



July 2014

# Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers Newsletter

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Dear Leia,

## Welcome to the July 2014 edition of the CIIC Newsletter!

It has been a month of much activity and change for the Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers.

There were a number of activities between member centers, including;

- A wellness collaboration between IIIC and ICAN discussed in an article below
- Another joint Senior Lunch between [NYIC](#) and [IIC of Philadelphia](#)--check out their pictures on Facebook
- A variety of CIIC Subcommittee calls, in which information and ideas were shared

Irish Senior Connect launched at its second site in Chicago at CIIS, taking its next step toward becoming a nationwide program, and CIIC was awarded a generous grant from the Tufts Health Plan Foundation in support of ISC.

Finally, as you are aware, Sara McDermott left the Coalition at the end of June to pursue other endeavors. During her short time with the Coalition, Sara accomplished good things and kept CIIC moving in a positive direction. We are thankful for the time she spent with

us, and wish her all the best.

After Sara's departure, I returned to my post at CIIC as National Coordinator. I am glad to be here once again, corresponding with you, and I look forward to our continued work together.

Please keep us update to date on the activities of your center or organization, and forward this Newsletter onto friends and colleagues by using the link at the bottom of this page or sharing via social media using the links above.

Best,  
Aileen

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## **TUFTS Health Plan Releases List of 2014 Grant Awardees**

*Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers Included as One of 43 Grantees*

**JULY 28, 2014**--[The Tufts Health Plan Foundation](#) announced last week that it is awarding more than \$1.6 million in new grants to 43 Nonprofit organizations based in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, for its 2014 grant cycle. The Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers (CIIC) is proud to be one of the grant recipients for its [Irish Senior Connect](#) program.

To address the health care needs of their communities and to help meet the challenges of an aging society, the Tufts Health Plan Foundation is committed to funding healthy aging programs for adults age 60 or older in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Through the programs they fund, they hope to elevate the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of older adults to enable them to contribute their experiences and knowledge to their communities and ultimately to help older adults live healthier lives.

Irish Senior Connect, a community outreach program of CIIC, initially launched at the [Irish Pastoral Centre, Boston](#) in March 2012. Since that time, the program has enjoyed great success and growth, focusing on strengthening program capacity within Boston and the

greater Massachusetts area; expanding its services to include well-being check-in calls, as well as the listening line services; and recently launching to a second site at [Chicago Irish Immigrant Support](#) (CIIS).

ISC is dedicated to providing seniors with a listening ear and a response that conveys empathy and respect, alleviating feelings of isolation and loneliness within the senior community through telephone contact, well-being calls and community referrals. CIIC looks forward to increasing the geographic scope and community impact of ISC to include more areas of Massachusetts, as well as Rhode Island, with the help of this generous grant from Tufts Health Plan Foundation.

Celine Kennelly, CIIC Board President, "We are thrilled to partner with the Tufts Health Plan Foundation, and thank them for their generous support." She went on to say, "With the Tufts funding, ISC is able to strengthen the current programming in the greater Massachusetts area, while concurrently expanding into Metro Providence, Rhode Island. Through assistance from funders such as Tufts, ISC is well on its way to becoming a national service for all seniors, especially those of Irish descent."

To learn more about the TUFTS Health Plan Foundation, [click here.](#)



Irish Senior Connect  
**855.249.5146**

It has been a very exciting month for Irish Senior Connect (ISC) beginning with the launch of the second program site in Chicago, and ending with the announcement that the Coalition received a generous grant from the Tufts Health Plan Foundation in support of of the program.

As demonstrated by the events of July, ISC continues to grow and

expand. The program is fast on its way to become a national presence providing a listening ear and a compassionate response to the the most lonely and isolated seniors of our community and beyond.

Read the press release regarding the launch in Chicago below, and visit the [ISC Facebook page](#) to see pictures form the event.

**JULY 15, 2014--CHICAGO, IL--**Irish Senior Connect (ISC), a community outreach program of the Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers (CIIC), launched today at Chicago Irish Immigrant Support (CIIS). Building on the successful implementation of ISC by the Irish Pastoral Centre, Boston, the expansion of the program in Chicago is the next step in making Irish Senior Connect a nationwide presence.

Aidan Cronin, Consul General of Ireland in Chicago, was present to officially cut the ribbon at the new site. Roseann Finnegan Feavour, Midwest Director at The American Ireland Fund, and Rosetta Sexton, Congressional Aide from Congressman Mike Quigley's Office (5th District of Illinois) were also present to support the expansion.

The Irish Senior Connect program is dedicated to providing seniors with a listening ear and a response that conveys empathy and respect, alleviating feelings of isolation and loneliness within the senior community through telephone contact, well-being calls and community referrals.

"We are thrilled to be implementing Irish Senior Connect here in Chicago," stated Breandán Magee, Executive Director of CIIS. "The program will fit nicely into the array of senior programming that the center currently provides, and we look forward to collaborating with the Coalition and IPC Boston to expand the geographic scope of the program, as well as the number of seniors positively affected."

Celine Kennelly, CIIC Board President, indicated "We are very happy with the positive results that ISC has yielded thus far in Boston and the greater Massachusetts area. We look forward to strengthening the program through this expansion to Chicago, moving another step closer to making ISC a national service for all seniors, especially those of Irish descent."

The creation, management and expansion of Irish Senior Connect was made possible through generous funding by [The American Ireland Fund](#), the [Irish Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade: Emigrant Support Program](#) and [TUFTS Health Plan Foundation](#).

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](mailto:susan.doody@ciic-usa.org)

## **Boston's Irish International Immigrant Center Shares Knowledge in Canada**

*Irish International Immigrant Center Outreach Staff*



The [Irish International Immigrant Center](#) (IIIC) was truly "international" over the weekend of July 12th when IIIC's Wellness Director, Danielle Owen, visited with our Canadian neighbors to discuss common issues relating to the Irish immigrant communities of Boston and Toronto.

The [Irish Canadian Immigration Centre](#) (ICAN) is currently assessing the wellness needs of new Irish immigrant arrivals to the province of Ontario and asked the IIIC, which conducted a similar assessment 10 years ago in Boston, to facilitate a focus group with key members of the Irish Immigrant community of Toronto. Danielle reports that "We had a fascinating conversation, discovering that substance use problems resulting in isolation, depression and anxiety were being experienced by the newly arriving Irish to the city. It's one of a number of tools (including questionnaires, online surveys etc.) being used to allow ICAN to respond to these needs effectively".

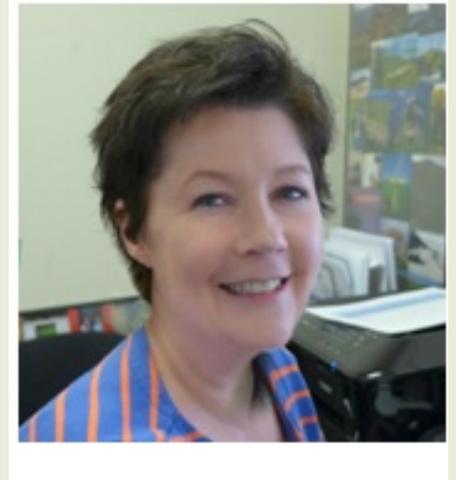
If you have family member or a friend who is considering a move to Toronto or anywhere in Ontario, make them aware of this valuable resource. For more information, please visit the ICAN website at:

[irishcanadianimmigrationcentre.org](http://irishcanadianimmigrationcentre.org) or follow the group on [Facebook](#) and Twitter (@irishcdnorg).

## **Aisling Irish Community Center Welcomes Rosemary Vassallo, LCSW**

*Aisling Irish Community Center*

Rosemary Vassallo recently joined the team at [Aisling Irish Community Center](#) as a full-time Registered Licensed Clinical Social Worker. She has many years experience as a Mental Health Professional with extensive clinical, administrative and supervisory responsibilities. Rosemary has experience working as an individual, family and group counselor and is really looking forward to working with Irish emigrants and the local community here in Yonkers.



Rosemary is available Monday - Friday for walk-in clients as well as by appointment. She is available to take appointments or see people on an as-needed basis up to 8:00pm two nights a week. The center also has experienced psychotherapists and counselors available for evening and weekend appointments, both here at the center or at another location if preferred.

Confidentiality is of the utmost importance, therefore anyone who avails themselves of this service should feel free to come in for counseling knowing that a foundation of privacy, trust and respect for all individuals is exhibited at all times here at the Aisling Irish Community Center.

Life has its many challenges whether you've recently emigrated from Ireland or have been here long term. If you, or anyone you know, are feeling depressed, isolated or anxious, please let us try to help.

Our trained staff is on hand to deal with daily "walk-ins" in need of social service referral, information and assistance i.e. depression and suicide awareness, anxiety and panic, alcohol and drug issues, domestic violence, rape and/or sexual assault, homelessness, financial problems, relationship issues, grief and bereavement, family pressures, pregnancy and health insurance.

Please feel free to call the Aisling Center at 914-237-5121 or 914-237-7121 or to e-mail Rosemary at [rosemary@aislingcenter.org](mailto:rosemary@aislingcenter.org). We also have a new e-mail [counseling@aislingcenter.org](mailto:counseling@aislingcenter.org) for confidential questions about our counseling services and emotional well-being in general.

## **CIIC Congratulates Billy & Anne Lawless on Becoming US Citizens**

*Chicago Irish Immigrant Support*

CIIC would like to take the opportunity to congratulate our friend and colleague Billy Lawless and his wife Anne on recently becoming citizens of the United States.

A tireless advocate for immigration reform, Billy received a commendation from Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL) this month from the floor of the Senate, which can be [viewed here](#).



*Upcoming Events*

# **IIIC to Celebrate 25th Anniversary at October Solas Gala Honoring Sister Lena Deevy, LSA, and Richard E. Holbrook**

*Irish International Immigrant Center*

On October 30, 2014 the [Irish International Immigrant Center](#) (IIIC) will hold its annual Solas Awards Celebration at the Boston Park Plaza Hotel. Named from the Gaelic word for "light," the Solas Awards recognize the good work of inspirational leaders dedicated to the IIIC's vision. This year, the IIIC will present awards to Sister Lena Deevy, LSA, and Richard E. Holbrook. We are also honored to announce that Massachusetts State Senator Linda Dorcena Forry will lead us as event emcee.

We are thrilled to be recognizing Sister Lena and Richard as we continue to celebrate the IIIC's milestone 25th anniversary, given all they have done to make IIIC's services possible over the years.

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

In his role as Chairman and CEO of Eastern Bank, Richard Holbrook oversees a company that is a leader in corporate social responsibility. With a strong commitment to giving back, Eastern Bank has been a tremendous supporter of IIIC's work for a decade and shares IIIC's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Proceeds from the 2014 Solas Awards Celebration support the IIIC's legal, wellness, and education programs for immigrants from Ireland and around the world, and learning exchange programs promoting reconciliation and economic recovery in Ireland. For more information or to reserve your seat today, contact Mary at 617-695-1554.

## 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](http://www.ciic-usa.org)

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