



# Michaela

FOUNDATION



*life without limits*

Annual Report 2018

“ I have learnt that everyone is going through their own challenges and we can't judge a book by its cover. It's important to check up on friends and there's nothing wrong with asking for help. ”



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## Chairman's Welcome



**This year has been a great success for Michaela Foundation. We continued to deliver on the hugely successful Michaela Foundation Summer camps, delivering 17 camps in total and in doing so, were able to impact 1,200 young Campettes and over 330 volunteers.**

**It is now 7 years since we launched our inaugural camp in Glencull, Tyrone back in 2012 and one of the most heart-warming successes for me personally, is to see many of the Campettes from the early years now volunteering with us and promoting our ethos to the next generation.**

We introduced two brand new programmes that will now form part of our overall annual programme delivery, and I am really proud of that. After many months of research, development and hard work, we delivered our Wings Awards programme which celebrates and supports young people doing incredible things in their communities as well as launching the 'Heart & Soul' Retreats which allows us to deliver a faith and wellbeing programme in schools throughout Ireland.

We had over 60 applications for the inaugural Wings awards and we were able to award 10 winners a grant of £250 whilst we produced video of all winners, showing the public exactly what they achieved. We were blown away by some of the fantastic winners and are looking forward to more nominations in 2019.

Our Heart & Soul Retreats were delivered 46 times in 2018, a huge success and 1,150 students are now more knowledgeable around the area of resilience, self-acceptance and gratitude. Whilst we had delivered one off retreat's before, a sustained programme was delivered throughout autumn and winter and the feedback has been excellent. I believe there is a huge demand and requirement for this type of activity and we have the skills, care and passion at Michaela Foundation to provide this.

2018 also marked the first full year that Orla McIntyre fulfilled her role as Operations Manager. I am delighted how she has performed this year and the fact that she delivered two new programmes alongside our existing programmes and activities, showcased her hardwork and dedication, as well as her ability.

At the end of 2018, we said goodbye and good luck to Janine Diamond who was with us for 3 years in the position of Operations Assistant. Janine was a valued member of the team and always worked with integrity. I want to thank her for her effort throughout this time and wish her well for her career.

Our core donor support is as valuable as ever and indeed really does enable us to plan ahead. We have continued to be fortunate with some new donors and organisations ready to help our cause, and for that we are extremely grateful. Thank you to everyone who continues to help Michaela Foundation, on behalf of the many beneficiaries we are truly grateful for helping to give so many opportunities to so many young people.

*John McCreavey*

Chairman Michaela Foundation  
December 2018

## a Message from Mickey Harte

**I am delighted to concur with the Chairman's reflections on the increasing and enduring success of the work of Michaela Foundation**

The positive feedback I personally, and the organisation generally, continue to receive from Campettes, Camp Leaders, parents/guardians is most encouraging and endorses the belief that we are providing something innovative and beneficial for young girls between the ages of 11-13.

I also want to acknowledge John for the continuity he provides for the foundation and note that the seamless succession of Orla from volunteer to Operations Manager was in no small way due to his expertise and hard work. Additionally, his ability in the field of finance is an added bonus for our organisation.

On behalf of all the Trustees I would like to commend John on his dedication to this excellent foundation.

*Mickey Harte*

Trustee

“The positive feedback I personally, and the organisation generally, continue to receive from campettes, camp leaders, parents/guardians is most encouraging.”



## trust Details

**Official charity name:** Michaela Foundation

**Charity Number:** NIC 105705. We are registered as a charity by the Northern Ireland Charity Commission

**Charity classifications:**

- The advancement of education
- The advancement of health or the saving of lives
- The advancement of citizenship or community development
- The advancement of the arts, culture, heritage or science
- Other charitable purposes

**Area of operation:** Ireland

**Address and registered office:** Unit 6, Banbridge Enterprise Centre, Scarva Road Industrial Estate, Banbridge, Co. Down, BT32 3QD

**Board of Trustees**

Chairman - John McAreavey  
Trustee - Mickey Harte  
Trustee - Catherine Strain  
Trustee - Brendan McAreavey  
Trustee - Matthew Harte

New trustees are voted in following a proposal by any of the current Trustees which can be made at any time. We aim for a unanimous agreement before potential trustees are approached. No other individual or organisation can appoint trustees.

**Governing Document:** Trust Deed

The Trust was formed on 25th June 2011 as a charity and is governed by its Trust Deed signed on the same date. The registration with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland happened on 28th September 2016

**Bankers:** Danske Bank, Banbridge, Northern Ireland.

**Website:** [www.michaelafoundation.com](http://www.michaelafoundation.com)

**Email:** [enquiries@michaelafoundation.com](mailto:enquiries@michaelafoundation.com)

## Charity Purpose

Michaela Foundation is inspired by the life of Michaela McAreavey. We offer young people throughout Ireland the chance to experience and live out our 'Life Without Limits' ethos by offering programmes tailored to establish a happy, confident, faith filled life.

The mission of Michaela Foundation is to promote our core values through each and every activity we operate. Our core values are as follows;

- **Irish** - The love of Irish language and cultural identity.
- **Faith** - The development of trust and a relationship with God who loves us dearly.
- **Fun** - Having fun throughout our life!
- **Well-Being** - Looking after our mental and physical self and that of others.
- **Fashion** - An expression of our creativity and artistic self.

We concentrate on attracting donors and volunteer groups, and the delivery of our services in Ireland to young people looking for opportunities to enhance their lives.

**Vision**

We believe that young people yearn for guidance about how to achieve a fulfilled life. We want every young person to feel loved and to see how beautiful they truly are. To do this we train young volunteers in how to achieve this and inspire them to follow our ethos and to be role models of Michaela Foundation.

**Charity Objectives**

- The delivery of Summer Camps for young girls aged 11-13 throughout Ireland during the summer which deliver our core values and aim to enrich the girls attending.
- The opportunity for volunteers to learn our ethos and help us deliver our core values through our programmes.
- The delivery of Workshops and retreats in Faith, Irish Culture and Well-being for young people in schools and other public areas.

- The recognition, promotion and award of young people who share and exhibit our ethos through their endeavours with us in our projects and by themselves in their local communities.

**Governing Document:**

Trust Deed. The Trust was formed on 25th June 2011 as a charity and is governed by its Trust Deed signed on this date. The registration with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland happened on 28th September 2016.

**Going Concern**

The Trusts financial position and performance has been outlined in the financial review. The Trustees have assessed projected future income, expenditure and cash flows and have analysed the strength of the Trust's reserves, its liquid assets and its ability to withstand a material fall in incoming resources. Consideration has been given to stability and diversity of various income streams in making this assessment.

The Trustees have concluded that there is a reasonable expectation that the Trust has adequate resources to continue activities for the foreseeable future. Accordingly, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements.

**Risk Management**

The Trustees are satisfied that the major risks identified in the main areas - financial, governance, operational, compliance and external - have been mitigated through proper and comprehensive planning and operational decision-making, management systems, insurance cover, specialist advice and holding appropriate levels of funds for residual reserves. The risk management assessment is monitored regularly by the staff and by the Trustees. The Trustees have also considered any potential conflicts of interest and the implications of the Bribery Act 2010.

**Public Benefit**

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and setting grant making policies. In particular, the Trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

**Disclosure of Information**

The Trustees who held office at the date of approval of this Trustees' report confirm that they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a Trustee to make themselves aware of any relevant financial information and to establish that the relevant authorities are aware of that information.

**Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities**

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations. In preparing the financial statements the Trustees are required to select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently, observe the methods and principles in the charities SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice), make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent, and prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue its activities.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions, and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Trust. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Trust and for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the UK governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

# Financial Statements

## Financial Review and Results

During the year the Trust raised **£110,904**.  
Total expenditure for the year was **£125,883**

The core costs of the Trust were covered by Project Income, fundraising and donations.

Our main funding continues to come from our Summer Camp income along with fundraising events organised by us and for us. Fundraising activities raised £30,463 which was down on 2017, although 2017 included the Marathon Match which was a huge fundraiser. In 2018 we held our first ever Gala Ball which we intend to make into an annual event, it contributed £8,453.

The Trustees have continued to focus on creating sustainable income streams and three primary objectives for income generation:

- to ensure core costs remain covered by Camp Income, Fundraising events and donations.
- to demonstrate long-term relationships with supporters based on effective stewardship and evidence of the impact of its programmes;
- to develop the volunteering programme while at the same time promoting a high degree of integrity and social responsibility towards the expectations of volunteers and local host communities.

Furthermore the Trustees continue to ensure expenditure is monitored regularly and is in line with approved budgetary controls.

We are unusual in that I maintain a daily contact with Operational Manager and work voluntarily to help with the running of the charity. As a Chartered Accountant, fiscal responsibility is of upmost importance to me which is reflected in the financial running of the trust.

Approved by the Board of Trustees and signed on its behalf by,

*John McAreevey*  
Chairman



“ Thank you to everyone who continues to help Michaela Foundation, on behalf of the many beneficiaries we are truly grateful for helping to give so many opportunities to so many young people. ”

# Receipts and Payments

A1 Receipts	Unrestricted Funds	Total Funds
Donations & Legacies	17,758	17,758
Grants	-	-
Fundraising Activities	30,463	30,463
Dividend on Investments	-	-
Members' subscriptions	-	-
Charitable trading receipts	62,197	62,197
Rents from land & buildings	-	-
Other charitable receipts	486	486
<b>A1 Sub Total</b> (Gross income for the Annual Return)	<b>110,904</b>	<b>110,904</b>
A2 Asset and Investment Sales		
Proceeds from sale of Fixed Asset	-	-
Loan repayment received	-	-
<b>A2 Sub Total</b>	-	-
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>110,904</b>	<b>110,904</b>
A3 Payments		
Cost of fundraising events	19,677	19,677
Gross trading payments	39,078	39,078
Investment management costs	-	-
Direct charitable activity	67,128	67,128
Grants & donations paid	-	-
Governance costs	-	-
Other costs	-	-
<b>A3 Sub total</b>	<b>125,883</b>	<b>125,883</b>
A4 Asset and investment		
Purchase of investments	-	-
Loans made	-	-
<b>A4 Sub total</b>	-	-
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>124,345</b>	<b>124,345</b>
Net of receipts / (payments)	(14,979)	(14,979)
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	355,319	355,319
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>340,340</b>	<b>340,340</b>

# Balance Sheet

B1 Cash Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Total funds	Last year
Current Account	11,655	11,655	29,664
Deposit Account	300,494	300,494	300,045
Credit Card Account	(571)	(571)	244
Euro Account - Converted to GBP	28,793	28,793	25,853
<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>340,340</b>	<b>340,340</b>	<b>355,319</b>
<b>B2 Other Monetary Assets</b>			
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	-	-	-
<b>B3 Investment Assets</b>			
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	-	-	-
<b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>			
Buildings	-	25,000	25,000
Motor Vehicles	-	3,750	5,000
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>28,750</b>	<b>30,000</b>
<b>B5 Liabilities</b>			
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	-	-	-

“ I had a brilliant time, every day went too fast. ”

# Review of charitable activities



## Michaela FOUNDATION GIRLS SUMMER CAMP

Summer 2018 saw our seventh consecutive year of our largest initiative, our Girls Summer Camp. We hosted 17 camps across 9 counties throughout Ireland, including bringing three new camps to Antrim, Fermanagh & Tyrone.

Our Summer Camps are designed with each individual Campette in mind and help to develop their faith, confidence and self-acceptance with fun at their very core. Summer 2018, saw us engage with over 1,200 young girls aged 11-13 and over 340 of our outstanding volunteers. Our Summer Camp initiative continues to go from strength to strength with an additional three camps already in the pipeline for 2019.

The work that goes in to planning our summer camps starts at least 6/7 months prior. We have a fantastic relationship with our host schools and liaise with them to set the camp dates in November. November also sees the beginning of our Camp Advisory Group meetings. This is a group of our volunteers who come together to plan the activities for the following summer. We have our five elements of Fun; Faith; Fashion; Fáilte & Wellbeing which all need to provide a different activity in each element, every single day - as you can imagine this can be a mammoth task! We are incredibly grateful to have our Camp Advisory group who work with us to come up with new, interesting activities, with an underlying message to ensure camps are fresh from year to year. Once we agree on an activity it needs to be costed to ensure that it isn't too expensive to deliver at camp whilst also considering the logistical requirements of shipping all the resources to each and every camp. Leaders aim to provide a fun, friendly & welcoming environment in which campettes not only develop their skills and talents but self-esteem too.

Our Camps would not be possible without the hundreds of volunteers who give so graciously of their time. Our volunteer registration opens every year at the start of January and every volunteer is Garda-checked or are cleared by Access NI with the help of the fantastic Ulster GAA. After the teams are finalised, they meet up within their camp teams throughout the year in preparation for camp in the summer and they attend our National Training Day. This year our National Training Day was held on the 26th May 2018, in Queen's Student Union, Belfast. We hosted over 300 volunteers where they got to engage with other volunteers from other camps and received training in the activities they would be delivering at camp.

We are proud to have developed a great management system, with LD2 Limited, that allows us to register volunteers and campettes in a professional way online, whilst allowing us to gather much needed information e.g. emergency contact details, medical information, allergies, campette collection and jersey size etc.

The 2018 jerseys were again beautifully designed by O'Neills Sports and every volunteer and campette receives a jersey for camp. These jerseys are hugely popular and also act as a great promotional tool as the girls wear them with pride throughout the year.

Each and every campette also received a Wallet Card which details the values that were transcribed from a poster Michaela made for her students in school.

Michaela Foundation believes that the values which Michaela lived her life should live on, and that young people can succeed in life fulfilment and happiness with faith, confidence and fun as their foundation.



“ Best week with the best people. ”



**In February 2018 we launched the first of our new initiatives – our Wings Awards.**

**The Wings Awards are open to young people in Ireland from all communities, aged from 11-24. We hear so many ‘bad news’ stories about a small percentage of our youth and we thought we would like to turn this around and celebrate our young people who are motivators within their local community.**

The awards on offer were split into three age groups;

- Age 11-13
- Age 14-16
- Age 17-24

Each Wings Award recipient received a **€250 bursary** to spend on themselves and/or their community.

We were inundated with over 70 applications and were completely blown away reading about the amazing young people we have in our communities! On Thursday 12th April we held our Wings Awards Night in the Great Hall, Queen’s University, Belfast and was hosted by the outstanding Malachi Cush. Every nominee in attendance received a certificate and on hearing their achievements, the audience were humbled and captivated in equal measure. In each category, we had our standout winners:

Some of our winners included;

**Kaylee**

Kaylee was nominated by her teacher at Killard House School, Donaghadee. Kaylee has overcome personal challenges of autism and other learning difficulties, to discover a huge talent for music and singing. She has since performed in London & America and has gone viral twice with her version of Hallelujah, most recently seen on America’s ‘Little Big Shots’. We were blown away by her voice and her amazing, positive attitude.

**Ryan**

Ryan was nominated by his family friend and neighbour, Maria for his tireless fundraising for various charities through profits raised by his

business “Ryan’s Cookie Box”. Ryan sells his delicious baked goods providing a local community service via his “Cookie Box” positioned at the end of his garden, customers leave their money in an honesty box with monthly total profit in excess of £600! Ryan donates his monthly profits to various charities such as Marie Curie, Medicines Sans Frontiers, Age NI, Air Ambulance NI and Adsum Foundation. We were delighted to see Ryan got his Great British Bake Off-inspired yellow mixer!

**Janda**

Janda was nominated by her teacher at St. Mary’s College, Derry for helping others overcome challenges and adversity. Janda arrived in Derry from Syria in 2016 and immediately threw herself into the local community. She began teaching English to other refugees, but also teaching Kurdish and Arabic to local people, enabling friends and neighbours to communicate better with the Syrian community in Derry. Janda also leads ‘field trips’ to the town centre, to help newcomers recognise the different street signs and help them find their way around, as well as showing them how to take buses and taxis back to their homes. She translates for other refugees during medical appointments and is an integral part of her community. On the back of receiving her Wings Award, Janda was invited to Dublin to take part in the World Meeting of Families celebration in Croke Park, Dublin and read a poem on stage in front of thousands, including Pope Francis himself!

We look forward to seeing the continuous growth of our Wings Awards in years to come, highlighting the fantastic young people we have among us!

“ Our whole ethos is ‘Life Without Limits’ so we wanted to recognise and award people who are going out and actively living that ethos through using their God given skills and talents to the best of their ability. We are encouraging young people to use their wings and fly, get out there and show the world what they’ve got! By using our promotion and platforms, we can share their stories and positively inspire more and more young people. ”



# M.F. Heart & Soul RETREAT



“ All the students involved loved how the course taught them to assess challenges objectively and to problem solve constructively. ”

## The second of our new initiatives this year has been our ‘Heart & Soul Retreats’.

We were becoming increasingly aware of the issues young people were having to deal with and we thought that delivering a faith & mental health retreat in schools could help young people gain the tools they needed to face whatever challenges came their way. We were acutely aware that faith and mental health development is more crucial than ever so we decided to speak to working psychologists, schools and others already delivering retreats to ensure we were on the right track with our content.

Our Heart & Soul Retreats have Faith & Well-being at their core and focus on the themes of Resilience, Self-Acceptance and Attitude of Gratitude.

The half-day retreats are filled with group work, games, activities and plenty of opportunity to discuss and reflect and are aimed at pupils in Years 10-12 (ages 13-16). The retreats are for smaller groups of no more than 30 pupils as we found the smaller group sizes allowed them to relax and get the full benefit of the content.

“ To date, in the course of three months, we have delivered **46 retreats** in schools in **5 different counties**, engaging with almost **1,200 young people**. Our feedback so far has been overwhelmingly positive. ”



Our retreats are split into three themes:

### RESILIENCE:

We look at challenges to the average teenager and how to cope with those challenges. We look a little at breaking down challenges into smaller, manageable goals. We then look at prayer and how this can help having someone to talk to when they need it most.

### SELF-ACCEPTANCE:

We look at social media pros and cons and look at how people will only ever show their highlight reels. Look at what qualities we can't see in a profile picture. What qualities are we most proud of? We discuss how God made us exactly how we are supposed to be.

### ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE:

We discuss all the small things we take for granted every day - having a 'Good morning, God' attitude versus, 'Good God, it's morning!' attitude. Discuss how being thankful can have a positive impact on our mental health. They then write a letter to someone that has had the biggest positive impact on their life.

## World meeting of families event, Dublin 2018



**In August 2018, 15 of our volunteers travelled to Dublin to volunteer at the World Meeting of Families. We were over the moon to be invited and for 3 days we delivered workshops to children and young people from all corners of the Globe.**

On the last day of the Teen Village Workshops, Michaela Foundation was offered a unique and incredible opportunity. Our Operations Manager, Orla sat on a panel with others to discuss the theme of the day, 'Hope' and what it meant to Michaela Foundation in front of hundreds of young people. Other charities, very like ourselves, also took part in the panel discussion but sitting on the same couch was Cardinal Tagle, who was an inspiration to listen to and is tipped to be the next Pope! Ultimately, working in the Teen Village was a unique experience and while we were celebrating with people from different countries who were speaking different languages, we felt very much part of the one family.

## Volunteering in the Teen Village



As volunteers, we found ourselves imbued with the buzz, energy and excitement radiating from the young people attending the celebrations in the Teen Village. However, as onlookers, we couldn't help

but notice how the majority of the teenagers experienced the event through the lens of a Smart phone. Posting, sending, snapping, editing. This reality served as reminder of the role our workshops had to play and the impact that we could have on these young and impressionable people. In our work, we focused on the themes of Hope, Resilience, Self-Acceptance, and Attitude of Gratitude.

Over the course of the 3 days we met and engaged with a diverse range of young people and there were many highlights. We were all delighted when a group of Taiwanese teenagers taught us the '5 Finger Prayer' in Chinese!

## The Festival of Families & The Papal Mass

After volunteering in the Teen Village, we were rewarded with tickets to attend the Concert in Croke Park and The Papal Mass in Phoenix Park. Attending both events was the perfect way to finish off an unbelievable week for Michaela Foundation. The Croke Park concert was a celebration and it was a joy to be a part of. The Papal Mass is something that will go down in history for Michaela Foundation and was a humbling and joyous occasion.



# Fundraisers



## A selection of fundraisers throughout 2018...

### Strictly Does Jiving

'Strictly Does Jiving' saw us once again partnering up with Cancer Focus NI to put together a large fundraiser. The night took place in the Tullyglass Hotel in Ballymena on Saturday 24th March and it saw 8 couples take to the stage to showcase their dance moves to Country Music to help raise vital funds for the two charities.

### Belfast Marathon

On Monday, 6th May 2018, 20 volunteers got together as 4 relay teams to run the Belfast marathon on what was a scorcher of a day! We had an absolute ball and hope to expand on the number taking part in 2019, in what has the potential to be a brilliant fundraiser.

### Gala Ball

Saturday, October 13th 2018 saw Michaela Foundation descend on the Hilton Hotel, Belfast in all its glitz and glamour where we held our first Volunteer Celebration Gala Ball. This night was all about our volunteers and we really wanted to celebrate the fantastic input they have at Michaela Foundation throughout the year. We introduced an award scheme where each volunteer was recognised: Bronze Award for those that had volunteered for one year; Silver Awards for three years and Gold Award for those that had been with us for five or more years. The fabulous Annette Kelly once again provided her talents as compère on the evening and the outstanding 'Hootin' Annie's' raised the roof until late!

### Winter Wonderland Afternoon Tea Party Fundraiser

A Ladies' Sparkling Afternoon Tea Fundraiser on behalf of Michaela Foundation was held on Sunday 2nd December 2018 in The Chelsea, Belfast.

A ticketed event guests enjoyed, red carpet on arrival a glass of prosecco & traditional afternoon tea in the elegance of The Chelsea whilst being entertained by DJ Johnny. Guests also appreciated a Christmas 'party look' make-up artist demonstration from Louise at Louise Donnelly Make Up & Beauty Studio as well as entertaining interludes from Compère Annette Kelly (Little Penny Thoughts).

Fundraising initiatives like this will enable us to continue inspiring and supporting young people throughout Ireland via our engagement programs such as our Wings Awards, Michaela Foundation Girls Summer Camp, Heart & Soul Retreat, workshops & presentations.

### Trillick Carol Service

On December 16th 2018, Ronan and his amazing St. MacCartan's Choir delivered a truly, spectacular performance in their 'O Holy Night' Carol Service where Michaela Foundation was the beneficiary.

Special mention must go to our fab volunteer Moya, who not only performed in the choir, but also spoke to the huge audience about what volunteering with Michaela Foundation meant to her.



“ I have come away with a more positive outlook on life and realise how important it is to show gratitude in everyday situations. ”

## One Year on... Orla McIntyre

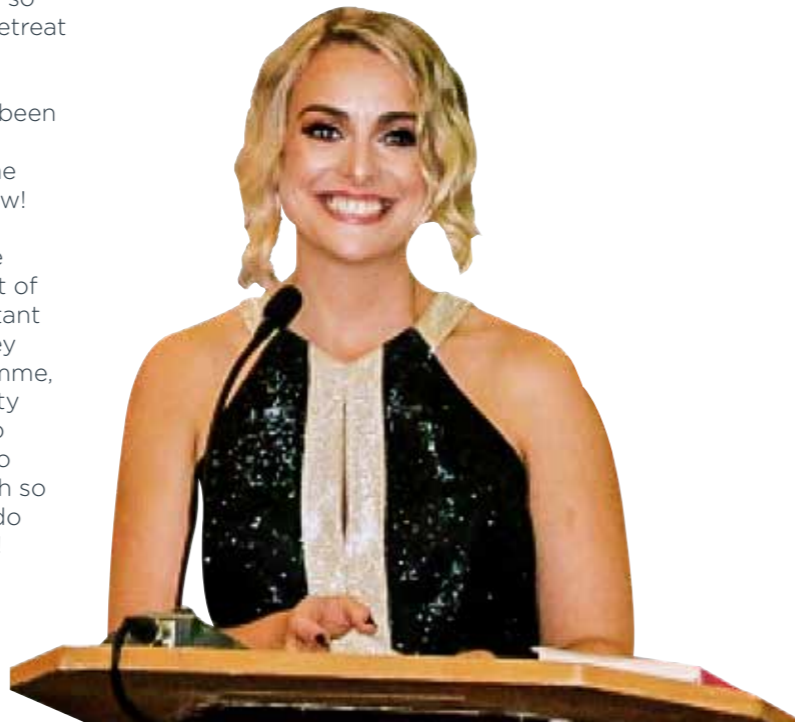
**I joined Michaela Foundation as Operations Manager in November 2017 having volunteered at our Summer Camps for 5 years previously and to say 2018 has been a rollercoaster ride with Michaela Foundation would be a severe understatement!**

We had the launch of two brand new initiatives, our 'Wings Awards' and our 'Heart & Soul Retreats' to go alongside our ever-growing 'Girls Summer Camp' initiative. The Wings Awards was extremely humbling and overwhelming - it helped to cement what I already knew, that we have outstanding young people in our midst and the future is very, very bright! Our Heart & Soul Retreats was something that I was delighted to be involved in and very close to my heart. I am a firm believer that helping young people to develop their tools to deal with challenges at a young age can only be beneficial to them as they get older. I loved every second of being out in schools, delivering our programme and our feedback so far has been so positive. I am very optimistic to see how our retreat programme will grow.

Being on this side of the Summer Camps has been a very different experience from volunteering! From our National Training Day in May until the last week of camps at the end of July, time flew! Organising what seemed like a mountain of resources and jerseys for 17 camps could have been overwhelming if it wasn't for the support of our amazing volunteers. For me, it was important to visit every camp and I am so glad I did! They may have all been following the same programme, but every camp had its own unique personality and way of doing things that I left every camp happier than when I went in! It was inspiring to watch every volunteer approach their role with so much joy, passion and enthusiasm. We really do have the best team of volunteers in the world!

There have been too many highlights in 2018, that I doubt I could fit them all in! Volunteering in the Teen Village at the World Meeting of Families with our team and speaking on a panel in front of hundreds of young people was an extraordinary experience. Our fantastic fundraisers throughout the year: learning to jive for our Strictly fundraiser with Cancer Focus NI; having 20 of our volunteers crammed into my small kitchen in Belfast drinking tea before laughing the entire way round our chosen legs of the Belfast Marathon; our beautiful Afternoon Tea in December and all the stunning carol services - we are fully indebted to everyone that gives of their time to help us raise much-needed funds to do the work we do. Our very first Celebration Gala Ball in October 2018 was a huge highlight for me, celebrating so many of our fantastic volunteers and toasting an amazing year at Michaela Foundation. Our volunteers really are the beating heart of our Foundation.

I had 5 wonderful years of volunteering at Michaela Foundation and when the opportunity came up to work full-time as Operations Manager, it was a chance I had to take. Now, one year on, I am so glad I took the leap...when you're passionate about what you do and the people you work with, it's never really considered 'work'. I can't wait to see what 2019 has in store.



## thank you

**I would like to conclude this report by thanking the many people who contribute and support the brilliant work Michaela Foundation continues to do. Whilst this foundation was borne from a tragic place, it is now the embodiment of hope, life and positivity that shines so much light into many people's lives.**

I am immensely proud of how Michaela Foundation has evolved over the years and our dedication to improve is equalled by our brilliant volunteers and supporters. You are the people who truly impact each other through your generosity of spirit and action of kindness. Thank you so much.

To our core partners at Ulster GAA, LD2 Limited and O'Neill's International Sports, thank you for your continued support and expertise through this journey. We are truly blessed to have great people to work alongside and are indebted to you support as we thrive to meet our objectives.

Here's to a bigger and better 2019!

*"In 2018, our activities saw us positively engage with 2,850 young people through camps, retreats and events and this is something we are very proud of."*

*John McAreavey*

Chairman, Michaela Foundation



**Michaela**  
FOUNDATION

*life without limits*

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