

NEW JERSEY'S IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



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NEW JERSEY'S IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026

**INSIDERNJ IS ONCE AGAIN PLEASED TO PRESENT
ITS ANNUAL PROFILED LIST OF NEW JERSEY'S IRISH
AMERICAN LEADERS AND ACTIVISTS.**

The annual tribute is our way of honoring, celebrating and acknowledging the accomplishments and contributions of Irish Americans from around the state.

The list this year with its newcomers and veterans alike demonstrates a commitment of those on it to their Irish American heritage and, just as importantly, to their communities.

Last year's traditional "Tip of the Top Hat" was a salute to the son of Irish immigrants, the late United States Supreme Court Justice William J. Brennan Jr.

Newark born Justice Brennan was a strong advocate of individual freedoms and the principles of equality and justice. He was one of America's most influential jurists.

A statue in his honor, created by Jay Warren of Oregon, and erected on June 3, 2010, was the first one to be dedicated at the Essex County Government Complex since Gutzon Borglum's "Seated Lincoln" was unveiled in 1911.

We invite you, when in town, to come have a look.



TIP OF THE TOP HAT



This year we offer a timely salute, a **'Tip of the Top Hat'** and the best of Irish luck to the Hon. Mikie Sherrill, newly elected as the 57th Governor of New Jersey.

Governor Sherrill shares the legacy of past and current New Jersey Irish American leaders who have occupied the Office of Governor.

Those who come to mind, some of long ago, some of recent past: William Paterson, Richard J. Hughes, William T. Cahill, Brendan T. Byrne, Jim McGreevey, Richard J. Codey, Christopher J. Christie (son of Irish father Wilbur James "Bill" Christie) and Philip D. Murphy.

The late, legendary, and never forgotten Stephen "Big Steve" Aduato Sr., (1932-2020) an acclaimed educator and community leader in Newark's North Ward (who himself famously organized the annual "Italians Who Celebrate the Irish on St. Patrick's Day") once quipped to his festivity guests about local political fortunes:

You may think because you 'might have' gotten over on the Irish once or twice that you have beaten them, but you're wrong. You can't beat the Irish, they never give up.

Which suggests Governor Sherrill who herself has graced our pages in years past, and who was once featured as Essex County Irishwoman of the Year.

A trailblazer, her well known and chronicled personal story is one grounded in courage, devotion to duty and community service.

A resilient spirit, the likes of whom the Irish celebrate on St. Patrick's Day, Governor Sherrill served her country in uniform as a Navy aviator, as a

federal prosecutor, in Congress and now the State of New Jersey as Chief Executive.

Irish Americans like those cited both above and profiled below have shaped our civic life with fortitude and determination. Their belief in opportunity is, often, unshakeable.

In honoring Governor Sherrill, we also pay tribute to generations of Irish Americans immigrants and their descendants for their enduring spirit.

A SALUTE TO PROGRESS AND TRADITION, FAMILY, FAITH AND COURAGE AND A ST. PATRICK'S DAY BLESSING FOR GOVERNOR MIKIE SHERRILL:

"MAY THE ROAD RISE UP TO MEET YOU, MAY THE WIND BE ALWAYS AT YOUR BACK."



TOM BARRETT

Compiler of the list, would like readers to know he is certain to have left someone out, hopefully making amends next year.

WE HOPE YOU ENJOY IT!

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



CHRISTOPHER D. ADAMS, ESQ.

Partner Greenbaum Rowe, Red Bank. Past President/Criminal Defense Bar. Selected by Best Lawyers as Woodbridge “Lawyer of the Year”/ Criminal Defense/ General Practice (2023).



SCOTT ALTIERI

Director of Labor/Gov. Mikie Sherrill. Former Political Director, Sherrill for Governor. 2nd generation Irish American (Craigs). Grandmother/County Cavan/Grandfather, proud NYC union carpenter, hailed from County Roscommon, Ireland. They met at an Irish dance in Newark.



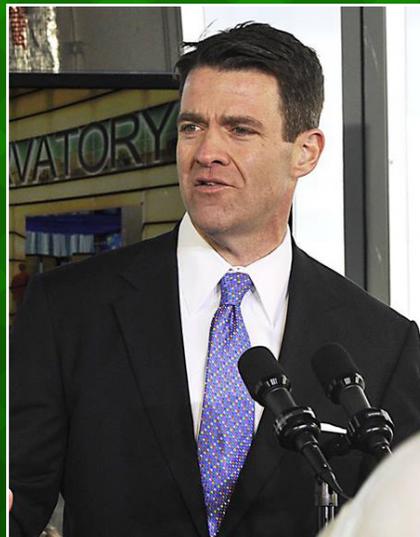
GEORGE ASTON

President/American Irish Association of Woodbridge. Former Parade Grand Marshal. 2026 marks the Association’s 52nd annual St. Patrick’s Day Parade.



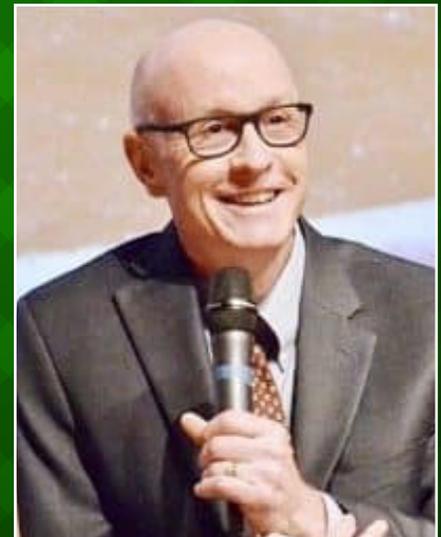
MICHAEL G. BANNON

Rockaway Township. 2026 Grand Marshal /Morris County St. Patrick’s Day Parade. Traces his Irish roots to his paternal great-grandfather William, born at sea during the family’s flight from Ireland’s Great Hunger. Forebears hail from County Tipperary. Former President / Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick of Morris County.



WILLIAM (BILL) BARONI

Former NY/NJ Port Authority Executive, Seton Hall Law Professor and New Jersey State Senator. His mother immigrated to America from Ireland.



DAN BARRY

Maplewood-based. Pulitzer Prize-winning New York Times journalist and author. Winner / Eugene O’Neill Lifetime Achievement Award.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



MAUREEN DUNPHY BRADY

Instructor/ Rutgers (Osher Lifelong Learning Institute) & Brookdale Community College. Member / Advisory Committee/ Irish American Cultural Institute, John Walsh Chapter. Summa Cum Laude grad / St. John's University with a NYU Master's Degree: Irish & Irish - American studies.



AIMEE BELGARD

New Jersey Superior Court Judge, Burlington County. Aimee served as an Edgewater Park Township Committee- woman and Burlington County Freeholder. She was a former candidate for Congress (CD-3).



BRIAN BORU, INC. HONOREES.

83rd Anniversary: Patricia Feehery (Women of Irish Heritage-Jersey Shore). Sean O'Neill (Ironbound Irish Assn.), and Sister Kathleen Tuite (Sisters of Saint Dominic-Caldwell NJ).



JOSEPH P. BRENNAN, ESQ.

Three-term Essex County Surrogate (retired). Twice elected West Orange Council President. Decorated Vietnam War veteran. Former Grand Marshal / West Orange Irish Parade.



LAUREL BRENNAN

Highly regarded South Jersey Labor leader. Secretary-Treasurer NJ State AFL-CIO. Past recipient of the Evangelina Menendez Trailblazer Award. 2022 Brian Boru Honoree.



TOM BRENNAN

2026 Grand Marshal / West Orange St. Patrick's Day Parade. Also, leading the Parade are Deputy Grand Marshal Eileen Aker, Daniel Cunningham. Bill McEvoy and Steve Shaffer. Tom will be making parade history marking the first three generation family to hold the distinction of Grand Marshal.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



JESSICA SHEA-BROWN

Founder and President of the (new) chapter/Monmouth County Daughters of Ireland.



DECLAN BURKE

Senior Director/ Center for Science & Digital Assessment Design, ETS, Princeton. “Man of the West” / Dunmore, County Galway, Ireland. Graduate/ Ireland’s National University, MA/Seton Hall, MBA / Rutgers.



MEGHAN BARRETT BURKE, ESQ.

Deputy General Counsel, Colas Inc. Global Infrastructure Construction Co., Morristown. Former Partner / Connell Foley. Honors grad. Providence College/University of Galway, Ireland. JD / SHU Law School.



BOB BRUNS

2026 Grand Marshal Cranford St. Patrick’s Day Parade. Known to many as “Mr. Cranford.” Nancy Mahoney named Irish Woman of the Year, and Jerry Conheeneey was selected as Irish Man of the Year.



STEPHEN BURKE

Ten term Fairview Borough Councilman. League of Municipalities Hall of Fame Inductee. Business Official /NJDOE (retired). Member /Hudson County AOH Division 1.



JACKIE BURNS

Communications Expert /Gov. Mikie Sherrill., Office of the Historian/ U.S. Congress (five years). George Washington Univ. Grad/ master’s degrees /London School of Economics & Columbia University.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



TOM BYRNE, JR.
Founder/Byrne Asset Management LLC. Former Chairman / NJ State Democratic Committee. Past Chairman / New Jersey State Investment Council. Son of the late Gov. Brendan T. Byrne.



COL. PATRICK CALLAHAN
(Retired) Superintendent / NJ State Police. Served under Gov. Phil Murphy as full-time head of force. Former Chief Honoree / Irish Echo / Law & Order Awards.



BRIAN CAMPBELL
Finance Executive, Writer / Essayist. Silver Pen Award winner / Star Ledger. Grandson of George Bell / 1961 Grand Marshal of Newark's St. Patrick's Day Parade.



DENNIS F. CAREY, III
Essex County Superior Court Judge (retired). Grandson of the legendary Dennis "I run Essex" Carey (1953-1969) who engineered a 50,000 countywide vote plurality for JFK in 1960.



JOHN CARR
Past President / Friendly Sons of the Shillelagh/Belmar Chapter. Former Belmar / Lake Como Parade Grand Marshal. Past Chairman, NJ Irish Festival and driving force for its new location at Monmouth Park.



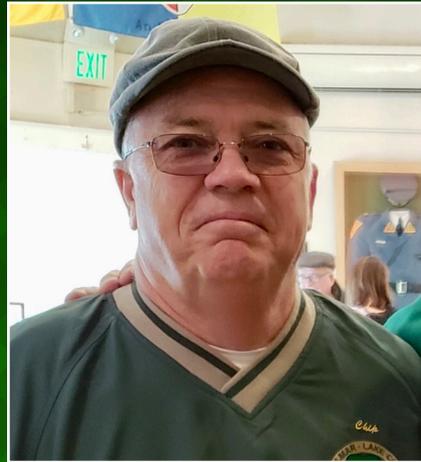
MICHAEL PATRICK CARROLL
Former GOP Assemblyman. Member / Friendly Sons of St. Patrick. Son of the late Maurice (Mickey) Carroll, former NY Herald Tribune reporter and director of the Quinnipiac Polling Institute.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



ROBERT "BOBBY" CARROLL

Morris County Prosecutor. Son of the late and famed labor leader 'Big' Jim Carroll of Heavy Construction Laborer's Local 472 in Newark.



CHIP CAVANAUGH

Former Grand Marshal/Belmar / Lake Como Anniversary St. Patrick's Day Parade. Served as the Chief of Belmar Fire Department. Member of the Goodwill Hose Fire Company for 47 years. 2024 Essex-based Brian Boru, Inc. honoree.



DENNIS M. CAVANAUGH

U.S. District Court Judge / District / NJ (retired) whose mother was born in County Clare, Ireland. Related to the late Frank McGovern, famed proprietor of McGovern's Tavern in Newark.



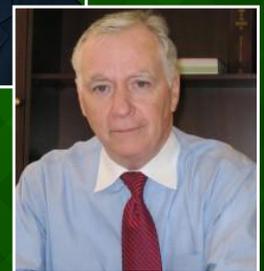
MARY PAT FOSTER CHRISTIE

Former NJ First Lady. University of Delaware grad. Seton Hall University MBA. Ninth / 10 children born to a Pennsylvania Irish Catholic family. Former Essex County Irishwoman of the Year.



MARY ELLEN CLYNE, PH.D.

President and CEO/ Clara Maass Medical Center. Only person who holds a BSN, MSN and a Ph.D in Nursing from Seton Hall University. Former Essex County Irishwoman of the Year.



EUGENE AND RAYMOND CODEY

Still the 'dynamic duo'. Twin brothers, Gene a retired Superior Court Judge in private practice with Connell/Foley, LLP and Raymond, Business Manager for Madison Township.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



**PATRICIA CODEY,
SC, ESQ.**

Accomplished attorney and Sister of Charity. President / Catholic HealthCare Partnership of New Jersey.



DAWN MARIE COLE

Stalwart organizer for the Newark St. Patrick's Day Parade. Serves as Recording Secretary. Committee member / NJ Irish Festival. Staff member / Essex County Clerk's Office in Newark.



JERE' COLE

Essex County Sheriff's officer (retired). Currently National Secretary of the Ancient Order of Hibernians. 2022 Grand Marshal / Newark St. Patrick's Day Parade.



PAT COLLIGAN

President / New Jersey State PBA. Former Grand Marshal of the Nutley Irish Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade.



JACK COLLINS

Princeton Public Affairs. Former Speaker of New Jersey General Assembly. College Professor. Basketball Coach. Lawyer. Farmer.



**KATHLEEN M.
CONLON**

Director / Burn Community & Disaster Programs/ St. Barnabas Medical Center. Former Deputy Grand Marshal / Newark St. Patrick's Day Parade.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



HUGH W. CONNELLY
One of the founders / Burlington County St. Patrick's Day Parade. President / Business Banking / Univest Bank & Trust Company.



THOMAS B. CONSIDINE
Managing Partner / Gravlaur Solutions, LLC. Former NJ Commissioner / Banking & Insurance. Named Top 100 Lawyers of Irish Descent.



CAROL SHARKEY CORCORAN
Former Grand Marshal / West Orange Parade. Her mother, Helena Sharkey, was the 1979 Grand Marshal (first NJ woman Grand Marshal) and her father Alfie Sharkey was 1999 Grand Marshal. The family hails from County Roscommon, Ireland.



MICHAEL C. CORCORAN
Morristown's first civilian Public Safety Director overseeing police, fire and office of Emergency Management. Former West Orange Deputy Police Director / U.S. Navy veteran.



PATRICIA K. COSTELLO
Essex County Assignment Judge (retired). Stellar judicial career that spanned 25 years including 10 years as top judge in NJ's busiest courthouse. Former Essex County Irishwoman of the Year.



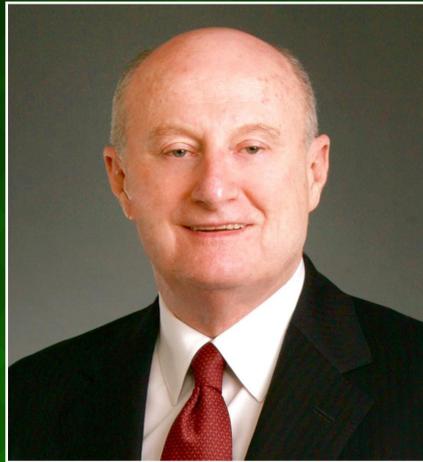
CRAIG J. COUGHLIN
Well regarded Speaker of the NJ General Assembly (D-19) of Fords, Woodbridge Township. Graduate St. John's Law School. Former Municipal Court Judge. Lawyer in private practice. 2023 Essex County Irishman of the Year.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



JENNIFER CRITCHLEY, ESQ.

Judge / Essex County Superior Court. Former partner with Connell Foley law firm. Began her career as a judicial law clerk to the Honorable Mark Falk, United States Magistrate Judge (District of NJ). Experienced litigator in both federal and NJ and NY state courts.



MICHAEL CRITCHLEY, ESQ.

Highly regarded Defense Attorney, involved with numerous Irish American and charitable organizations. Former Essex County Irishman of the Year.



JAMIE CRYAN

Former Parsippany Business Administrator. Rutgers School of Public Affairs grad. Served as Trustee at Habitat for Humanity (Hudson County) for many years.



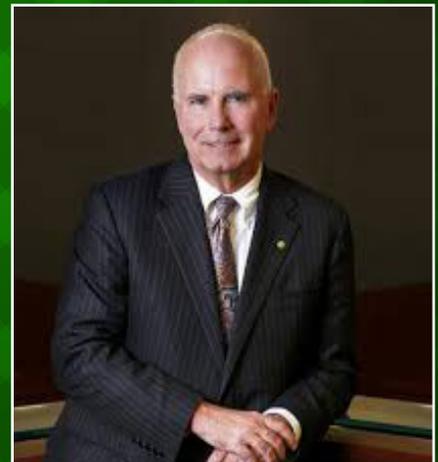
JOSEPH (JOE) CRYAN

NJ State Senator (LD 20), Chair / Union Township Dem Committee. Former Union County Sheriff and State Assemblyman. Served as NJ Democratic State Committee Chairman. 2023 Grand Marshal/Union County Parade.



MEGAN CRYAN

Senior VP / AVOQ with clients spanning health care, labor, higher ed. non-profit and emerging Fortune 500 companies. President / John F. Cryan Association. Active member/Union County Daughters of Ireland.



KEVIN CUMMINGS

Pres. / CEO/Investors Bank, 3rd largest bank hdqtr. in NJ. Former Grand Marshal / Newark's Irish Parade. 2017 honoree / St. Patrick's Guard of Honor. 2018 Jersey City Irish Parade Grand Marshal.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



ABBOT AUGUSTINE CURLEY

Writes and speaks about the Irish of New Jersey, particularly Essex County. Serves with monastic community, and the wider communities of Newark Abbey, St. Benedict's Prep, and St. Mary's Parish. 2025 Brian Boru honoree.



SEAN DARCY

Democratic Party strategist, principal with Round World Consulting. Former press secretary to Governor Richard Codey.



ERICA DAUGHTREY

Popular, well-known Hudson County community activist. Served as Communications Director for former U.S. Congressman Albio Sires. DNC National Convention delegate.



ELLEN M. DAVENPORT

Former Maplewood Mayor / Essex County Freeholder who served as Secretary of the NJ State Senate. Former Essex County Irishwoman of the Year.



JIMMY DAVIS

Newly elected Hudson County Sheriff. Former Mayor of Bayonne. Retired police officer. Known for numerous community fund raising activities including raising money for slain police officers and autism.



VIVIAN E. DAVIS

Program Specialist/Passaic County Dept. Of Cultural & Historic Affairs. Led Bergen250 efforts commemorating nation's 250th Anniversary. Board member/NJ Historical Commission.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



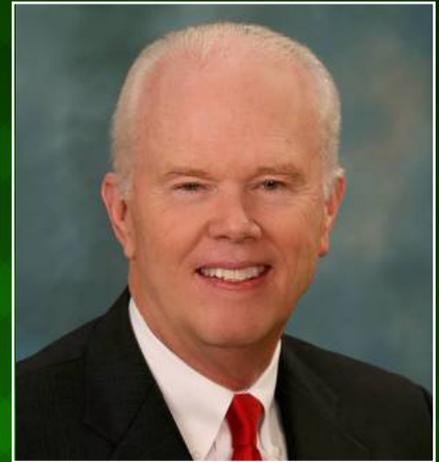
JOHN J. DEGNAN

Former Chairman / Port Authority of NY/NJ and NJ Attorney General. Vice-Chair / Chief Operating Officer of the Chubb Corporation. Harvard Law School graduate.



TOM DEIGNAN

Author / "Irish Americans: Coming to America". Contributing writer / "Irish American Chronicle". Writes weekly Sidewalks column: Irish Voice newspaper. Regular contributor / Star Ledger.



PAT DIEGNAN

New Jersey State Senator (LD 18). Former State Assembly member. Seton Law School grad. Credited with spearheading comprehensive laws on concussions.



MATT DOHERTY

Former Mayor / Belmar. Member of the Friendly Sons of the Shillelagh; Former Irishman of the Year / Friendly Sons of the Shillelagh.



MICHAEL J. DOHERTY

Warren County Surrogate. Former Member/ NJ State Senate. Graduate / West Point, Seton Hall. Captain / Army Reserves 1985-93.



ROBERT H. DOHERTY

State President / NJ / Bank of America. Chairman / NJ Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. Board member: Community Food Bank of NJ, Newark Museum, NJ Performing Arts Center.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



JACK DOLL

Grand Marshal 91st Anniversary Newark St. Patrick's Day Parade serving along with Deputy Grand Marshals Chase Hamilton, Sister Jane Mckenna, SSJ, Msgr. William Reilly, Frank Yorke, and Honorary Deputy Grand Marshal Sean Mannion.



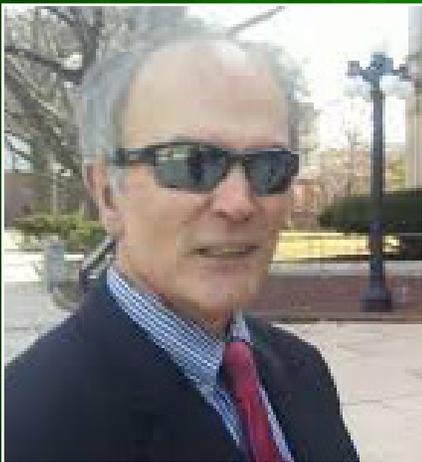
CHRIS DONNELLY

General Manager/AVOQ's NJ Office. Former press secretary to Senate President Steve Sweeney and author of four books on baseball. Traces roots to Ennis and Tulla, Ireland.



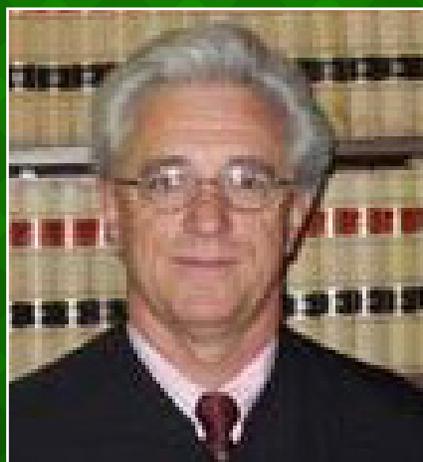
ED DONNELLY

President / NJ State FMBA representing 5000 firefighters statewide. Chairman / Bd. of Trustees / Police & Firemen's Retirement System (PFRS). Twenty year veteran / Union Fire Department.



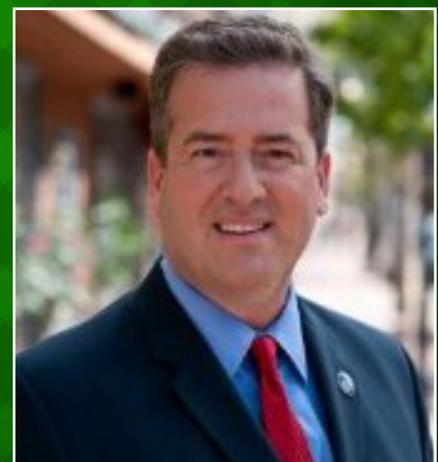
JOE DONOHUE

Former (and legendary) Star-Ledger reporter. Now Deputy Director of the NJ Election Law Enforcement Commission.



JOSEPH P. DONOHUE

Former Ass't Essex County Prosecutor. Currently Superior Court Judge, Criminal Division, Union County. SHU Law Grad.



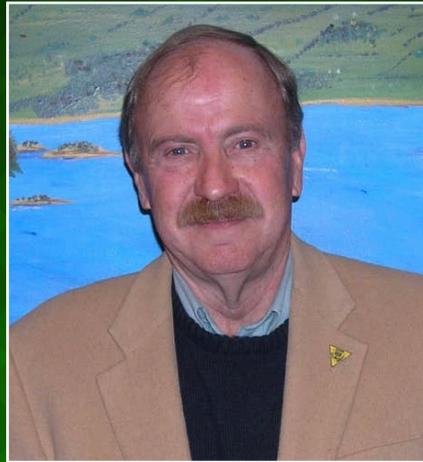
MICHAEL J. "MIKE" DONOHUE

New Jersey Superior Court Judge (retired). Former firefighter, teacher, practicing attorney, church volunteer and Chairman of the Cape May County Republican Committee.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



TIMOTHY M. DONOHUE, ESQ.
Partner / Arleo & Donohue.
Specializes in white-collar criminal defense. Also serves as local counsel to various governmental bodies and businesses. Honors grad SHU Law School.



EDWARD DONOVAN
30-year veteran / NJ State Police (retired Captain). Elected three terms / Manasquan Borough Council. Former Mayor, Grand Marshal / Belmar Lake Como Irish Parade (2017). Grand Marshal / Manasquan Memorial Day Parade.



KATHE' DONOVAN
Former Bergen County Executive, Clerk and former Chairlady of the New Jersey Republican State Committee. Served on the Port Authority of NY / NJ.



TOM DONOVAN
Former publisher/ Asbury Park Press, Named executive director of Asbury Park Music Foundation. Former Grand Marshal / Asbury Park St. Patrick's Day Parade.



TIMOTHY (TIM) DOUGHERTY
Popular Mayor of Morristown. Former Councilman and Chairman / Morristown Zoning Board. Retired Chief Engineer at Prudential Center / Newark. 2024 Brian Boru honoree.



JOANN DOWNEY
Former Member/NJ State Assembly. Served on Financial Institutions & Insurance Committee. Trial Attorney. MA / Social Work/Boston University. JD / New York Law School.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



MEGHAN DOYLE

Formerly with Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office, now in private practice. Daughter of the late Norman A. Doyle, Jr. (decorated Vietnam war veteran) and Kearny Mayor Carol Jean Doyle.



CAROL JEAN DOYLE

Mayor of Kearny, first woman Mayor since 1938. Council member for 27 years. Clerk/ Hudson County Board of Commissioners. Former Honorary Irish Woman / West Hudson United Irish, among numerous awards. Former Deputy Grand Marshal Newark Irish Parade.



CAITLIN DUFFY

Senior Director for Protocol/ Office of Governor Mikie Sherrill. Former Deputy Campaign Manager/Sherrill for Governor and Deputy Operations Director/Democratic National Committee. Worked for Hillary Clinton, Elizabeth Warren, and the Massachusetts legislature.



PATRICK C. DUNICAN, JR., ESQ.

Chairman and Managing Director / Gibbons Law Firm in Newark (retired). Major supporter and former Grand Marshal of the Newark St. Patrick's Day Parade.



CHRIS DURKIN

Essex County Clerk. Member, NJ Democratic State Committee. Former Grand Marshal/Newark St. Patrick's Day Parade and Essex County Irishman of the Year.



JOAN DURKIN

Revered leader of the Durkin clan. Essex County Tax Administrator (retired). 2018 Essex County Democratic Committee Hall of Fame honoree.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



AURA K. DUNN

NJ State Assemblywoman (District 25) with offices at Courthouse Plaza, Morristown. Assistant Minority Whip. Committees: Higher Education (AHI), Transportation & Independent Authorities (ATR)



JOSEPH V. EGAN

Assemblyman (LD 17) (retired). New Brunswick City Council President for more than ten years and serves as Business Manager for IBEW Local 456.



TIM EUSTACE

Executive Director / North Jersey District Water Supply Commission. Former Bergen County Assemblyman (D-38), 2012-2018. Strong advocate for environmental causes.



JAMES P. FALLON, MS.

Director / Department of Research at Saint Michael's Medical Center in Newark. Jim, a Bloomfield resident, traces his roots to Ireland's County Roscommon.



JOHN J. FARMER JR.

Former NJ Attorney General, senior counsel for 9/11 Commission. Former Assistant U.S. Attorney. Former law school Dean/currently special counsel to Rutgers President. Faculty member/ Eagleton Institute. Traces Irish roots to Counties Armagh, Kerry, and Mayo. Former Newark Irish Parade Grand Marshal.



SUSAN A. FEENEY

Partner / McCarter & English Law Firm/ Former NJ State Bar Assoc. Pres. / Former Newark Irish Parade Deputy Grand Marshal.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



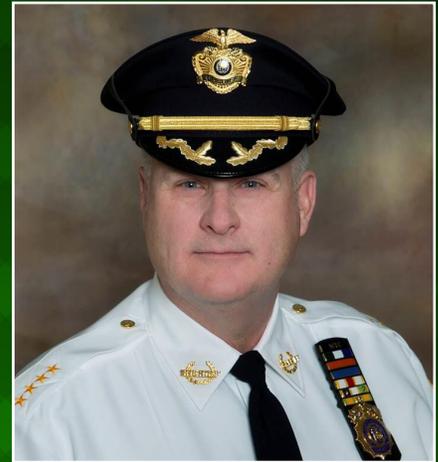
MARTHA MCDONOUGH FINAN

Executive Board Secretary / Belmar Lake Como St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee. Vice President / Women of Irish Heritage. Former Parade Deputy Grand Marshal.



STACEY LEA FLANAGAN

Jersey City Dept. of Health and Human Services Director. Won statewide acclaim for battling the pandemic, aiding the homeless, and feeding the hungry. U.S. Peace Corp volunteer.



JIM GANNON

Well regarded Morris County Sheriff, descendant of NYPD detective. Drum Major / Police Pipe & Drums. FBI Academy graduate.



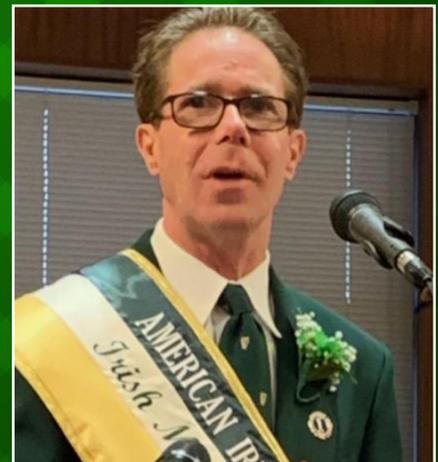
RICHARD S. GANNON, ESQ.

One of the founders of / GTB Partners (Gannon, Torpey, Bellin), Trenton. Currently, Board Chairman, Seton Hall University's School of Diplomacy and Int'l Relations.



MICHELE GANNON & WYATT EARP

Michele Gannon & Wyatt Earp. Grand Marshals for the 2026 Belmar & Lake Como St. Patrick's Day Parade along with Honorary Grand Marshal John Hatton. Michele is the Founder & Executive Director of Mary's Place by the Sea in Ocean Grove. Wyatt is International Rep./ International Brotherhood/ Electrical Workers Third District.



KEN GARDNER

Senior Advisor / Lead Fundraiser / The Woodbridge American Irish Assn Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. 2019 Irishman of The Year, Former Council President and Fire Chief.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



ROBERT GARRISON
Business Development. LECET.
Government Affairs. President/Ceiba
Consulting. Former Executive Director/
Bergen County Improvement Authority.



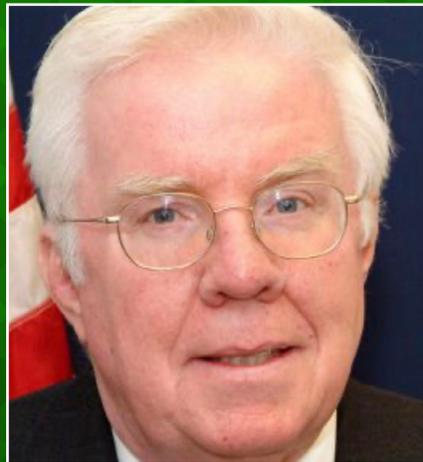
**SUSAN HAPWORTH
GARTLAND**
First Vice-Chair/ Newark St. Patrick's
Day Parade. Former Caldwell Mayor /
Councilwoman and Deputy Grand Marshal
/ Newark Parade. Board of Trustees of
Mount St. Dominic Academy. Former
Honoree / Brian Boru, Inc.



**EDWARD M. (TED)
GIBLIN**
Newark Irish Parade Grand Marshal
(2024) Honors graduate/ Providence
College. MBA / Seton Hall University.



NOREEN M. GIBLIN
PSE&G Executive Former Cabinet
Secretary / NJ Gov. Phil Murphy.
Served as Chief Counsel, NJ Board of
Public Utilities and with McGreevey
Administration. Former Essex County
Irishwoman of the Year.



THOMAS P. GIBLIN
Former Assemblyman (LD 34).
Business Mgr. Union Local 68, IUOE.
Former Essex County Freeholder
Board President/Essex County
Surrogate, Essex County and NJ
Democratic State Chairman.



VINCENT M. GIBLIN
Equity Partner / DeCotiis Law Firm.
Trial counsel/state and federal
courts. Handles union, trust fund
matters, and white-collar criminal
defense. Former Assistant U.S.
Attorney / NJ. Rutgers Undergrad /
Seton Hall Law.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



BRENDAN GILL

Member / Essex County Board of Commissioners. Head of BGill Public Affairs. 2018 Essex County Irishman of the Year. Former Grand Marshal / Nutley Irish Parade.



EILEEN P. GILLEECE

NJ State Police Detective. Fellow with both JFK School of Government and United Nations Leadership School. Past President of Women of Irish Heritage (North). Former Newark Deputy Grand Marshal.



CAROL GILHAWLEY

2026 Grand Marshal/Rutherford St. Patrick's Day Parade. A native of Dún Laoghaire, a picturesque port town, seven miles south of Dublin city center. Former columnist/ The Irish Times, Carol has sung the Irish national anthem, Amhrán na bhFiann, at the start of the parade each year.



PATRICK GILLESPIE

Regional Vice President for State Affairs /Elevance Health. Pat traces his family roots to Killybegs, Co. Donegal and County Cavan. Ireland. Member/ Friendly Sons of the Shillelagh, Pat served as Old Bridge Township Mayor, Councilman-at-large and Executive Director/NJ Senate Majority Office.



DON GILMARTIN

Traces roots to County Roscommon. Former Newark Parade Grand Marshal. Founding member / Past President of Essex County Police and Fire Emerald Society.



TERRY GOLWAY

Historian, author, and a journalist, having served as a columnist and editorial board member for The New York Times and a long-time editor and writer at The New York Observer.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



WILLIAM L. GORMLEY
Former State Senator and Judiciary Committee Chairman. Assemblyman (1977-1982). His father was former Atlantic County Sheriff. Notre Dame grad, Marine Corps captain.



RYAN GRAHAM
Business Development Director / Fairview Insurance. Former NJ Jaycees State Director. Associate Publisher / InsiderNJ.



KIMBERLY ANN (MCFADDEN) GUADAGNO
2026 Grand Marshal/ Asbury Park St. Patrick's Day Parade. NJ's first Lieutenant Governor. Served as Secretary of State. Former Ass't United States Attorney. 2017 GOP candidate for Governor.



JOHN F. X. GRAHAM
Founder of Verona based Fairview Insurance. Member / Democratic National Committee (DNC) / Friend of U.S. Presidents and Secretaries of State. Publisher / Insider NJ.com.



MICHAEL GRAHAM
Chief Executive Officer. Insider NJ, award winning website dedicated to political news in New Jersey. Graduate / Yale University. JD Fordham Law School.



RYAN GREFF
Member/NJ Commission/ National & Community Service. Executive Director/ Fair Lawn Main Street, Inc. Chairman/ Economic Recovery Task Force Initiative/ NJ Small Business Development Center, Ramapo College. Honoree/ Irish Echo Heroes of Irish America Award.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



KEVIN P. HAGAN
Principal / Princeton Public Affairs Group. Seasoned Democratic Party Strategist. Former Chief of Staff / State Senate President. Staffed Governors, US Senators, NJ Democratic State Committee. Drew University graduate. College basketball standout.



SHARON ANNE HARRINGTON
Commissioner/ NJ Casino Control Commission. Previously, served as Chair/ Chief Administrator of the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission. Sharon served as State Director for two U.S. Senators, and as Commissioner of the State Ethics Commission.



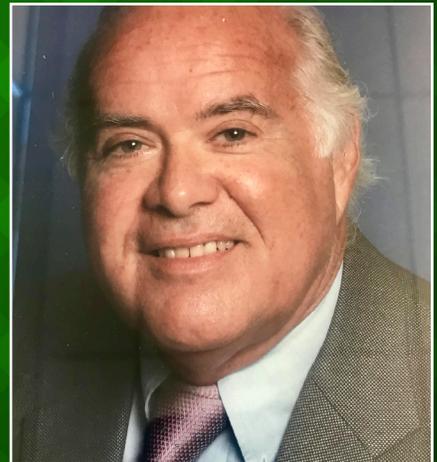
NOREEN HAVERON
President / CEO / Job Haines Home, Bloomfield, non-profit provider of compassionate senior care. Mother, Noreen K., former president / Nutley Democratic Club and late father, Owen. BA Seton Hall. Master's degree / Public Adm. / Kean University.



JOSEPH A. HAYDEN, JR., ESQ.
Sought after, highly regarded Criminal Defense Attorney. Served on the Rules Committee for the Democratic National Convention. Democratic National Convention delegate. Columnist/ Legal Counsel /Insider NJ and Co-Chairman of its Advisory Board.



JERRAMIAH HEALY
48th Jersey City Mayor and former Chairman of Hudson County Democratic Committee. Renowned singer of Irish Ballads.



ELMER J. HERRMANN, JR.
Supporter / Friendly Sons of St. Patrick. His mother, Theresa Elizabeth, was the niece of Charles P. Gillen, Newark's only Irish born Mayor and the Newark Parade's first Grand Marshal (1936).

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



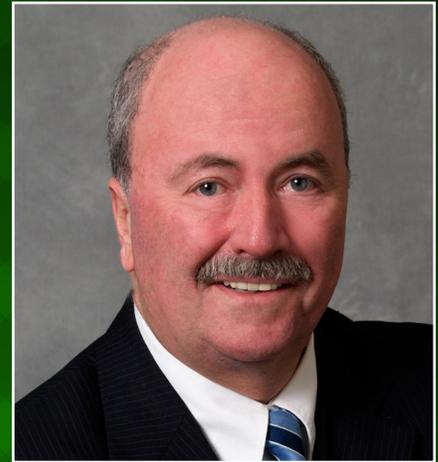
JILL HIRSCH, ESQ.

First woman President/CEO/New Jersey Sports & Exposition Authority (NJSEA). Political Director/ Advisor/Mikie Sherrill for Gov. Campaign. Now plays a key role in statewide economic development. Honorary list member. Mentor and advocate for numerous list entries. Accomplished Irish Step Dancer.



JOHN HOGAN

Bergen County Clerk. Election authority for more than 70 Bergen County municipalities. Studied at St. Thomas Aquinas College, NY.



JOHN HUGHES

Son of the late Governor Richard J. Hughes. Retired Federal Magistrate / US District Court / NJ. Villanova Law graduate. Currently engaged in mediation work.



MAUREEN KILLEEN HULINGS

Chair / Board of Commissioners / Jersey City Municipal Utilities Authority. Employed / Connell Foley law firm. Executive Director 200 Club. Former Honoree Essex-based Friends of Brian Boru.



LEO J. HURLEY

Partner / Connell Foley's Commercial Litigation & White Collar Defense Group. Selected by NJ Law Journal: "New Leaders of the Bar". Former Assistant Prosecutor / Hudson County. Trustee 200 Club.



MATTHEW HURLEY

Bloomfield resident. Now with the U.S. State Department. Former Counsel General / Guadalajara, Mexico.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



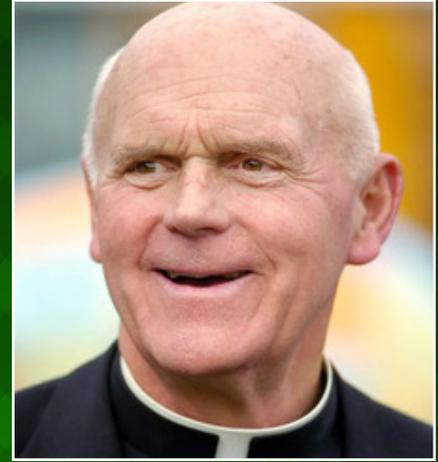
SEAN JACKSON

Chief Executive Officer of Isles, a nonprofit community development / environmental organization headquartered in Trenton. Former State Director, top aide to former U.S. Senator Robert Torricelli.



PETER KANE

Summit resident. Publisher / Fitzgerald's NJ Legislative Manual / owned by Kimmage Publishing LLC, named for Kimmage, Ireland (outside Dublin). Traces roots to County Roscommon.



MSGR. MIKE E. KELLY

President, Seton Hall Prep, oldest Catholic prep school in NJ. His Holiness Pope John Paul II named Msgr. Kelly as a Prelate of Honor. Appointed liaison / Irish Community / Archdiocese of Newark 1990.



SEAN KENNEDY

New Jersey Economic Development Authority Chief of Staff/ Chief External Affairs Officer. Formerly with Connell Foley and VP / Government Affairs / Rowan University. Member/ Governor's New Jersey-Ireland Trade Commission.



STEPHEN KEALY

Legendary labor leader and former Business Agent (retired) for flagship Laborers' Local 472 (LIUNA) of Newark.



EILEEN KEAN

Government Affairs. Commissioner / Monmouth County Board of Elections. Drumthwacket Trustee and member / Women of Irish Heritage. Traces roots to Counties Cork and Armagh, Ireland.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



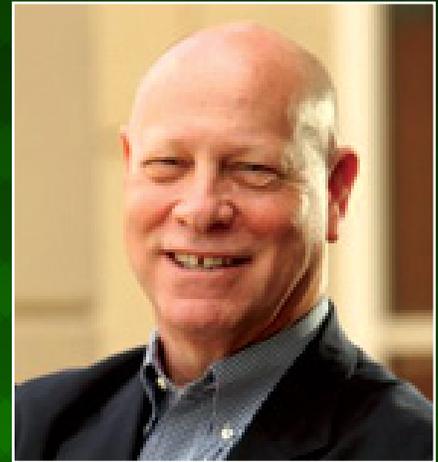
SEAN T. KEAN

NJ General Assembly / (R-30) Monmouth County. Traces roots to County Cork, Ireland. Former Irishman of the Year / Order of the Friendly Sons of the Shillelagh / Jersey Shore. Sponsor of legislation celebrating Irish-American contributions to American society.



GERALD "JERRY" KEENAN

President, NJ Alliance for Action. Founded in 1974. Non-partisan, non-profit association representing thousands of business, labor, government, utility, education professionals to improve NJ's economy with capital construction and infrastructure investment.



JAMES J. KENNEDY

Assemblyman (D-22). Elected in 2015. Former Rahway Mayor, lobbyist. Principal, Skye Consulting, LLC.



JOHN C. KENNEDY

Judge of the Superior Court, Appellate Division. (Retired). Former Corporation Counsel / Jersey City. Fellow: Advanced Science and Technology Adjudication Resource Center in Washington, D.C.



PATRICK JOSEPH KENNEDY

Former Rhode Island Congressman, son of Senator Ted Kennedy, JFK nephew. Mental Health Advocate / Brigantine.



ADELE KENNY

Author of more than two dozen books / poetry and nonfiction / published worldwide. Recipient / 1st place/2021 Allen Ginsberg Poetry Award. Director/Fanwood Arts Council/Shade Tree Commissioner / Featured at poetry readings in the US, England, Ireland, and France. Member/ Secular Franciscan Order.

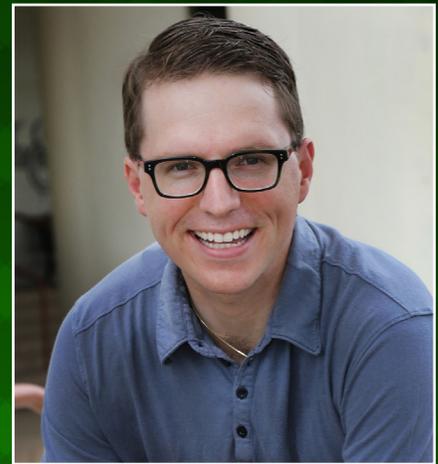
IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



BERNARD F. KENNY
Former Member of both NJ State Senate and Assembly. Former Grand Marshal/Man of The Year for Hoboken's St. Patrick's Day Parade. Held the rank of Lieutenant in the United States Navy. Member / Advisory Board / Insider NJ.com.



DOMINIQUE KILMARTIN
Brilliant young litigator/state and federal court/ civil and criminal matters. Served as law clerk/ NJ Supreme Court and Senior Federal Judge Katharine Hayden. Family hails from County Kerry, Ireland. Father active in Irish affairs in Yonkers, NY.



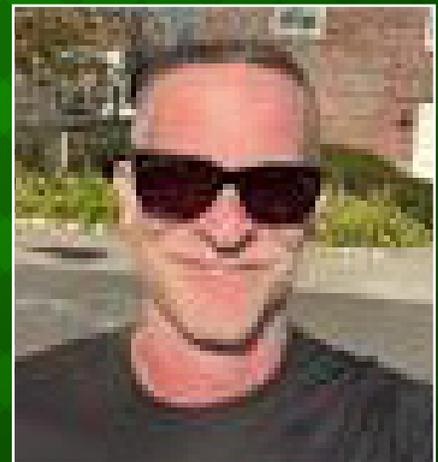
JESSE O'LEARY KURTZ
Atlantic City Councilman, former State Assembly candidate. Born and raised in AC. Stalwart supporter of the Atlantic City St. Patrick's Day Parade.



JAY KOST
General Chairman/ 2026 American Irish Association 52nd annual St. Patrick's Day Parade in Woodbridge Township.



BRIANNA KOSTECKA
Chairwoman 50th Annual New Jersey Irish Festival. Irish Dance Instructor / Heritage Irish Dance Company. Medalist / World Championships. Attorney / Seton Hall Law graduate.



JAY LASSITER
Award winning columnist for Insider NJ.com and one of only 3 NJ activists who traveled to Ireland in support of the 2015 marriage equality referendum which overwhelmingly won approval. Descendant of the Sullivan clan of County Sligo.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



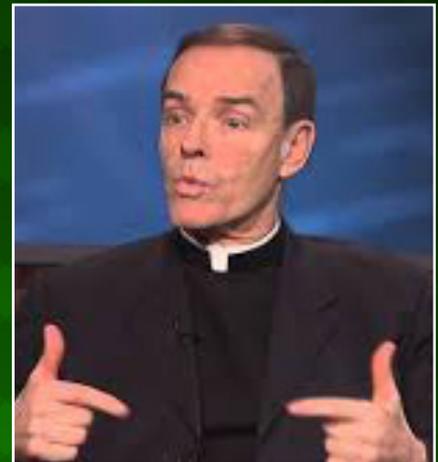
LEN (CORCORAN) LUCIANO

Essex County Commissioner representing the county's western suburbs. Grandson of Mary Corcoran of Orange, NJ and County Roscommon, Ireland.



KIERAN LYNCH

Director / Bergen Irish Assn. / Served as co-chair of the March St. Patrick's Day Gala. / Member/ Executive Board. Traces roots to Counties Kerry, Waterford, and Clare.



REV. EDWIN D. LEAHY, O.S.B.

Headmaster of St. Benedict's Prep, Newark since re-opening in 1973. A 1963 Prep school graduate. Grand Marshal of the 82nd Anniversary Newark St. Patrick's Day Parade.



GERALD P. LENIHAN

Former Security Manager/ Seton Hall Law School, Essex County Prosecutor's Office (retired). Former Grand Marshal and General Chairman/ Newark Parade/NJ Irish Festival.



STEVE LENOX

Lenox Consulting. Dual American / Irish citizenship. Former State Director / Senator Frank Lautenberg. President / Irish Network USA.



KATHLEEN SMITH LORIA

Executive Director, Atlantic Brain & Spine, affiliate of Atlantic Health. Member, Women of Irish Heritage, North NJ. 2025 Deputy Grand Marshal, West Orange St. Patrick's Day Parade.



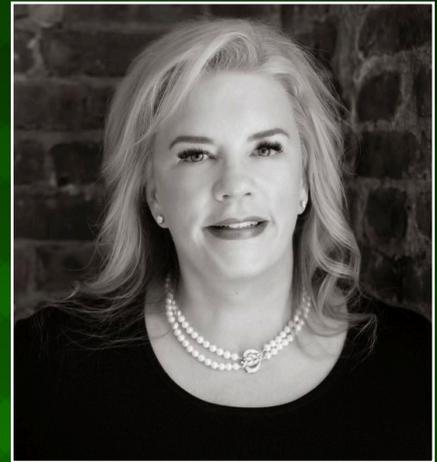
BRIAN M. LOWE

Public relations consultant. Co-Chaired the 48th Annual New Jersey Irish Festival.



JIM LOWNEY

Veteran journalist. Raised in Hillside now of Toms River. Photog for The Newark Evening News. Wrote for NYT's / Asbury Park Press. 30-year columnist for the Irish Echo.



KELLY STEWART MAER

More than 20 years of legislative and lobbying experience. Kelly serves as a Board Member for Horizon Blue Cross / Blue Shield of New Jersey.



COLLEEN M. MAHR

Past President / NJ League of Municipalities. Mayor of Fanwood Boro. Former President / New Jersey Conference of Mayors. Director of Business Dev. for DMR Architects.



MICHAEL MAITLAND

McCarter & English. LLP. Government Affairs Advisor/Experience in policy with knowledge of the legislative process and workings of NJ State Legislature. A former chief of staff for U.S. Rep. Donald Norcross, Michael traces family roots to Ireland's Counties Clare and Roscommon.



PATTI CASSIDY MARTIRANO

Long time Judicial Ass't / Judge Katherine Sweeney Hayden / State & Federal Court. Traces roots to family hometown Ballymaguigan, County Derry, Ireland.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



KEVIN MCCABE
Middlesex County Democratic Party Chairman. Partner/River Crossing Strategy Group, one of Trenton's leading full-service government affairs firms. Member / NY/NJ Port Authority Board of Commissioners.



JOHN J. "JACK" MCCARTHY
Former Secretary / NJ State Senate. Member of the Electoral College. Served as Bergen County Democratic State Committeeman / Secretary / Bergen County Division #1 ADH.



LAURENCE (LARRY) MCCARTHY
Past President, Gaelic Athletic Association. Chair, Economics and Legal Studies, Stillman School of Business, Seton Hall University.



JOHN E. MCCORMAC
Mayor of Woodbridge. Elected In 2006 in the oldest original township in the state of New Jersey. Former NJ State Treasurer.



STACY MCCORMACK
Partner/ TWENTYTWO Public Affairs. Co-founded women-owned firm to offer lobbying, policy development, and political strategy services to a diverse clientele. 2025 Brian Boru, Inc. honoree.



MARY MCCORMICK
2024 Gala Chair / Waves of Health. Provides basic medical care to underserved communities in Dominican Republic and Uganda. BSN, MSN, NP-C, Seton Hall University. Summit Medical Group, Frequent Irish traveler.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



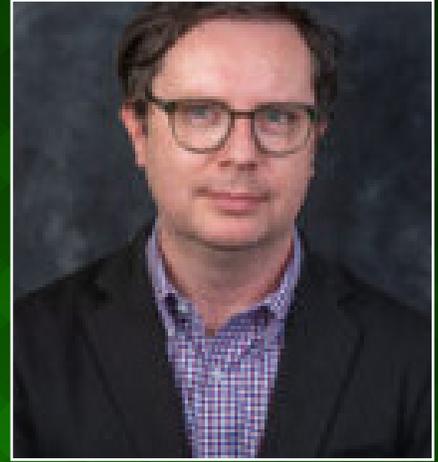
GREG AND MATT MCDERMOTT

Brothers: Greg, former Mayor of Westfield and Matt, experienced government lobbyist with the Kaufman Zita Group. Sons of the legendary late Francis X. McDermott, former / NJ Senate President / Union County GOP Chairman and candidate for NJ Governor.



JOHN P. MCDONALD

Highly respected criminal defense attorney. Appointed Superior Court Judge/ Somerset County. Currently Somerset County Prosecutor. Known for his Irish sense of humor.



TERRENCE T. MCDONALD

New Jersey newspaperman for more than 15 years covering Trenton politics to municipalities “exposing public corruption”. Winner of 23 New Jersey Press Association awards.



FRAN MCENERNEY

Senior Consultant, Public Accounting / Litigation support with PKF O’Connor Davies. Strong supporter of Irish causes. Bagpiper/Marine Corp veteran. Former Essex County Irishman of the Year.



PEGGY MCGARVEY

2026 Grand Marshal/ Bayonne St. Patrick’s Day Parade with aides Emily Gill, Eileen (Farley) Feuer and Suzanne Neary.



MICHAEL B. MCGLYNN

Seven term Fairfield Councilman. Former President Local 68 IUOE. 45-year union member. NY County Roscommon Society Honoree. Former Pres., Montclair AOH Div. #9. USMC.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



JENNIFER NAGLE MCGOVERN

Co-Owner of the award winning DeNogla Academy of Irish Dance. Traces her roots to County, Kerry, Ireland. Former Newark Parade Deputy Grand Marshal.



SEAN MCGOVERN, ESQ

Former Roseland Councilman, Newark based attorney and well-known proprietor of McGovern's Tavern, Newark. 2025 Grand Marshal/Newark St. Patrick's Day Parade.



CHRISTINE MCGRATH

Verona Township Councilwoman. Leader and strategist for community-based organizations.



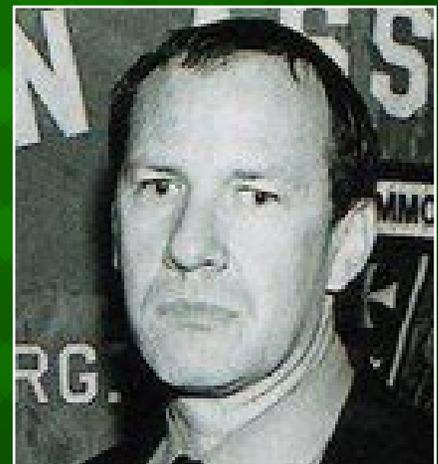
JAMES E. MCGREEVEY

Elected New Jersey Governor 2001. Former State Assemblyman and State Senator. Former Grand Marshal / Newark St. Patrick's Day Parade. Lauded for pioneering prison reform efforts.



DILLON MCGUIRE

Deep roots in Ireland. Family hails from Counties Kerry and Donegal. Criminal defense attorney/ Pashman Stein. Works closely with Joe Hayden and Aidan O'Connor.



JOHN E. MCGUIRE, JR.

Former member of NYPD and decorated veteran Detective / Essex County Sheriff's Department (retired). Former Essex County Irishman of the Year and past West Orange Democratic Chairman.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



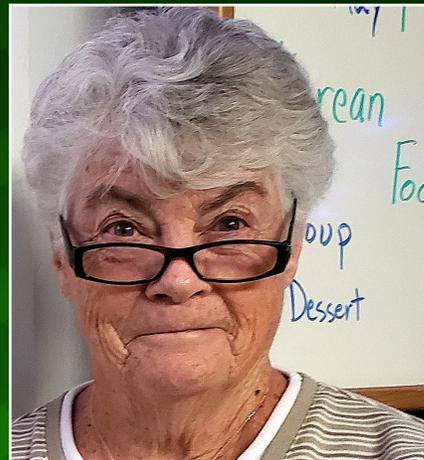
PATTI MCGUIRE

More than 30 years of political / government affairs experience. Since joining PPAG-Princeton Public Affairs Group has focused on Legislative Strategy for Clients, Business Projects, Education and Healthcare. Co-Chair of the New Jersey Leaders Council



VINCENT MCKELVEY

Hamilton Township St. Patrick's Parade Committee Chair and President / Ancient Order of Hibernians, Msgr. Crean Division 1.



SR. JANE MCKENNA, SSJ

Oversees the Women & Children's Center at St. John's Soup Kitchen on Mulberry Street / Newark. Pioneered by the (late) director, Barbara Maran, with help from Sister Jane, the Center offers an indoor facility for women, children and the handicapped to eat breakfast and lunch in safety, free from frigid cold or scorching heat.



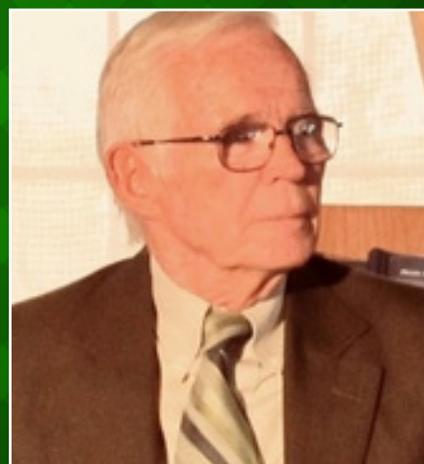
JOHN MCKEON

NJ State Senator (LD 27). Formerly served in State Assembly where he chaired the Financial Institutions & Insurance Committee. Former Mayor of West Orange. Attorney and longtime organizer of the West Orange St. Patrick's Day Parade.



KELLY MCMANUS

Historian/Educator. Passaic County Dept. Cultural & Historic Affairs overseeing public programming and historic preservation initiatives. Adjunct Professor/ William Paterson Univ. Sought after public speaker/ lecturer.



HENRY (HANK) MCNALLY

Retired educator / Secondary School Principal. Sought after lecturer of Irish history in shore area. With Irish Studies Program at Brookdale Community College / Rutgers. BA / MA Fordham. Studied at University College, Dublin, Ireland. Resides in Manasquan.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



JOHN MCPARTLAN
Owner of Molly Maguire's Irish Pub and Restaurant in Clark. "Champion for the Center for Hope Hospice / NJ Coalition of Autism Awareness." 2018 Grand Marshal 22nd Union County Irish Parade.



BERNADETTE P. MCPHERSON ESQ.
Adjunct Prof / Law John Jay College. Honors grad/LaSalle / JD Temple. Former Councilwoman / Mayor / Rutherford. Bergen County Freeholder. Honored by Irish Echo. Roots in County Mayo.



MICHAEL MCQUEENY, ESQ.
Partner, and Co-Chair of Foley Hoag's national Cannabis Group. Counsels clients on complex issues of regulatory compliance. Irish Echo: "Forty Under 40 Award" Syracuse Grad., Villanova Law School.



JIM MCQUEENY
Key advisor/ Governor Phil Murphy. International strategist, public and political practitioner. Now teaches at Sacred Heart University.



MARY ELLEN MCVEIGH
Curator of Education, Liberty Hall Museum / Kean University. MA / Seton Hall. Family hails from the Irish Aran Islands.



JOHN MEADE
Former Grand Marshal/Newark St. Patrick's Day Parade (1997) and owner of the St. James's Gate Publick House in Maplewood.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



MARY MEEHAN

Seton Hall University's 1st woman President (retired). BA, MA and Ph.D (Seton Hall). MS / Health Policy & Management / NY Medical College.



ROSEMARIE L. MELLODY

First woman Grand Marshal in the 91year history of the Newark St. Patrick's Day Parade. Native of County Longford, Ireland.



MAGGEE MIGGINS

Former Millburn Township Mayor. Award winning Short Hills Real Estate Broker. Owner: Maggee Miggins Group / Compass RE. Fairleigh Dickinson University grad. Deputy Grand Marshal / 2009 Newark Irish Parade.



JOHN M. MITCH

2026 Grand Marshal/American Irish Association of Woodbridge 52nd Annual Parade. John, Township Clerk, and former Township Councilman, serves along with Irishman of the Year Kevin McCreary, Irishwoman of the Year Mary Marion.



WILLIAM F. MOEN, JR.

New Jersey Assemblyman (D-5th). Deputy Majority Leader. Fifth generation Irish American. SNJ Business People Magazine's "40 Under 40" in 2018. MPA degree / University of Pennsylvania.



KAITLIN MOONEY

President/Co-Founder/ Union County Daughters of Ireland. Community Service group cultivating friendships while honoring Irish Heritage.



MAGGIE MORAN

Award winning national Public Affairs consultant. Former Deputy Chief of Staff / Governor Jon Corzine. Former State Director / NJ Senators Corzine and Lautenberg.



TOM MORAN

Former Star-Ledger Editorial Page Editor / Accomplished national correspondent. Once told NYT's, he has "a front-row seat on the spectacle of NJ politics."



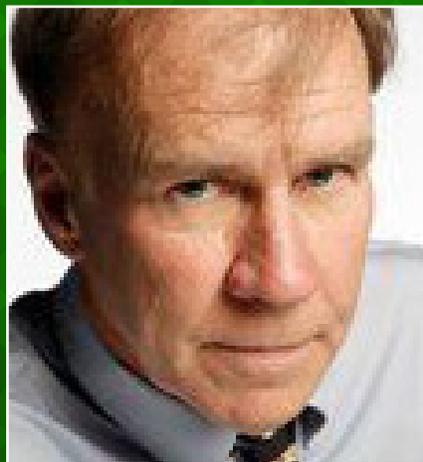
WILLIAM 'BILL' MULLEN

President / NJ State Building & Construction Trades Council, AFL-CIO. Former President of Ironworkers Local 11. Influential voice among legislative leaders in Trenton.



GENE MULROY

Co-Founder/Capital Impact Group, prominent contract lobbying firm; West State Street veteran and voice in state and national politics, served in varying capacities for presidential, gubernatorial and legislative campaigns. Gene's family hails from Ireland's County Mayo and further north in County Donegal sits Mulroy Bay.



PAUL MULSHINE

Former Star-Ledger journalist. Grew up in Toms River. Worked for the Philadelphia Daily News. Regarded himself as the sole remaining old-time conservative columnist at a major American newspaper.



CAROL A. MURPHY

NJ State Assemblywoman (LD-7). Burlington County. Majority Whip. Vice-Chair Judiciary Committee. Member / State Budget and Financial Institutions Committees. First woman in 20 years to represent the Seventh Legislative District.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



JOHN MURPHY

Financial Advisor / Private Advisor Group / Morristown. Former Freeholder, Morris Township Committeeman / Mayor. Active member: Morris Township Volunteer Fire Dept., Former Grand Marshal / Morris County Irish Parade.



MARY K. MURPHY

Director Planning and Regional Development PANY & NJ. Former Essex County Irishwoman of the Year.



MICHAEL MURPHY

Former Morris County Prosecutor. Gubernatorial candidate / 1997 Democratic primary. Stepson of the late Governor Richard Hughes. Heads up Impact NJ. Successful lobbyist.



PETER MURPHY

Chairman / Passaic County Republican Committee. Once described as “the hardest working person in politics.” Owner: Murph’s Tavern.



GOV. PHILIP D. MURPHY

Former New Jersey Governor (2018-2026) Ambassador to Germany (2009-2013). Goldman Sachs Executive / National Finance Chairman / DNC. Wife, Tammy, parents of four. Harvard & UPenn grad. 2019 Essex County Irishman of the Year.



CAROLYN A. MURRAY

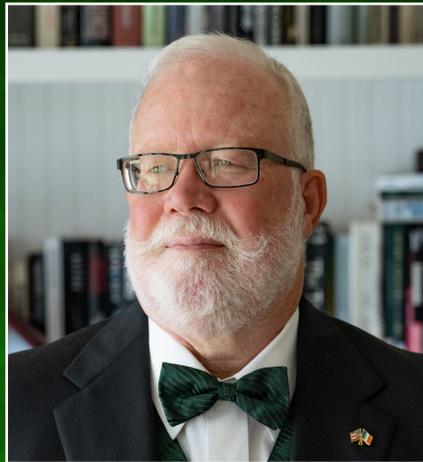
Former Family Court judge. Former state / federal prosecutor appointed by Attorney General / Acting Sussex County Prosecutor. Georgetown University (cum laude) and NYU Law School. Former Essex County Irishwoman of the Year.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



NUTLEY IRISH

2026 Nutley St. Patrick's Day Parade Dignitaries: Grand Marshal Steve Blank, Deputy Grand Marshal Noel Lenahan, Firefighter of the Year Brandon Griffitt, Member of the Year Katherine Bennett and Parade Queen Victoria Kealy,



ED NEAFSEY

Superior Court Judge (retired). Teaches course on Northern Ireland Civil Rights Movement at Rutgers Law School / Newark. Volunteer trial observer / Irish Diplock Courts. Dual American Irish citizenship. Contributor / Irish Central News. Ed and his sister Meg will co-chair the 2026 NJ Irish Festival.



LYNN FONTAINE NEWSOME, ESQ.

Past President/NJ and Morris County State Bar Associations. Well respected attorney in the area of Family Law, member / Editorial Board/ New Jersey Law Journal.



JOE NORTON

Leader of the Bloomfield Irish Club, former Caldwell GOP councilman / Owner of the Bloomfield Travel Network.



AIDAN P. O'CONNOR, ESQ.

Former Trial Attorney / Supervisor U.S. Attorney's Office. Co-chair / Pashman Stein Walder Hayden Criminal Defense Practice Group. Traces his roots to Counties Kerry and Waterford, Ireland.



BILL O'DEA

Author; The Legacy of Haguesville. Youngest member ever elected to the Jersey City Council at age 26 in 1985. Longtime member of the Hudson County Board of Commissioners.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



KEVIN O'DOWD
Co-President and CEO of Cooper University Health Care. Former Chief of Staff / Governor Chris Christie.



BRENDAN (DAN) O'FLAHERTY
Economics Prof / Columbia Univ. Marathon runner, political strategist, author, Trustee / Newark Historical Society.



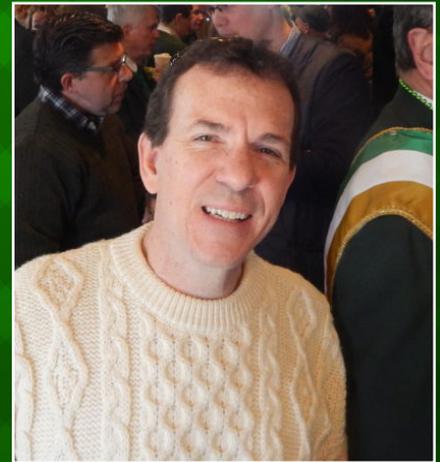
ERIN K. O'GARA-MEIER
Longtime West Orange leader and former Director of Constituent Services for the late Gov., State Senator Richard J. Codey.



MAUREEN E. O'HARA
Renowned West Orange Irish community leader and former Grand Marshal of the WO St. Patrick's Day Parade.



TRISH O'KEEFE
President, Morristown Medical Center. Senior VP, Chief Nurse Executive at Atlantic Health System and recognized by United Nations as one of 21 Nurses with Global Impact and by Irish America magazine to its Healthcare and Life Science list, among many career tributes.



DECLAN O'SCANLON
NJ State Senator. Former Republican Assemblyman / Monmouth County (R-13) known for advocating improvement for drivers who travel on the state's roads.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



JOHN O'SHEA

President, Bergen Irish Association, founded 1964 to preserve and celebrate Irish culture/tradition in Bergen County. Hails from Kenmare, Co. Kerry, Ireland, Thirtytwo-year member.



BETHANY O'TOOLE

Chief Financial Officer / Essex County Utilities Authority. Chairwoman & Commissioner / Essex County Board of Elections. Traces family roots to County Tipperary. Former Essex County Irishwoman of the Year.



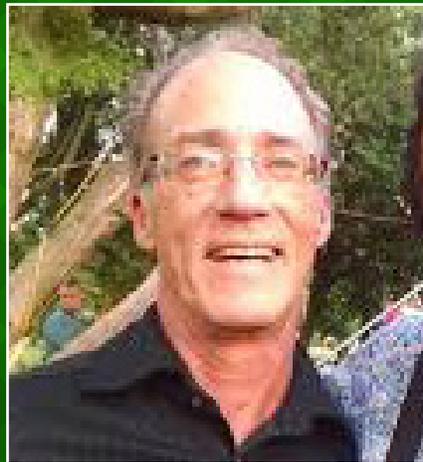
KEVIN O'TOOLE

Chairman / Port Authority of NY / NJ. Former NJ State Senator (R-40) and Essex County GOP Chairman. Former Essex County Irishman of the Year.



SEAN PENDER

National Director of the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH), State AOH President and former Grand Marshal of the Hamilton St. Patrick's Day Parade.



PATRICK O'SHEA POLITANO

Well known Union County political strategist, former journalist. Named for Ireland's patron saint by his mother Flora O'Shea. Union County Parade supporter.



MICKEY QUINN

President MQ Strategies. Political Strategist. Former Deputy Executive Director / New Jersey General Assembly / Trustee / Rowan College at Burlington County.

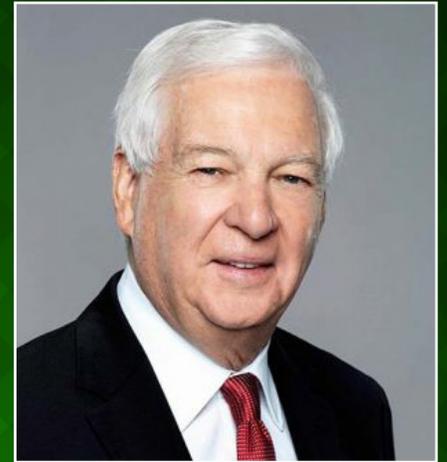
IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



MIKE QUINN
Founding member of the Morris County Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick. Served as Parade Grand Marshal 2017. Instrumental in bringing the parade to Morristown from Wharton more than 26 years ago.



JOSEPH A. QUINLAN, JR.
2025 Irishman of the Year/St. Patrick's Guard of Honor of New Jersey. 40 years/Intercollegiate Athletics and Higher Education Advocate with Columbia, Rutgers, and Seton Hall University. Resident of Montclair.



BILL RAFTERY "THE COACH"
Analyst and play-by-play announcer / CBS Sports (college basketball). Named Mr. Basketball (1959), 3-sport all-state HS player, coached at Fairleigh Dickinson and Seton Hall (1970-81).



DAN REILLY
Former Chairman / NJ Irish Festival. Supporter of Special Olympics and benefit projects for disabled veterans. 2018 Belmar / Lake Como St. Patrick's Day Parade Grand Marshal.



ERIN RICE
Director of Strategy/Lenox Consulting/ Offices in NJ and Ireland. Member/ Governor's Irish Trade Commission. Former Chief of Staff/the late Gov., State Senator Richard J. Codey. Formerly with IUOE Local 825. Irish Echo Honoree. BA English/Montclair State University.



CELESTE M. RILEY
Cumberland County Clerk, former NJ Assemblywoman (D-3). Former Bridgeton City Council President. Family hails from counties Cork and Mayo.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



**JOSEPH "JOE"
ROBERTS, JR.**

Former Camden County Freeholder Director who went on to serve with distinction as Majority Leader and Speaker of the NJ General Assembly.



**NORMAN "NORM"
ROBERTSON, ESQ.**

Member/NJ State Parole Board / Former GOP NJ State Senator (34thLD). Rutgers University / Fordham Law School grad. Served on Passaic County Freeholder Board. Former Chairman / Passaic County Utilities Authority. Member/ Advisory Board/Insider NJ.



**ROBERT ROWBOTHAM,
ESQ.**

Newark Counsel & Trustee / St. Patrick's Day Parade. Trustee / St. Patrick's Guard of Honor. Trial Attorney / Bramnick, Rodriguez, LLC. Former NJ Deputy AG.



**MARGUERITE "PEG"
SCHAFER**

Vice Chair / NJ Democratic State Committee. Chairwoman / Somerset County Democratic Committee. Commissioner/ NJSEA. Counsel to two law firms: Murphy Orlando and Rainone Coughlin. Known for her sharp wit, brilliance in and out of court and tenacious political activism.



**WILLIAM "BILL"
SCULLY**

Legend in Irish circles for his quick wit, fine voice, classic moustache, short game in golf (which includes putting from sand traps) and as the long time proprietor and host of McGovern's Tavern.



DONALD SHAUGER

Executive Vice President / The Shauger Group, family owned and operated contracting company founded 1981. Former Grand Marshal / West Orange St. Patrick's Day Parade.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



JAMES SHEA
Jersey City Public Safety Director.
Retired Deputy Chief from the New York City Police Department.



JOHN SHEA III
Director/Committee on Political Education (COPE) for New Jersey State AF-CIO.



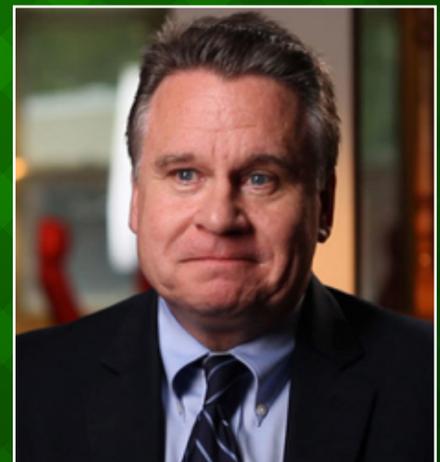
MIRIAM (MIMS) SHERIDAN
Born in Dublin, renowned for her volunteerism and a strong supporter of the Belmar / Lake Como St. Patrick's Day Parade. Former Deputy Grand Marshal.



MIKIE SHERRILL
Recently elected 57th NJ Governor. Served four terms in US Congress (11th CD) Ten-year Navy veteran. Helicopter Pilot. Mother of four. Graduate / US Naval Academy, London School of Economics (MA), Georgetown Law, JD. Former Federal Prosecutor. Former Essex County Irishwoman of the Year.



KEVIN J. SLAVIN
St. Joseph's Health (SJH)/President, Chief Executive Officer/ Multi- hospital major academic, healthcare system based in Paterson, NJ / formerly at East Orange General Hospital and St. Clare's Health System in Morris County. Rutgers grad., MHA, University of Colorado.



CHRIS SMITH
U.S. Congressman (R-4 NJ). Senior member / Foreign Affairs Committee, Chairman Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights and International Organization Subcommittee. Recipient / American Ireland Fund's Distinguished Leadership Award.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



JAMES (RYAN) SPANGO
Mayor of Roseland. Career law enforcement/Essex County Undersheriff. Traces his family's Irish roots to the Ryans and Mooneys of County Meath, Ireland.



BRIAN P. STACK
State Senator (D- 33rd District). Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee. Union City Mayor since 2000. Former member of the State Assembly.



BARBARA MCCANN STAMATO
Former NJ State Assemblywoman (D-31) (2024-2026). Executive Assistant, Spectrum Health Care, Inc. Jersey City Democratic Committee Chair. Irish Woman of the Year/ Jersey City Irish Parade Committee 2018.



CHRISTINE A. STEARNS
Chief Government Relations Officer/ New Jersey Hospital Association. Listed on NJ Spotlight's "Top 10 Healthcare Lobbyists." Christine advises C-suite leadership clients on various legislative and public policy issues.

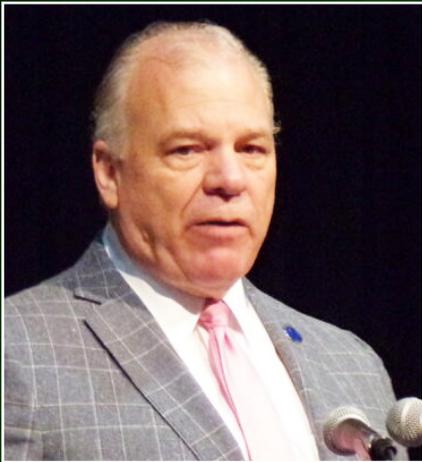


GUY STERLING
Journalist, author / historian. Columbia J-School grad. 35-year newspaper career / reporter with Star-Ledger. Only New Jersey-based reporter to interview Richard Nixon after he moved to the New York area.



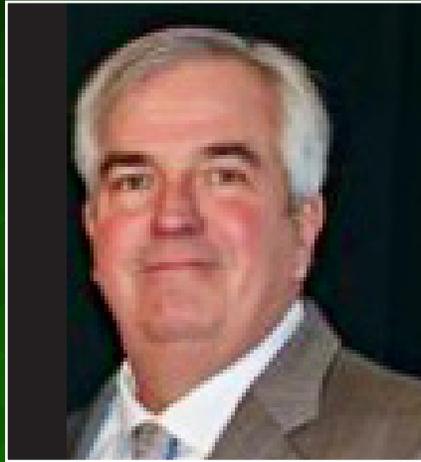
MARYPAT SULLIVAN, RN, MSN, CNS
Chief Nursing Officer (CNO)/ Chief Experience Officer at Overlook Medical Center, MaryPat's leadership of the nursing staff has been instrumental in many of Overlook's achievements and accolades.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



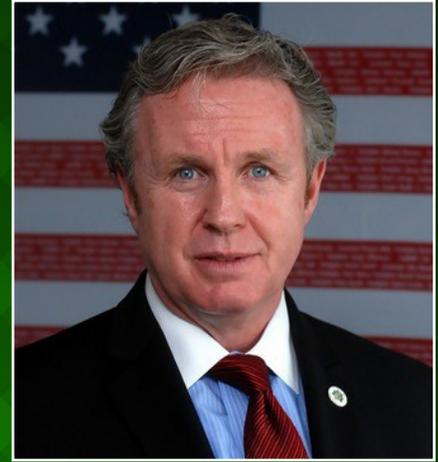
STEVE SWEENEY

Currently, Gloucester County Administrator. Served with distinction as NJ Senate President. Former Business Agent for Ironworkers Local 399 and General Organizer for the Int'l Association of Ironworkers.



ROBERT SWENSON

Deputy Grand Marshal of the 2022 West Orange St. Patrick's Day Parade. Professional Photog / Champion Golfer.



JIM TANSEY

Union County Prosecutor's Office (retired). Former Grand Marshal / Union County Irish Parade, Piper with Essex County Emerald Society. Traces his roots to Counties Roscommon and Mayo, Ireland.



BRIAN TEVLIN

2026 Young Irishman of the Year/ Friendly Sons of St. Patrick's of the Oranges. Midfielder, Captain / California Redwoods LC. Yale graduate/ Master's Degree University of Notre Dame. Played on National Championship Lacrosse teams for both Universities. Seton Hall Prep Alum.



BRITNEE TIMBERLAKE

New Jersey State Senator (LD 34) whose mother Cathy Walsh and grandfather Frank Walsh trace their roots from Trenton and Hamilton, New Jersey to Kilkenny, Ireland.



CARDINAL JOSEPH WILLIAM TOBIN

Archbishop of Newark, Large Irish Catholic family, oldest of thirteen children. Elevation to Cardinal (one of 18 nationwide) November 2016. Installed January 2017. First time Newark Archdiocese is headed by a Cardinal. 2020 Grand Marshal / Bergen County.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



MICHAEL P. TORPEY, ESQ.
Founding Partner/ GTB Partners. Thirty years experience in government, politics, business and law. Former Chief Counsel and Chief of Staff to Governor Christine Todd Whitman.



CHRIS AND MAIREAD TULLY
Chris a NJ State Assemblyman (D-38), former Council President / Bergenfield and top aide to U.S. Congressman Josh Gottheimer and Mairead, a writer with the Irish Echo.



ANN TWOMEY
Distinguished President (retired) / Hospital and Professional and Allied Employees (HPAE-AFT), state nurse's union. Delegate to the Democratic National Convention(s). VP / NJ State AFL-CIO. Member / Advisory Board / InsiderNJ.com.



VIRGINIA "GINNY" TREACY
Executive Director/Jersey Nurses Economic Security Organization (JNESO). Respected leader with 35 years of service to labor causes (retired)). Former Deputy Grand Marshal/Newark St. Patrick's Day Parade.



THOMAS J. WALSH
Superior Court Judge. Former President / Union County Friendly Sons of St. Patrick. Family hails from County Sligo, Ireland. Married to the well regarded, former Star Ledger reporter Diane (Curcio) Walsh.



SHEILA LENIHAN WALSH
University Hospital, Newark APN. Former Newark Parade Deputy Grand Marshal. Her (late) husband, John, was a former Newark Parade Grand Marshal.

IRISH AMERICAN LEADERS 2026



MEGAN WIGGINS

Judicial Law Clerk (Permanent) / Federal Judge Katherine Hayden. Strong supporter of Irish causes. Married to Irish leader Jamie Cryan.



JENNIFER WILLIAMS

Trenton (North Ward) City Council's first LGBTQ member and the first transgender person elected to any municipal council statewide.



ROBERT C. (BOBBY) WILLIAMS

Trustee of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick of the Oranges. Attorney in private practice. Life long West Orange resident.



DANIEL ZEISER

Director of Union Township Police. Past Grand Marshal Newark St. Patrick's Day Parade. Former Newark police officer.

In Memoriam

Peter F. Burke 1954-2026



Peter F. Burke, born in Queens, New York to Francis Xavier Burke and Gloria Veronica Burke, née McLoughlin. died Saturday, February 28, 2026. Peter was raised in Holmdel, NJ. A proud New Jerseyan and a proud Irish Catholic, he was one of six children and a devoted and protective big brother.

He was a graduate of Christian Brothers Academy in Lincroft, NJ participating in Indoor Track and Intramural Softball. He later studied at Saint Peter's College in Jersey City and graduated from New Jersey City University with a BA in History and a minor in Economics, He was a member of the National History Society.

In 1994, Peter attended a Bible Sharing Group with Sister Grace Reape, where he met Luz Obligacion. He served as an usher at Saint Peter's Church and volunteered in the Food Pantry.

In 2005, Peter and his family moved to downtown Jersey City and began attending Resurrection Parish, worshipping at Saint Mary's and Saint Michael's Churches. He worked for M.T.M. Project Live in Newark, NJ for 11 years retiring in 2020. His work included maintaining housing for individuals suffering with mental health issues.

Peter is survived by his beloved wife, Luz, and his son, Federico "Freddy" Burke, his brothers Stephen, Vincent, Gerard, and Thomas, his sister Anne as well as in-laws and numerous loving cousins.

In Memoriam

Eugene J. Byrne

1938-2025



Gene died on October 9, 2025, at Mountainside Hospital in Montclair after a month-long illness. Son of Michael Joseph Byrne of Aghamore, County Mayo, Ireland and Helen O'Neill of Brooklyn, New York, Gene's parents moved the family to Montclair in the early 1940s. He was a 1960 graduate of Mount Saint Mary's College in Emmitsburg, MD and a 1963 graduate of Villanova Law School.

A founding member of The Friendly Sons of the Shillelagh of Essex County and the 1916 Easter Week Parade and Ceremony, he was a long-time member of the Ancient Order of the Hibernians, Montclair Knights of Columbus Council 1277, St. Isaac Jogues Assembly 0649 Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus, the Giblin Association, the Cryan Association, the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick of the Oranges, the Mayo Association of New York City, and the St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee in Newark.

Gene marched in every New York City Saint Patrick's Day Parade from 1957 to 2024. He was named Young Irishman of the Year by the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick of the Oranges in 1967, chosen Guest of Honor by the Ancient Order of Hibernians in 1970, and elected Grand Marshal of the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Newark in 1990. He is survived by his son, nephews and nieces, grandnephews and grandnieces, cousins at home and abroad, brother Knights, brother Hibernians, and many friends.

In Memoriam

Gov. Richard J. Codey

1947-2026



Richard J. Codey, the 53rd governor of New Jersey and a lifelong public servant who had a remarkable gift for making complete strangers feel like the most important people in the world, died Sunday, January 11, 2026, at his home in Roseland, surrounded by family, after a brief illness. He was 79.

A native son of Essex County and a third-generation funeral director, Gov. Codey devoted his life to public service. For more than five decades in the New Jersey Legislature, including service as Senate President, he earned a reputation as a steady hand and trusted listener.

In the days following his passing, tens of thousands of messages poured in from across New Jersey. They came from public officials and from teachers, nurses, union workers, parents and people who crossed paths with him once and never forgot it.

He's also survived by millions of former constituents, extended family, friends, current and former staff members, basketball players and even political adversaries. In lieu of flowers, donations to honor his life's work may be sent to: The Codey Fund for Mental Health, 307 Bloomfield Ave. Suite 303, Caldwell, N.J. 07006.

In Memoriam

Michael R. Dressler

1952-2025



Beloved husband, father, brother, and friend, Michael passed away after a lifetime of service, faith, and devotion to others. At just twenty-two, the people of Cresskill elected him to Borough Council, and soon after he became Mayor. He went on to serve as Bergen County Counsel and as counsel to the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority before being elected Bergen County Surrogate in 1996.

Michael served the people of Bergen County for nearly thirty years, re-elected multiple times and becoming one of the most respected New Jersey constitutional officers.

In Memoriam

Valerie E Feeney
1932-2026



Valerie Feeney, devoted wife, loving mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, passed away peacefully on Sunday, January 18, 2026, age 93, at her longtime home in East Hanover, NJ.

Married to Newark Fireman John Feeney for more than 25 years until his early death in 1979, they welcomed eight children. A widow at 47, Valerie single handedly raised her eight children and joyfully watched the expansion of her family into 18 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

Valerie was a longtime Democratic and community activist and served as a founding member and past president of the Women of Irish Heritage. She was the 1979 Deputy Grand Marshal of the Newark St. Patrick's Day Parade.

In Memoriam

Brian Hughes

1956-2025



Hon. Brian Hughes, a prominent figure in Mercer County politics, passed away at age 68 on June 10, 2025. He served as the Mercer County Executive for two decades, from 2004 to 2024, and was known for his significant contributions to the community.

Brian was part of a well-known political family in New Jersey, the son of former Governor and Supreme Court Chief Justice Richard J. Hughes. Brian's legacy includes a commitment to public service and community development, which made him a respected leader statewide.