



Issue 2, 2006

This is the second in our series of newsletters covering programmes, research, communities, staff and students that have been, and are, involved in activities within the Community Knowledge Initiative. We hope this newsletter will be informative and enlightening about the areas of civic engagement and social responsibility. For more information or comments about this newsletter, please email christina.legg@nuigalway.ie or visit our website at www.nuigalway.ie/cki

**Christina McDonald Legg,
Editor**



Inside this Issue:

ALIVE	2
SUAS	2
Friends Club	3
Service Learning Academy	4
Mayors Awards	4
Teddy Bear Hospital	5
Bish Lab	6
What is Ireland?	7
Service Learning - Nursing	8
Service Learning - Mec Eng	9
Public Speaker Seminars	10
Alzheimer Society	10
Service Learning Funding	11
Service Learning, As Gaeilge	11
Upcoming Events	12

ALZHEIMER SOCIETY AND ALIVE PARTNER TO MAKE A SPLASH

ALIVE students will make a splash on Shop Street on March 1st in an effort to raise awareness and much needed funds for the Alzheimer Society Ireland. Students of NUI Galway will be undertaking a fundraiser in which they will scrub a fire truck with toothbrushes to raise the profile of the Alzheimer Society.

"We in the ASI think it is fantastic that young people are so willing to give their time and energy to help those with Alzheimers and their families," Des Mulligan, Galway/Mayo Regional Office of the Alzheimer Society of Ireland said.

Students are part of the



(from left) Liam Tyrrell, Galway Alzheimer Society, Mayor Brian Walsh and Linda Anderson from ALIVE

ALIVE programme at NUI Galway and will receive a certificate from ALIVE for their hours participating in volunteering.

"The Alzheimers Society has offered NUI Galway students an amazing opportunity to devise and project manage a

(continued page 10)

ALIVE Graduation Will Give Certificates to Volunteers



2005 ALIVE graduates

Up to 300 students will receive an ALIVE certificate in a graduation ceremony congratulating

each of them for their time spent volunteering within the college and the community.

"This ceremony is a celebratory event to acknowledge each student's commitment to volunteering on and off campus," Lorraine Tansey, Volunteer Coordinator for ALIVE said.

"The event is an important opportunity for volunteers to get recognition, hear other's experiences and for NUI Galway to show their

appreciation."

The ceremony will take place on the 28th of March from 2-3pm with speeches from ALIVE volunteers, NUI Galway's Registrar, and local dignitaries, and a catered reception will follow the ceremony.

"We are delighted with the progress of ALIVE and hope to encourage students to use ALIVE as a tool in their endeavours to actively engage in society," Lorraine said.

ALIVE Broadens Horizons with Volunteering Experience



Lorraine Tansey

In an effort to engage students and graduates with the community, CKI has redesigned the ALIVE programme to encompass more avenues and more students.

ALIVE, "A Learning Initiative and the Volunteer Experience," is a programme that offers students a positive avenue for pursuing partnerships within the community, giving them encouragement and a reliable direction for taking on the mantle of civic engagement.

"We're meeting people where they are at and going from there to give them this original experience," Lorraine Tansey, Volunteer Coordinator for ALIVE said.

The programme recognises that people do different things and should get individualised certificates. Students looking to volunteer attend a foundation meeting after registering, and then keep a handbook throughout their experience in order to obtain their certificate in an awards ceremony at the end of the semester. To date, NUI Galway is the only university to offer

campus wide endorsement of student volunteering contributions. Other universities in Ireland have begun to look to ALIVE as a leader in the volunteering field.

"We are proud of each student's commitment and achievements and recognise this through the award of the ALIVE certificate," Lorraine said.

Students volunteer in capacities such as societies and clubs, as well as off campus with NGO's, community organisations, etc. ALIVE volunteers should be students or staff, but according to Lorraine, nothing is exclusive and all volunteer work is encouraged.

With over 500 students registered in ALIVE both on and off campus since its inception in 2003, it has become a permanent fixture in the Community Knowledge Initiative, giving students an opportunity to gain work skills as well as life lessons in social and community awareness.

"We want to strengthen ties with the community through providing a supportive environment in which students and the community can liaise, and ALIVE is a perfect opportunity for students to do this."

Volunteering Students Praise ALIVE Programme

Two students who have actively engaged in ALIVE this year have enthusiastically praised the benefits of volunteering and the advantage of receiving the ALIVE certificate.



Eilish McDonagh and Robert Healy have actively volunteered in the community. Eilish works with Enable Ireland and hopes to go into child psychology in the future.

"Even when you think you can do nothing, something small can make a big change," Eilish said.

Robert spends his time volunteering with Croí, helping raise money for researching blood flow into the heart.

"You get so much back when you give just a little bit," Robert said. "I can't praise it enough."

Both students will receive certificates from ALIVE for their hours volunteered.



"We can be so much more than we are," Robert said.

SUAS Society Partner with ALIVE



Make a Difference week for the Suas Society at NUI Galway saw a successful partnership with ALIVE last semester. Throughout Make a Difference week, the theme 'Think Globally, Act Locally' motivated students to access information on ALIVE and volunteering opportunities in Galway City.

Suas is a student society at NUI Galway that hopes to highlight the importance of education to the development of a just and fair society. Founded in 2002, Suas is a youth and education focused organisation, which facilitates young people to address educational disadvantage at home and overseas and is a registered charity.

The Suas "Youth Initiative" is run by volunteers and students through their college society network: currently there are over 1,500 members across seven colleges. By 2007, they are working towards 20 societies nationwide, addressing educational disadvantage & promoting interculturalism in Ireland.

Suas has four themes underpinning their activities and programmes: *Service to Others* - they promote the involvement of individuals in creating a better society; *Leadership* - they develop the commitment and capacity to make a positive difference; *Supporting young people* to fully realise their potential and create a better future for themselves and their communities; *Global perspective* - they believe that humans live in an interdependent world.

During *Make a Difference* week, presentations were made by Childline and the Galway Youth Federation, giving students an insight into the role of the volunteer in youth and community groups. ALIVE students attended the launch of the Suas International Programme. This event highlighted issues of volunteering in the developing world.

"This was a fantastic experience for us and we welcome any opportunity to partner with other NUI Galway events," Lorraine Tansey, Volunteer Co-ordinator for ALIVE said.

Friends Club Fosters Unity at Eglinton Hotel



Over 60 Refugee and Asylum Seeker children living at the Eglinton Hotel were visited by Santa this past Christmas, in the form of 12 volunteers from the Friends Club.

Celebrating a Christmas that for some children was their first in Ireland, the Friends Club helped organise the Christmas party so that all children could experience Santa's visit.

The Friends Club at NUI Galway is a youth club for children in the refugee and asylum seeker centre in the Eglinton Hotel. Started by a small group of friends studying at NUI Galway in 2004, it has evolved into a volunteering initiative.

This year every Refugee and Asylum Seeker child was given a present by the Friends Club.

"It's so heartbreaking when children believe in something and don't get that belief confirmed, so this is to live up to that complete innocence," Gesche Kindermann, one of the coordinators of the Friends Club said.

The children in the youth club are those of refugee and asylum seekers that come to Ireland. Throughout their application for permission to stay in the country, families live at the Eglinton Hotel. Each family lives in a one bedroom hotel room, with time periods ranging from months to years.

"For us, the club gives the children something to go to after school where they can be accepted and welcomed and just really for them to have fun and have after school activities to go to," Gesche said.

Volunteers with the Friends Club dedicate approximately two hours a week, taking the children out for outdoor sports, treasure hunts, games, and excursions during the summer, and indoor games and help with homework during the winter.

"The idea is to give them somewhere to go to mix with the other kids in the hotel," Cepa Giblin, another Friends Club organiser said.

According to Gesche and Cepa,

this club sticks out from others because the Friends Club gives participants an instant response to what has been achieved, with the ability to see happy children at the end of every evening.

"In a way you get to be a kid again yourself," Gesche said. "This is something where you can see an instant response by giving."

As refugee and asylum seekers, each of these children's experience is a different and often complex story, and volunteers with the Friends Society hope to just be able to help these children experience a better life in Ireland.

"We'd never prod into what their story is," Gesche said. "We're here to help them get away from those questions so they don't have to continuously explain themselves or justify being in Ireland."

The Friends Club were recently approved for funding to put on information classes for adult Refugee and Asylum Seeker at the Eglinton hotel and this starts in February.



Engagement Discussed at Dundalk Seminar

The Dundalk Institute of Technology hosted a seminar at the end of last year on transforming learning for 3rd level students in their community. This conference explored the term 'engagement,' and discussed how engagement can be effectively used in our work in Ireland, providing analysis and recommendations for the consideration of academics and community.

Because outreach or service tends to be the least developed activity in third level education, this seminar addressed how to involve knowledge-sharing with mutual learning, development and progression, and how to engage students

in their community to enhance their learning and development. The main theme in Dundalk was, 'how can engagement bring about improved circumstances for each party involved?'

Tom Collins, former director of Dundalk IT (currently Director of Adult & Community Education at NUI Maynooth), stressed that third level higher education institutions need to engage in communities in a genuine and mutually beneficial partnership process.

Students gain from this partnership through supervised work experience in their professional practice. Universities gain through demonstrating to future

students the on-site working abilities of their graduates and the effectiveness of their programmes.

At the engagement level, NUI Galway was highlighted as a leader in Service Learning and the partnerships built between NUI Galway and the city of Galway were discussed as paving the way for other universities.

At the end of the event, the participants hoped for the future appointment of an appropriate professional developer dedicated to the pursuit of civic engagement activities.

SERVICE LEARNING ACADEMY FOR SPRING



A three day Service Learning Academy will be held on the 30th and 31st March to introduce the pedagogy of Service Learning within higher education in Ireland. Organised as a collaborative project by CKI at NUI Galway in partnership with NUI Maynooth, DCU, DIT and funded by the HEA Strategic Initiatives, the academy will address Service Learning as a tool for encouraging students to learn through the integration of theory and practice.

Service Learning also seeks to reinvigorate the civic mission of higher education and instil in students a sense of social responsibility and civic awareness. As a pedagogical tool, Service Learning is vital to society, both inside and outside the classroom.

“Students learn from engaging with communities by active participation and academic credit is awarded based on the learnings,” Lorraine McIlrath, CKI Project Manager explained. “The academic staff member guides students through this process through structured reflection and the integration of theory and practice.”

Service Learning has been endorsed by the Government of Ireland and its vision

is to mainstream Service Learning activities through higher education institutions in Ireland. This project is a bottom up process to meet the government’s aims and objectives in introducing a civic dimension to higher education in Ireland.

CKI is currently engaged in developing a network of lecturers and other staff involved in promoting these ideas.

“This promises to be an interesting and informative event and we look forward to this opportunity to learn from each other in this highly relevant area,” Lorraine McIlrath said.

For more information, please contact lorraine.mcilrath@nuigalway.ie

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

- * Facilitation of a two day service learning academy to be held in March 2006.
- * National and international experts in the field will lead and facilitate the event including representatives from Campus Compact and higher education institutions in the US.
- * 50 academic staff from higher education institutions within Ireland will attend.
- * Development of a Service Learning Network of Practitioners in Ireland.
- * Publication of a Service Learning Introductory Resource available to higher education institutions in Ireland (offered as a contribution to the National Digital Learning Repository).

SPEAKERS:

- * *Marshall Welsh*, Director of the Bennion Centre at the University of Utah
- * *Andrew Furco*, Director of the Service-learning Research and Development Centre at the University of California at Berkeley
- * *Maria Avila*, Director of the Centre for Community Based Learning at Occidental College, Los Angeles

ALIVE STUDENTS RECOGNISED FOR EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE TO COMMUNITY



Seona Joyce and Robert Healy from Croí

Three ALIVE students were nominated in the Community and Voluntary Sectors in the annual Galway

City Mayor’s Awards this year. Robert Healy, a volunteer with Croí, Patrick Lajoie, a volunteer with the Galway Youth Information Centre and Emma O’Brien, a volunteer with the Access Programme here at NUI Galway were all nominated to win the coveted Mayor’s Award.

The three students attended the Black Box event, where the Mayor, Cllr Brian Walsh, presented them with a certificate to commend their achievements helping and volunteering in the Galway Community.

Nearly 70 people and groups took the

opportunity to nominate more than 60 individuals and organisations in the six different categories. Approximately 400 people attended the packed reception to honour the nominees who have worked so hard in the voluntary sector. Brendan Smith from DERI at NUI Galway won in the Social and Community Support category

“We are proud of the student’s accomplishments through ALIVE and this nomination illustrates the exceptional capacity for change that students have in our community,” Lorraine Tansey, Volunteer Coordinator said.

BEYOND THE BEAR NECESSITIES - MEDICAL STUDENTS HAVE TEDDY BEAR HOSPITAL FOR CHILDREN



Children at the IFMSA Teddy Bear Hospital

Happiness has been described as never stopping to think if you are happy. And this is never more apparent than when watching a child play. When children play they put themselves entirely into having fun, into happiness. Being one third of our population and all of our future, children are the heart and soul of humanity.

Watching them play at the teddy bear hospital last week was a day that inspired many people to smile, to grin, to laugh and chuckle with delight.

"A day not to miss, purely for the feel good factor," as one attendant aptly described it.

Children brought their teddy or favourite toy to be seen by medical students, in an effort to reduce children's anxiety about going to the doctor or visiting the hospital. The Teddy Bear Hospital helped to show that the foundation of a doctor-patient relationship is trust.

A teddy with a sore back, an elephant whose trunk was blocked, a teddy who burnt his feet while dancing on the hot cooker, and a doll that was pregnant. All of these would need to go to the same place. The teddy bear hospital of course.

Last week over 360 teddies visited the doctor with their owners, all aged four to seven, creative aspirations lighting their little eyes as they marched single file into the Sports Hall at NUI Galway, determined to get their teddies cured. "My teddy has a hurt leg," Roisiun, 5

said.

"Mine fell down the stairs and hurt his arm," Ailbhe, 5 said.

"My teddy has to have his appendix out," another child said, pointing irrefutably to the place it would need to be taken from.

Aimed at dispelling the kind of fear that children have of doctors and hospital environments, the Teddy Bear Hospital reiterated that these aren't things to be scared of.

"I think that it is important to reassure children from as young an age as possible that illness and the fight against it are a part of everyday life and not necessarily something to be afraid of," Nuala Kane, Press Relations Officer for the Teddy Bear Hospital (and 1st year Medical Student) said. "Where I believe we might make a real difference is hopefully to help reduce trauma in the case of children who might be visiting sick relatives."

Overcoming the fear of hospitals and doctors through fun and play was the main objective of the day.

"A lot of children are afraid of hospitals and doctors and by coming here and seeing the doctors use their instruments, it's remembered as fun. And hopefully if they ever have to go to hospital they'll remember this experience and they won't be afraid anymore," Sarah May, a national school teacher said.

Children were delighted with the opportunity to get their teddies cured, and were enthusiastic about meeting the 'doctors' and learned a variety of things from the day out.

"I learned that if you go to the hospital it's not scary," Roisiun said bravely.

"I learned that doctors are very nice people," Ailbhe said.

After initially taking their teddies to the doctor, children took them to an X-ray machine and then to fill their 'prescription,' of fruit and health drinks. And finally, when all the business was

taken care of, the children were released to play in an enormous bouncing castle. Mats were set up for the children to colour, tables arranged for them to get their faces painted, and jugglers enthusiastically flipped their props high in the air as life size animals in costume roamed the Sports Hall. Outside children prowled the real ambulance, wandering inside and out while pelting the Medics on hand with a thousand inquisitive questions.

"The day was really a success," Nuala said. "I felt the results were very evident. The children had a great time and the students got involved and talked to the kids. We would like to put on an annual event here at the college, hopefully."

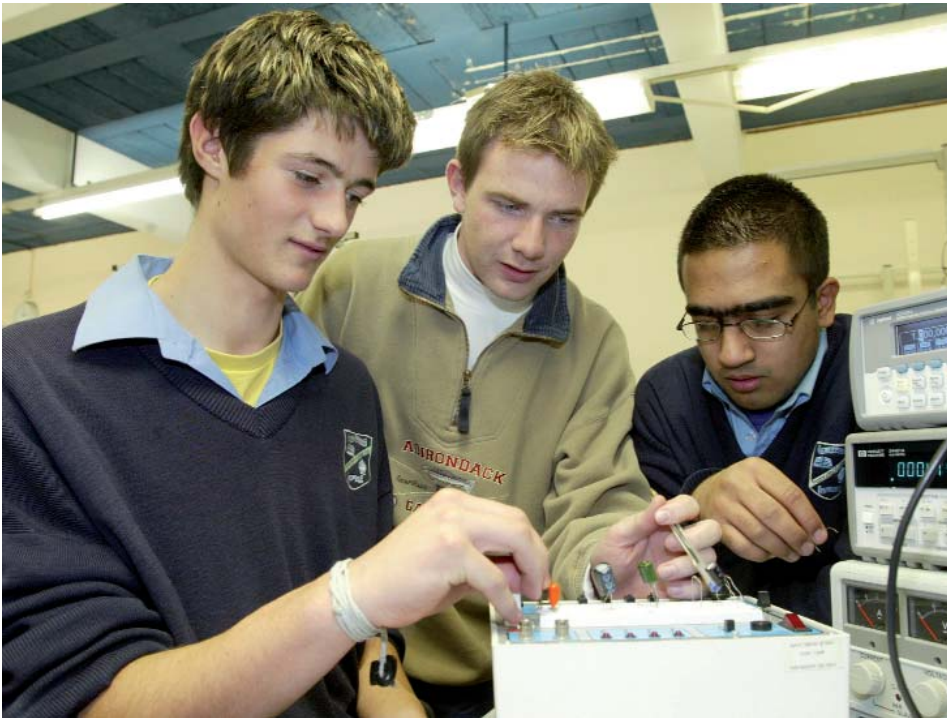
With over 150 volunteers from the faculty of medicine and health sciences and from the other faculties as well, over a thousand hours were put in to organising the monumental event.

Each of the volunteers will receive a certificate from ALIVE, a student volunteering programme at NUI Galway that encourages students to undertake volunteering in their community, as well as at college, supporting this engagement and a giving reliable direction for taking on the mantle of civic engagement.



"I know students are accused of being apathetic a lot of the time but when you see an event like this where people are really getting involved and giving up their time to help it's really encouraging," Nuala said.

ELECTRONICS LAB GIVES PRACTICAL SKILLS TO SCHOOL STUDENTS



A hands-on electronics laboratory course at NUI Galway gives leaving certificate students from St. Joseph's College, Galway, (The Bish) a chance to learn practical knowledge in the field of Electronic Engineering. Students from honours physics classes construct and test an electronic circuit in the lab, giving students that would typically only have access to diagrams in a book, the ability to learn 'hands on' about Electronic Engineering.

"We hope that the programme will help these talented young students with their understanding of the electrical and electronic aspects of their leaving certificate physics course," Dr Martin Glavin from the Electronic Engineering course at NUI Galway said. "It will also introduce them to the exciting world of high-technology by bringing them out of the classroom and into the state-of-the-art facilities at the Department of Electronic Engineering."

Run for eight weeks total and giving two groups one hour a week in the lab for four weeks, this course is a modification of what first year Physics students in college would do. Students explore semi conductor theory, experimenting with a range of modern apparatus and equipment on the course. With six students from the course taking the National Physics exam, and an expected 30 to 40 percent A1's on their leaving certificate results, the students are a very talented group.

"As a consequence (of the lab) we have lots of kids who would be interested in this area as a future, where they might not have been without this experience," Brendan Doheny, one of the Physics Teachers at St. Joseph's College, Galway said. "This is great hands on experience; they get exposure to the apparatus in the lab, exposure to postgraduate and undergraduate students, and interaction with teachers of this field."

This lab accounts for 30 percent of the leaving certificate, and has helped the students using the lab learn 'life skills.'

"It's really about getting them to understand taking measurements and precautions," Dr. Glavin said. "Even like checking a fuse at home, this is giving them life skills."

According to Dr. Glavin, the students are fascinated by what they are learning during the experiments, asking questions and participating fully.

"When you explain a concept to them, and they apply that theory to a circuit they build themselves, you can see their satisfaction with their own work," Dr. Glavin said. "They are very motivated which is refreshing."

Liam Doheny, a 6th year leaving certificate student has been working at the lab for a few weeks now and is contemplating a future at NUI Galway in Electronic Engineering as a result.

"It's really good because we don't have this equipment at our school so it's good to use it and see where you can go," Doheny said. "We're applying what we're learning instead of just looking at a book."

Doheny believes that being supervised by a postgraduate student has helped him in learning the experiments and applying theory into practice.

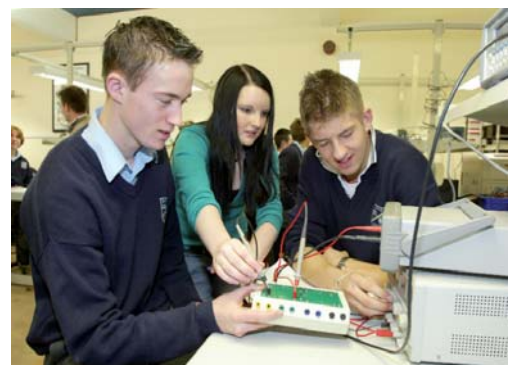
"The tutors have been very helpful and enthusiastic to help. You can chat to them and get along with them and they really help give insight into the Electronic Engineering Course," Doheny said.

With 40 students in the lab now and looking to reach around 60 next year, Dr. Glavin has applied for service learning funding from CKI.

Dr. Glavin hopes to support other schools that wouldn't usually have the funding to get into town with this money, as well as develop Service Learning through the lab. According to Dr. Glavin, this will give Electronic Engineering students the opportunity to gain academic credit for their time in assisting with the "Bish lab."

"We hope to make it easier for schools by funding them to come in," Dr. Glavin said. "It costs €450 to get a bus of students here from Clifden, so we'd hope to give them some funding for the trip into town, bring them in and give them use of the facilities."

"Other schools in the city have already shown an interest in participating in the project and it is hoped that it will be extended to the wider schools community in the coming months."



'WHAT IS IRELAND?' ASKS STUDENTS TO THINK TOGETHER



Fatima, Declan, and Louise at the 'What is Ireland?' workshops

Students at NUI Galway are posing the question 'What is Ireland?' to members of the community, in order to address mutual understandings and differences in Irish culture. Supported and facilitated by the Community Knowledge Initiative (CKI) at NUI Galway, the 'What is Ireland?' project created art work at a workshop with Macnas in order to define this topical question.

The art work was created by a group of NUI Galway alumni, students, and community members at a day-long art workshop, designing a series of tall triangles into an art installation piece, which will be exhibited in Galway, Belfast, and Washington DC.

"The symbolism is of creating small pieces that will always be separate and always be different but when put together can mean a lot of things," David Russell, one of the 'What is Ireland?' organisers said. "It is interesting to see how they came together and solidified one idea of what Ireland is. There isn't a right or wrong answer; we have to learn to speak respectfully of this topic."

The question 'What is Ireland?' asks people to articulate and express their personal visions of 'Ireland' and 'Irish'

identity.

Organisers are alumni of NUI Galway and the Washington Ireland Programme, a programme that trains third-level students from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland to transcend sectarian boundaries. This project was directed towards gaining an understanding of what different people feel Ireland is.

WIP was established in an effort to establish peace and integrate communities between North and South. It consists of a three month internship in Washington DC that merges service learning and community involvement in order to foster the idea of achieving harmony on such a diverse island.

The art workshop comes on the heels of a series of workshops that took place with young children, compiling art that children created.

"It's priceless what they have done," Russell said. "They're at the stage where a Moldovan kid sits next to an Irish kid who sits next to a Nigerian kid and they are communicating and that's really great. Racism doesn't exist to them."

An art exhibition took place at the Bank of Ireland theatre, bringing together photography and other visions and entries from NUI Galway students, alumni, and community members, in order to provoke debate and conversation in this topical area.

"Everybody is part of a community and the idea of collecting information from a pool of people who, in the university, in the community, are respecting the idea that everybody is from some community," Russell said. "This is about breaking our own community barriers and showing we're willing to make the extra effort and stretch into others' communities."

The 'What is Ireland?' project is an ongoing theme, and organisers are accepting 'vision pages' on what Ireland is indefinitely, exhibiting the visions wherever the final art artwork goes.

"This project has legs; it is not ending this weekend but will continue on in the future," Martina Callanan, a WIP alumni organiser of the 'What is Ireland?' project said.

The completed artwork will be displayed at the University Art Gallery in Galway until the summer, when it will then travel to Washington DC to be on display until it continues its travels to Belfast, where it will be displayed in the autumn.

Organisers hope to expand the project and work in collaboration with other universities and embassies to continue this work into the future.

"We like the idea of it being mobile so it can confront so many people and see there's no single voice in anything we've done, it's about every one being involved," Russell said.

<http://www.wiprogram.org/>

Students' Community Experiences Change Nursing Global Awareness



*Aoife Feeney & Ann Marie Mulryan,
Nursing Students*

In an effort to increase social awareness and cultural diversity, three students of the Nursing programme at NUI Galway went to Belize, Central America for six weeks as part of an optional module with the Centre for Nursing and Midwifery Studies.

From organising flights, to fundraising, to coordinating immunisation shots, Aoife Feeney, Blathnaid Kelly and Ann Marie Mulryan participated in this module to gain further cultural awareness within the future of nursing care.

"I think when we set out to do the module we didn't know it was going to be so hard to organise," Aoife Feeney one Nursing student said. "But the experience was definitely worth it in the end."

All three volunteered at local hospitals, Ann Marie and Blathnaid at La Loma Luz Hospital and Aoife at Octavia Wait Centre. Spending their days with the needy from the Cayo community, all three saw a huge difference in the way that medical care is done there, experiencing civic engagement and learning about how to be socially responsible in their careers.

"They have free healthcare but it's very minimal," Ann Marie said. "They have out of date equipment and old medication and the people working are a lot less qualified and less educated in this field."

According to Ann Marie, working in these situations gave them an awareness for cost effectiveness, as well as how to deal with diversity that may be in a hospital.



"You really have a self awareness of what you are doing and that it can have an impact even if you don't speak the language," Ann Marie said.

Most striking was the difference in health care for people living in urban areas versus rural areas. With medical care not being distributed properly, all three girls participated in outreach



clinics to support the rural areas.

And yet overall, the girls felt like they had made a difference and had been accepted into the community.

"We weren't made to feel like outsiders and there weren't any big barriers or anything," Aoife said. "I learned a lot and it was worth everything."

Nursing Module Raises Cultural Awareness



Dympna Casey

Cultural awareness and social responsibility within medical care has become a prominent issue in society today. In order for patients to get the best care possible, their medical staff must have a sensitivity and a flexibility to different cultures, backgrounds, societies and even religion.

Dr. Dympna Casey, a Lecturer with the Centre for Nursing & Midwifery Studies at NUI Galway, has implemented a service learning module into the Centre's courses. With the sponsorship of CELT and the support of the Community Knowledge Initiative, this module has proved to be an invaluable resource for students.

Dr. Casey's course is a three to six week placement in Ireland or abroad in which students implement their theoretical study into actual practice within the healthcare system.

"The key thing is to help the students develop professionally, make them more independent and give them more confidence in their nursing skills than when they went away," Dr. Casey said. "Most come back with

this experience for the first time in their life and that changes the way they approach people in Ireland."

According to Dr. Casey, this experience is vital to teaching nursing students to be more aware of global issues, opening their eyes and broadening their minds to issues that may arise with patients that are of a different ethnicity.

In order to foster this process and incorporate civic engagement into the learning of nursing students, the Centre for Nursing & Midwifery is setting up links with Ranchhod Hospice in Kabwe, Zambia. Ranchhod Hospice is an 18 bed AIDS hospice supporting three farming villages. Dr. Casey is now working with Ranchhod Hospice to discuss ways of building the capacity of the hospice and sending over nurses from Ireland. Additionally, discussions are taking place with a Hospital in Kenya and an orphanage in Chernobyl to foster this relationship.

The variety of settings in which nurses practice and the diversity of the patients in their care has made this module beneficial and constructive for nurses that hope to have a wide range of skills relating to nursing care in a multicultural society.

Poster Presentations Emphasise Community Engagement in Engineering Module

Students of the Mechanical and Biomedical Engineering Programme are getting an introduction to community engagement during their third year. John Joe Finn and Alan Divilly have developed a project to build a fold up wheelchair ramp for disabled people.

After making the proposal in October 2005, the NUI Galway students began researching what wheelchair users would

need. Meeting with Ciaran Cannon from the IHCPT, The Irish Pilgrimage Trust, a national charity caring for young people with special needs, they discussed what developments the ramp would need.

Even with the great improvements in disabled access to modern buildings, the pair found that there are still many situations that are encountered by wheelchair bound young people today.

completed at Fahy Engineering.

"This project brought a different element and a different aspect to looking at engineering," Alan Divilly said. "Because we have to go out and contact people and find out what they need, we got the more practical aspect of it."

The prototype of the ramp will be used for the IHCPT's pilgrimage to Lourdes this Easter and one will also be kept in the specially adapted minibus in Kilcuan. Plans have been made to meet again in future to suggest possible improvements.

"I have no doubt that this portable ramp could become an invaluable piece of equipment for families and organisations dealing with disability," Ciaran Cannon, Chief Executive of IHCPT said.

Alan and John will present their project and findings, along with their classmates, at a poster presentation for the Engineering and Biomedical Programme in the Arts Millennium Building from 23rd February until 1st March.

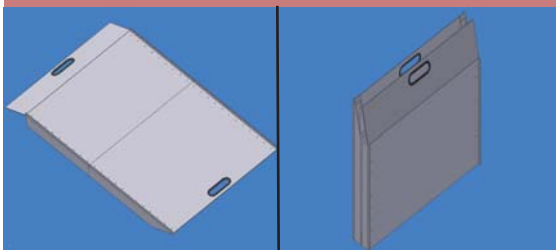
"Doing this was something new that we've never done before," John Joe Finn said. "We were actually making use of what we learned in college."

In building the ramp, the students learned how to work within their field for the good of the community.

"Doing this wasn't just for the grades," John Joe Finn said. "It was to help someone."

Combining classroom with community, and theory with practice, this service learning module, sponsored by CKI has shown students how to connect and help their community.

"It is real life experience that students can gain and can see their need and their usefulness in the community," Professor Pandit said.



Open Ramp

Closed Ramp

The design that John and Alan created enables the ramp to be both portable and lightweight, in order to be easily stored in a car and carried by a carer accompanying a wheelchair bound person. Compact and made of aluminium, the ramp will be simple, yet convenient. Alan and John are currently in the manufacturing phase, which will be

Service Learning Module in Mechanical & Biomedical Engineering



Abhay Pandit

The Mechanical and Biomedical Engineering degree, under Professor Abhay Pandit, has incorporated a service learning module since 2003, giving students experiential learning

while applying academic knowledge. CAIRDE, Community Awareness Initiatives Responsibility Directed by Engineers, was designed by Professor Pandit as a way for students to identify a need in their community and define a project with specific goals.

Students spend one semester of their third year doing the module, dedicating a minimum of 16 hours to their project, and an additional minimum of four hours for reflecting on the experience and creating a poster. The posters are technical/scientific posters that are displayed and presented at an exhibition in the university.

"As a university we have a duty to engage students with the community and to create students that give to the community," Professor Pandit said. "We need to teach them so that we can distinguish them so that when they go into jobs, their CV will show that

something extra."

During the service learning module, students learn practical knowledge in their field through organised services that address genuine community needs. Students apply concepts presented in their field and reflect on the experience.

Service learning is also a way to increase students' marketability to potential employers, giving them the tools, knowledge, and practical skills needed to become more sought after by employers.

"I feel that these service learning modules are so critical," Professor Pandit said. "Students by default live in a cocoon of privilege and if we don't challenge that privilege we are not doing what we should."

Originally implemented as a way for students to develop engineering skills, the service learning module has evolved to incorporate a commitment to local communities by making a contribution of time and expertise.

"Service should be a part of what the students do," Professor Pandit said. "Both students and the community benefit from the experience."

CKI to Fund Seminar and Guest Speaker Programmes

CELT/CKI is offering staff at NUI Galway the opportunity to compile a 'Wish List' of speakers they would like to see at NUI Galway.

Ideal speakers would be those able to address a wider audience reaching out to the community in Galway, Ireland and beyond. We are also interested in hosting key researchers, provided they contribute to the general flavour of the programme.

The funding available should enable us to pay travel and accommodation costs for those coming from abroad (which includes the US, etc), but presenters from Ireland are, of course, welcome. In keeping with our support for the Irish language, presentations as Gaeilge are also most welcome.

CELT's new video recording studio can be used to film interviews with speakers and, combined with their presentations, this material will be available through our public webcast service and serve as an important archive and resource for the future.

We would like to invite you to provide suggestions of potential speakers in this series, which will run for the next two academic years.

If you have any ideas or contact information for suggested speakers, please email Mary Bernard, mary.bernard@nuigalway.ie

We hope that this can be a high profile and prestigious series that will help establish NUI Galway as a key centre of civic engagement and democratic participation.

ALZHEIMERS SOCIETY MAKE A SPLASH ON SHOP STREET



Alzheimer Society of Ireland with Mayor Brian Walsh, ALIVE students & Galway Firestation

young people today at a time when volunteering is in decline," Des Mulligan, Alzheimer Society Ireland said.

Today more than 35,000 people have Alzheimers or Dementia in Ireland today and this figure is expected to rise to 61,000 by 2021. While not strictly a disease of old age, Alzheimers affects mostly those over 65, and with the phenomenon of an aging population, it has never been more important to raise the profile.

"Most people know someone with Alzheimers and it's getting more prevalent and affecting more people than before, so it's important to raise awareness of it," Martin Kenny, one of the NUI Galway students involved said.

Galway City Mayor Brian Walsh will be at the event, hoping to lend a hand in raising the profile of Alzheimers in Galway.

"I want to congratulate everybody in the ALIVE programme for investing time in this very worthwhile cause and I would encourage the people of Galway to come out to such a worthwhile event," Galway Mayor Brian Walsh said.

<http://www.alzheimer.ie/>

(continued from page 1)

fundraising event to raise awareness locally and nationally," Lorraine McIlrath, Project Coordinator for CKI said. "The students involved have created a truly innovative event and should be commended for their commitment and creativity."

The six students involved come from a range of backgrounds and they hope that their imaginative event will draw attention to the needs of families affected by Alzheimers.

"As a charity, we are delighted to be involved in such an innovative project as ALIVE, which instils volunteering in

Seed Funding for Service Learning Modules Available

CELT/CKI are pleased to announce the availability of seed funding to support pilot implementations of service learning in courses or modules.

Service Learning is essentially a range of approaches to increasing students' civic engagement, awareness of the wider social context, and assisting their personal development as active citizens

Typically, a service learning programme would support students' work in non-profit organisations and integrate a reflective component that may itself be assessed for academic credit. There are many examples of service learning programmes in operation in universities, colleges and schools around the

world, but the concept is still relatively new in Ireland.

In NUI Galway, we are currently pioneering a number of approaches to service learning and in 2006/2007 seed funding (up to €6,000) is available to academic staff who wish to pilot service learning opportunities. The CELT website has an application form which can be downloaded from <http://www.nuigalway.ie/celt/newsite/news.html>

For further information on this teaching tool or assistance with the development of the seed funding proposal, please contact Lorraine McIlrath ext5234

lorraine.mcilrath@nuigalway.ie

New Irish Language Degree to Include Service Learning for Students

As service learning becomes more crucial in the development of students role within communities, departments are considering the advantages of integrating service learning modules into their courses. September 2006 will see the commencement of a new BA programme from Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge, and will incorporate a service learning element during the third year of the course.



Áras na Gaeilge at NUI Galway

The Céim B.A. sa Chumarsáid, will see a BA in Communications taught solely through Irish. Similar to the shift that the Ard-Diplóma i gCumarsáid Fheidhmeach is making, this new BA in the Acadamh will also include service learning as a key element for students.

The idea behind the service learning dimension is to prepare the students for the workplace and the community by incorporating their learning into the community and giving them valuable experience in work practice.

"The requirement in the market is for entrants that not only have a theoretical base towards the subject but who can show a practical aptitude as well, so

we're going for a year of service learning to back that up and to improve the skills of the students in the workplace prior to their leaving NUI Galway," Rónán Ó Dubhthaigh from Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge said.

Prior to the two semesters of service learning, students will initially participate in Breathnóireacht, literally meaning 'observation' towards the end of their first year. Students will have the opportunity to observe various areas of Communications before focusing their skills and aptitude towards their particular area of interest.

"The observation period gives students an opportunity to become comfortable

with the areas that they are going into and will give them a better idea about what they'd like to achieve within those areas," Rónán said. "It's subsequent to this stage that we'd be looking towards a mix of work experience and service learning and organising the "Service Learning Agreement" between the student, the organisation, the community and the university."

So far the Acadamh is in discussion with RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta, TG4 and Nuacht RTÉ, who have all expressed an interest in developing internships that would form part of the service learning module. According to Rónán, the service learning aspect of the course will give students an opportunity to understand more deeply what the Irish language and culture have to offer them in their lives as well as in their choice of career.

"This module will give students a chance to better understand the people they are going to be broadcasting to or writing for or making television for," Rónán said. "I think service learning offers them an excellent opportunity to develop not only as a person but as a member of the Irish language community."

NUI GALWAY
COMMUNITY KNOWLEDGE INITIATIVE

CKI is based in CELT (the Centre for Excellence in Learning & Teaching) and its staff are:

Iain Mac Labhrainn (Director, CELT)

Lorraine McIlrath (CKI Project Coordinator and Academic Staff Developer)

Lorraine Tansey (Student Volunteer Coordinator)

Mary Bernard (Administrative Assistant)

Christina McDonald Legg (Communications Specialist)

For further information on CKI or related projects, please contact:

Phone: +353 (0) 91 493823

Web: <http://www.nuigalway.ie/cki>

E-mail: cki@nuigalway.ie



National University of Ireland,
Galway
University Road
Galway
Ireland

ALIVE Events

Date/Time/Location	Name/Description
Wednesday 1st March 1 - 2pm Location: Shop Street	Alzheimer's Society and ALIVE students Fundraising Event - Fire Engine cleaning to raise money for the Alzheimer's Society
Tuesday 28th March 2-3pm, Reception to follow Location: Aula Maxima, NUIG	ALIVE Certificate Presentation Ceremony

Need Volunteers?

With over 14,000 students at NUI Galway, many of whom have a strong commitment to bettering society, why not consider partnering with the ALIVE programme? Through this we can source volunteers for your work as a registered charity or non profit organisation. If you would like more information, please contact Lorraine Tansey, who coordinates student volunteering, lorraine.tansey@nuigalway.ie ext 5346

CKI Workshop & Seminar Events

Date	Title/Event	Facilitator
Tuesday March 7th 10am - 5pm	<i>Options & Issues in Global Development Work, Training Day</i>	Barry Cannon, Comhlahm
This workshop provides a chance for staff and students at NUI Galway who are thinking of volunteering overseas, for short or long periods of time, to meet with others and consider the options available. The sessions will cover subjects such as: What is development; Motivations and expectations; Inter-culturalism; Types of agencies and projects. The workshop is participatory and is designed to explore the issues in a way that will encourage action on development issues from a justice and equality perspective.		
Tuesday March 28th 11am - 1pm	<i>Service Learning Perspectives from the Bennion Centre at the University of Utah</i>	Marshall Welsh, University of Utah
Thur/Friday 30th & 31st March Venue: Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone	<i>Service Learning Academy (in partnership with National University of Ireland Maynooth, Dublin Institute of Technology & Dublin City University)</i>	Lorraine McIlrath, CELT, NUI Galway & National & International Facilitators
NUI Galway will lead a two day 'Service Learning Academy' in partnership with NUI Maynooth, DCU and DIT whereby, in a shared environment, up to 50 academic staff from all four institutions will explore the potentials for embedding service learning as part of teaching and learning in higher education. National and international experts in the field will lead and facilitate the event including representatives from Campus Compact and higher education institutions in the US.		
Monday 10th April 12pm - 2pm	<i>Service-Learning at Clemson University: A Work in Progress, Service Learning Lunchtime Seminar</i>	Marty Duckenfeld, Clemson University
Venue: All events take place in the CELT Training Room (AM207) unless otherwise indicated. To book a place, please email Mary Bernard, mary.bernard@nuigalway.ie		