

October 2014

Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers Newsletter

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Greetings!

Welcome to the October 2014 edition of the CIIC Newsletter!

I hope you find this edition of the newsletter interesting. Enjoy reading about:

- The Embassy's Anniversary, celebrating 90 years of Ireland-US Diplomatic Relations
- The inter-generational collaboration occurring at Irish Senior Connect, and think about becoming a volunteer for the program if you are currently residing in the greater Boston or Chicago areas
- The history and mission of Pieta House, and its new venture in the US
- The Phil Coulter benefit event for CIIC member center, IPC - Boston

As always, 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.

Also, take the time to ["Like"](#) us on Facebook as an easy way to stay connected.

Best,
Aileen

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90 Years of Ireland-US Diplomatic Relations Celebrated

Congratulations to the Embassy of Ireland, who earlier this month celebrated 90 years of Ireland-US Diplomatic Relations. The Anniversary was marked by a series of events including the Minister of Foreign Affairs & Trade, Charlie Flanagan's, first visit to the Embassy in Washington, DC, as well as Irish music and dance events and educational seminars.

Be sure to check out the Embassy's newly launched [Facebook page](#) to keep up to date on all news and information, and watch the video below highlighting the history between Ireland the US over the past 90 years.



Ireland-US 90 years of Diplomatic Relations



Irish Senior Connect
855.249.5146

Elizabeth Seton Academy Students Volunteer Time with Irish Senior Connect

Students from Elizabeth Seton Academy in Dorchester, MA visited Irish Senior Connect (ISC) at [Irish Pastoral Centre](#) (IPC) Boston on October 30th. The event was an opportunity for the students to learn about the ISC program, as well as the variety of services provided by IPC. Additionally, the students volunteered their time to work on the ISC program, including mailing outreach and informational materials, assisting ISC volunteers with well-being check in calls and teaching 1:1 computer & internet basics for IPC seniors & ISC senior volunteers. A great learning experience was had by all!



Elizabeth Seton Academy students & staff (Christina Brown front left, Mae Ba, center) at the Irish Pastoral Centre in Boston with Susan Doody, ISC Coordinator (back left) & Megan Carroll, IPC Executive Director (front left)

Become an ISC Volunteer!

Do you or someone you know have interest in volunteering with Irish Senior Connect? Do you live in the greater Boston or Chicago areas? Complete the volunteer application online, or print it out and pass it along to a friend. [Click here](#) to view the application.

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

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](#).

Exclusive Performance by Phil Coulter a Huge Success to Benefit IPC Boston

Submitted by Irish Pastoral Centre - Boston



On Tuesday October 14, Phil Coulter made a most welcome return to the City of Boston where, in the beautiful setting of St. Ignatius Church on the grounds of Boston College, he played his only Boston show to an enthusiastic audience. The venue was one of particular significance to Mr. Coulter as he had previously spent three years working as a Visiting Professor in the Irish Studies program.

Irish Pastoral Centre - Boston's (IPC) Executive Director, Megan E. Carroll, addressed those in attendance and outlined why their

support continues to be so important to the programs at the Irish Pastoral Centre and thanked them for their continued support. Consul General, Breandán Ó Caollaí, spoke about the difficult economic circumstances in Ireland at the moment and how organizations like the IPC makes a difference to those living in the Greater Boston area, after which, Megan introduced Phil Coulter to the stage.

The crowd was delighted and entertained with almost two hours of hits from Mr. Coulter's 50 years in music. Phil's collection of songs included 'The Town I Loved So Well', 'Ireland's Call' & 'Bright Brand New Day'. Notably Phil paid tribute to the late Seamus Heaney during which he recited the poem, 'Mid-Term Break'.

After a short intermission, Mr. Coulter returned to the stage and was joined by his loving wife, Geraldine Brannigan who performed a touching rendition of 'Scorn Not His Simplicity'. Phil rounded off the evening with the classic 'Steal Away', where he encouraged those present to sing along. After a rapturous round of applause and standing ovation, Mr. Coulter took time to sign autographs and posed for some pictures much to the delight of those present.

Pieta House & Darkness into Light

Submitted by New York Irish Center



Pieta House first opened its doors to the public in Lucan in 2006, with the vision of having a Pieta House within 100 kilometers of every person in Ireland. Since then, nine additional centers have followed, employing 180 staff with the potential to hire more. There are also three more centers pending in the midlands, southeast and northwest. The positive effects of Pieta House have rippled across Ireland.

Pieta House specializes in the prevention of self-harm or suicide and over 14,000 people have availed of this spectacular service. This professional one to one service is completely free of charge and provided by fully qualified, accredited psychologists and psychotherapists. Anyone can make the initial call for the person in

distress, including a family member, a colleague, a friend, a neighbour, realizing that it can be an extremely difficult call to make. No reference letter from a doctor nor a psychiatric report is required.

Joan Freeman, founder and CEO of the organization, closed down her counseling business to dedicate all of her time to people who are suicidal. It was at this time, Joan recognized how little discussed and rarely understood this distressing topic was and she highlighted the critical need to change this. She became determined to dissolve the haunting stigma that deeply shadowed depression and suicide. She did this in an extremely powerful way, by creating Darkness into Light walk. The first ever Darkness into Light started with 400 people in Phoenix Park, Dublin in 2009. Six years later almost 80,000 people participated in over 40 venues right across Ireland, and London and Sydney too. This walk quickly became the basis for bringing suicide to its forefront and tackling the issue as a community.

Currently, Joan Freeman is focused on creating a permanent base for Pieta services right here in the United States starting with New York and Chicago. As the Irish Community remains dominant in the States, attending to their needs as adequately as in Ireland is crucial and Joan has recognized the extensive need for these services. Thus far 3 Cities have been confirmed to host Darkness into Light in May 2015, including New York, Chicago and Washington, DC. Starting at 4:15 am and crossing the finish line as dawn is breaking, walking out of darkness and into light, this 5k walk is phenomenal and an experience not to be missed.

Recently, Joan participated in a CIIC Social Services member call to discuss the history and mission of Pieta House, as well as her outreach efforts to centers in the US. The call also focused on the collaboration in this effort between the three CIIC member centers in New York: Aisling Irish Community Center, Emerald Isle Immigration Center and the New York Irish Center. This comes at a particularly pertinent time as our community continues to face the devastation caused by suicide and self-harm. It is important to remember that help is available and that many of the local Irish Immigration Centers offer counseling or can assist with referral resources in a confidential manner.

For more information on Pieta House, [click here](#).

To find your local Irish Center, [click here](#).

Electronic Diversity Visa Lottery

The submission period for the 2016 Diversity Visa Lottery closes on November 3, 2014 at 12.00 pm EST.

Remember DV Lottery applications can only be submitted via the US Department of State Website and there is no charge for submitting the application.

For further information or to apply, [click here](#).

Thank you to all of our member centers who have worked so hard this month to review and submit DV Lottery applications on behalf of our immigrant community.

Fingers crossed we shall see some successful applicants next May!

Emerald Isle Immigration Center welcomes new staff members

Aida Almonte is our new bilingual Receptionist in Woodside, Queens. She is attending Hostos Community College in the Bronx.

Rachel Cavanagh from Derry is our new Queens Trainee. She is a graduate of law from the University of Ulster. She is currently here on the IWP Program and she will be with us for through September 2015.

Marcella O'Connor is our new Woodlawn, Bronx Receptionist and a welcome addition! She is an Armagh native residing in Pearl River, New York.

Upcoming Events

Save the Date

Save the Date for the next CIIC Social Services Seminar on December 11, 2014 at 12p EST.

Seminar details to follow.

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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