



United Irish Cultural Center of San Francisco (UICC)
www.irishcentersf.org | 2700 45th Avenue; San Francisco, CA 94116

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SAN FRANCISCO, CA During their 50th Anniversary year, the [United Irish Cultural Center of San Francisco](http://www.irishcentersf.org) (UICC) is hosting an extraordinary evening of celebration, culture, and community on Saturday, April 12, 2025 starting at 5 pm at the [Building Our Future—Gala 2025](http://www.ballykeal.com). This event is being hosted at [Bally Keal Estate](http://www.ballykeal.com) vineyard (4286 Suisun Valley Rd. Fairfield, CA 94534) as a campaign kick-off event for their proposed and fully approved San Francisco building project.

In addition to a distinguished guest list of approximately 400 attendees, a 5-star meal designed by Chef James Aptakin, and a beautiful locale in the Suisun Valley wine region, the event has several significant highlights in the program for the evening. The UICC plans to announce a new partner and cornerstone gift for the \$75M building project. The organization will award the inaugural [Irish Heritage and Humanity Award](http://www.irishcentersf.org) to former **Senator George Mitchell** honoring his global contributions to peace, culture, and community. Most significantly, under Mitchell's leadership, the governments of Ireland and the United Kingdom and the political parties of Northern Ireland agreed to the historic Good Friday peace accord. Senator Mitchell will be in attendance to share some remarks and receive the award.

The event organizers look forward to an exhilarating evening dedicated to shaping the future of Irish heritage in the west. UICC President Liam Reidy, a native of County Limerick, Ireland, is particularly energized about this new award and considers Senator George Mitchell a most deserving recipient. “With the Irish Heritage and Humanity Award, we celebrate the heart and soul of our heritage—standing up for peace, lifting up others, and leading with courage. In honoring trailblazers like Senator George Mitchell, we’re not just tipping our hat to history—we’re planting our flag for the future. It’s a testament to the power of Irish spirit shaping a better, brighter world. As the old Irish saying goes, *‘Ní neart go cur le chéile’*—there’s no strength without unity.”

UICC Building Committee Chair and Board Member and County Clare native, Leo Cassidy, has been working on this project for more than five years now ensuring it’s successful and unanimous approval by the City of San Francisco. He is encouraged by the enthusiasm for the event and sees the participation of so many leaders as a real testament to the need for this building and the possibilities it will bring about. “For generations, the dream of building a lasting home for Irish culture here in San Francisco has lived in the hearts of our community. Today, that dream is not just within reach—it’s coming to life. The United Irish Cultural Center stands as the beating heart of Irish heritage on the West Coast, a place where music, language, theater, and community thrive. The Gala’s guest list of distinguished friends and leaders represents more than a celebration—it’s the perfect kick-off to the next great chapter of our story. Together, we’re building not just a new building, but a legacy for future generations.”

The United Irish Cultural Center is celebrating 50 years in 2025 and eagerly anticipates securing the next fifty years by sharing its vision at the Building Our Future Gala on April 12.

ABOUT the United Irish Cultural Center of San Francisco (UICC):

Since 1975, the United Irish Cultural Center (UICC) has been committed to celebrating, promoting, and preserving the rich culture and heritage of the global Irish community. As the only center of its kind on the West Coast, the UICC’s diverse programs offer opportunities for connection, growth, and learning for everyone.

With origins in San Francisco dating back to the late 1800s and in a building that opened its doors half a century years ago, the United Irish Cultural Center thrives today as a vibrant California 501c3 nonprofit organization committed to celebrating, promoting, and preserving the rich culture and heritage of the collective local, regional, and national culture of Ireland. In order to preserve our history and ensure our future, we have launched a [Campaign for Our Future](#).

ABOUT the Irish Heritage and Humanity Awardee:

Established in 2025 to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the United Irish Cultural Center of San Francisco and express a commitment to building for our future, our Irish Heritage and Humanity Award is an annual recognition celebrating individuals who embody the values of Irish heritage through their extraordinary impact on the world. Honorees champion peace, humanitarianism, culture, and leadership in ways that uplift humanity.

Our inaugural recipient is Senator George Mitchell—a global statesman whose leadership in the Good Friday Agreement helped secure peace in Ireland. His dedication to diplomacy and humanitarian efforts continues to inspire generations around the world. A permanent exhibit in our new Irish Cultural Center will honor Irish contributions to global peace and humanitarianism, ensuring this legacy endures.

ABOUT the Venue—Bally Keal Estate:

Conveniently located approximately one hour away from San Francisco and Sacramento, Bally Keal Estate, in the Suisun Valley wine region, is easily reached by all major Bay Area cities and airports. Named to pay homage to the owner’s home town in the West of Ireland, Bally Keal is within ten minutes of leaving the freeway. Guests are transported to another world where our friendly hosts, UICC members Mary and Joe Cassidy and their team, await you. Located at 4286 Suisun Valley Rd. Fairfield, CA 94534.

Evening Highlights

Exclusive Meet & Greet: Hosted cocktail reception at 5:00 pm with champagne and well drinks; plus, a VIP reception with Senator George Mitchell meet and greet.

Special Guests: Featuring distinguished leaders among a guestlist of 400—former and current SF mayors, California State politicians from both parties, and Governor Gavin Newsom (to be confirmed); Irish dignitaries and government officials; and key public figures.

Entertainment: Live performances by internationally renowned violinist Gregory Harrington, Irish musicians, and surprise artists. The evening concludes with dancing to the sounds of Live Wire—a premier Bay Area dance band.

Irish Heritage Humanity Award: Honoring an extraordinary individual who embodies the spirit of Irish heritage and humanity. Senator George Mitchell to receive this inaugural award.

Five-Star Dinner: A gourmet meal prepared by celebrated Chef James Aptakin, featuring a curated menu showcasing the best of Irish and Californian flavors.

Live Auction: A live auction featuring exclusive experiences, all in support of building the new Irish Cultural Center; with auctioneer and MC Eoin Harrington.

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