

Report on the Toronto Commission on the Future of Ireland

At Toronto City Hall on Saturday June 28, the Commission on the Future of Ireland came to town.

With over 90 members of the Irish community in attendance, Sinn Féin TD Rose Conway-Walsh engaged in a fireside chat with Professor Pa Sheehan from the Celtic Studies department at the University of Toronto (see below).

The event was chaired by Hugo Straney and featured an outstanding and diverse group of panelists from the Irish diaspora in Toronto.

These included:

- Scott Armstrong, Chief Executive Officer at Brainrider;**
- Geraldine Browne, Toronto Irish Person of the Year (2019) and producer at the Toronto Irish Players;**
- Edel Daly, Fraud Investigations and member of Roger Casements football team of Toronto GAA;**
- Kirsty McLeod, Business analyst and member of Na Piarsaigh camogie team of Toronto GAA;**
- Gerry O'Connor, Toronto Irish Person of the Year (2020), recipient of the Governor General of Canada Sovereign Medal for Volunteers (2018), founder and past president of Blackrock Corporate Services of Toronto, and past member of the Board of Directors at the Toronto Region Board of Trade.**
- Pat Sheridan, Executive Board Member, of LiUNA Local 183 trade union.**

But perhaps the best part of the Commission event was the engagement and passion of the Irish community in attendance. The capacity crowd was completely locked in during the fireside chat and panel discussion and when it came time for them to have their say, there were outstanding contributions and questions which rounded out an excellent afternoon.

The final speaker was Ciarán Quinn, the Sinn Féin representative to North America. When he spoke, he made the connections between the Commission events in Ireland and those in Canada. He stressed the importance of hearing from the Irish nation abroad as the support for Irish unity continues to grow.