



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Irish Dance Families Raise Funds for Champion Dancer's Mother Battling Cancer

Manassas, VA – Monday, Nov. 14, 2016 – As 8-year-old Irish dance champion Aine Callahan takes the stage Friday, Dec. 2, to compete at the Irish Dance Teachers Association of North America (IDTNA) Southern Region Oireachtas (regional championship) in Baltimore, her mother will be undergoing cancer treatment across town at Johns Hopkins Hospital. Families from the McGrath Academy of Irish Dance will set up a table to spread awareness and raise support for one of its own fighting colon cancer.

"When our families heard the news, they pulled together to come up with ways to support the Callahans," said McGrath Academy owner Lauren McGrath Dutton, ADCRG, TCRG. "So many of our families have been affected by cancer that we all wanted to help in some way. Some are delivering meals, some are donating money for hotel and gas vouchers, some are soliciting donations for the raffle. We'll do whatever we can so the Callahans can focus on beating cancer."

More than 2,000 Irish dancers from Alabama, Arkansas, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia and Mexico will convene in Baltimore for the annual competition. The McGrath Academy is thankful that the dance community is joining them in supporting the Callahan family as they face this battle.

Shannon Callahan won her battle against colon cancer two years ago, but in the beginning of October learned that the cancer had spread to her liver. This time, treatment isn't in her neighborhood, but about two hours away in Baltimore. The Callahans have medical insurance – Steven Callahan recently retired from the U.S. Air Force – but will have to pay deductibles and copay expenses. In addition, they will incur many costs traveling from Manassas, Va. to Baltimore for surgery and additional treatments. To help offset the costs of travel, commuting and hotel stays, the Claddagh Irish Dance Association (CIDA), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that supports the McGrath Irish Dance Academy reached out to the Oireachtas organizers who offered to provide a space for the raffle in Baltimore.

"All of the McGrath families are overwhelmed by the support and generosity from the Irish dance community and especially the many donations from vendors including a custom dress from Taylor Dresses Belfast," said Katy Gareau, president of CIDA.

Irish dance vendors have also stepped up to support the Callahan Family by providing the prizes that will be raffled throughout the three-day event.

- Fays Irish Dancing Shoes - hard Irish dance shoes
- Feistan - Gift certificate for a full body tan redeemable at the national championship this July and a Feistan at-home kit
- Head for the World - Irish dance accessories
- Irish Dancing & Culture Magazine - drawstring bag with the latest issue and a six-month subscription
- CIDA - Free family registration to the 2017 McGrath Feis
- Miss Di Kreations - collection of shirts and other items
- Northwest Designs - SRO hooded sweatshirt
- Irish Rose Accessories - gift certificate
- Irish Dance TShirt Company - gift certificate
- Taylor Dresses Belfast - custom Irish dance costume
- "The Best of New Orleans," put together by Irish dance families from the Muggivan School of Irish Dance in New Orleans, where the national championship will be held in July, 2017
- McGrath Academy of Irish Dance – Family feis survival kit, including Zuca bag
- And more!!

About McGrath Academy of Irish Dance

McGrath Academy of Irish Dance, based in Manassas, Va., was founded in January 2004. Classes are also offered in Lorton, VA, Purcellville, VA, Ashburn, VA, and Frederick, MD. Lauren McGrath Dutton, ADCRG, TCRG, is a second-generation TCRG and 2003 world championship dancer. Ariel Raguso, TCRG, is a 2013 world championship dancer.

About Claddagh Irish Dance Association (CIDA)

CIDA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that supports the McGrath Irish Dance Academy. Katy Gareau is the president.

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CIDA

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