

## Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers Newsletter

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**Dear Sara,**

***Welcome to the November 2013 edition of the CIIC Newsletter!***

As we are in the midst of Autumn - a season which brings change - the Coalition is also experiencing change as I began my role as the new National Coordinator earlier this month. A very warm thank you goes to the CIIC Executive Committee, the CIIC Board Members and Member Centers, and to Aileen Leonard Dibra, our previous National Coordinator for working with me and supporting me to ensure a smooth transition into this role.

This is my first newsletter as the National Coordinator, and I must say, I'm delighted to be a part of such a fantastic organization. I am very much looking forward to future work with the CIIC and its Member Centers. I believe my experience of living, working and studying in Ireland (my second home) will contribute to the current efforts being made by the Coalition to support Irish Immigrants living in the USA (my first home).

I am looking forward to our continued communication through the CIIC Newsletter. Please feel free to contact me with comments, suggestions or if you would like to submit an article. Please also feel free to forward this Newsletter onto friends, family or colleagues by using the link at the bottom of this page.

All the best,

Sara McDermott  
National Coordinator  
Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers  
sara.mcdermott@ciic-usa.org  
206-618-4926  
P.O. Box 30945,

## **Diversity Visa Lottery Closes November 2nd!**

On Tuesday, October 1st 2013 online registration for the DV-2015 opened. The online registration entry submission closes on Saturday, November 2, 2013 at 12:00 noon, Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) (GMT-4). The only way to apply is electronically through the US Department of State Website [www.dvlottery.state.gov](http://www.dvlottery.state.gov). There is no fee to apply. Contact your local Irish Immigration Office if you need assistance or have questions.

## **CIIC Address Has Changed**

The CIIC has changed from the New York address to a Seattle address to accommodate the location of the new National Coordinator. From now on, please address mail to the following:

Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers  
P.O. Box 30945  
Seattle, WA 98113

## **Why Can't We Ask for Help?**

*Submitted Irish Central*

Every 15 minutes someone in the U.S. dies by suicide.

IrishCentral, the leading Irish media site, is running a week long campaign next week about mental health among Irish American and Irish populations.

There have been a number of tragedies in our communities over the past few months which have resulted in a lot of outreach work both in the U.S. and Ireland. As Irish Americans we are all acutely aware of the difficulties and challenges we face with the stigma attached to mental illness. The fact is that around 38,000 people in the US die by suicide every year. Why aren't we able to talk about this?

IrishCentral are running a week-long series of articles and stories on the topic. We have also assembled a resource page that you can visit or direct people to who are in need of help. We would love for you all to share this information with your families and communities. Visit [www.irishcentral.com](http://www.irishcentral.com) for full coverage from Monday November 4th.

## Chicago Irish Immigration Support Welcomes New Immigration Attorney



Chicago Irish Immigrant Support welcomes its new immigration attorney, Raia Stoicheva. Raia graduated from Northwestern Law School in 2012 and interned with a federal judge and the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights' policy program prior to joining CIIS. As a law student, Raia worked at Northwestern's immigration clinic on youth asylum cases and with the National Immigrant Justice Center's policy and detention units. Her own family experience emigrating from Bulgaria and naturalizing in the United States encouraged her to begin her career in immigration law. She looks forward to serving the community's immigration needs and advocating for comprehensive immigration reform. Welcome, Raia!

### **Temporary Visitor Driver's Licenses Roll Out in Illinois**

*By: Raia Stoicheva*

We have one more thing to be thankful for here in Illinois. Thanksgiving Day marks the roll out of the new Temporary Visitor Driver's License (TVDL) program. This program, administered by the Illinois Secretary of State (SOS), allows undocumented motorists to apply for a driver's license. The roll out completes more than a year of advocacy by the Chicago Celts for Immigration Reform and their partners. The Chicago Celts were instrumental in securing the passage of the TVDL legislation in Springfield and welcome its commencement.

In the past, only foreign-born persons with a valid visa could apply

for a TVDL. With the implementation of the new program, people who are in Illinois without legal status will be able to obtain one. This development is especially important because many undocumented persons come to the attention of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) through routine traffic stops.

Imagine this scenario. A local police officer stops a motorist for something as small as a broken taillight. When the motorist cannot produce a valid license, she is arrested for driving without a license. While booking the motorist, the officer fingerprints her. The fingerprints are run through a federal immigration database. If the fingerprints produce a match, ICE requests that the local police detain the individual until ICE can come and pick her up. Upon transfer into ICE custody, the motorist is placed in immigration detention and removal proceedings are commenced against her.

The likelihood of this scenario repeating itself has significantly diminished with the advent of TDVLs. If stopped by local police now, a person in possession of a TVDL will be able to use it as bond, in the same way that a holder of a regular license would be able to do. This means that she would be ticketed for a driving violation only rather than arrested for driving without a license. Since valid visa holders will continue being able to obtain a TVDL, a police officer will not know that a driver is undocumented. Remember, however, that a TVDL is only valid in conjunction with car insurance. If a holder of a TVDL is stopped and cannot show proof of insurance, she will be considered to be driving without a license.

In order to apply for a TVDL, you will need to make an appointment at one of 25 specified SOS facilities. You can find a list of facilities issuing TVDLs on the SOS website. At the appointment, you will need to prove that you live in Illinois and that you have lived in Illinois for at least one year. You will need to pass all the regular vision, written, and driving examinations. TVDLs will not be issued on the spot, rather mailed within two or three weeks of the appointment. SOS will begin taking appointments in mid-December. The program should be fully functional by the end of January 2014.

One more thing to remember. TVDLs are not valid for identification. This means that they cannot be used for voting, obtaining a firearm identification card, boarding an airplane, or entering a federal building. You can use a TVDL to indicate your name and address to hospitals, first responders, bars, and other privately owned establishments.

For more information, call Chicago Irish Immigrant Support at 773-282-8445. We look forward to hearing from you. Happy Driving!

## Seattle Welcomes Consul General of Ireland Phillip Grant



*L-R:* Vanessa Peterson (Seattle Gaels), Brendan McDermott (Waterford), Brian White (Seattle Gaels), Consul General Philip Grant, Noreen McCormack (Irish Network Seattle), RoseMarie FitzSimons (Irish Network Seattle), Sara McDermott (CIIC)

**October 8th, 2013** - On his first visit to the Emerald City as the new Consul General of Ireland in San Francisco, Mr. Philip Grant took the opportunity to meet with representatives from 15 Irish organizations in the Seattle area. The event was well attended and provided Mr. Grant with a flavor of Seattle's vibrant Irish Community.



855.249.5146

**Calls to Date** - ISC volunteers have received 220 calls to date on the listening line, and have made 405 well-being check-in calls.

**Irish Senior Connect Volunteers and Susan** have been busy spreading the word about ISC throughout the Summer and Fall at the Boston Irish Festival at the ICC in Canton, The James McNally Wilson Music Festival in Pawtucket, RI and the Irish Heritage Festival in Dorchester.

Last month's Irish Heritage Event in Dorchester was a great success, with several thousand people venturing out to enjoy Irish music and dance performances, and to patronize the various participating vendors. Irish Senior Connect raffled off several gift certificates generously donated by area businesses, along with two festive Fall gift baskets generously provided by their dedicated volunteers.

**The Irish Senior Connect phone number is 855.249.5146.**

For more information about the program, contact ISC Program Coordinator, Susan Doody, at [susan.doody@ciic-usa.org](mailto:susan.doody@ciic-usa.org) . Also, like ISC on [Facebook!](#)

### **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)