



*The Ireland Funds Make a Landmark Grant to the **Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers***

In March of 2017, The Ireland Funds announced a grant of \$100,000 to the Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers (CIIC) in the United States. This support was timely to the Coalition as it is the umbrella group for Irish Immigration Centers across the US. The grant is being used to support a humanitarian program of direct support to users of the Centers. Support will go to direct provision of services such as: living costs, child care, medical services, and legal counsel to families under pressure.

What Is the Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers?

The Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers (CIIC) serves as the national umbrella organization for Irish immigration centers throughout the United States. The CIIC is a strong, cohesive and representative voice for the needs of its member centers thereby benefiting the wider

community of Irish immigrants

in the United States. The

CIIC promotes and fa-

cilitates the sharing

of best practices and

information to better

support the direct

services of its member

centers.



The CIIC is comprised of

11 member organizations located

in California, Illinois, Maryland, Massa-

chusetts, New York, Philadelphia and Washington. These

centers are safe havens for Irish immigrants, providing a

continuum of services, accurate information and opportu-

nities to participate in community events. All services are provided with a cultural sensitive approach and adhering to the strictest confidentiality.

CIIC will focus on individuals in emergency situations

focusing on immediate need and impact,

family support and legal impact.

“CIIC is thankful for the

generous support from

The Ireland Funds,” says

Aileen Leonard Dibra,

National Coordina-

tor of the Coalition of

Irish Immigration

Centers (CIIC). “This grant

will allow much needed direct

support and urgent relief to mem-

bers our community who need it most.”

What Examples of Services Do **IRISH IMMIGRATION CENTERS** Provide in the U.S.?

In California



The Irish Immigration Pastoral Center - San Francisco is a home away from home for Irish immigrants in the Bay Area. As a “parish without boundaries” it offers spiritual, social and practical support to Irish immigrants who are thousands of miles from home and family. Significant financial support from The Ireland Funds provided services to families after the J1 Berkeley balcony tragedy in 2015.

Irish Outreach San Diego is a community-based organization that supports and nurtures the Irish community in Southern California, assisting with immigration, employment and legal services, pastoral care and counselling and social integration.

In Illinois



Chicago Irish Immigrant Support (CIIS) is a not-for-profit immigration and social services provider serving the Irish community in Chicago and the 19 States represented by the Consulate General of Ireland in Chicago and Austin. CIIS provides a comprehensive array of services to the elderly and full range immigration and naturalization services, with the mission to act as both a direct service and informational hub for Irish citizens seeking immigration, social, and pastoral services in the Midwestern United States.

In Maryland



The Irish Outreach Ocean City supports an intensive J1 support program for the students who visit annually from Ireland. Volunteers provide a comprehensive orientation and resources on employment, accommodation, Social Security processes and bank accounts. The Coordinators operate a help line that students with medical, legal, job, or housing problems can contact. Most importantly, IOOC gives the Irish students a place to receive a warm welcome and friendly support from local residents.

In Massachusetts



The Irish International Immigrant Center (IIIC) assists immigrants from Ireland, and around the world, as they successfully integrate into American society. We are Boston’s Port na Fáilte (Welcome Center) providing immigration legal, wellness and education services, while also advocating for systemic change and facilitating community building for immigrants. The IIIC is a designated J1 visa sponsor for the J1-Irish Work & Travel program helping over 500 Irish students and recent graduates secure internships in the United States. Our vision is of a society where all people are welcomed and valued and enjoy equal opportunities, and protections.

The Irish Pastoral Centre—Boston is staffed by dedicated full-time team as well as a large number of Irish and Irish American volunteers who provide key frontline services that include: Immigration, Social Work, including counseling and substance abuse, assistance to victims of domestic abuse, Pastoral Support, employment referrals and housing assistance, mother and toddler groups and senior citizen outreach.

In New York



Aisling Irish Community Center provides a range of social, cultural, educational and recreational programs and services for Irish emigrants living in New York and the local community. Its service provision includes, confidential and professional counselling; legal and immigration referrals; Irish Volunteers for the Homeless; assistance with employment & accommodation; classes in Irish language, music, & dance; Computer Classes; Classes for children including art, karate, acting, and yoga; Parent & Toddler play group; exercise classes; and a weekly AA support group meeting.

The Emerald Isle Immigration Center (EIIC) is a not for profit created to exercise and protect the privileges and interests of the community, foster a healthy interest in the civic affairs of the community, help immigrants acquire US citizenship.

EIIC provides an array of immigration legal and social services to the Irish community, as well as clients from over seventy other countries of origin. The center is a previous recipient of grant money from The Ireland Funds related to support for its elderly programs, as well as in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy.

The New York Irish Center (NYIC) is a gathering place for everyone in the greater New York Irish community. Services provided by the center include a wide array of cultural events and classes, with a special focus on seniors and children. Counselling by Pieta House is also offered at this center. In recent years, NYIC has greatly benefited from the generous support of The Ireland Funds, especially from its Forgotten Irish campaign.

In Philadelphia



The Irish Immigration Center of Philadelphia serves as a community resource center for Irish Immigrants in the Philadelphia area and provides information, advice and assistance on a variety of immigration needs, including various adjustments of status applications, cases of deportation and provides prison visits. Community service programs, include employment assistance and accessing benefits and services, as well as a thriving senior outreach program, a Foriúge international youth club and partnership with the GAA to promote Gaelic games and culture.

In Washington



Seattle Irish Immigrant Support Group, in collaboration with the Irish Heritage Club, provides immigration and social service programming for the greater Seattle Irish community. Additionally, they support Irish cultural opportunities that include Irish dance, language, lectures, Gaelic games and a thriving senior program, as well as their Annual Irish Week celebration in Seattle.