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## **Irish Cultural Center and McClelland Library Selects Dr. Amanda Hofmann-Handy as New Executive Director**

*Dr. Hofmann-Handy secures position as the organization prepares for Irish-American Heritage Month and its St. Patrick's Day festivities*

**PHOENIX, February 18, 2026** - After a months-long search, the Irish Cultural Center and McClelland Library has selected Dr. Amanda Hofmann-Handy as its new Executive Director in its lead up to its St. Patrick's Day celebrations next month.

With a Doctorate of Education from the University of Southern California, Dr. Hofmann-Handy brings with her nearly twenty-five years of nonprofit experience and a direct focus on organizational change and leadership. Throughout her journey, Dr. Hofmann-Handy has lived and practiced servant leadership across the country in diverse ecosystems and communities. Her work has included curating a living collection within a renowned science center and serving as executive director for a children's museum—spaces that bridge science with cultural storytelling and collective memory, as well as leading the program team for the Girl Scouts Arizona Cactus-Pine Council, supporting a vast and diverse jurisdiction while contributing to curriculum design for the national organization. Most recently, she served as the Chief Executive Officer, in support of this nation's largest urban preserve. Her work reflects a deep commitment to inclusive, culturally responsive, and community-rooted learning experiences.

"My work has evolved over my career and has become increasingly informed by the human experience," Dr. Hofmann-Handy said. "For a quarter of a century, the Irish Cultural Center and McClelland Library has served as a home for the Irish diaspora of Arizona and much of the greater region. To be a part of its team and lasting legacy while directing its vision and programs towards the future is a unique and exciting opportunity for which I am grateful. As we navigate what the next twenty-five years of this



organization looks like, I pull from the Irish and Celtic appreciation of history, culture, and storytelling as a guidepost to lead us towards success.”

“Dr. Hofmann-Handy’s credentials, collaborative leadership style, and clear vision for the future of our campus made her an unequivocal choice for our hiring committee,” said Laddie Guy Shane, President and Chairman of the Irish Cultural and Learning Foundation. “With St. Patrick’s Day upon us and national attention turning toward Irish communities, there is no better time to welcome a leader who understands both the cultural significance and institutional responsibility of this role. Whether you are from Ireland, of Irish descent, or simply curious about Irish culture and celebration, our doors are open. We are confident Amanda’s leadership will ensure that all feel welcomed to our castle in the desert. As our campus and community continue to grow, she will help guide us into the next chapter of our organization’s history and strengthen our legacy for generations to come.”

Dr. Hofmann-Handy’s Irish heritage is rooted on both sides of her family, with ancestral ties to County Kilkenny, Dublin, Cork, Kerry, and Derry~Londonderry. Her maternal lineage includes the Butler family of Kilkenny; the Punch and McCarthy families of Cork and Kerry; and Irish emigrants who later settled in Massachusetts. Her paternal line traces to Irish-born ancestors who emigrated in the nineteenth century.

To learn more about offerings for St. Patrick’s Day and Irish-American Heritage Month at the Irish Cultural Center and McClelland Library, visit [azirish.org/grandolirishmonth](http://azirish.org/grandolirishmonth).

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**About the Irish Cultural Center and McClelland Library:** We bring Irish heritage to life through dynamic education, vibrant community events, and the celebration of cherished traditions, inviting people of all cultures to connect, learn, and carry the Celtic spirit forward. The Irish Cultural Center and McClelland Library are divisions of the Irish Cultural & Learning Foundation, Inc., a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation, and are owned and maintained by the City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department. Learn more at [azirish.org](http://azirish.org).