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In The News

Hibernians name the Donahue scholarship winner

HOLYOKE – The scholarship committee of the Ancient Order of Hibernians James A. Curran Division One, and the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians Division Two of Hampden/Hampshire Counties have chosen Lauren A. O'Donald of West Springfield as the recipient of the Maurice A. Donahue Scholarship for 2022.

Committee Chairperson Paul O. Mengel recently released a statement on this most worthy scholarship winner.

"Lauren O'Donald exemplifies the values that were so important to Maurice A. Donahue," Mengel said. "They are: scholarship, community service, and love of Irish tradition and culture. She is the ideal recipient of the scholarship that bears his name."

Lauren O'Donald is the daughter of AOH member A.J. O'Donald and LAOH member Alison O'Donald of West Springfield.

She is a recent honors graduate of Deerfield Academy, where she excelled in field hockey. She plans to attend Bowdoin

College in Brunswick Maine in the Fall to study pre-law and political science.

O'Donald has been involved with community service by participating in can drive and sandwich making for the Food Bank and volunteers at the Holyoke Children's Museum.

O'Donald is determined to give back to the community as her parents have done, when she graduates as she states in her scholarship application.

"Seeing the need for advocacy for those less fortunate either socio-economically, or due to incapacity," she said. "It has made me work to make a resounding difference in our community and society."

The late Massachusetts Senate President Maurice A. Donahue and AOH member whom the scholarship is named after, would have been proud of this year's choice for the scholarship. Maurice was so committed to encouraging young people to pursue a higher education so that they could give back to the community. At the Democratic Convention in Chicago in 1968, he challenged everyone

to do more for the less fortunate: "Let us place ourselves in the shoes of the less fortunate and determine humanely what we all must do and do it."

AOH member Joe O' Connor and his wife LAOH member Mary K. O'Connor and their committee raised the monies to benefit the scholarship this past March by sponsoring a take out of a traditional corned beef and cabbage dinner "Irish Night A-Go-Go" prepared by the Log Cabin of Holyoke.

Next year, the Hibernian's hope to be back at the Log Cabin with Irish music, dancing, and the traditional corned beef and cabbage dinner.

Locally, early on, the Hibernians helped Irish Immigrants assimilate in America-AOH was founded in Holyoke in 1880 and the Ladies Order was founded in Holyoke in 1897.

Today the Hibernians have been active in the community by assisting at Kates Kitchen, offering The Maurice A. Donahue Memorial Scholarship, and assisting the Holyoke St Patrick's Day

Parade Committee at the Annual Road Race and the entering of at least 2 floats in the Parade.

The Hibernians are committed to being "A Voice for Ireland." The Maurice A. Donahue Memorial Scholarship will be presented at the Annual Traditional Summer Picnic at Hamel's Pavillion from 1 to 4 p.m. on Sunday Aug. 28 rain or shine. There will be Irish and American Music provided by the Boston Blackthorn Band, children's games, dancing, hot dogs, hamburgers, BBQ chicken, baked beans, coffee and dessert.

For tickets call John Gaughan at 860-904-3056 or Fran Hennessey at 413-785-5687 go to Eventbrite.com by Aug. 22. The public is invited to attend.

The Maurice A. Donahue Memorial Scholarship is for a child or grandchild of a present member in good standing for at least one year, from the James A. Curran Division One or the LAOH Division Two of Hampden/Hampshire Counties. For more information on the Hibernians, visit the web site at aoh-holyoke.com.