



## IRISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MUSEUM

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## NEWS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### THE IRISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MUSEUM ANNOUNCES FIRST IAHM 2026 REGIONAL IRISH CULTURAL AMBASSADOR

*IAHM to Continue Program to Recruit Regional Ambassadors  
To Partake in Rich, Regionally Diverse Irish Heritage Experiences*

ALBANY, N.Y. - Following the 2025 successes of the Irish American Heritage Museum's (IAHM) Regional Irish Cultural Ambassador program, IAHM's Board of Trustees announced today that **Aoibhinn Williams** (Rockaway Park, NY) is the first of several IAHM cultural and heritage scholarship winners in 2026. Aoibhinn will represent IAHM at Leahy Music Camp at Lakefield College School in Lakefield, Ontario (Canada) from July 5-9, 2026. Leahy Music Camp is Canada's preeminent Celtic-based cultural immersion experience, inspiring students of all ages and abilities through classes in fiddle, piano, step-dancing, singing, guitar, bass, drums, mandolin, accordion, music technology, songwriting, composing, and more.

Aoibhinn is a brilliant addition to the IAHM community, as the Museum's newest Regional Irish Cultural Ambassador. With her combined artistic talents and passion for Irish heritage, Aoibhinn has already firmly established herself in Irish cultural communities in both the United States and Ireland. Still a student, Aoibhinn has taken lessons over the past few years from legends such as Mary Bergin (whistle); Michael Rooney, Eileen Gannon, and Irish Nevins (harp); Brendan Dolan (piano); Joey Abarta and Ivan Goff (uilleann pipes); Caitlin NicGabhann (Concertina); and Alan Murray (guitar). Aoibhinn is also an advocate for traditional Irish music, song, dance, and language in the eastern US, serving as Youth Officer for the Killoran-Clancy-Whelan branch of Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann. Aoibhinn was recently elected as Youth Officer for the Mid-Atlantic region (Florida to Rockland County NY) of Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann. Aoibhinn epitomizes the spirit of IAHM's Regional Irish Cultural Ambassadors, who in geographically diverse settings share their own Irish cultural talents; exchange styles, art, and tunes with other Irish artists; immerse themselves in the "trad" culture and life of another region; and, who ultimately return home to share those experiences with their own communities.

"I am proud to be an IAHM Regional Irish Cultural Ambassador and new IAHM Member; I am grateful to IAHM for this opportunity," said Aoibhinn. "I have attended Catskills Irish Arts Week, Scoil Eigse, the Mid-Atlantic Fleadh, and the All-Ireland Fleadh, and know well the brilliant impact

of learning through sharing our rich regional Irish American perspectives and tunes. Through this IAHM opportunity, I will continue to grow in a global traditional Irish community that I see myself being part of throughout my life. I so look forward to being an IAHM Ambassador, and to meeting the instructors, attendees, organizers and at Leahy Music Camp. I especially look forward to enjoying sessions, attending classes and concerts, and participating in all of the the culture-based events the Leahy family has to offer.”

IAHM’s Executive Director **Michael C. Clarke** added: “It became apparent the first time I spoke with Aoibhinn how she embodies the very spirit that drives IAHM’s Regional Irish Cultural Ambassador program. We remain grateful for IAHM’s supporters who follow this exchange program closely - those who recognize the generational, heritage-value of participating, sharing and fostering our Irish culture throughout North America and the world.”

“IAHM recently met with the Irish Ambassador to the US, the Irish Deputy Consul General (New York) and IAHM, and discussed how in this age of social media and AI Irish cultural, heritage and arts communities across the globe have become remarkably small,” said **Denise Murphy-McGraw**, Chairperson of IAHM’s Board of Trustees. “With the generous donations IAHM has received in support of our Regional Irish Cultural Ambassador program, the Irish American Heritage Museum will continue to further its mission to foster dialogue and cultural exchange, build connections, provide support to the Irish diaspora, and bring Irish and Irish American heritage communities even closer together.”

“IAHM’s Regional Irish Cultural Ambassador program speaks to the hearts of the Leahy family. This program underscores the importance of the global learning, sharing and participating in heritage-based culture and arts programs,” said **Maria Leahy**, Executive Director of Leahy Music Camp. “This is Leahy Music Camp’s twentieth year; each year we strive to both feed the curiosity and promote our Celtic culture. We are a proud partner with IAHM in doing so, and can’t wait for Aoibhinn to join us this July.”

Details about IAHM’s Regional Irish Cultural Ambassador Program are provided, [here](#).

Details about the Irish American Heritage Museum are provided, [here](#).

Details about Leahy Music Camp are provided, [here](#).

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**IAHM’s Regional Irish Cultural Ambassador Program scholarships are made possible by generous donations, alone. IAHM is grateful for donations from Crisafulli Family Foundation, Steve and Lisa Miller, Ronan Rooney, the Michael A. Flanagan Irish Music Heritage Inc., and several anonymous donors. 100% of donations made to this program go to heritage and cultural scholarship opportunities.**

IAHM encourages all to consider sponsoring IAHM Regional Irish Cultural Ambassadors. Those interested in supporting this program are encouraged to reach out *via* email to IAHM's Executive Director **Michael Cornelius Clarke**. Please consider donating, **here**.

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