

May 2014

Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers Newsletter

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About CIIC

Welcome to the May 2014 edition of the CIIC Newsletter!

This month many CIIC Member Centers have been preparing for the arrival of J1 students visiting the US for the summer on the J1 work/travel visa. Our J1 subcommittee has been working hard over the past 8 months to work with U.S. sponsors to ensure that students arrive to America seamlessly, enabling students to engage in a cultural opportunity of a lifetime during their time here. Nationally centers will be hosting many J1 orientations which will cover topics such as work, accommodation, safety and much more.

We hope you find the diversity of articles interesting, please feel free to forward this newsletter by clicking on the link at the bottom of this page.

All the best, Sara McDermott

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What's Happening at Irish Senior Connect

by Susan Doody
Irish Senior Connect
855.249.5146

Irish Senior Connect continues to receive strong response in the Irish community throughout Greater Boston and beyond. The program, funded by the DFA Ireland and the AIF is in it's third year providing listening line, resource information and referral, and well-being check-in call services for seniors.

Volunteers, providing twelve hours per week of call coverage recently received the 300th listening line call to date from area seniors. Over 1300 well-being check-in calls have been made to a growing list of 34 seniors who have signed on to the well-being check-in call program.

Plans are underway for the expansion of the program to another CIIC member site, CIIS in Chicago. Recruitment of volunteers has begun, and orientation and training meetings are scheduled through June in preparation for line activation and service provision start up in mid July.

Give us a like! We're on Facebook

For more information about the program, contact ISC Program Coordinator, Susan Doody, at susan.doody@ciic-usa.org

Irish Senior Connect is generously funded by The American Ireland Fund and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Emigrant Support Program.

Upcoming J1 Orientation Dates

Irish Immigration Pastoral Center - San Francisco

From 12 noon onwards: May 29 May 4, May 11, May 18

Irish Outreach - San Diego

From 10am: May 29, June 2, June 5, June 9, June 11

Aisling Irish Community Center - Yonkers, NY June 5 from 5 - 7pm

Emerald Isle Immigration Center - NY

Queens: May 27 - May 30; June 2-13 daily at 2pm Bronx: May 27 - May 30; June 2-13 daily at 3pm June 2 from 4 - 6pm at the Consulate General of Ireland

Irish Student Outreach Center - Ocean City, MDJune 7 at 3pm

Chicago Irish Immigrant Support - ChicagoDaily Orientations

Irish Pastoral Centre Boston - Boston May 28 and June 5 from 1 - 3pm

Irish International Immigrant Center - BostonJune 4, 11, & 18 (depending on numbers) from 2-4pm

For more information on center locations, please visit the <u>CIIC</u> Website.

IPC Boston Welcomes New Executive Director

Irish Pastoral Centre, Boston MA



The Irish Pastoral Center recently welcomed Megan Carroll as their new Executive Director. Carroll brings with her a wealth of experience to the non-profit Irish organization which she has accumulated from her many years of working at a variety of business, law and non-profit organizations. More recently, Carroll was well known for her role as Director of Intern Placements for the J-1 Irish Work and Travel Program at the Irish International Immigrant Center.

"On behalf of the Board of Directors, I'm delighted to welcome Megan Carroll to the IPC" said Sheila Gleeson, Chairperson of the Board. "I'm confident she will continue the organizations mission and help strengthen the role the IPC plays in our community so that we can continue to serve a population whom we care deeply about."

As Executive Director, Carroll responsibilities will include overseeing the day to day operations, help the development and growth of the center and lead the future direction of the IPC. "I am excited about this opportunity because I live and breathe the mission. The IPC is such a natural place for me because I have so many common connections between my personal and professional life" Carroll said about her new appointment as Executive Director.

To contact Megan or to find out more about the Irish Pastoral Center please visit www.ipcboston.org or call 617.265.5300

Challenging the Irish "No Talk" Rule on Mental Health Across State Lines

By Danielle Owen, Director of Wellness Services Irish International Immigrant Center, Boston MA



Pictured: New QPR Gatekeeper, Conor Cusack with Danielle Owen

On April 25th, the IIIC's Wellness Services counselor Danielle Owen was invited to participate in the "Mind Yourself" mental well being awareness events in Yonkers New York, held by Aisling Irish Community Center in conjunction with New York GAA.

Danielle facilitated a QPR (Question Persuade Refer) Suicide Prevention Workshop for over 30 locally based Irish Immigrants along with local Irish center staff and volunteers (including Aisling, Emerald Isle and New York Irish Centers) empowering new Community Gatekeepers (QPR's term for people who have been trained in its methodology) to respond with increased confidence to someone struggling with suicidal thoughts.

Danielle also joined a panel of speakers in a community open discussion and information session on mental well being, which featured speakers including Conor Cusack, well known Cork Senior Hurler and respected Gaelic Players Association spokesperson on depression and mental health. Conor traveled from Ireland specifically to participate on the panel.

The panel also included Stephen Naughton and Deborah Roche, NY based clinicians who focus on grief, substance abuse and suicide. This event was designed to "open the door" for the local Irish community to participate in a helpful conversation about suicide and mental health issues.

The day was a powerful one of honest conversations, challenging the myths and the stigma that blocks many from accessing support and treatment. Many thanks to Conor Cusack for training as a QPR Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper as well as his inspiring talk at the panel. We would also like to give special thanks to Orla Kelleher (herself a QPR Community Gatekeeper, trained during CIIC Conference in San Francisco in January this year) and her amazing staff for all their hard work on the day.

The staff from the New York Irish Center have invited Danielle back to Queens later this summer to offer a similar QPR Workshop for their staff, volunteers and community members.

Cathy Murphy from the Canadian Irish Immigrant Center in Toronto, herself a QPR Community Gatekeeper since the recent CIIC Conference in San Francisco, has also invited Danielle to consult and facilitate a Substance Use and Wellness Focus group, enabling their staff in Toronto to get an initial assessment of the wellness and substance use needs of their new and established Irish immigrant community. We are so proud to be a part of this mental health and wellness conversation which will ensure that more people in need of culturally responsive support and treatment can access it more effectively through their own local Irish center.

As always, none of these vital conversations and work would be possible without the continued support of the Department of Foreign Affairs in Ireland, via their Irish Abroad Unit, supporting the IIIC and all the member centers of the Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers.

President Higgins Supports Immigration Reform in Chicago

by Breandan G. Magee CIIC Vice President & Executive Director of Chicago Irish Immigrant Support



President Higgins touched down in Chicago this week where he met with Irish community leaders and received an update on efforts to find a solution to the plight of the 50,000 undocumented Irish emigrants in the USA. As emigration from Ireland reaches famine-level rates, the Irish are finding that the once welcoming door to America is increasingly shut.

Changes in immigration law from 1952 to the present have made it more difficult to immigrate to the U.S. Before 1952, thousands of Irish were able to join family and friends here. Since that time, the flow has slowed to a trickle. Last year over a million green cards

were issued yet the Irish barely managed to scrape more than a thousand, which was one of the lowest totals of the more than 200 countries listed in statistics released by the Department of Homeland Security.

Advocates like Billy Lawless and Cyril Regan of the Chicago Celts for Immigration Reform have been pushing for an immigration bill that will legalize 11 million undocumented immigrants, including the Irish. Such a bill passed the U.S. Senate last year. It establishes a path to citizenship for the undocumented and includes a provision for the Irish E3 Visa - a renewable two year visa - that will allow 10,500 Irish people to come and work in the USA each year. The bill has the support of Republicans and Democrats but the process has stalled in the House of Representatives, where Republican Leader John Boehner refuses to call a vote over concerns from his more rightwing members, who fear amnesty for millions of immigrants from Latin America.

The Irish have been key players in pushing for immigration reform and have taken the lead with other immigrant groups nationwide. In the face of federal inaction they have focused on changing state laws that affect immigrants. The Chicago Celts recently took the lead in passing a law that provides undocumented immigrants in Illinois with a driver's license, a move that was followed by eight other states including California and Massachusetts.

The pressure is ratcheting up for the Obama administration to act as immigration reform languishes in Congress, while over 400,000 people are deported every year. On his visit, President Higgins heard first-hand how the Irish in Illinois are leading the fight for another state law aimed at curbing deportations. After meeting with undocumented Irish he expressed his desire to see immigration reform as soon as possible.

Gerry, an undocumented man from Co. Tipperary, told the President how he had had to watch the funeral of his beloved grandfather via Skype last year, as he was unable to return home to pay his respects. Gerry was featured in an interview by RTE News and his story touched the President so much that he highlighted the undocumented in each speech he made thereafter.

Breandan Magee is a leader in the immigration reform movement and serves as Executive Director of Chicago Irish Immigrant Support and Vice President of the Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers.

IIIC Solas Award Celebration Honors Sister Lena Deevy, LSA

By Julie Martin, Director of Development Irish International Immigrant Center, Boston MA

On October 30, 2014 the Irish International Immigrant Center will hold its annual Solas Awards Celebration at the Boston Park Plaza Hotel. Named from the Gaelic word for "light," IIIC's Solas Awards recognize the good work of inspirational leaders. This year, IIIC will present awards to Sister Lena Deevy, LSA, and others.

2014 is a special year for the IIIC, marking our 25th anniversary of assisting immigrants from Ireland and from 120 nations as they integrate into American society, and working with partners to promote reconciliation in Ireland.

This year's Solas Awards Celebration will mark the culmination of our year of anniversary activities. IIIC expects hundreds of our friends and supporters to participate in this celebration of the volunteers and staff members who have provided services to thousands of immigrants and Irish exchange program participants over the past 25 years, and of the immigrants who continue to bring so much to our communities. Given the anniversary milestone, it is appropriate that IIIC is presenting Solas Awards to Sister Lena.

Sister Lena, IIIC's Executive Director Emerita, has worked tirelessly to promote the welfare of immigrants, especially during her 24 years of leadership at the IIIC. Her efforts to promote solidarity, peace, and justice are global in scale, benefitting people in Ireland, Haiti, Uganda and beyond.

Proceeds from the 2014 Solas Awards Celebration supports our vibrant, welcoming center that provides legal, wellness, and education services to thousands of low-income immigrant families from Ireland and across the world each year, and to promote leadership development opportunities for men and women from the island of Ireland.

For more information, contact Mary at 617-695-1554.

Chicago Irish Immigrant Supports Immigration Attorney Gives Her Take

by Raia Stoicheva Chicago Irish Immigrant Support

In 1886, Chicago was the site of a large labor demonstration insisting on an eight-hour work day. Although it began peacefully, it ended in bloodshed at Haymarket Square with workers and police suffering causalities. The Haymarket affair underpinned the choice of May 1 as the modern celebration of International Worker's Day, or May Day, around the world. Over the years, Chicago has continued to be an epicenter of activity - marches, protests, and celebrations - surrounding May 1. And with time, May Day has become an increasingly important holiday for immigrants - documented and not.

Undocumented immigrants have been a part of the U.S. workforce for decades. Currently, about three-fourths, 74 percent, of adult undocumented immigrants are in the U.S. labor force. Although they are subject to the same obligations as U.S. born and documented workers, undocumented workers often do not receive the same benefits. Many of them work under the radar, in sectors with little regulation where abuses are rife and wages are low. Even so, overwhelmingly, undocumented workers pay their taxes, and pay into Social Security. Although unauthorized workers would be able to obtain a tax refund if they are using an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) number, they would not be able to access any Social Security benefits which they have paid into. If previous legalization efforts are our guide, a comprehensive immigration reform (CIR) bill, which legalizes currently undocumented workers, would help raise their wages and increase educational and employment opportunities for them and their children. In addition, CIR

will benefit the economy by adding not only tax revenue to our economy, but also by boosting the buying power of currently undocumented immigrants, thus creating more overall spending and jobs.

For these reasons - and as we fight for state specific reforms helpful to immigrant communities, like the TRUST Act - we should not forget to remind our congressman and women in Washington that CIR makes sense for immigrants and their families, our communities, and the country. If you do not know your

congressperson, please visit the <u>Illinois State Board of Elections</u> website.

As always, if you have any immigration related questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at 773-282-8445 or via email at rstoicheva@ci-is.org.

* * *

A Friendly Reminder!

For those of you who are lawful permanent residents and may wish to file your naturalization application soon, please remember that beginning May 5, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) will accept only the current edition of Form N-400, Application for Naturalization, dated 9/13/2013. After May 4th, USCIS will reject and return all naturalization applications using previous versions of Form N-400. To find the edition date, look at the bottom of any Form N-400 page.

Galway Student Lands Internship at Irish American Partnership With Help of IIIC

By Noor Hassan, LEP Intern Irish International Immigrant Center, Boston MA

For Conor Kelly, it was love of big cities that drove him to Boston. After graduating from Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology with a degree in Information Technology for Business, he was thrilled to experience our unique city. Says Conor "Galway is considered a small city, so I wanted to experience a bigger city like Boston and to take advantage of all the opportunities it has to offer." After having participated in three J-1 Summer Programs, Conor applied for the 12-month J-1 Irish Work and Travel visa through the Irish International Immigrant Center. With the help of the Learning Exchange Programs at the IIIC, Conor found the necessary support and resources to land a position at the Irish American Partnership in Boston. "Conor is a welcome addition to the Irish American Partnership and will be a great help particularly given his computer design skills," said president Joe Leary.

Throughout college, Conor held part time positions, and now he is eager to experience the working world here in Boston and to finally apply what he has learned in college to the workplace. Conor believes that this experience will look appealing to any future employer back in Ireland, and he is excited to see what the future holds.

Upcoming Events

San Francisco Irish Open Golf Tournament

Irish Immigration Pastoral Center San Francisco, CA

May 30th - Support the programs and services of the Irish Immigration Pastoral Center and join us for the 16th Annual San Francisco Irish Open two person scramble. The tournament is one of our annual fundraisers through which we raise over 60% of our annual operating budget.

Friday, May 30th, 2014 Alameda Golf Course, Alameda, CA

Morning Shotgun: 7.45am Afternoon Shotgun: 12.45pm

\$125 Donation Per Person / \$500 Foursome

Includes:

- * 2 person scramble
- * Round of Golf with cart
- * Barbeque lunch
- * \$10,000 Hole in One Competition
- * Great Tee Prizes
- * Evening Awards Dinner at Johnny Foley's Irish House (partners welcome)

Sponsorship Opportunities:

Green Sponsor - \$200 Tee Sponsor - \$100

Sponsorship includes:

A mention at one green or tee plus promotional mentions in our tournament program, on our website and in the Irish Herald in July.
You and your guest will also be invited to our Awards Dinner in Johnny Foley's Irish House.

To register your team or be a sponsor, please email Celine at celine@sfiipc.org or call 415.752.6006.

CIIS Annual Golf Outing

Chicago Irish Immigrant Support Chicago, IL

June 1st - Every year CIIS hosts an annual Golf day out, a very successful fundraising event.

Sunday, June 1st, 2014 Shot Gun Start at Noon St. Andrew's Golf and Country Club 3 N 441 Route 59 * West Chicago, Illinois 60185 * (630) 231- 3100

\$125 Donation Per Person Includes: 18 Hole Round of Golf * Contests* Golf Cart* Dinner

Contests Include: Nearest to the Pin * Longest Drive \$10,000 Hole In One Prize (Par 3 Hole) Dinner Immediately After Golf

To Purchase Tickets Contact: Breandán Magee: (773) 282-8445 Father Michael Leonard: (773) 677-5341

Or visit our website at www.ci-is.org to purchase online

All proceeds benefit the Chicago Irish Immigrant Support, a registered 501(c) 3 organization.

EIIC Celtic Cruise

Emerald Isle Immigration Center New York

June 4th - Music, dancing, great food, and fun. A board the spirit of New York benefit.

Featuring live music by Celtic Cross, the Cunningham Brothers, the Shay Mac Band. Open bar, buffet dinner.

General Admission: \$100 in advance, \$110 dockside

For more info visit <u>www.celticcharity.com</u> or call 212-717-9955

Upcoming Events in Seattle's Irish Community

Seattle, WA

June 7th - Seattle Gaels Gaelic Games Tournament at Green Lake on Saturday, June 7, starting at 10 am and finishing around 5:30 pm. Free admission all day to watch the Hurling, Gaelic football and Camogie games.

June 24th - Tuesday, June 24, is Irish Night at the Seattle Mariners for the game vs. the Boston Red Sox at 7:10 pm. Irish stepdancers and the Seattle Police Pipes and Drums will perform in centerfield before the game. Reduced price tickets at Mariners.com/Irish.

June 29th - Sunday, June 29, 2 -6 pm is Irish Day the Races at Emerald Downs in Auburn. All the races will be named for Irish organizations including the Irish Immigrant Support Group. Free admission tickets are available through any of the Irish organizations.

July 27th - Seattle's Irish Community Picnic is at Lake Sammamish State Park on Sunday, July 27, from noon-dusk. Free admission and all are welcome to join in the fun and games.

August 15th - The annual Irish Headstone Ceremony in Sunnyside Cemetery in Coupeville on Whidbey Island is on Friday, August 15 at 5:30 pm. The headstone inscription is in the Irish language written in old Gaelic script and memorializes a Tipperary woman buried on Whidbey Island in 1861. See attached shot of part of the headstone or watch last year's ceremony on **YouTube**.

The Cripple of Inishmaan Premiers on Broadway!

New York

Save up to 30% on Tickets

The latest sold-out hit from Tony Award®-winning director MICHAEL GRANDAGE (*Red, Frost/Nixon*)arrives from London with the Broadway premiere of THE CRIPPLE OF INISHMAAN - the biting comedy by the master of vicious fun, Academy Award® winner MARTIN McDONAGH (*The Pillowman, In Bruges*) When a Hollywood director visits the remote islands off the coast of Ireland, the feisty locals of Inishmaan plot to escape their rural doldrums for a glittery chance at movie stardom - none with more starry-eyed determination than perpetually teased Cripple Billy. DANIEL RADCLIFFE wowed London's critics as the frail Irish lad with big Hollywood dreams. Including the critically acclaimed original cast of nine, this award-winning production from the Michael Grandage Company's inaugural season brings a West End gem to Broadway.

SPECIAL OFFER FOR CIIC MEMBERS! Save up to 30% on THE CRIPPLE OF INISHMAAN

Performances April 12-30

\$99 Orchestra/Front Mezz

\$49 Balcony

Performances May 1 - June 8

\$109 Orchestra/Front Mezz

\$59 Balcony

To receive the special offer for CIIC members: Visit broadwayoffers.com and use code CIIRISH3 Call 212-947-8844 and mention code CIIRISH3

ABOUT THE COALITION OF IRISH IMMIGRATION CENTERS

The Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers (CIIC) is a national umbrella group for all of the Irish Immigration Centers in the US. The CIIC was established in 1996 to promote the welfare of Irish immigrants in the US at a national level. The CIIC is funded by a grant from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Emigrant Support Program and by generous support from the American Ireland fund for its Irish Senior Connect Program.

The mission of the CIIC is to represent immigrant organizations throughout the United States who are committed to providing services to Irish immigrants. The Coalition provides support and assistance to the various centers in their work through advocacy, education and the exchange of information. CIIC member organizations are located in California, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, Philadelphia, Washington and Wisconsin.

To learn more about CIIC visit, www.ciic-usa.org

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