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Hibernians choose scholarship winners for 2025

REGIONAL
Staff report

HOLYOKE – The Ancient Order of Hibernians of Hampden and Hampshire counties have chosen four scholarship winners for 2025. Founded in Holyoke in 1880, the Ancient Order of Hibernians continue to live by their motto of friendship, unity, and Christian charity.

The Hibernian Scholarship was named after Hibernian and Massachusetts State Senate President Maurice A. Donahue in 1980, who in 1968 challenged people at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago to help others.

The scholarship winners are: Emma Kelly of Holyoke who is attending Northeastern University; Maela Allen of Springfield, a student at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst; Peter Pluta of Holyoke who is enrolled in Springfield Technical Community College; and Riley Mary Allen of Holyoke, a student at Westfield State University.

"These four people represent the core values that were so important to the man for whom the scholarship was named," said scholarship chairperson Paul O. Mengel.

"Maurice A. Donahue believed deeply in academic excellence, community service, and love of Irish History and Culture. He would be very proud of these scholarship award recipients," Mengel said.

The Hibernians ask prospective members "to be a voice for Ireland." The organization helps the community through supporting Kate's Kitchen and Margaret's Pantry; the Soldiers Home; Homework House; the Children's Museum in addition to providing scholarships.

The scholarships were presented at the Hibernian Traditional Annual Summer Picnic in late August at Hamel's Summit View Pavilion in Holyoke.



Pictured from left to right: Emma Kelly, Maela Allen, Hibernian president Joseph O'Connor, Ladies Hibernian president Mary Kate O'Connor, Peter Pluta, and Riley Allen. (iObserve photo/ courtesy of Peter Hogan)