



THE MULCAHY SCHOLARSHIP NEWSLETTER

2025 EDITION



2025 MULCAHY SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

*L-R; Celia Ramos, Cora Harrigan, Carlo Scotto,
Brooklyn O'Brien and Luke Connolly*



Note from the Board of Directors

As Project Children celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, the Mulcahy Scholarship Program is committed to deepening connections between Irish American youth and their heritage through meaningful experiences and events.

Our Board of Directors were handed the arduous task of narrowing down the talented applicant pool, as the submissions were extremely strong again this year. It is heartening to know that the younger generation continues to offer a fresh perspective and holds immense potential to shape a prosperous future for us all, all while emulating the basis of the Mulcahy family way. Our recipients showed an abundance of leadership qualities, all while sharing an enthusiasm to explore their Irish heritage.

In March, we proudly awarded the Mulcahy Scholarships to Luke Connolly, Cora Harrigan, Brooklyn O'Brien, Celia Ramos, and Carlo Scotto during the screening of the documentary *How to Defuse a Bomb: The Project Children Story* at the AOH Division 18 in Peekskill. This event was particularly meaningful for our Scholars, helping them understand the origins and inspiring legacy of the program.

In July, the Scholars visited the Consulate General of Ireland in New York and met with Deputy Consul General Gareth Hargadon to learn more about Ireland's work abroad and its support for the Irish diaspora worldwide. They also had the privilege of a roundtable discussion with Ambassador Fergal Mythen at the Permanent Mission of Ireland to the United Nations. Thanks to Aisling McDonagh, Communications and Public Diplomacy Lead at the Mission, we also toured the United Nation, including the Security Council room. The conversation with Ambassador Mythen highlighted the crucial role cultural exchange plays in promoting peace and understanding, inspiring our scholars with a renewed commitment to the scholarship's mission of fostering connection and reconciliation.

Our scholars spent two transformative weeks at the Celtic Irish American Academy in Galway, under the expert guidance of Brian Fahy and his daughter, Dr. Johanna Clancy. During their stay, students engaged in a rich program combining Irish language lessons, history workshops, traditional music and dance sessions, and entrepreneurship seminars. They explored Galway's vibrant cultural scene, connected with local communities, and participated in outdoor activities that deepened their appreciation of Ireland's landscape and heritage. This immersive experience empowered scholars to develop a stronger sense of identity, leadership skills, and lifelong friendships.

The Mulcahy Scholarship was launched in 2018 by the Aisling Irish Community Center, Yonkers, New York, in tribute to Denis and Miriam Mulcahy, and their family's commitment to Project Children, a charity that for forty years, worked untiringly to change the lives of children across Northern Ireland. Project Children provided each child a 6-week summer reprieve from the violence of "the Troubles". Nearly fifty years later, the scholarship is proud to replicate the reverse, by providing American high school students the opportunity to experience firsthand their Irish culture in a fun and diverse way. It is our way of thanking the 16,000 US host families for opening their doors, when the children of Northern Ireland needed them most.

Our board are delighted with the growing interest in our scholarship program, and we will continue our endeavor to offer Irish American high school students the chance to explore their Irish heritage. We would like to extend our thanks to all our donors, as well as Brian Fahy and Dr. Johanna Clancy, Directors of the CIAA, and their host families.

Le buíochas,
MS Bord Stiúrthóirí 2025

Luke Connolly

Woodside, NY



The Mulcahy Scholarship was easily one of the best experiences I've ever had the opportunity to enjoy due to it allowing me an amazing two weeks where I learnt so much. I first met the other Scholars during a viewing of the documentary How to Defuse A Bomb, which recounts how Denis Mulcahy started Project Children to help children in Northern Ireland during the Troubles. Not only did I learn the inspiring story of how Project Children changed people's lives, I met the four other scholars who I would develop special friendships within time to come. This idea of the unique friendship between Ireland and America bonding them on the level of individual families helping the other was the core of Project Children and now the Mulcahy Scholarship.

We were generously hosted by amazing families once we all arrived in Galway, and I felt so welcome and accepted as soon as I walked through the door. Our host family always provided us with delicious food and their conversations with us taught more about modern Irish life than I could've ever anticipated. Our time in the classroom was far different than any other classroom experience I've had before: not focused on homework but instead on truly grasping a culture. We received lessons in Irish from students in St. Enda's College, and it inspired me to pursue learning Irish fully. My favorite part, however, was when we learnt about Irish history with Brian Fahy, and we listened to Rebel songs, saw Famine art, and got a view into Irish identity I never saw before. I'd heard "Fields of Athenry" in the past, but never did I hear it the same once I'd understood the pain and reality of its Famine context. Overall, our time in the class covered many different aspects of Irish culture that I'd never enjoyed before, be it instruments, history, literature, or language, and I learnt so much about Ireland and my own interests through our study.

We also explored Ireland outside St. Enda's as well, going on many trips around Galway and Connemara. As a New Yorker accustomed to the concrete jungle, the majesty of the Cliffs of Moher surpassed even the Empire State Building and it left an indelible mark on my mind. I was also very impressed by the University of Galway, and the demo courses we received there helped me imagine college life and made me consider going to Ireland to study full-time. I love soccer, but after playing Gaelic Football with a former All-Ireland player and winning a Galway jersey, I found a new sport to enjoy as well. The most daunting of all our expeditions, in my opinion, was Black Rock, the name of the diving pier on Salthill. Diving 33 feet into the icy Irish sea was terrifying, especially due to my fear of heights, but I still did it anyway and conquered my fear. While not a crazy feat, it symbolizes the core of this trip for me: a leap of faith. I had never gotten the chance to be away from home for as long as I did, travel as far, or meet as many new people as with the Mulcahy Scholarship. And, while daunting, I am endlessly grateful for the chance to have taken that leap of faith because it was the most rewarding chance in my 17 years of life.

I want to deeply thank Linda Croston, the Aisling Irish Center, the other Scholars, and of course Mr. Mulcahy for the amazing opportunity and time I had with the Mulcahy Scholarship. I cannot give a higher recommendation for the Mulcahy Scholarship and encourage anyone to apply for this chance too!

Cora Harrigan

Blauvelt, NY



I would like to sincerely thank Denis Mulcahy, Linda Croston, Catherine Flood, and everyone involved in the Mulcahy Scholarship for giving me the incredible opportunity to travel to Galway and learn more about Irish history, culture, and the mission behind Project Children.

Earlier in March, at the award presentation ceremony, we watched “How to Defuse a Bomb: The Project Children Story”, the documentary about Denis Mulcahy and the creation of Project Children. It was inspiring to see how one person’s idea could bring children from different backgrounds together and build peace through understanding. Watching that film helped me realize how special this scholarship really is, and how it continues to make a difference for young people today.

During our two weeks in Ireland, we got to experience so many amazing things. We visited the Cliffs of Moher, hiked up Diamond Hill, and toured the University of Galway, where we attended sessions with professors. Each day started with mornings at St. Enda’s College, followed by afternoons filled with new experiences such as playing Irish sports, learning traditional music and dancing, and exploring Galway’s Shop Street to enjoy the lively street performances. Every activity gave us a deeper appreciation for Irish culture and the warm, welcoming spirit of the people we met.

We also had the chance to hear from inspiring speakers and leaders. At Portershed, three young entrepreneurs shared their journeys and how they built their businesses. Pat Ward told us about his path from serving in the Navy to starting his own company, and Mayor Cubbard spoke about what it’s like to serve the people of Galway. Hearing their stories made me realize how important it is to take chances, work hard, and give back to your community.

Thanks to the Mulcahy Scholarship, I was able to make new friends from around the world and step outside my comfort zone. This experience taught me to be open to new opportunities, to appreciate my Irish roots, and to see the value of bringing people together. Just like Project Children has done for so many years.

I am so grateful for this life-changing experience and to everyone who made it possible. It’s something I’ll never forget.

Brooklyn O'Brien

Bronx, NY



This past summer, I had the amazing opportunity to travel to Ireland, and it's an experience I'll never forget. The whole trip wouldn't have been possible without the support of the Irish Aisling Center and the Mulcahy Scholarship Program, which was created by the incredible Denis Mulcahy. I'm so grateful to both the Center and Mr. Mulcahy for giving me the chance to connect with my Irish roots, meet some amazing people, and see one of the most beautiful countries I've ever visited.

From the moment I got to Ireland, I felt right at home. I stayed with a wonderful host family who welcomed me like I was part of their own. They shared their traditions, stories, and even their favorite homemade meals with me. Their kindness made it so easy to adjust to a new place and gave me a real sense of what life in Ireland is like. I learned so much just from spending time with them and hearing about their experiences.

One of the most memorable parts of the trip was visiting the Cliffs of Moher. Standing at the edge of those massive cliffs, I was blown away by how incredible the landscape was. The cliffs seemed to stretch out forever, and the view was both powerful and peaceful at the same time. It's one of those moments where you just stop and think, "Wow." I'll never forget it.

Aside from the Cliffs of Moher, I had the chance to check out a bunch of charming towns, historic spots, and the stunning green countryside. I saw old ruins, walked down quiet roads, and even visited local markets. Each day was a new adventure, from meeting locals to finding places I would've never discovered on my own.

None of this would have happened without the generosity of Denis Mulcahy and the Aisling Irish Center. Their dedication to helping young people connect with their Irish heritage is amazing. Through the Mulcahy Scholarship Program, they didn't just provide me with a plane ticket and a place to stay; they gave me the chance to grow, learn, and see the world in a completely new way.

This trip gave me a deeper understanding of my roots and helped me look at life from a different perspective. I came home with new friends, memories I'll always treasure, and a stronger sense of who I am. I'm beyond thankful to the Aisling Irish Center, Denis Mulcahy, and everyone who helped make this experience possible. Your generosity truly changed my life.

Celia Ramos

Middle Village, NY



This summer I was honored to go to Ireland with the Mulcahy Scholarship. When applying for the scholarship in the Winter, I wasn't sure what to expect. From what I knew I would be spending two weeks in Galway with a host family. I had no idea of what a memorable, fulfilling trip awaited. It was truly an amazing experience that thanks to everyone involved in the Mulcahy Scholarship, I will never forget.

On the afternoon of July 12th, me and four other Scholarship recipients boarded the airplane headed to Shannon Airport. After a 7-hour flight, we made it to Ireland and were warmly greeted by Brian Fahy - the Celtic Irish American Academy (CIAA) program leader. Soon after, we met our host families. Me and three other girls were put in the same house where we went from strangers to best friends very quickly. A highlight of my trip was our nightly tea talks where we drank Barry's tea and discussed our day with our host parents. Every morning, we attended classes at St. Enda's college - these classes were led by Mr. Fahy and his family. We learned about Irish culture through poetry, Irish dancing, playing Gaelic football and so much more. The afternoons were usually followed by shopping, silent disco and street performances in Galway city. One of my favorite parts of the trip were our evening dips in Blackrock Beach where everyone jumped off the diving board into the freezing Galway water.

The CIAA program also visited The Cliffs of Moher. I had previously seen the Cliffs with my family but had never gone with friends. Aside from this, we visited Dunguaire Castle, and hiked Diamond Hill. Being in new places with new friends truly created some of my best memories. I was able to meet kids my age from all over the world - Ireland, France, Canada and different parts of the U.S. It was amazing to strengthen my Irish culture while learning about other cultures as well. On our last day we even got to meet the Mayor of Galway, Mayor Cubbard. He described life being the Mayor of Galway and answered any questions we had. The group was lucky to watch a Galway soccer game that night at Eamonn Deacy Park. We had fun comparing the rules of soccer to Gaelic football, which we watched a couple nights before at the local GAA pitch.

I want to truly thank Denis Mulcahy for the opportunity to visit Ireland with the Mulcahy Scholarship. I had an amazing two weeks that I will forever cherish. I came home with new friends, plenty of stories, a broader understanding of Irish culture and a lot of Irish candy. I also want to thank Linda Croston and Catherine Flood. Thank you for making this experience wonderful. If I could spend another two weeks in Ireland with the Mulcahy Scholarship, I would in a heartbeat. The trip has helped me in so many ways. It has helped teach me independence, to step out of my comfort zone, and has overall made a huge impact on me. Attending Galway University made me really think about College which I feel more prepared for after this trip. This trip would not have been possible without the Mulcahy scholarship and the amazing people who are involved. Thank you!

Carlo Scotto

Greenwood Lake, NY



Firstly, I would like to thank everyone who encouraged me and helped me throughout my Mulcahy Scholarship journey, including the whole Mulcahy Family, Linda Croston, Brain Fahy and my family and friends. The Mulcahy Scholarship provided me with something I could never imagine doing as a 17-year-old during my summer.

When I received the title of a Mulcahy Scholar I was initially more nervous than excited. I was scared to leave home, be on a plane and mostly be out of my comfort zone. As the first couple days passed in Galway and I had met my host family and some new friends my worries began to ease. Everyone I had met was very welcoming and very kind which made this process a whole lot easier. So I quickly went from being nervous and anxious to being excited and comfortable.

As for the actual program me and many others were involved in, it was a blast. Firstly, it exposed me to tons of new people and tons of new places. Funny enough it even reconnected me with people whom I went to school within the past. I met people from all over the world including France, Canada, and all different states around the United States. Along with this we visited numerous places and participated in numerous activities. Some of my favorites being our trip to the Galway Cathedral where we went to the gift shop, took some pictures and we were even lucky enough one day to participate in the mass. Another of my favorites was our trek up Diamond Hill where I was able to scale to the top, take some pictures and was able to have some meaningful conversations with new friends. Some other activities that the group participated in were playing basketball and soccer at the GAA and learning about and how to play some instruments I had never heard of before.

While there were so many more awesome trips and activities, we participated in the program also offered many learning experiences including presentations from all the students of where they were from. Some of the most interesting being the French, Irish and Canadian presentations where for some of the presentations we were able to learn new languages and history I had never known about. Overall, the program gave me new opportunities and friendships that I had never expected in my life prior to being part of the CIAA.

When the trip was over and when we had left the airport in Ireland I was excited to see my home, my family, and my friends but I was sad to leave behind my home in Ireland, a family that had treated me as one of their own by feeding me, providing me a home and a bed and overall providing me with kindness and care and lastly friends and mentors that made the journey fun yet informative and life changing.

Overall my experience in Ireland will be one I will never forget and I am beyond grateful to have been given the opportunity through the Mulcahy Scholarship. I strongly encourage anyone eligible to apply to be a Mulcahy Scholar because it won't just change your plans for one summer but, it will change your perspective for the rest of your life.

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to all of our program donors, and in particular:

The Michael J. Miller Foundation

Denis Jr. & Heidi Mulcahy



Denis and Miriam Mulcahy with the 2025 Mulcahy Scholarship Recipients at the AOH Division 19 Peekskill, NY screening of "How to Defuse a Bomb: The Project Children Story".

L-R: Catherine Flood, Carlo Scotto, Brooklyn O'Brien, Celia Ramos, Siobhan Henry (chairperson of the AICC, Denis Mulcahy, Stephanie Messing, Miriam Mulcahy, Cora Harrigan Connolly and Linda Croston



A great honor for our Scholars to meet with Fergal Mythen, Irish Ambassador to the United Nations, for a roundtable discussion on diplomacy, global citizenship, and Ireland's place in the world today.

L-R: Brooklyn O'Brien, Celia Ramos, Carlo Scotto, Ambassador Mythen, Luke Connolly and Linda Croston

Mulcahy Scholars demonstrating their civic duty and proudly presenting a donation from the CIAA to the Galway Simon Community

L-R: Carol Hynes, Carlo Scotto, Cora Harrigan, Celia Ramos, Brooklyn O'Brien, Luke Connolly and CIAA Director, Brian Fahy



Mulcahy Scholars' visit to the Consulate General of Ireland, New York to learn about Ireland's work abroad, from supporting Irish citizens to promoting culture, trade, and international relations.

L-R: Carlo Scotto, Brooklyn O'Brien, Deputy Consul General, Gareth Hargadon, Celis Ramos & Luke Connolly

