

The American Ireland Fund New York Dinner Gala Celebrates its 40th Anniversary and Raises \$4.3 Million to Assist Irish Not-for-Profit Groups

The 40th Annual American Ireland Fund New York Dinner Gala Honors the Leslie C. and Regina Quick, Jr. Family and Welcomes Special Guest Senator George J. Mitchell

Manhattan, New York, May 7, 2015 - The American Ireland Fund hosted its milestone 40th Annual New York Dinner Gala on Thursday evening, May 7, 2015 in New York City. The Ireland Funds were founded in 1976 by Sir Anthony O'Reilly and Ambassador Dan Rooney at an inaugural dinner held in New York City. Four decades later, the New York Dinner Gala has now raised over \$50 million of support for the philanthropic work of The American Ireland Fund.

The event on May 7 raised \$4.3 million marking another milestone in establishing the 2015 New York Gala as the most successful event ever held by The Worldwide Ireland Funds.

“Tonight, we celebrate the vision and courage of Tony O'Reilly and Dan Rooney in establishing the Fund at our very first New York dinner in May, 1976,” said Kieran McLoughlin, President & CEO of The Worldwide Ireland Funds. “Just as the honoree that first night was a relatively unknown Irish Senator named Mary Robinson who went on to become the President of Ireland, that pioneering dinner was the seed for the Fund to become one of Ireland’s largest private grant makers. Despite all the changes and challenges of the last four decades, the mission Tony and Dan set out that night to strengthen the island of Ireland, remains as relevant and as necessary as ever.”

The American Ireland Fund New York Dinner Gala recognized The Leslie C. and Regina Quick, Jr. Family with its Bird and Bell Award for their extraordinary commitment and philanthropic work across Ireland and beyond. Past recipients of the Bird and Bell Award have included Seamus Heaney, Liam Neeson and President Mary McAleese. In addition, special guest Senator George J. Mitchell was recognized for his distinguished career advancing peace around the world and in particular, for his role in leading the peace negotiations in Northern Ireland that resulted in the Good Friday Agreement.

Over 1,000 guests from the spheres of business, the arts and politics attended the Gala at the Grand Hyatt New York at Grand Central. It is the largest of the 100 global events hosted annually by The Worldwide Ireland Funds. The 2015 American Ireland Fund New York Dinner Gala was chaired by Robert J. McCann, President Americas, UBS AG. The event celebrated Irish culture and heritage and generated much-needed

funds for The Worldwide Ireland Funds' *Promising Ireland* Campaign which has assisted over 650 Irish charities to-date.

For more information on the *Promising Ireland* Campaign and a listing of organizations that have received support, visit www.theirelandfunds.org

About The American Ireland Fund

The American Ireland Fund is part of The Worldwide Ireland Funds, a philanthropic network across 12 countries that has raised over \$500 million for worthy causes in Ireland and Irish causes around the world. It is the largest network of friends of Ireland dedicated to supporting programs of peace and reconciliation, arts and culture, education and community development. Founded in 1976, The Worldwide Ireland Funds have benefited over 3,000 organizations. Funds raised are contributed by private sources - individuals, corporations and foundations.

In response to the severe downturn in the Irish economy, The Worldwide Ireland Funds launched the *Promising Ireland* Campaign in 2009 to raise \$100 million for charities experiencing an increased demand for their services at a time of a major reduction in resources. Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of donors, the initial goal has been exceeded and the target has been doubled to now raise \$200 million. As a result, over one third of the Funds' total earnings since foundation have been raised during the six years of the Campaign. Over 650 outstanding projects and organizations have received support from the *Promising Ireland* Campaign.

The American Ireland Fund holds a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator in recognition of efficiency, sound fiscal management and commitment to accountability and transparency.

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