The Ireland-U.S. Council

A Business Organization

MIDSUMMER GALA DINNER

Friday, June 28, 2024

Saint Patrick's Hall, Dublin Castle, Ireland

With Awards presented to:



Sebastian "Sebby" Raspanti



Victoria Smurfit



Jim Curley

Plus The Award For Outstanding Portraiture

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Tom Higgins
Council President

The Ireland-U.S. Council
A Business Organization



Michael Somers
President, Ireland Chapter

You Are Cordially Invited To Attend the Council's

MIDSUMMER GALA DINNER

Friday, June 28, 2024

Saint Patrick's Hall, Dublin Castle, Ireland

Cocktails: 6:30pm • Dinner: 7:30pm • Black Tie

PACKAGE OPTIONS

Individual Seats: Council Members:	**€225**
Individual Seats: Guests/Non-Members:	**€300**
Full Page ad in Dinner Program:	**€750**
Two Premium Seats plus Full Page Ad in Dinner Program:	**€1,500**
Shamrock Package: *Choice table of 10, plus full page ad in dinner program.*	**€5,000**
Harp Benefactor Package: *Premier table of 10, full page ad in program, logo on screen during dinner, logo on all signage and other materials, logo on Council website with other Patron Sponsors, President's recognition from podium.*	**€7,500**

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Book and pay online at www.irelanduscouncil.com

Award for Excellence in the Performing Arts

Presented to Victoria Smurfit



The Ireland-U.S. Council is pleased to present 2024 *Award for Excellence in the Performing Arts* to Victoria Smurfit who has built a distinguished and successful career as an actress. She is known for playing Detective Chief Inspector Roisin Connor in the ITV police procedural *Trial & Retribution* and Cruella de Vil in *Once Upon a Time* for which she was nominated as Best Supporting Actress in IFTA Film & Drama Awards.

She studied for an A-level in theatre studies and subsequently attended the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School. In 2002 Victoria stared with Hugh Grant in *About a Boy*. She has reprised roles as Nina in the 2003 film *Bulletproof Monk*. In 2011 Smurfit appeared in the *Agatha Christie's Marple* television episode "The Mirror Crack'd from Side to Side". She co-starred as Lady Jayne Wetherby in the NBC television period drama *Dracula*. In 2014, she began playing the recurring guest role of Cruella de Vil in ABC's *Once Upon a Time*. In 2021 she played Pippa in *Deadly Cuts* and in 2022 played Olivia Foyle in "Bloodlands".

Victoria is a great supporter and Patron of the Vision Ireland and has worked tirelessly on their behalf.

Award for Excellence in Public Service

Presented to Sebastian "Sebby" Raspanti



Sebastian "Sebby" Raspanti, left a successful career at a major corporation, and found inspiration to become a firefighter after family members were rescued from a fire. He went on to serve as a First Responder in New York and was one the the earliest and longest serving First Responders at Ground Zero on 9/11. Following the horrific events of that day, Sebby suffered from the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder and survivor guilt and a host of medical issues. Eventually, he bounced back from his brain trauma, first by recognizing that his injury affected him physically, emotionally, and behaviorally, he then began his quest to find modalities to treat these debilitating conditions.

Sebby's story and the doctors who worked with him are featured in the new documentary called Quiet Explosions: Healing the Brain, which can be found on Amazon. Sebby encourages anyone who is struggling with undiagnosed traumatic brain injury to watch the film to learn about new research about TBI that is continuously emerging. Sebby now spends his time volunteering to help others who suffer from similar brain health issues and has been instrumental in sponsoring legislation and programs to provide healthcare benefits and compensation to those who were injured, both physically as well as emotionally from the trauma and toxic effects of 9/11. He has also worked with healthcare professionals to create and make available diagnostic and therapeutic modalities which not only benefit those injured in 9/11, but also populations for whom such therapies and diagnostic techniques did not exist prior to his and his associates efforts.

Award for International Business Excellence

Presented to Jim Curley, Chief Executive *Jones Engineering Group*



Jim Curley is the former CEO of *Jones Engineering Group*, one of the biggest, longest-operating and respected companies in Ireland's engineering and construction sector. A Chartered Engineer by profession, Jim joined *Jones Engineering* in 1978 and was part of the management buy-out in 1993, bringing a public company at that time into private ownership.

Following the buy-out, Jim led to team that grew the Jones Group from IR£18 million annual sales to an international company with revenues of over £1Billion in 2022. Employment at the Group grew from 350 people to over 3,500 staff in the 16 countries where the Group now operates.

Jim Curley has overseen the successful completion by Jones Group teams of over $3 billion in projects in a range of industries from Medical, Life Science, Building Services, Industrial, Semi-Conductor, Data Centre and Power and Energy Sectors. Almost half of these construction projects were completed outside Ireland.

In 2022, Jim and his fellow directors sold their interests in the Group to a US Company, Cathexis Holdings LP. Jim and his family now control and operate a very successful development and investment company.

Jim is happiest surrounded by family in his beloved Dingle, he has a passion for mentoring others. He also shares a compelling interest and love for supporting Ireland's education and "creative" sectors. He and his family have provided scholarships and bursaries in the area of arts and engineering education. An avid golfer, he says he pursues aggressively the one thing money cannot buy – a lower golf handicap.

Entertainment

An Chead Ghluin Eile



An Chéad Ghlúin Eile [The Next Generation] are a singing sister duo from the Ráth Chairn Gaeltacht in County Meath. Étáin and Máire are Sean-Nós singers with a GRÁ for the oral Irish tradition of Sean-Nós [Old Style]. The native Irish speakers released their first single 'Tá Mo Chleamhnas Déanta' in July 2023 and have just released their first album. ACGE perform on TV regularly and have appeared on shows such as *The Tommy Tiernan Show*, *Bláth na hÓige*, *Ceol Ó Kylemore* and Dúirt Bean Liom. They love to travel and to sing all over! The sisters are also Irish language content creators on their joint sister Instagram account

Upcoming Council Events

Friday, September 6, 2024
Council Golf Day in Ireland
Dún Laoghaire Golf Club,
Enniskerry, Co. Wicklow, Ireland

Thursday, November 14, 2024
61st Annual Dinner of the Council
The Metropolitan Club, New York City

Friday, March 14, 2025
Saint Patrick's Lunch in New York
The Metropolitan Club, New York City



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