



2022 University of St. Thomas Irish Gala: “Celebrating the Gifts of Ireland”

Over 300 friends of the University of St. Thomas William J. Flynn Center for Irish Studies attended its Annual Irish Gala “Celebrating the Gifts of Ireland” on Nov. 18, 2022, at The Houstonian Hotel. The 2022 Gala marks the 19th anniversary of the Center for Irish Studies.

Consul General of Ireland, **Robert Hull**, attended from Austin.

This year, the Gala honored **Dr. James McDeavitt**, who is Executive Vice President and Dean of Clinical Affairs of Baylor College of Medicine. Dr. McDeavitt and Baylor were recognized for the pivotal role they played in assisting the University and the community through the Covid pandemic.

The Gala Chairs were **Gwen and Bob Corrigan**. Gwen is a former member of the Center for Irish Studies’ Advisory Board. Bob serves as Vice Chair of the UST Board of Directors and is Senior General Counsel of Baylor College of Medicine.

His Eminence Daniel Cardinal DiNardo and **The Most Reverend Brendan J. Cahill**, ’85 were the Honorary Chairs for the 2022 Gala.

Guests were greeted by beautiful flute and violin music performed by members of the *Beyond the Pale Band*. They enjoyed live traditional Irish music from the full Beyond the Pale Band throughout the program and an after dinner *Sing-along*. The Gala benefits the University of St. Thomas’ William J. Flynn Center for Irish Studies.

The delicious three-course meal was followed by the witty remarks presented by Special Guest Dr. Paul Klotman, President, Chief Executive Officer and Executive Dean of Baylor College of Medicine, who led the now traditional “Roast and Toast”. This portion of the evening was especially entertaining.

The Gala was very successful in bringing out a wonderful, cheerful crowd in which people can renew long-held friendships and make new ones. The event raised over \$240,000, including \$69,560 in scholarships and other support for students to take Irish Studies courses.

Under the direction of Lori Gallagher J.D, the Center has awarded scholarships to students in excess of \$904,000 since 2006. The Center also sponsors monthly cultural events open to the public. These lectures, concerts and storytelling events highlight all aspects of Ireland, Northern Ireland and Irish America.

UST’s William J. Flynn Center for Irish Studies is rated among the top 10 Irish Studies programs in the country.

The University of St. Thomas named the Center in honor of William J. Flynn, Chairman Emeritus of Mutual of America Life Insurance Company in New York, for his outstanding contributions to the Northern Ireland Peace Process.

The primary goals of the William J. Flynn Center for Irish Studies are to preserve Irish heritage and culture, to promote peace and reconciliation and to deepen the appreciation of the contributions of the Irish and Irish Americans around the world.