Happy Holidays from the IIIC!

Photo: Jackie’s client surprised her with these gifts of appreciation after she was approved for her green card. It is so important to hold onto these moments of joy.

Dear friend,

As we wrap up 2019 and prepare for the holidays, we are very grateful for your support and friendship. Thank you! There have been many challenges in the past year for immigrant and refugee families. With great courage and dignity, they have faced an onslaught of cruel and unjust policies and assaults on their humanity.

The IIIC team is fully committed to a better future for all, and we will not let these forces prevail. We are inspired by the courage of the families we serve, by the collegiality of our co-workers and partner organizations, and by your trust in us. Thank you!

We wish you a very restful and peaceful holiday season, and much goodness in 2020.

In solidarity,

Ronnie Millar
IIIC Executive Director
ESOL Class Learns about Boston Public Library’s Offerings

This Fall our Level 1 English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) class got out of the classroom and took a field trip to the Boston Public Library. Our ESOL teacher, Laurianne shared with us about their experience:

“We walked through the Boston Common and the Boston Public Garden, enjoying the cool, misty weather, which students enjoyed, proclaiming the weather was perfect -- ‘You can do anything in this weather!’ With this positive attitude, we arrived at the library for our tour with Jenna, a staff member on Boston Public Library English as a Second Language (ESL) and Literacy Services team. She showed students where they could find books in many different languages, where they could find ESL books, and even how to find the correct level of ESL book for their needs.

Next, we went to the computer lab, and students could follow along as Jenna showed them the online language-learning resources available to them with a library card. The students then had the chance to get library cards if they didn’t have one already. Five students got library cards and now have access to the amazing free library resources available to them. She also informed students about the English conversation groups held multiple times a week, and students went home with a schedule of all of the ESL/Literacy offerings at all the BPL locations throughout the city. It was a memorable and educational day out in the community for our class!”
IIIC Hosts J-1 Alumni in Dublin

At the IIIC, we maintain a strong J-1 Alumni Network to support connections between our past participants of our sponsored J-1 visa. This Fall, we hosted a networking event at Boston College Ireland where past participants and perspective Exchange Visitors came together to talk about their unique experiences as well as network with each other. The past participants shared with perspective Exchange Visitors tips for internship searching as well as what to expect from being in the U.S. for a year.

We invited guest speakers from the Department of Foreign Affairs in Ireland, LinkedIn, CrossCare, Trinity College, and two former J-1 participants. The speakers gave tips on how to network, shared about the importance of global exchanges and what they mean for Ireland, as well as the emotions that people may go through while living abroad.

We are grateful to all of the speakers, the thirty attendees, and Boston College Ireland for hosting us.

IIIC Creates a Pathway to a New Beginning

Earlier this year, Jackie, one of our attorneys, represented an Ethiopian immigrant, Ella (name changed), who had temporary immigration status based on her American husband. Ella came to one of the Center’s legal clinics in early 2018 seeking guidance. Ella’s husband was abusive, threatening to withdraw his support for her immigration status, she was desperate to end her marriage but didn’t know what to do, as her status was tied to her husband. Additionally, Ella’s husband was financially abusive, he forced her to drop out of her college program and work long hours in a factory, limiting her access to the money she earned and isolating her from her friends. Through our clinics, Ella learned that she did not need to stay in this destructive situation. Our attorney, Jackie, helped her obtain a permanent green card independently of her husband, which was granted in November 2019, while she received a restraining order and safely ended her marriage. She is now continuing her degree with plans of starting her own jewelry business.
Holiday Irish Chat Night at the Irish Consulate a big success!

The Consulate General of Ireland-Boston kindly hosted a holiday themed Irish chat night on Dec 6. There was a great turn out, with many familiar faces, as well as many new ones. It was so much fun, and the space was beautifully decorated for Christmas. The group practiced a ‘cúpla focal’ and reminisced about Christmas traditions from home in Ireland. The amazing Maureen Mc Nally led the group in a sing song, accompanied by Cumann na Gaeilge teacher, Pat Clifford. Thank you so much to all the staff at the Irish Consulate, especially Anne Byrne, who put so much thought and work into making the night a success. Thank you also to all the amazing Cumann na Gaeilge teachers (Pat, Natasha and Mary) who lead these wonderful classes in our office downtown. Nollaig Shona daoibh go léir!

Photo: Members of our Irish class and staff enjoy a lively night of conversation at the Holiday Irish Chat Night, hosted by the Irish Consulate.
JOIN US: Irish Language Classes this Winter

Wellness Services continued to run our Irish language program with our partners Cumann na Gaeilge Boston. This Fall semester we provided twenty students with three classes & levels of Irish, from beginner to advanced speakers. Our students come for a reconnection to Irish culture, the camaraderie of learning in a new city, and the craic.

One student noted: “I love the balance of grammar, practical conversation, and the songs & sayings. I feel like I’m learning a little bit of everything here!”

We will be hosting our Winter Irish class here at One State Street from January 16, 2020 - March 5, 2020. Please email Siobhan Kelly at skelly@iiicenter.org to sign up or learn more.

So grateful for all of our amazing interns and volunteers!

We’d like to take this opportunity as 2019 is coming to a close, to say a great big thank you to all our volunteers and interns for everything that you do here at the IIIC! We appreciate the gift of your time and effort. We would not be able to do the work we do, or assist the number of immigrant and refugee families that we do without your help. We are blessed to have over 100 volunteers and interns as part of our team.

Photo: A few of our amazing fall semester interns from a variety of local colleges. They very kindly agreed to pose for an impromptu photo in our office this week. Thank you all!
The IIIC provides a comprehensive, multi-service approach to supporting families from more than 126 countries. The Center provides the immigration legal, wellness and educational support immigrants need to gain stability, security, and build pathways to success. In addition to our services, rooted in the Irish tradition of welcoming others and social justice, we help newcomers find community, and stand up for immigration policies that are humane and just. We are proud to continue the tradition of welcoming immigrants to this country and working together to create a better future for all.

Please support our work at this important time. The IIIC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit. All donations are tax-deductible.

www.iiicenter.org | 617.542.7654

Please Support our Work: The IIIC’s End of Year Campaign

The IIIC’s annual campaign is underway, and thanks to a generous gift from Mr. Arnold Hiatt and the AM Fund, every dollar donated up to $25,000 will be matched! Donate here to help create a better future for immigrant and refugee families this holiday season. Gifts can also be sent to One State Street, 8th Floor, Boston, 02109, or by contacting Sari Foundas at 617-542-7654.

Our amazing community of supporters make it possible for families from 126 countries to build safe, stable, bright futures in the United States. Thank you for taking action to welcome our immigrant neighbors!