

6 January 2021

Dear Irish Chamber Members, Sponsors, Partners and Friends,

*2020: What a year.* We started the year with optimism, with our focus on *nasc* (the Gaelic word meaning links, connections or bonds) between the Greater Philadelphia region and the Island of Ireland. Despite the pandemic and challenges presented by the ensuing economic fallout, we made the conscious effort to end 2020 on an optimistic note.

The beginning of 2020 was quite busy with in-person events including the launch of our Emerging Professionals networking happy hour series; our Life Sciences Forum at The Union League; the largest Ambassador's Awards luncheon to date (600 guests) where we honored Aer Lingus, Father Peter Donohue of Villanova University and the Connelly Foundation; our first event with the Irish Whiskey Association; and the launch of the American Chamber of Commerce's 2020 US-Ireland Economic Report. We also welcomed the new director of the Northern Ireland Bureau, Andrew Elliot, to Philadelphia.

We pause now to express our gratitude for the continued support of our members and sponsors. Throughout 2020, we continued to work closely with our valued partners at the Irish Embassy in Washington, DC and Irish Consulate in New York, in addition to Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland. Consul General Ciaran Madden and Deputy Consul General Eimear Friel were regular participants in our virtual programs throughout the year. On the US side, we have joined Philadelphia area stakeholders in roundtable conversations hosted by Philadelphia's Department of Commerce. We are extremely grateful for the support of our members at Pennsylvania's Department of Community and Economic Development.

Like many organizations in the Philadelphia area and Ireland, our Chamber transitioned quickly to virtual programming with the support of our dedicated members, Dan Cronin and Caroline Kneafsey. We launched our IABCN Online Series in late March and have presented 34 virtual programs since. Over the past year, we transitioned our Women in Leadership series to a virtual format with our first of four programs featuring Samantha Kelly, the 'Tweeting Goddess', who joined us live from Co. Wexford.

Of course, we greatly miss seeing our members in person each month. Making the best of the situation, we have found virtual programming to be vital for maintaining our strong network and providing value for our members. A silver lining of virtual programming has been the ability to "visit" Ireland and to welcome guest speakers with greater frequency than previously possible. We were fortunate to welcome Ambassador Mulhall back to Philadelphia for a Global Conversation this spring. We visited Teeling Distillery and EPIC, the Emigration Museum in Dublin. We co-hosted our first joint event with the Cork Chamber of Commerce focused on the strengthening of trade links and connectivity between Ireland and Pennsylvania, specifically with relation to the new direct shipping route from the Port of Cork to Penn Terminals in Chester, PA.

This fall, we were able to host our second life sciences forum of the year highlighting The Scene in Cell and Gene: Philadelphia on the Rise. We launched a new series co-hosted by Tourism Ireland called Explore the Emerald Isle, with the goal of keeping Ireland top of mind (and heart) for future travel plans. We were also able to have an intern based in Dublin to assist with our member outreach and market research in Ireland.

Throughout the year, Chamber leadership was able to participate in a variety of virtual conferences focused on maintaining and strengthening transatlantic ties, including New York New Belfast, Irish Echo Campfire, Golden Bridges, and Georgetown University's Bridging the Atlantic: Ireland and the US.

This year we expanded our dynamic Board of Directors and welcomed new members: Liam Kelly, Chairman, President and CEO of Teleflex; Patrick Ward, Executive Vice President, Pennsylvania Market President for WSFS Bank; Timothy Schlegel, Vice President, Sr. Relationship Strategist at PNC Wealth Management; Dr. Paul McCracken, Vice President, Head of Medical Imaging at ICON plc; and James Welsh, CPA, Pennsylvania Office Managing Partner for Mazars USA.

Due to the generosity of our 2020 Ambassador's Awards sponsors, combined with the support of our strong membership base, we have been able to continue providing networking opportunities and facilitating valuable connections. We have a variety of sponsorship and membership options available for the coming year, including unique opportunities available through our Global CEO Roundtable and Leadership Matters Conversation Series. Your support of the Chamber helps to make our mission of promoting the interests of its members and the development of economic and educational relationships between our region and the Island of Ireland possible.

Please feel free to contact any of us, or our Business Manager, Alanna Barry McCloskey, with questions, concerns or feedback.

Go raibh maith agat (thank you),



Kevin Dooley Kent, Esquire  
Chairman



Sean M. Flatley CFP®, AIF®  
President



Lisa Maloney, Esquire  
Vice President