



Team Bulletin: March 2014

Dear Volunteer Team

I would like to extend a big thank you to all the volunteers in Croí na Gaillimhe. One of my favourite quotes is "To the world you may be one person but to one person you may be the world".

From observation and listening to participants of Croí na Gaillimhe I know that volunteers have a profound effect on the lives of people coming into the centre. A kind word, a gentle touch or a listening ear can mean so much to someone who feels lonely or isolated. We are particularly lucky or blessed with volunteers who come through our "Red Door". Volunteers in Croí na Gaillimhe continually give the gift of time to make contact, provide support and encouragement and also a lot of laughter, this may make someone's day a bit more bearable because the volunteer has taken the time to care and to listen.

Volunteers are involved in all the different aspect of the centres work for example: Lunch and Social Club, Fáilte Isteach, Classes, Dances, Knitting Clubs, Men's Group and they bring with them their life experiences, skills, abilities, compassion, intellect and laughter and ask for nothing in return. I would like to think that you have received friendship, appreciation and some satisfaction from our participants, other volunteers and staff.

Above all I hope you enjoy volunteering with Croí na Gaillimhe.

Please know that I genuinely appreciate and value your commitment of time to volunteering with Croí na Gaillimhe and for this I say thank you.

Loretta Needham, Manager of Croí na Gaillimhe



Volunteer Programme

Everyone knows that volunteers are the best thing ever. Without your involvement we wouldn't offer a portion of the things that we do. Who would teach English, serve lunches, play music, lead the painting and drawing group, pen stories with the creative writers, navigate the keyboard at computers or help us chill and relax?

Just to give you an idea of what that adds up to in people power and hours:

Between September – December 2013

- We had 70 active volunteers
- Contributing a total of 1580 hours.



That's fantastic!

Over the last year we have put in place a number of things aimed at helping to make your volunteer experience as worthwhile as possible. In line with Volunteer Ireland best practice guidelines, we now have group Induction, a Volunteer Handbook, a Volunteer Agreement and a volunteer noticeboard. You also have a staff member who is available to meet with you about your involvement.



Help us make it better!

We would like to get your views on what we could do to improve the volunteer experience. Have you any thoughts on what we could do introduce or what have you seen happening elsewhere that we could try here. Basically anything!

We will hold a meeting in April but we will also give you the opportunity to send in your suggestions if you can't attend. Keep an eye on the Volunteer Noticeboard.

Volunteer Opportunities

We are currently looking for volunteers to help with the following roles:

- Lead computer tutor to deliver the computer course
- Assistant computer tutors to support learners on an individual basis with +the various course tasks.

Did you know?.....

The Dancing Troupe Boogied up to Dublin



On the 1st Feb five of us set off by train to NCH Dublin to see Anton Du Beke BALLROOM TO BROADWAY show. It is a beautiful venue, just a stones throw from Stephens Green. When we arrived, we had a lovely lunch at the Terrace Restaurant, then went for a walk in Stephens Green, which was very refreshing. The show started at 3.15pm and finished in 2 hours. This is a fantastic show, music, singers and of course dancing, from the old Hollywood Musicals. One dance routine was from a 1953 musical called BAND WAGON, starring Fred Astaire/Cyd Charisse. DANCING IN THE DARK, danced by Anton du Beke and dancing partner and it was a pleasure to watch. Everybody enjoyed the show and we came back to Galway feeling happy and energised. It was a first visit for all of us and we hope to go again in the future.



Our Staff Team

Loretta Needham: Manager

I am the Manager of Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre. I've held this position with Croí na Gaillimhe since inception in April 2009. I am responsible for the overall management of the organisation, the implementation of the Strategic Plan, and the organisation and development of the staff team. I report to St James Conference who is responsible for the Governance of Croí an Gaillimhe Resource Centre.

What you don't know about me is that I love animals, particularly my 3 dogs (Rua, Shady and Bob) and would love to have my dogs with me to work if that was possible.

Aisling Bell: Administrator / Receptionist



I am a Galway native who has spent the last six years living and working in Dublin as a

practice manager for a GP service and am delighted to have just recently moved home to Galway with my husband and son. I joined Croí Na Gaillimhe in October 2012 covering all the administration and day to day running of the office. I thoroughly enjoy meeting all the wonderful participants and volunteers that make Croí na Gaillimhe such a special place to work.

What you don't know about me is I love a good book especially a mystery or history or a crime novel but it must be in book form.

I love the feel and smell of book and the thought of a kindle makes me shudder.

Ger Gibney: Receptionist

I am from Galway and now live in Barna, with my husband. I have two grown up children. I joined Croí na Gaillimhe in August 2011. I work part time on reception and administration.

My job as receptionist means I get to meet and chat to all the centre's visitors, volunteers and class participants. I really enjoy this aspect of my job and have met some wonderful people in my time here.

What you don't know about me is that I opened Galway's first Vintage shop in Quay Street in the 80's

Janet Kehelly: Project Worker

I've been living in Galway since 2004 with my partner and two sons, aged 5 (& ¾) and 9. My background is in adult and community education and I've worked in the community sector for a number of years. I joined Croí na Gaillimhe in October 2012, working with the Parents Network and Failte Isteach. I really

enjoy working with the people involved in Croí na Gaillimhe. And I definitely have the best office desk in Galway.

What you don't know about me is that I was a tip top chambermaid back in the day.

I cleaned Barry Manilow, Diana Ross, Ivan Lendel, David Hasselhoff, Ossie Osbourne and Greg Normans bedrooms. A very 80's A list!

Loyola King: Activities Coordinator

It's been my pleasure to work here in Croí na Gaillimhe where else would a Galwegian want to be but in the 'heart of Galway'! As the Activities Coordinator my role involves organising the lunch and social club on Monday and Wednesdays, as well as many of the classes and programmes we have on offer at the center. What a great year we've had in our social club from enjoying sumptuous lunches to learning new skills in origami and drumming workshops. Our bingo games are legendary we really do have the best prizes! There is always a lot on offer, but best of all is the welcome and genuine sense of friendship felt by all our older users

And what you don't know about Loyola is....

Hola!

What people don't know about me is that I have always wanted to learn to speak Spanish, perhaps it is something to do with having a Spanish first name or the various holidays spent on the Spanish Costas – Bueno! Haven't been successful yet despite a few attempts to learn, but starting classes again after Easter, fingers crossed for more fluency!!!

-Adios, Loyola

Board of Croí na Gaillimhe

Our Board oversee all the work we do. They meet about every six weeks. They include Jim Harrington, President, Harry Kenney, Secretary, Margaret Ayo Lagara, Michael Begley, Treasurer and Lorraine McIlrath NUI Galway. As well as monitoring that we are keeping to our plan and within budget, they are kept up to date on all the activities that we do.

Croí na Gaillimhe Website



We are really delighted that our website has gone "live". Please have a look at it and as always, we'd like to know what you think of it. We have included the Volunteer Handbook in the Volunteer section and will keep it up to date with vacancies as they arise. It would be great to rotate the Volunteer Stories from time to time so please let us know if you would like to have your profile included.

You can find us at www.croinagaillimhe.ie

The Mayor Awards

The Mayors Award celebrates voluntary activity in Galway City. If you would like to nominate someone you think deserves special recognition then please fill out a Nominee Form which you will find at the Volunteer Station.

Thank you!