



lwetb

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
an Longfoirt agus na hIarmhí
Longford and Westmeath
Education and Training Board



www.lwetb.ie

NEWSLETTER

2/2017
December 2017



Our December newsletter gives a very good insight into the operation of LWETB at this time. Over the past number of months we have been involved in developing our Strategy Statement 2017-2022. This document sets out a direction for LWETB to develop over the coming five years. It defines our mission, vision and values as an organisation and also outlines what strategic goals we will pursue over the next five years.

Chief Executive's address

DYNAMIC DIVERSE INNOVATIVE

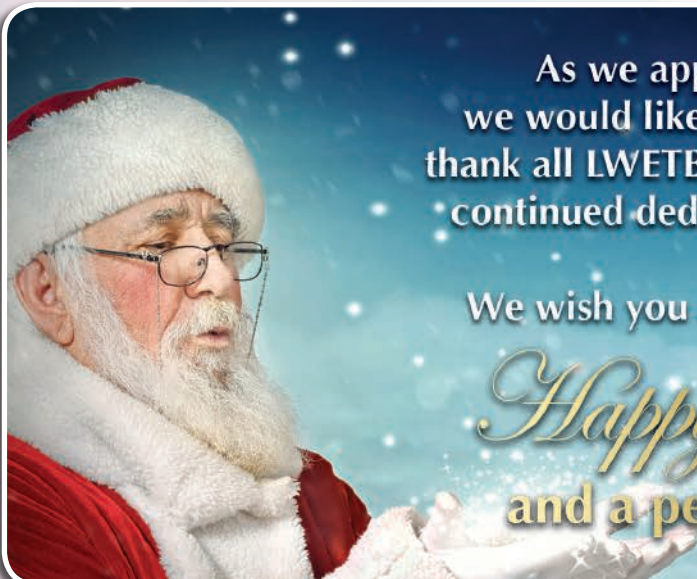
The three key words from our mission statement are Dynamic, Diverse and Innovative. These are the key phrases that drive how we go about our work and also clearly articulate for others what sort of an education and training organisation we are trying to be. As you read through this newsletter you get a real flavour of how dynamism, diversity and innovation are hallmarks of our services in LWETB.

Students in our LWETB schools have been involved in an increasing range of activities and have achieved many local and national successes over the past number of months. There are also a number of innovative activities that schools are engaged in that have resulted in recognition and awards. LWETB has also seen an expanded role in our Youth Services in both the design and oversight of services offered to young people in both counties.

Under our Further Education and Training (FET) services we see a range of new courses and opportunities being offered to learners. Learners are also actively involved in the community both through community fund raising events and increasingly through work-based learning opportunities and work placements in very high profile work environments.

As we move towards the end of a calendar year I wish to thank all staff in LWETB for your energy and commitment over the past year. Staff are at the heart of what drives our dynamism, diversity and innovation in LWETB and what ensures that all learners are afforded the best possible opportunities to develop and thrive.

Dr Christy Duffy,
Chief Executive, LWETB



As we approach the end of 2017
we would like to take this opportunity to
thank all LWETB staff for their hard work and
continued dedication throughout the year.

We wish you and all your families a very

Happy Christmas
and a peaceful New Year.

LWETB'S NEW MISSION STATEMENT

Following considerable consultation Longford and Westmeath Education and Training Board are proud to ratify the revised Mission Statement for LWETB. This statement articulates our core purpose both for the organisation and those who engage with it. The three key words embedded in the statement are Dynamic, Diverse and Innovative and hopefully will become the mantra for our organisation as we enter into the next stage of its development.

OUR MISSION
To provide dynamic, diverse and innovative education and training services

LWETB STRATEGY STATEMENT 2017-2022

LWETB endeavours to ensure all learners are provided with the highest level of service and outcomes to enable them reach their potential. This can only be achieved if as an organisation we set clear goals and objectives and implement strategies to deliver on these goals. LWETB's Strategy Statement 2017-2022 clearly sets out its vision for the next five years, defining our mission, visions and values, and outlines the goals we need to pursue to meet our targets. The Strategy Statement covers all aspects of the organisation from teaching and learning in schools, infrastructure, CPD, further education and training and administration functions.

OUR VISION
To develop and deliver nationally and internationally recognised high quality, vibrant, professional education and training services

OUR STRATEGIC GOALS 2017-2022	
Goal 1	Deliver professional, high quality, learner-centred education and training services
Goal 2	Enhance the learning experiences and outcomes for learners
Goal 3	Foster effective communication, collaboration and partnerships
Goal 4	Progress the development of effective organisational structures
Goal 5	Support a culture of continuous development with staff



CHANGES TO DATA PROTECTION



In less than half a year from now, the name of the legal mechanism that protects the privacy of our personal information will change. The EU would like data protection law to be uniform across all member states, and to this end has passed the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) into law. This measure will replace our Data Protection Acts which have been in force for almost thirty years.

Everyone – staff, learners and students, as well as students' parents or guardians – will have enhanced rights in respect of their personal information,

including the right to question or challenge how it is used, the right to request a copy of all of it, or even the right to ask to have it corrected or destroyed.

For ETB staff, these rights impose obligations on us – to tell people clearly the purpose we will be using their data for, to stick to that purpose, and to keep that data safe and secure and out of reach of anyone who is not entitled to see or use it.

Find out more about the changes to come at <http://gdprandyou.ie>. And for any more questions about data protection in LWETB, and how it affects you as an ETB staff member contact David on 044 9394015 or at dmcgreal@lwetb.ie

RECRUITMENT NEWS

LWETB are continually recruiting to fill vacancies in all areas within the organisation. Please refer regularly to www.etbjobs.ie for new and exciting opportunities.

SCHOOLS

TEACHMEET 2017

LWETB's TeachMeet 2017 was held on Saturday, 18th November 2017 in Athlone Community College. This innovative event was organised for all LWETB school leaders, teachers, Youthreach leaders, tutors, FET tutors, special needs assistants and administrative staff. TeachMeet is an important event in the LWETB calendar and this year's event provided a fantastic opportunity for staff to meet colleagues in a fun and informal way.

TeachMeet promotes a collaborative environment to support all those involved in education to meet, chat, share tips and insights with each other and build connections across education and training communities.

The day began with a presentation by Mr Declan Coyle who flew in especially from the USA to attend as our key speaker. Mr Coyle is a renowned international educationalist and motivational speaker and author of the bestselling book, "The Green Platform". This was a wonderful opportunity to hear Declan speak about the power of positive choices in our personal and professional lives.

Following the key note address staff from within LWETB as well as guest speakers from other from ETB's with expertise in a large number of areas provided short presentations on topics ranging from innovative use of ICT in the classroom, Data Protection and advice on minding yourself and your mental health. We also had a student voice workshop led by post primary and Youthreach students from within LWETB and this proved a huge success on the day.

Plans are already underway for next year's event, so if you wish to be part of TeachMeet 2018 please forward your name and school/centre to Bronagh at bmaguire@lwetb.ie



Mr Declan Coyle pictured with LWETB Chief Executive Dr. Christy Duffy and LWETB Director of Schools Ms. Liz Lavery

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Our annual LWETB Academic Excellence Awards, an event that recognises the hard work and achievements of our Leaving Certificate students throughout our schools in Longford and Westmeath was held on Friday, September 8th, 2017 in Bloomfield House Hotel, Mullingar.

Shauna Burke, a student of Ballymahon Vocational School received LWETB's Highest Academic Achiever Award in recognition of her fantastic Leaving Certificate results. We would like to wish Shauna and all of our 2017 winners every success in their futures.



2017 Academic Excellence Award winners representing each of our eight schools, pictured with Dr. Christy Duffy, Chief Executive, Cllr. Frankie Keena, Chairperson and Director of Schools Liz Lavery

LWETB STAFF ORIENTATION DAY



LWETB's annual orientation day for all new and recently appointed teaching staff took place on Tuesday, 22nd August 2017 in Athlone Training Centre. The day, which always proves to be hugely successful at establishing and strengthening connections amongst staff, was attended by over 34 new staff members.

Topics covered on the day included an overview of the vision, mission and services of LWETB which was led by the Chief

Executive, Dr. Christy Duffy. Best practice guidelines on teaching and learning were delivered by Director of Schools, Liz Lavery. Staff who have worked in a LWETB school shared their experience, while a special workshop on developing positive staff and student relationships was delivered by two students from Ardscoil Phádraig, Granard.

The day proved a huge success and provided staff with a great opportunity to reflect upon their future roles.

ARDSCOIL PHÁDRAIG



ACTIVE SCHOOLS FLAG

Ardscoil Phádraig has become the first secondary school in Co. Longford to be awarded the Active Schools Flag. The school has been working towards this flag for the past two years. Some of the areas the school focused on were including more variety in lunchtime and extra-curricular activities as well as giving students more of a say on what is offered in the school through questionnaires. Well done to all members of the active schools committee and to the whole school community on the achievement. Ardscoil Phádraig is currently offering Physical Education as a short course to first years in a bid to enhance overall physical activity levels and to promote social, physical, mental and emotional health through practice and theory.

ROINN NA GAELIGE

The Roinn na Gaeilge and Gaelbhrtach committee are delighted to be the first school in Longford to have been awarded a Gaelbhrtach in recognition of their promotion of Irish language and culture. Only 55 schools nationwide have been awarded a Gaelbhrtach in recognition of their development of Gaeilge both in school and in the local community. The committee, consisting of representatives from all year groups in the school, organised a variety of events as Gaeilge throughout the year including Seachtain na Gaeilge, our Club Gaeilge, a whole-school Céilí & a Tráth na gCeist with local primary school students. They also created an action plan for the future development of Gaeilge in the school to ensure its growth, both within and beyond the classroom environment.

Committee members Eimear Corcoran, James Kiernan & Niamh Reilly were awarded the Gaelbhrtach at the presentation ceremony at Punchestown Racecourse in May. Recently, Ardscoil Phádraig were also one of 300 schools nationwide to take part in the Conradh na Gaeilge 'Gaeilge 24' initiative. 70 students and teachers accepted the challenge to speak go hiomlán as Gaeilge ar feadh 24 uair a' chloig agus bhí i bhfad níos mó ná 'cúpla focal' le cloisteáil! Is léir go bhfuil an Ghaeilge ag dul ó neart go neart anseo in Ardscoil Phádraig!



ATHLONE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

LIFE AFTER THE LEAVING CERT



Discussions at the "Life after the Leaving Cert" event

On Thursday 19th of October 2017, Athlone Community College launched a brand new event- 'Life after the Leaving Cert'. All senior students across the Longford Westmeath Education Training Board were invited to attend this event along with their parents and siblings. Students had the opportunity to discuss their career options with people who work in their areas of interest. It was great to see so many outstanding companies and organisations giving up their free time in order to inspire our students. Local companies Eriksson, Medtronic, Abbot, Tormey Solicitors and RBK Accountancy had stands and provided the students with great insights into their working life and the sorts of roles that exist within their respective companies. Other organisations, Barnados and Foróige were on hand to provide information on careers in social care. Over the course of the evening, presentations took place to explain the intricacies of each company/career e.g. Architecture, MRI Specialist, Biomedical Science and careers in the Arts. Public organisations and initiatives such as the Gardaí, the Defense

Forces, SOLAS Apprenticeships and FAST Track to IT also attended. For any student interested in becoming self-employed, Mr. Pat Campbell and Mr. Sean Torpey of 'Project Opportunity in a Million Initiative' were there to explain the services they provide to assist anyone wishing to take that path. We also had an experienced entrepreneur and CEO Mr. Anthony Denby of local company 'Woodfit' presenting and answering questions. Most of the major universities and many Institutes of Technology and further education colleges had stands at the event to answer any queries students and parents had about life in college and their course offering. It was a fantastic event where so many positive options were presented to our students in a vibrant environment. Thank you to Ms. Burke and Ms. Cryan for organising the event.

MATHS WEEK

Athlone Community College held a large variety of activities and events for students to enjoy during Maths Week 2017. First year students participated in a poster competition and the top three students in each group won a prize. Congratulations to class Michelangelo for winning the poster competition! In second year a 'Drop Everything and Calculate' competition ran. Fifth year students participated in a table quiz and problem solving competition. There were daily riddles with chocolate prizes for all correct answers. Solutions and winners names were placed on the noticeboard the following day. Transition year students took part in MangaHigh, an online maths game where they competed against their class as well as the rest of the TY cohort. Bronze, silver and gold medals were awarded to the winners. Overall, 100 of our students from First to Sixth year took part in the National Problem Solving Competition PRISM. The standard was outstanding! It was a very close competition between both Senior and Junior students. The best senior maths student award went to Kevin Shine (5th year) and the best junior maths student award was won by Oleksandra Sachov (1st year). Well done to every student who participated.

BALLYMAHON VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

UCD ENTRANCE SCHOLAR AWARD

Congratulations to Sinead Bannon, who was awarded a UCD Entrance Scholars Award at a ceremony in the University on Wednesday 15th November 2017. UCD Entrance Scholars are first year students recognised for their academic achievement in Leaving Certificate 2017. These awards are part of a range of UCD initiatives put in place to recognise exceptional students when they join, as well as those who develop their talents while studying at UCD.



CPR FOR SCHOOLS

Before the midterm, students from BVS were privileged and honoured to be the only school in Ireland invited by the Irish Heart Foundation to participate in the official launch of their CPR for Schools programme. Last year three students; Ciara Moughty, Emma Kearney and Sarah Mc Cormack, guided by their teacher Ms Mulcahy carried out a very worthwhile BT Young Scientist project. The main aim of the girls project was to design an educational based programme that could be used in schools to raise awareness on CPR techniques, how to use an AED machine and general life saving skills. The girls wanted to take the fear out of saving a life. The Irish Heart Foundation were very impressed and inspired by the hard work and dedication of the three students. As a result the Irish Heart Foundation were eager to have Ballymahon Vocational School students as the face of their CPR for Schools programme which is being rolled out nationwide.



CASTLEPOLLARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SUCCESSFUL STAGE PRODUCTION

Castlepollard Community College has produced many successful stage productions over the last three years and this this year was no exception.

On November 16th, 17th and 18th, under the tutelage of Ms Joan Leonard, a huge cast of new and experienced performers staged Andrew Lloyd Weber's "Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat" in the Mullingar Arts Centre. Congratulations to all those involved. You should be proud be of your hard work and dedication.



DIRECTION DCU

All Ireland winner Jonny Cooper representing Dublin City University visited Castlepollard Community College in October. Jonny spoke to 6th year students about DCU and the programmes on offer at the university.



COLUMBA COLLEGE KILLUCAN

LONDON ART TOUR

On Tuesday 24th October 15 art students from Columba College caught an early morning flight to London. Within three hours of landing in Gatwick the group found themselves surrounded by contemporary works of art in the world famous Saatchi Gallery. After a very successful guided tour the group moved onto the Tate Britain, where they spent two hours wandering through space and time whilst viewing the paintings and sculptures on show. Following this it was time to relax in the comfort of the Apollo Theatre and enjoy a performance of "Wicked"

After an early start the following morning the group spent some time visiting the masters in the National Gallery, the Tate Modern and the National Portrait Gallery. They even had time for some sun bathing in Trafalgar Square, selfies at Buckingham Palace and a spot of shopping on Oxford Street

They returned home on the Thursday evening with pockets that were empty and minds that were full of culture, art and questions.



TY BONDING

Columba College's Transition Year group, consisting of 36 students, headed to Tannagh Adventure Centre on the Monaghan Cavan border for this year's team building and bonding trip.

The group took part in a number of water- based activities, including canoeing out to the middle of a lake, and with the aid of a life jacket, swimming back to shore! Not for the faint hearted but still something that even the non-swimmers were excited to partake in.

After a break and a warm beverage on the shores of the lake, they returned to the adventure camp to try their skills at rock climbing and archery. The competition was particularly strong within the sport of archery as the students took on the TY coordinators - the results of which are still pending!

After a relaxed lunch it was time for 'Battlezone,' where every student and teacher battled to remain on the winning side. The day was without question a success for all. New friendships were made, old ones were rekindled and memories were certainly captured.

LANESBORO COMMUNITY COLLEGE

AISLING ARTS FESTIVAL 2017

This year, the Aisling Arts Festival celebrated its 20th anniversary. Aisling teamed up with The Longford Leader and three secondary schools from County Longford. Six TY students from Lanesboro Community College were delighted to be chosen to be part of this supplement. It was a great opportunity for our budding journalists and photographers to get their work published and see how a newspaper worked. The theme of this year's festival was "The Future is Bright". Our TY Aisling team focused on all that is bright in Lanesboro.

A sample of the articles that appeared in the supplement included an interview by Leah Farrell with Lanesboro Community College past pupil and RTE reporter Ciaran Mullooly. Ciaran talked about the ongoing tourism development taking place in Lanesboro. Jennifer Brennan spoke to fellow club member Leaving Certificate student Michael O'Donnell who played in goals for County Roscommon in the first ever Under 17 All-Ireland Final against Kerry this summer. Winner of Sci Fest Best Project at AIT, Will Dennigan, 6th Year, explained to Moya Reynolds how he invented an app called "Herd Checker". This app allows farmers to feed their cattle from anywhere! Leaving Cert student Adam Farrell is the drummer with up and



Past pupil of Lanesboro Community College Ciaran Mullooly being interviewed as part of the Aisling Arts Festival

coming Indie music group "Painted Skies". Their recent first single "Constellations" rose to no. 41 in the Alternative Music category in the Irish charts. The future is certainly looking bright for this talented group from Longford.

The TY students worked extremely hard on their articles, developing the many skills required for compiling and editing this supplement.

THE TASTE OF THE LAKELANDS JUNIOR MASTER CHEF

Three TY students, Evelina Bulotaite, Leah Farrell and Moya Reynolds competed in the Taste of the Lakelands Junior Master Chef competition. While not winning the competition outright, they were highly commended for the excellent organisational and culinary skills they demonstrated on the day. In 40 minutes they produced restaurant standard chicken and vegetable stir-fry with noodles for the main course, followed by an orange and passion fruit dessert. The presentation and taste of these dishes was excellent and they represented their school with pride.



MULLINGAR COMMUNITY COLLEGE



Students pictured in Shakespeare's Globe Theatre

LONDON LITERARY ADVENTURE

Mullingar Community College senior students recently took a literary adventure to London. There they toured Shakespeare's Globe Theatre and participated in a King Lear/Macbeth workshop. From there they soaked up the atmosphere of the city on a walking tour, were inspired by young actors in musical School of Rock, read stories of the horrors of war in the Imperial War Museum and walked the streets with storyteller Paul as he revealed to them the world of Jack the Ripper. Naturally there was also time for a spot of shopping, a flight on the London Eye and a terrifying tour of the London Dungeons. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the trip.

HURLS AT THE READY

Mullingar CC successfully reintroduced Hurling as an extracurricular sport this year. The students have shown a keen interest in the sport and this is evident through their participation in the training and games played. The Junior hurling team, coached by Mr Page, have competed very well on their first year out by coming second in their group. It is hoped that this new introduction to what we can offer students will be further developed over the coming years.

TEMPLEMICHAEL COLLEGE LONGFORD (AND LONGFORD COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION)

TY - A STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Transition Year students from Templemichael College reflected on their TY year as a time in school in which they learned to develop as a person rather than just intellectually. Students were taught how to work as a team, to be more open-minded, learn new skills and experience new activities such as group projects, international cooking in the Home Economics class and a life skills programme. They received certification in a series of short courses such as self-defence, tourism, graphics, first aid and coaching.

There were many highlights during Transition Year. However, the one that stands out was the trip to Barcelona. The students remember fondly how they went sightseeing, shopping and visited the adventure park, Port Aventura.

They discussed how everyone got along really well and how perfect a way it was to round off the year. We learned new skills and developed as people. We made new friends and experienced new adventures.

Transition Year was a very productive year, in which a lot was learned and experienced, and overall everyone seemed to enjoy it.

STAND UP WEEK 2017

Stand Up! Week tackles homophobic and transphobic bullying by increasing awareness, friendship and support for LGBT students by other students. This year's Stand Up! Week was held 13 - 17 November 2017, and took place in schools and youth services around Ireland.

As part of the Stand Up Week 2017, 2nd year SPHE students from Templemichael College collaborated with Ms McHugh to produce a piece of artwork to show their support for LGBT students and to promote a positive, inclusive atmosphere in the school



ST, ANTHONY'S ATHLONE

It has been a busy time for St Anthony's since the last newsletter. The biggest improvement to the facilities in the school for many years was commenced over the summer. Funds for a major refurbishment were provided by the ETB and phase one has been completed. This included repainting of all classrooms, construction and fit out of a new cookery/staffroom,

construction of an office, and fitting out the IT room with new purpose-built computer desks. This has been a major boost to the school already as it has provided a much more welcoming and user-friendly environment for students and staff alike. Phase two of the refurbishment is being completed as this article is being written. This will consist of repainting all

remaining areas, new flooring throughout the school, refurbishment of toilets and improvements to the main entrance.

This work will be a major improvement to the school and will allow the facility to prosper and grow as an important element of the services for young people in Athlone.

FURTHER EDUCATION

ATHLONE TRAINING CENTRE

ATHLONE TRAINING CENTRE AT THE ADOBE CERTIFIED ASSOCIATE (ACA) WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP 2017

Congratulations to Niamh Kelly from our recent web design class who was nominated to participate in the UK & Ireland final of the ACA World Championship 2017 in London. Niamh was one of the top twenty performing students in the UK & Ireland based on highest scores in her recent Adobe Certified Associate exam. This was a huge achievement for Niamh and she did Ireland and Athlone Training Centre proud in the final last week. Congratulations to her tutors Pat Fleming and Avrial Cogan for all their help and support to Niamh.

The Adobe Certified Associate (ACA) World Championship is a global competition that identifies and honours the next generation of design professionals using Adobe software.

The UK & Ireland Final brought together the 20 finalists (selected in the two Qualifying Rounds) at the Design Museum in London to determine the UK & Ireland Champion. The event saw finalists compete in a design challenge where they were given instructions, project requirements and assets to complete a real-world design challenge using Adobe Creative Cloud software.



LONGFORD ADULT LEARNING

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

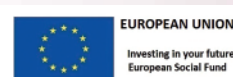
Over the past few months a number of improvements have taken place to enhance the facilities in the Further Education & Training Campus Longford. Firstly, a study hub with IT and internet access has been created so that students can study independently. All classrooms are now fitted with smartboards and the computer suites have all been upgraded with 41 new PCs. These modern facilities enable students to learn using the most modern technological facilities in a pleasant learning environment.

Autumn is a busy time in Adult Learning as students return to the classroom to attend part-time courses. For some learners, it's the first time they have been in a classroom for many years and it is a huge step. By November, 625 adults were participating in courses in the literacy scheme, including English for Speakers of Other Languages and Skills for Work.

It has just been announced that the national Skills for Work

Programme, of which the literacy schemes in LWETB are active participants, has been chosen by the European Social Partners to receive the "European Vocational Skills Week - Training at Work" Award. The award ceremony will take place on 24 November 2017 in Brussels. The award was given by the European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility Ms. Marianne Thyssen.

329 learners in the Adult Learning service submitted portfolios for QQI assessment in September. The presentation of QQI Awards took place on Monday 20th September in Longford Rugby Club. Shauna Doherty, Adult Education Officer presented certificates to students at QQI levels 1-3. 15 people achieved certificates by on-line learning using NALA's blended learning programme.



MULLINGAR ADULT LEARNING



MULLINGAR ADULT LEARNING NEWS

Student, Donal Kelly and a tutor, Laura Lowry, recently had the privilege of attending a reception at Áras an Uachtaráin. The President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins hosted this reception for adult literacy learners and tutors as part of the National Literacy Awareness campaign.

President Higgins is a patron of NALA and this was an opportunity for him to meet with learners and tutors. Donal and Laura had a wonderful day!

Adult Learning also had a talk in their centre on the key messages underpinning The “#Littlethings” campaign. Anthony O’ Prey from the HSE explained how the campaign focuses on sharing evidence-based, simple and powerful day-to-day steps – little things that we can all do to protect our own mental health, and support the people we care about. People are encouraged to eat and sleep well, take regular exercise, talk about their problems, drink less alcohol and stay in touch and spend time with others – all proven to improve mental health.

We followed up with a coffee morning after the talk to encourage everyone to make a start on adding friends to their tea circle!!

President Michael D. Higgins pictured greeting adult learners and tutors at a special reception



ATHLONE VTOS



Group from Athlone VTOS pictured at the Museum of Country Living

Athlone VTOS learners pictured in AIT

EVENTS OF INTEREST IN ATHLONE VTOS

Athlone VTOS business learners were invited to visit Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT). While there they toured the business department. A past Athlone VTOS student was there to meet them and tell them about her experiences as a mature student in her first year. The students were very impressed and came back determined to work hard.

The learners and staff also visited the Museum of Country Living in Castlebar, Co. Mayo. Here they learned about the past and Ireland's dependence on the agricultural industry. There was also a great variety of flora in the formal gardens in which the horticulture students were very interested!

LONGFORD VTOS

NEWS FROM LONGFORD VTOS

Longford VTOS held their annual awards ceremony at which Shauna Doherty (AEO) presented the certificates. The current second year learners were also presented with QQI component certificates and City & Guilds certificates they had received in their first year on the programme. The John Barry memorial cup was presented to Mr Tony Doyle as the 2017 student of the year. A great night was had by all and it was a good opportunity to hear of the progress they were making with several progressing to third level, PLC courses and others securing employment.

In June, Longford VTOS held their annual “Have a Heart Charity

Match” which involved both tutors and learners. We had a fantastic fun day but more importantly we raised nearly €800 for the Irish Heart Foundation. We also held a coffee morning and raised €148 for Longford Hospice. So well done to all involved.



MULLINGAR VTOS

MULLINGAR VTOS NEWS

ICT Course in Information and Communication Technology.

In January 2016 the Further Education and Training Centre in O’ Growney Drive launched its new BTEI programme for adult learners who wished to combine returning to learning with family, work and other responsibilities. This programme was delivered on a part-time modular basis and is very popular with students. The programme continued through the 2016/2017 academic year. Modules on offer to students include

Career Planning, Information and Communication Technology, Workplace Safety and Work Practice The first group of students to successfully complete this course received their QQI Level 4 Major Award in Information and Communication Technology Skills and Employment Skills on Thursday 23 November in the Greville Arms Hotel Mullingar. Students who successfully completed the full time VTOS course will also receive their QQI Level 5 Major Award on the same evening. Congratulations and well done to everyone.

College Awareness Week 2017:

College Awareness week took place in schools and centres from 20th to 24th November 2017. College Awareness week promotes the benefits of going to college and helping students of all ages to become college ready. As part of College Awareness, LWETB Guidance Co-Ordinator Caroline Cornally delivered a CAO workshop to VTOS students who are interested in progressing onto to 3rd Level College next year.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Community Education Service Chess Project

Learners from the Stepping Out project in Athlone recently presented two hand-made chess tables, along with chess pieces and storage boxes, to the municipal libraries in Athlone and Mullingar. The tables were designed and made under the tuition of Pdraig Duncan, LWETB carpentry tutor and were decorated using the technique of pyrography. The chess tiles were hand-cut by learner Robert Penrose and all the learners helped to mould and paint the chess pieces. These chess pieces are quite distinctive as they are based on a famous chess set found in Scotland in the early 1800s and bearing the name of the location of the find: 'The Isle of Lewis'.

Speaking at the hand-over ceremonies, Jim McNamee, Co-ordinator of the Stepping Out project, said the chess project was made possible by a combination of funding from Athlone Drugs

Awareness Group towards materials and the support of LWETB's Community Education Service. Jim outlined how it took 15 hours work to get to the point where the chess inlay squares could be laid, along with over 10 hours of hand cutting individual pieces for each section. The pyrography design followed and the table took up to 30 hours of intensive pyrography masking by the participants.

Athlone and Mullingar libraries will have the tables and chess pieces available to their members, and to members of the public, and they are confident that there will a demand for chess games from all age groups.

Stepping Out is based in Belhavel, Athlone and is funded by the Department of Justice and Equality along with LWETB and is hosted by the National Learning Networks.



Robert Penrose, Stepping Out and Mayor Andrew Duncan trying out Mullingar Library's new chess table and pieces

GUIDANCE

FET Adult Guidance and Information Service

Adult Guidance and Information encourages personal, educational and career development, enabling people to move towards their full potential and make an enhanced contribution to society. Our service is delivered on an individual and group basis and helps learners to make an informed choice about their future. All guidance information and guidance counselling sessions are free and take place in an impartial, confidential and supportive setting. In recent months the service has seen some staff changes. Liz Glennon returned from a year's secondment working with the National Centre for Guidance in Education and is based between Athlone and Mullingar. We are delighted to have Liz back within the service and she brings with her a wealth of knowledge and experience particularly in euro guidance. Euro guidance is a European network of national resource and information centres for guidance. Euroguidance centres operate in about 35 countries.

We are also delighted to announce that Fiona Murphy recently joined the team and will be based in Longford. Fiona has over twelve years' experience in Further Education, particularly with the Literacy Service and we are very pleased to have her understanding and exceptional skills within the guidance service. Finally, John Doherty and Caroline Cornally are continuing to work with the service based in Longford and Mullingar respectively. All our contact details are listed below and staff are welcome to contact us should they wish to do so.

- Patricia Reilly - preilly@lwetb.ie 086-3867847
- John Doherty - jdoherty@lwetb.ie 085-8086825
- Caroline Cornally - ccornally@lwetb.ie 086-3867954
- Fiona Murphy - fiona.murphy@lwetb.ie 087 2669988
- Liz Glennon - lglennon@lwetb.ie 087 1255541

YOUTHREACH

BALLYMAHON YOUTHREACH

Ballymahon Youthreach have had numerous beneficial staff training days so far this year including first aid, manual handling, SPHE, SafeTalk, suicide awareness, Outlook 365 and health and safety - all of which will make a huge difference to the centre. The students have also benefitted from World Mental Health Day. In the centre students were encouraged to participate in a "3 happy days" project where they were asked to write down one positive thing that happened that day or to think of something that makes them happy in general. It was a great success and well done to all students who were positive towards the activity.



The 3 happy days project

DELVIN YOUTHREACH

Delvin Youthreach would like to take this opportunity to welcome Cian Mekitarian to the centre and thank him for his positive contribution to date. New modules have been introduced this year; Career Planning and Painting at Level 4 and Challenging Discrimination at Level 3. Staff have been actively involved in training with courses in First Aid and Manual Handling during July. Staff also completed training during October including subject specific health & safety, Equality & Human Rights and Fire Safety. Students have been involved in lots of activities including team working project and fitness. A small number of students went on a trip to the Traveller Centre in Navan.



New tutor Cian Mekitarian busy in the kitchen with students

KILBEGGAN YOUTHREACH

For the second consecutive year the staff and students of Kilbeggan Youthreach invited members of the local community for a fund-raiser in June 2017. The event was held to try to raise as much money as possible for Longford Counselling Services. This is a new organisation in Longford Town that has been set up by Victor Connell to provide support for those with mental health issues. The day involved music from the centre's band, the youthreach bakery, old school games that were all made by the students, a BBQ and much more. The students for the previous three months had taken part in Music Generation which is a project run within Westmeath and Offaly. Two extremely talented musicians Frank Byrne and Johnny Owens used their skills to teach the students how to play a number of instruments, which the students then showcased on the day entertaining the crowd with a variety of different songs. The day was a huge success with many compliments from the people who attended. The money raised on the day amounted to €891.87 and was presented to Victor by the students when he returned to the centre to speak to them in September 2017. The students were extremely proud of what they achieved that day, there was a great team effort between them all and the staff, and it is something we will work hard to make even bigger and better next year!



LONGFORD YOUTHREACH

Longford Youthreach retained their All-Ireland Indoor Soccer Trophy in June when they successfully defended their title in the AIT Sports Arena. This is an exceptional achievement for the centre as there are 110 Youthreach Centres nationwide, most of whom participate in this tournament and would have larger student populations than Longford. To do this two years in a row is a fantastic achievement.

Longford Youthreach attended a very worthwhile, informative and career encouraging National and Tourism Hospitality Roadshow in the Aviva Stadium in September. We were fortunate to win the first prize of a €500 Travel Voucher sponsored by Aer Lingus which will benefit the Centre enormously as we travel abroad. We were in Madrid this year on a very successful personal development/educational trip.



YOUTH SERVICES

Launch of a new Drug & Alcohol Prevention & Treatment Support Services for the Midlands Area

Two new Drug & Alcohol Prevention and Treatment Support Services for the Midlands were officially launched by Minister of State for Communities and the National Drugs Strategy, Catherine Byrne, TD in the Shamrock Lodge Hotel, Athlone on Friday 13th October 2017.

The Extern MYDAS (Midlands Youth Drug & Alcohol Support) Project will deliver a Community based Under 18 Drug & Alcohol Prevention & Treatment Support Service for young people and families. The range of services provided includes information and advice, counselling, family support, family therapy, key working and interagency case management. It will also deliver a range of education programmes to relevant community, voluntary and statutory sectors in line with best practice.



Maria Fox, LWETB Youth Officer, Minister Catherine Byrne, Dept. of Health, Cllr. Frankie Keena, Chairperson LWETB and Liz Lavery, LWETB Director of Schools pictured at launch of new Drug & Alcohol Prevention & Treatment Support Services for the Midlands Area,

Merchants Quay Ireland DATS (Drug & Alcohol Treatment Support) Project will deliver a Community based Drug & Alcohol treatment support for individuals Over 18 years and families. MQI are also in the process of establishing an Open Access/Drop In Service in Portlaoise.

These services are co-funded and supported by both HSE CADS & the MRDATF in association with Longford & Westmeath Education & Training Board (LWETB), through funding allocated from the HSE & the Drugs Policy Unit (DPU) in the Department of Health.

Both services will complement and enhance existing treatment and prevention support services across the region with one of the main aims of the services to coordinate the care of individuals (both over and under 18 years) and families experiencing problems as a result of their drug and/or alcohol use.

Ms Liz Lavery, Director of Schools, Longford & Westmeath ETB stated, "LWETB is particularly happy to be associated with the development of a service for young people with an emphasis on both prevention and treatment. We are looking forward to the new service being of benefit to our schools, Youthreach centres and youth projects thus contributing to an improvement in the lives and experiences of the young people who engage with our services and those we fund."

GATEWAY YOUTH PROJECT ATHLONE

The Gateway Youth Project was delighted to host a Space Game Workshop in conjunction with the Science Department at NUI Galway, to celebrate Science Week 2017.

The workshop was full of hands-on activities to engage and immerse 2nd year secondary school students ranging from astronomy to board games. The workshop took 1½ hours. We had a capacity of 30 students per workshop and 3 sessions per day. A total of 95 students from local secondary schools participated in the event.



Co. LONGFORD YOUTH SERVICES

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Katherine Zappone pictured presenting an award to a young man who completed his QQI level 3 Certificate through-County Longford Youth Service's "Topclass" programme. Minister Zappone was delighted to present the award at the National Youth Council of Ireland showcase event which was held in the Mansion House in Dublin. The recipient was one of four young men who travelled to the showcase event which gave them the opportunity to speak directly to public representatives and share with them first-hand what they do, what they learn and the benefits of youth work for them and their local communities. The Topclass programme is an alternative education programme delivered by County Longford Youth Service and run in conjunction with Iscoil.



THE ATTIC HOUSE, LONGFORD

On 13th of November the Foróige Attic House launched their new FoodCloud initiative as part of their citizenship programme for this year. In partnership with Longford LIDL, who will be supplying much needed food to be redistributed to Longford households. It is no secret that one in eight people in Ireland experience food poverty

When approached by FoodCloud facilitator John Moran, the Foróige Attic House was delighted to take up the challenge. Many families that avail of the services at the Foróige Attic House deal with financial pressures especially when it comes to feeding their families.



The young people at the Foróige Attic House are delighted to be part of this community initiative as it demonstrates community responsibility and leads to empowerment and enrichment of the community of Longford. Jim Maher, Regional Youth Officer with Foróige wished to thank all those involved in establishing the FoodCloud at the Attic House, particularly John Moran, who initiated the venture, along with LIDL Longford for their commitment to the people of Longford and finally to Kat Mahon, Attic House Volunteer and all the young people involved.

If any volunteer would like to get involved in the project please do not hesitate to contact Jim Maher Regional Youth Officer on (086) 9672920 or alternatively email james.maher@foroige.ie

NEW CODING CLUB FOR CLONMELLON

A new Coding Club affiliated to Youth Work Ireland Midlands officially opened on Saturday 1st July 2017 in Clonmellon, Co. Westmeath. Coder Dungeon Clonmellon aims to teach young people from the age of eight to 18 years computer skills and coding with the help of Scratch as well as other tools. They also endeavour to develop mobile apps to support local clubs and activities as well as teaching computer ethics and supporting a non-cyber-bulling agenda. Fine Gael TD Damien English opened the doors to the new computer room.

Chairman John expressed immense gratitude to all the generous people and businesses that sponsored the club financially, with either materials or the time invested in the setup of the club. He thanked guidance counsellor and inspiration Gerard Keena from the Mullingar Coder Dojo and to Eileen Kelly, mentor from Youth Work Midlands Ireland for all her support.

Coder Dungeon, Clonmellon, is open to all young people from Clonmellon, Athboy, Delvin, Castlepollard, Brownstown, Kilskyre and surroundings areas. The only criteria are that you are aged between eight and 18 years and have an interest in computers.

Finally, we would not be in a position to run without a generous grant received from Maria Fox, Youth Officer LWETB.

For further information contact coderdungeon@gmail.com or @CoDuClonmellon

Alternatively Eileen Kelly, Youth Work Ireland Midlands at ekelly@youthworkmidlands.org or 0906477075

Winners of the Coder Dungeon Clonmellon Logo competition



LWETB schools are funded by the Department of Education and Skills



Further Education and Training in LWETB is funded by SOLAS



Many of our awards lead to QQI qualifications

