

URGENT: Host Families Needed!!

A message from James J. Lamb, President, IIP



We typically reserve this column to summarize the activity of the Ireland Institute of Pittsburgh over the last six months and share ideas about the vision, mission, and direction of the organization. But today we have an urgent need and ask readers to help us anyway they can.

In less than three weeks forty young people from Ireland will arrive in Pittsburgh to participate in our long-standing Wider Horizons Program. This is the primary activity of the Institute, providing work and life experience for young people from Ireland's most disadvantaged areas. While peace is taking hold in Ireland, reconciliation is just beginning. And these most disadvantaged young people, Protestant and Catholic, need opportunities to learn new skills, develop careers, and engage with peers from the other community.

We need host families to house these young people for approximately 7 weeks (late July to mid-September). Host families open their homes to our students. They provide sleeping quarters and include students in meals and other family activities. Hosts receive a non-taxable cash subsidy to fray costs associated with this program. Also, students receive stipends for their own personal expenses.

On behalf of the board and staff of the Ireland Institute of Pittsburgh, and the young people from Ireland, I urge all readers to consider this opportunity to be part of a noble cause, sustaining peace and progress in Ireland, North and South.

Please call Rob Tierney at 412-394-3900 to learn more about hosting our young men and women.

Thanks again for your continued support of our good work.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James J. Lamb". The signature is fluid and cursive.

James J. Lamb
President

We've moved!

The Ireland Institute of Pittsburgh offices have moved from the third floor of the Regional Enterprise Tower to the 14th. ***Our new suite number is 1410.*** Our email, phone, and fax contacts will remain the same. Please change our suite number on any future correspondence.

Faith-Based Organizations visit Pittsburgh



A seven person delegation of representatives from the island of Ireland, both Catholic and Protestant, and government officials, was in Pittsburgh from March 1-7 to observe the role of faith-based organizations in providing social services. The Churches Community Work Organization from Northern Ireland organized the trip. The group visited Catholic Charities, Providence Family Support Center, the Pittsburgh Project, the Islamic Center, and the Jewish Community Center, among others. Since the Government has traditionally provided most social services in Ireland, churches have not been involved in such issues. This is changing, however, as more and more faith-based communities see the need to get involved. The delegation hoped to learn how the charities in the area managed their services, from attracting and rewarding volunteers to how to secure assistance from the private sector. The delegation chose to visit Pittsburgh because of its reputation of having many faith-based charities.

Summer Intern

The IIP wants to send its congratulations and thanks to Amy Boots who was successful in her application for the JET Program (teaching English in Japan). Amy, who has finished up after two years as our intern graduated from Duquesne University in May with a degree in Modern Languages and Literatures. While with us, she worked with the Wider Horizons program, Common Ground newsletter, and business delegations. We wish her a fond farewell and all the best in her future career. Sayonara!

We would also like to extend a warm welcome to Kelly Smith, our new summer intern. She will be beginning her sophomore year at Point Park this fall with a major in Sports, Art, and Entertainment Management.

2007 Rooney Fellow Returns to Ireland



Ryan with Dan Rooney

Ryan Carragher, our 2007/2008 Rooney Fellow, has returned home. A native of Crossmaglen, Co Armagh, he will return to classes at Newry & Kilkeel Institute For Further & Higher education this fall. Ryan worked on marketing projects at his internships with the Steelers and Heinz.

Ryan writes of his experience: “My nine months in Pittsburgh involved so many activities that the time was up before I knew it. These activities were once in a lifetime opportunities, the first being the chance to work with the Pittsburgh Steelers Football Team, which has converted me into a fan for life.

The second was an internship that I completed at the HJ Heinz Corporation in Downtown Pittsburgh. It was amazing to see a global company being directed from Pittsburgh. My accommodation was top class in Assumption Hall at Duquesne University. I also took several classes and made use of the state-of-the-art fitness suite in the Power Center. The opportunity to travel was another highlight for me as I got to visit New York, Washington DC and the bright lights of Las Vegas Nevada. This is something many Americans rarely get the chance to experience, never mind an Irish Student from Crossmaglen, County Armagh, and for that reason I have many people to thank including Dan and Patricia Rooney along with the help of the Ireland Institute of Pittsburgh.”

The 2008/2009 Rooney Fellow was announced at a recent dinner at the Southern Regional College in Newry, Co. Down. Claire Dinsmore, hailing from Warrenpoint, Co. Down will arrive in Pittsburgh in mid-August and will study at the University of Pittsburgh.

Named in honor of Daniel M. Rooney, co-founder of the Ireland Fund, the annual American Ireland Fund Rooney Fellowship is awarded each year to an outstanding student of Newry College, Northern Ireland. The fellowship provides the opportunity for a student to undertake a one-year undergraduate business program at the University of Pittsburgh or Duquesne University and to participate in an internship program with the H.J. Heinz Corporation and the Pittsburgh Steelers Football Club.

Saying Goodbye to the Walsh Visa

The last participants of the Walsh Visa program will be going home in September after 2 years in Pittsburgh. Nine participants currently remain, 5 from Ireland and 4 from Northern Ireland. Overall, 293 participants have come to Pittsburgh since 2001 to live and work for 2-3 years, gaining valuable skills for their return. Of those, 135 came from the Republic, and 158 were from the North.



Washington, D.C. and Colorado Springs were the first “hub cities” on the program in 2000, followed by Pittsburgh and Boston in 2001, and Syracuse in 2002. After a 2-year hiatus allowing the passage of amendments to the program, Pittsburgh and Boston received new participants in 2005. As the program began to wind down, all hubs but Pittsburgh and Boston were closed after 2006.

In addition to job placements, the Walsh Visa program provided conflict resolution, leadership, and professional development workshops. The final retreat for the Pittsburgh group will be a Leadership Training weekend at the end of June. Past workshops have been combined with recreation at Seven Springs, Ohio, Washington, D.C. and other locations of interest. A final dinner for the participants was held on May 29 at Amici’s restaurant. Fred Welch, the program administrator, was present at the event to congratulate the participants. “We are so proud of all you have accomplished on the program,” he said, “We will truly begin to see success when, years from now, many of you have become industry leaders and say, ‘This is where I got my start.’”

The Ireland Institute of Pittsburgh would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all of the participants of the Walsh Visa program over the years, and to thank all of the employers and others who have helped make this program possible. To hear some of our past participants reflect on their time here in Pittsburgh on the program, watch the video at <http://www.iiofpitt.org/index.cfm/area/information/page/Videoclip2>

Wider Horizons 2008



This year the Institute will welcome three Wider Horizons groups. In March our first group (pictured), from the Monaghan and Portadown Partnership, arrived for an eight-week stay. They had placements at the Animal Rescue League, the YMCA (Downtown), WQED, and other local organizations. Information Technology was the focus of this group’s training at Duquesne where they learned Web Design skills. Pirates games, trips to Kennywood, the Carnegie Science Center and Washington DC were among some of their social activities. The Ireland

Institute would like to thank their supporters, volunteers and donors, including Tickets for Kids (www.ticketsforkidsfoundation.org) for their assistance with our group.

Our 2nd group of the summer, from Tyrone and Donegal, will arrive on July 21st and depart 15th September. They will spend eight weeks working in youth and community organizations throughout the region. We will welcome our 60th group, again from the Monaghan and Portadown Partnership. They will be with us from July 24th to September 18th.

IIP partners with BABC to lead business delegation

The Ireland Institute of Pittsburgh partnered with the British American Business Council of Pittsburgh to lead 6 companies on a delegation to Ireland and Northern Ireland. The delegation was the 14th lead by the Ireland Institute of Pittsburgh. The group arrived in Dublin on April 7th and departed from Belfast on the 12th. The IIP tailored the itineraries of participants to suit their needs, arranging meetings with businesses, government, and investment organizations.

Belfast City Council Sponsors Companies on US Visit

The Belfast City Council sponsored representatives of two companies, Michael McKernon and Paul Campbell, on a visit to Pittsburgh from May 26-28. Both sought to establish North American distributions for their products. Mr. McKernon represented Shanway Press, a publisher of Irish-themed books, while Mr. Campbell had a full catalog of athletic wear and merchandise from Gaelic Gear. The Ireland Institute of Pittsburgh arranged their full itineraries, including meetings with local business people and transportation. Both visitors reported great satisfaction with their visit to Pittsburgh.

Irish Festival 2008

Don't forget to stop by our stand at the Irish Festival this September 5-6-7 at Riverplex at Sandcastle. For further details about the Irish Festival, check out their website at www.pghirishfest.org.

Don't Forget to Sign-Up for the *Common Ground*

Don't forget to sign up to our free monthly e-newsletter, the *Common Ground*. You'll get lifestyle features, sports, news, and events from Ireland, Northern Ireland, and the tri-state area. To sign up email us at info@iiofpitt.org.

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If you would like to support the important work of the Ireland Institute of Pittsburgh in its mission of reconciliation in Northern Ireland and economic development throughout all of Ireland you can do so by making gifts of time or money. For more information on how to contribute or how to become involved with our work as a volunteer or host family, please call 412-394-3900. Ask to speak to Jim Lamb or visit our website at www.iiofpitt.org.

To designate your United Way gift for the Ireland Institute of Pittsburgh, please mark **4534** on your United Way pledge form.

We have also been designated a member of the National Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). Anyone interested in donating through CFC, please use **12438** when making a donation.