

EIIC NEWS

January 2009



"Meeting the Needs of Immigrants"

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www.eiic.org

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Emerald Isle Immigration Center Celebrates 21st Annual Dinner Dance

The 21st Annual Emerald Isle Immigration Center (EIIC) Dinner Dance took place on Friday October 24th, and saw prestigious awards bestowed upon three persons of great local acclaim.

The Hon. Vincent Gentile was commended for his work as Councilman of the 43rd District, in which capacity he has served the constituents of Bay Ridge, Dyker Heights, Bath Beach and parts of Benson Hurst for the past five years.

Dr. Geraldine M. Chapey, received an award too, for her passionate activity in Irish circles, including her service

on the Board of Directors of both the EIIC and the Queens County Saint Patrick's Day and Cultural Committee, as well as her work as founder and executive director of Trinity Services Inc. which serves the needs of over 2,000 older citizens of southwest Queens.

Maurice McGrath's work as a Business Representative and executive delegate to the District Council of Carpenters was also recognized. He began his career at local 608 twenty-

nine years ago, and became an organizer for 3 years prior to rising to his present position, which he has held for 18 years.

The Dinner was chaired by Randi Delirod who, along with musical guests the *New York Show Band*, helped to create a festive atmosphere of celebration and community.



A handsome journal, chaired Mae O'Driscoll, was produced for the night, offering an opportunity to express sincerest congratulations to the honorees and to the EIIC, which was taken up by family and friends, as well as well-wishers from the worlds of business, finance, politics and academia too numerous to mention individually in this space.

The sold out event took place at the Astoria World Manor in Astoria, Queens, and helped to raise over \$30,000 for the EIIC. The Center would like to express its most heartfelt thanks to all who contributed and attended.

NEWS

Twelve Month Intern Work and Travel Pilot Program for Ireland

The Intern Work and Travel (IWT) Pilot Program is an exchange program which allows Irish citizens who are 'bona fide' post-secondary college / university students, or recent graduates, to work and travel in the US for a period of up to twelve months.

As many as 20,000 visas will be available per year for five years to Irish participants. The program will be conducted under the existing Intern category of the Exchange Visitor Program, and subject to those regulations with the exception that pre-arranged employment will not be required prior to arrival.

Who is Eligible? To be considered eligible for participation in the program, the applicant must:

- Be a citizen of Ireland.
- Be a 'bona fide' post-secondary college/university student – the potential participant must have completed his / her freshman (first) year of a full-time course leading to a degree – or recent graduate – graduated in the past twelve months with proof of this from an educational institution.
- Provide proof of sufficient financial resources, prior to coming to the US, to support his/herself during a search for employment or between breaks in employment. Applicants must also provide evidence of sufficient ties back home.
- Not be accompanied by spouse or dependents.

Program information and details of sponsorship may be found on the US State Department's website at <http://exchanges.state.gov/jexchanges> and a comprehensive overview will be available from the Emerald Isle at www.eiic.org in future weeks.

Introduction of Electronic System for Travel Authorization

ESTA is an electronic registration system requiring travelers who are part of the Visa Waiver Program to register in advance of traveling to the USA. The ESTA program began on a voluntary basis on 1 August 2008. Mandatory registration will come into force as of **12 January 2009**.

Visa Waiver travelers should register through the Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection Agency website at the following address <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov>. Registration is free and may be done by third parties e.g. travel agencies. ESTA applications may be submitted at any time prior to travel, and once approved, will be valid for up to two years or until the applicant's passport expires or in the event of a name change. Authorizations will be valid for multiple entries into the U.S.

The US Department of Homeland Security is recommending that ESTA applications be submitted as soon as an applicant begins making travel plans and at least 72 hours in advance of travel. An applicant who does not receive authorization to travel will need to go to their nearest U.S. Diplomatic or Consular Mission and apply for a visa.

An ESTA approval does not determine admissibility into the United States. The final decision for entry to the United States rests with US immigration authorities at the port of entry.

DHS Wants Green Card Holders' Fingerprints

The US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has recently announced that from **12 January, 2009** the US-VISIT biometric program will be expanded to include all green card holders. As part of this program, green card holders will now be fingerprinted and photographed every time they enter the US.

At the moment, the program's biometric requirements apply only to foreign citizens with a non-immigrant visa or those traveling as part of the Visa Waiver program. Anyone screened as part of the US-VISIT program must provide digital fingerprints and a photograph at the border, as well as stating date of birth, address while in the country, and other information that the U.S. government deems appropriate.

The information is checked against a government database of known terrorists and criminals. Refusing to give prints of all 10 fingers will result in being denied entry to the country.

Some visitors to the U.S. will continue to remain exempt, including non-U.S. citizens younger than 14 or older than 79, as well as Canadian citizens on short-term visits under B visas.

Social Services

Announcements

Senior Book Club

Monday January 5th, 2009 will be the kick-off for the Senior Book Club in the Woodlawn office. The first meeting will establish guidelines for the group including meeting format, times, rotating group leaders and first book selection. The Woodlawn Public Library will be providing large print copies of the books. Call Lisa for further details Ext 102.

Winter Bronx Senior Computer Classes

The Fall Senior Computer Classes were successful and all of the participants gave positive feedback about Katie teaching them. The next session will start up again on Friday, January 9th and will continue to be two classes at 10am and 2 pm. Both classes are already full.

The Emerald Isle Immigration Center Bronx Knitting Group

The group will present the knitted blankets to Frances Schervier Nursing Home on Tuesday, January 13, 2008. Transportation will be provided and we will be leaving the Emerald Isle Office on Katonah Avenue at 9:30am to return by 11:30am. Please let Lisa know if you plan on attending.

Thank you for all of your hard work!!!

Civic Classes / ESL with NY Cares Starting January in Queens

Adult Civic / English as a Second Language (ESL) classes with NY Cares start up again this January 2009. The classes take place from 6:30 – 8:00 at our Woodside office (59-26 Woodside Ave. 2nd Fl. Woodside, NY 11377) and are open to the public. No reservation is necessary. The dates for these classes are:

Monday Evenings	Tuesday Evenings
January: 12, 26	6, 13, 20, 27
February: 2, 9, 23	3, 10, 17, 24
March: 2, 9, 16, 23, 30	3, 10, 24, 31
April: 6, 13, 20, 27	7, 14, 21, 28

Call Carla for information on (718) 478-5502 x215

US Embassy: Visa Appointments Available

The US Embassy in Dublin advise that they have some visa appointments available over the Christmas period.

Most years, large numbers of Irish working or studying in the US who go home for the holidays wait until the last minute to arrange their visa interviews and often the Embassy is unable to facilitate the requests in the normal way.

New Bi-Lingual Immigration Counselor Karla Rosero

The EIIC is proud to introduce our new bi-lingual immigration counselor, Karla Rosero. Karla has a B.A. from St. John's University and her J.D. from New England School of Law. She previously worked for the International Rescue Committee as Immigration Program Coordinator. During her academic studies at NESL, she completed clinical programs in both Immigration and Family Law, specializing in domestic violence and human trafficking. For caring, compassionate and confidential assistance on a range of immigration concerns, call Karla at 718-478-5502 x202

Information and Referrals

Immigration Applications for Residency	Family Petitions
Green Card Renewal	Adjustment of Status
Assistance with Enrollment in ESL Classes	Naturalization

Spanish Language Consultations Available

Immigration News

Citizenship

Emerald Isle Immigration Center Offers Free Assistance with Citizenship Applications

Apply for Naturalization – Become a US Citizen. Call Now to Make an Appointment

(718) 478-5502 (Queens)

(718)324-3039 (Bronx)

Please note that you will need to bring with you to the appointment:

Green Card

Birth, Marriage & Divorce Papers

Passport

All Immigration Documents

Any Criminal Record

\$675 check/money order payable to USCIS

Also note that you must be a lawful permanent resident in the US for a minimum of 3-5 years
to be eligible for naturalization
Hablamos Espanol

NEW US CITIZENSHIP TEST

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) recently completed a multi-year redesign of the naturalization test. Naturalization applicants began taking the revised test on **October 1, 2008**. Applicants who filed form N-400 before October 1st, and whose test date is between this date & October 1st 2009, will have a choice between the old and new tests. Applicants who filed before this date but whose tests are scheduled after October 1st 2009 will take the new test, as will all applicants who filed on or after the date.

DV Lottery Application Period Now Over

The entry registration period for DV-2010 green card lottery ended on December 1, 2008. DV-2010 lottery applicants will be selected and notified by mail between May and July 2009 and will be provided further instructions. Those selected in the random drawing are NOT notified by e-mail. Those individuals NOT selected will NOT receive any notification. Starting July 1, 2009, applicants will be able to check the status of their entry by returning to the website and entering their unique confirmation number and personal information from their online application receipt. For more information, go to www.dvlottery.state.gov

H-1B Cap Reached for 2009

Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) received enough H-1B petitions to meet the congressionally mandated cap for fiscal year 2009 by April 7, just one week after they started accepting applications. USCIS has also received more than 20,000 H-1B petitions filed on behalf of persons exempt from the cap under the “advanced degree” exemption. Affected H-1B applications received on April 7 will be subject to the random selection process. H-1B petitions received after that date will be rejected.

DV 2009 Results Announced

Ireland 132 Northern Ireland 35

The U.S Department of State has announced the results of the 2009 Diversity Visa (DV) Lottery. DV-2009 lottery winners were notified by mail between May and July 2008 of their eligibility to begin application for this year’s round of Diversity Visas. Those selected in the random drawing are not notified by email. Those not selected will not receive any notification from the Department of State, but are free to re-apply in future. Processing of the DV-2009 visas has already begun and will continue until September 30, 2009. If you have received a notification, and have questions about your eligibility to apply for a Diversity Visa or to Adjust Your Status in the United States, please call our Woodside Office at (718) 478-5502 Ext. 201.

Social

Emerald Isle Bronx Senior Luncheon, Monday, December 15th 2008



In attendance at the Luncheon were, (clockwise, from top left): Vice Consul General Alan Farrelly, Noreen O'Donoghue, Kathleen McGourty and Marie Burgess; Billy Kenneally and Evelyn Ryan; Nora Dobbins, Tony Kerins, Maire Kerins and Katie Hannon; EIIC Board Member Noreen O'Donoghue, Executive Director Siobhan Dennehy and wife of Consul General Marie Burgess; Eileen Fitzpatrick & Breeda Moore; Theresa Casey, Elizabeth Flaherty and Margaret Fogarty; Mary Nallen, Phyllis Owens and Kathleen McGourty; Mary O'Donoghue. Special thanks to the Rambling House for their assistance!

~ ~ Upcoming Events ~ ~

Save This Date!

**Emerald Isle immigration Center's
16th Annual
*Robert Briscoe Awards***

Monday, January 26 2009
6:00 – 8:00 P.M.

“21” Club
21 West 52nd Street
New York City

Honorees

Hon. G. Oliver Koppell
New York City Council Member – District 11

Neal Schelberg Esq.
Partner, Proskauer & Rose, LLP

The awards will be presented by
Robert's son, Hon. Ben Briscoe, former member of Dail Eireann (Irish Parliament).

The awards are bestowed each year on members of New York's Jewish community in appreciation of efforts to better the lives of Irish immigrants. Robert Briscoe was the first Jewish Lord Mayor of Dublin, Ireland. He was elected to that office in 1956, a time when New York City had not yet seen its first Jewish Mayor.

Admittance \$125
For Reservations call: (718) 478-5502 Ext 211