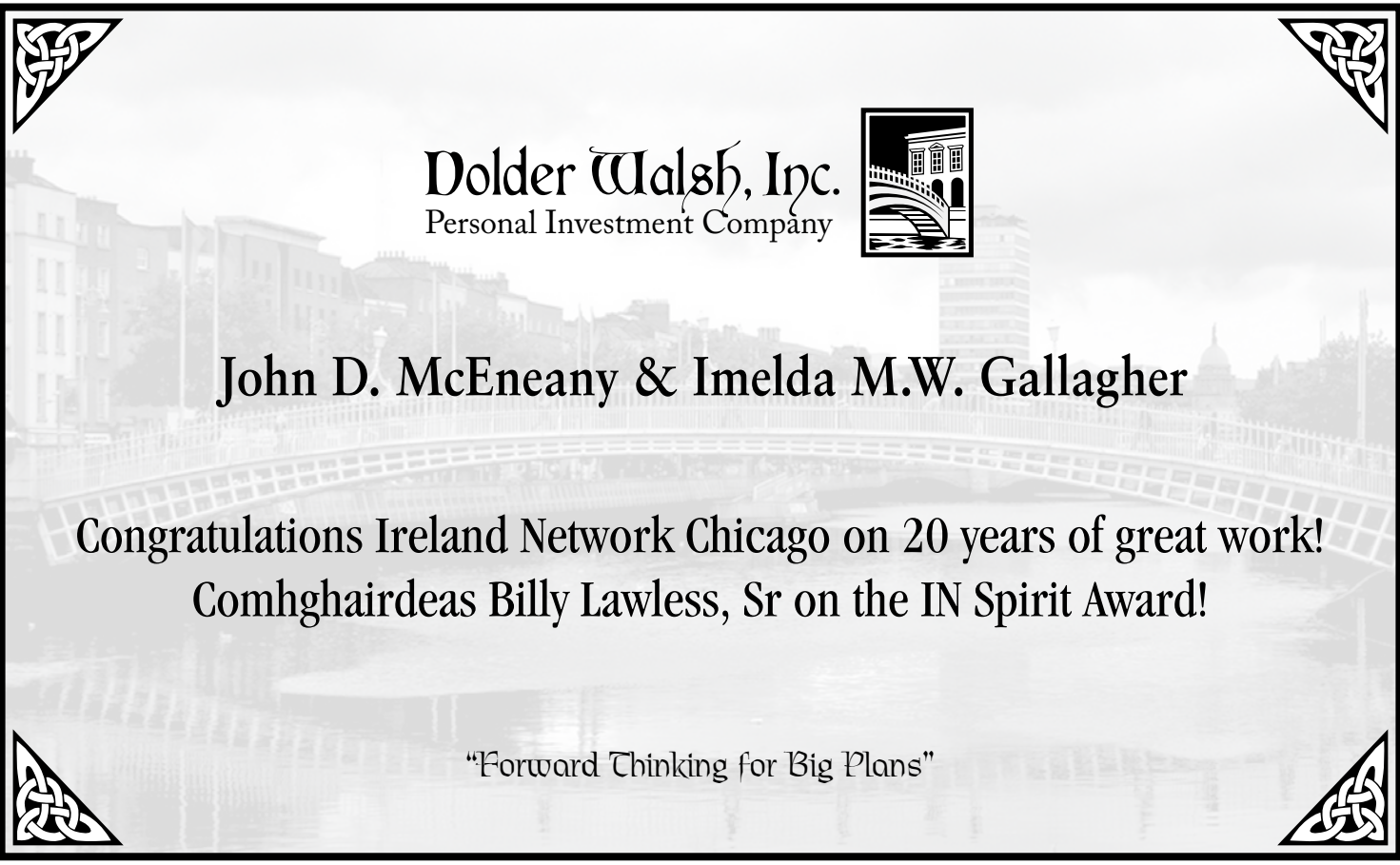
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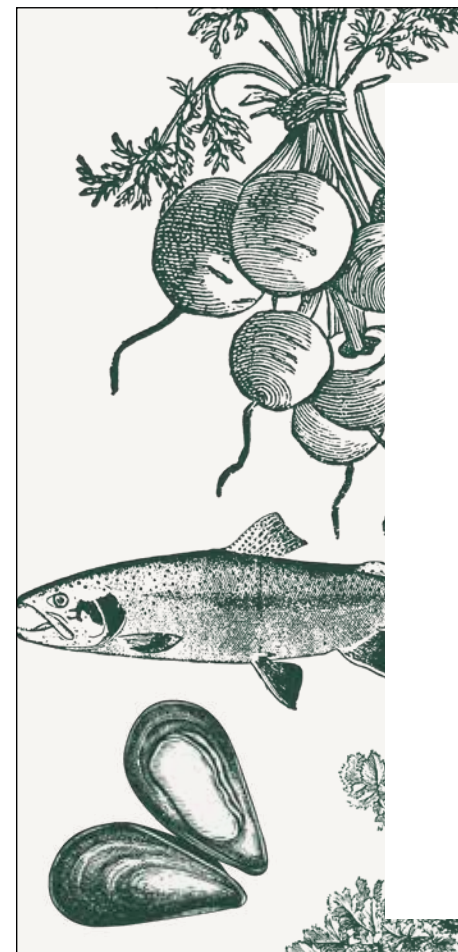
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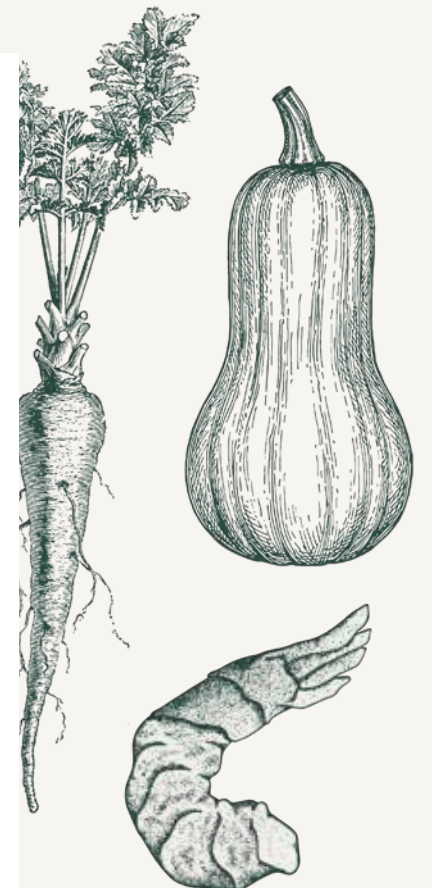


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~ Oscar Wilde ~

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