

Celebrating our 50th Wider Horizons Project

The Ireland Institute recently celebrated its 50th International Fund for Ireland Wider Horizons Project. The project concluded with a celebration at the LeMont Restaurant. Guests included William McCarter, Chairman of the International Fund, and his wife Mary; Congressmen Tim Murphy and Mike Doyle; and former Wider Horizons project supervisors, work placement supervisors, participants, and host families. Breandán Magee, who recently earned a Master's Degree in Conflict Resolution from Duquesne University, shared the insights of his thesis, which focused on an evaluation of the Wider Horizons program through interviews with past participants. The 50th group's participants hailed from Fermanagh in Northern Ireland, and Leitrim and Sligo in the Republic of Ireland. They concluded the evening with an entertaining rendition of "Leaving on a Jet Plane." The Institute would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who have made our Wider Horizons projects successful through the years. And special thanks to Ed and Anna Dunlap at the LeMont, for providing a spectacular venue for our past and future celebrations. The involvement of members of the greater Pittsburgh community continues to be the key to the success of these programs.



Wider Horizons Participants performing at the LeMont

15 Years 50 Projects

Walsh Visa Participants Certified by City and Guilds

City & Guilds is a provider of vocation qualifications in the United Kingdom. Walsh Visa participants have the option of participating in this certification program.

Nineteen participants were recognized for their completion of the City & Guilds certification process during the visit of Helen Bready, City & Guilds Manager, in December. Ms. Bready also met with participants currently working towards completing their profiles.

Mary Lou Harrington, City & Guilds coordinator at the Ireland Institute, stated, "We are very impressed with the participants who completed the certification process, especially with their hard work, willingness to participate, and the quality of their profiles." The Pittsburgh Hub would like to congratulate the following nineteen participants who fulfilled all requirements for the City & Guilds Certificate of Achievement:

Mary Bradley, Group 12
Peter Burns, Group 8
Sara Cryan, Group 6
John Dallas, Group 9
Debbie Dempster, Group 7
Stephen Docherty, Group 10
Darren Donaghy, Group 9
Niall Gallagher, Group 6
Chris Jones, Group 7
Shea McLoughlin, Group 6

Claire McMullan, Group 9
Anne McNamee, Group 11
Brian O'Neill, Group 6
Ross O'Neill, Group 11
Martin Shields, Group 12
Colin Shields, Group 12
Bryan Smith, Group 6
Aileen Taggart, Group 6
David Vance, Group 6



Helen Bready of City & Guilds with Group 6 participants, Niall Gallagher, David Vance and Brian O'Neill

Goodbye to Our Departing Walsh Visa Participants

In April, the Institute hosted a dinner for those participants who will soon be departing the Walsh Visa Program. The staff and board would like to congratulate these participants and wish them the best in their future endeavors.



Host Families Needed

The Ireland Institute is currently recruiting host families for our upcoming Wider Horizons programs. The Host Family Program provides the Institute's participants with an opportunity to learn about American family life. The participants welcome the opportunity to interact with families and become familiar with American customs and culture. Participating families have the unforgettable experience of learning first-hand about Ireland and Northern Ireland. Please contact the Institute at 412-394-3900 for more information on this exciting program.

New Board of Directors Members

The Institute wishes to welcome two new members to our Board of Directors: Thomas Sweeney, of Eckert Seamans Cherin & Mellott, and Dr. Daniel Sullivan, of North Hills Anesthesia Associates.

From the Desk of Michele O'Leary, RSM
President, Ireland Institute of Pittsburgh

May 1, 2004

Dear Friends,

Just a note of gratitude for all your prayers and good thoughts during my challenging hours this past year. What a year it has been! I am delighted to tell you that my recovery is nearly complete. I have survived, thanks to the good care and concern of the staff at UPMC, and the support of my family and all of you. With that, I hope this newsletter finds you in good health, both physically and spiritually.

The Ireland Institute of Pittsburgh continues its mission to promote peace and reconciliation to Northern Ireland's Protestant and Catholic young people and to stimulate economic development throughout Ireland. Programs like the Walsh Visa and Wider Horizons, among other projects have allowed us to deliver services to more than 1500 young people and their communities over the past fifteen years.

As we prepare for future groups and other activities that positively impact Ireland, North and South, we hope you will continue to support our efforts. We can't do it without you. Thanks again for all you have done on our behalf.

Sincerely,

Michele

Irish Ambassador Visits Pittsburgh

In December, the Institute was pleased to welcome the Irish Ambassador, Noel Fahey for a breakfast briefing co-hosted by Congressman Tim Murphy and the Ancient Order of Hibernians.

Ambassador Fahey spoke of three main issues: the connections between Pittsburgh and Ireland, economic relations between Ireland and the U.S., and the current situation in Northern Ireland.

Regarding ties between Pittsburgh and Ireland, the Ambassador spoke of the legacy of Irish immigrants coming to Pittsburgh, as well as the strength of the modern day Irish American community here including the Ancient Order of Hibernians. He also spoke with high regard for the work of the Ireland Institute of Pittsburgh, highlighted the ties between the Steelers and Ireland through the Rooney family, and spoke of Ireland native Anthony O'Reilly and his time in Pittsburgh with the H.J. Heinz Company.



Irish Ambassador, Noel Fahey

The Ambassador stated that Ireland wants to strengthen the “interdependence” between the American and Irish economies. He stated that job creation should be a two-way street between Ireland and America, exemplified by the fact that 60,000 people in the U.S. are employed by Irish companies, and 100,000 people in Ireland are employed by U.S. companies. Referring to the recent disagreement between the U.S. and the European Union over steel tariffs, Ambassador Fahey stated that the more we strengthen the interdependence of our countries, the “less cause we have for friction.”

The most recent elections in Northern Ireland have been a topic of interest to many who follow developments in the continuing Northern Ireland peace process. The Ambassador spoke of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), which he stated were the “less willing” of the Unionist parties to support the 1998 Good Friday Agreement. The DUP won a majority of seats in the Northern Ireland Assembly. Ambassador Fahey emphasized that despite the difficulties experienced by the Assembly, the “the cross-border bodies are working.” These bodies involve cooperation between the governments of the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland in areas such as economic development and tourism.

In addition to the speaking engagement, the Ambassador attended a Steelers game. This was the Ambassador’s first visit to Pittsburgh. Given the warm reception, it won’t be his last!

Patricia Lewsley Takes Part in St. Patrick’s Day Parade

The Institute hosted Northern Ireland MLA and SDLP Chairperson Patricia Lewsley in March; she was once again able to take part in Pittsburgh’s annual St. Patrick’s Day Parade. On behalf of Ms. Lewsley, the Ireland Institute thanks the Parade Committee.



Mary Lou Harrington, IIP Staff, with Patricia Lewsley

Walsh Visa Christmas Party



Participants celebrated the holidays with a social at Mullaney’s Harp & Fiddle on December 14th. Pictured, from left to right are: Darren Donaghy, Group 9; Amanda Mallon, Group 9; Lorraine Kennedy, Group 14; Bernie Donnelly, Ireland Institute staff member; Sarah Garland, Group 14.



Local Professionals Offer Tax Advice to Walsh Visa Participants

The Institute would like to thank Dale Marrison of PNC Bank and JinHo Park of PriceWaterhouse Coopers for their presentations on tax filing procedures and regulations. They were kind enough to donate their time for three sessions with Walsh Visa Participants. Brenda Mackin, Case Manager, stated, "Participants had many questions regarding taxes. Our presenters were able to succinctly answer their questions on tax filing and clear up confusion surrounding the various forms needed."

Thanks to Our Interns

The Institute would like to thank our spring semester interns, Lynn Finnerty and Eamon Conway, for their hard work and dedication. Lynn is a senior at the University of Pittsburgh. Eamon is a senior at Duquesne University.

Attention All Golfers!

The Ireland Institute's eighth annual golf outing will be held at Fox Chapel Golf Club on Monday, June 28th. This is the Institute's primary fundraising event of the year. We are especially grateful to Northwestern Mutual Financial Group for sponsoring this event. Support of this outing helps us to fulfill our mission of promoting peace in Northern Ireland and economic development throughout all of Ireland. So, tune up your swing, gather your friends and join the Institute for a day of golf, prizes, and plenty of fun! For more information, please contact LeeAnn at 412-394-3900 or visit our website at www.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 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 or **9016** on the Federal Campaign form.

