

‘Oscar’ Awards Event for Donegal ETB

The Third Annual Awards ceremony for Donegal Education and Training Board (Donegal ETB) was held in the Villa Rose Hotel, Ballybofey. The ‘Oscar’ style awards ceremony had representation from the 15 Donegal ETB schools and colleges managed by the Board as well as representation from the 8 Adult Education and Training Services, the 2 new ETB Training Centres in Letterkenny and Gweedore, the Adult Guidance Service, Gartan Outdoor Education Centre, the Music Service and the Youth Service. There were awards in 8 different categories that included: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM); Healthy Living and Well Being; Green Projects; Inclusive Project; Arts and Culture; Innovation and Entrepreneurship; Promotion of Irish language and Culture; Open Category.

There were school choirs performing from Mulroy College, Milford and Deeble College, Raphoe under the guidance of Karen Patton and Susanna Ward. The repertoire from both choirs entertained the guests and added to the sense of occasion.

Dr Martin Gormley MC for the event welcomed everybody to the ceremony. He congratulated all 76 projects that had been nominated across the various categories. He thanks all the participants both staff and students who had showed creativity and innovation in their work. He referred to the many highlights over the year and in particular the 50 year celebrations in Deeble College, Raphoe and the more recent 100 year celebrations in Errigal College Letterkenny. He also referred to the integration of the former FAS training services into Donegal ETB in July 2014 as a historic milestone on the Further Education landscape.

Mr Shaun Purcell, Chief Executive Donegal ETB, in introducing the awards to Donegal ETB referred to the range of activities happening on a daily basis throughout the Board. He was delighted to congratulate all recipients, *‘as Chief Executive of Donegal ETB I am proud and honoured to be associated with this occasion and I salute all those that have investigated the time, knowledge and energy in bringing the various projects to fruition’*. He paid tribute to the excellent work that was happening on a regular basis right across the ETB schools and centres in the County. He welcomed the large representation of Donegal ETB Board members in attendance and acknowledged their support in developing education and training in the county.

Ms Joanne Irwin, as Chairperson of Donegal ETB presented the certificates and awards and referred to the depth of work taking place outside of the formal curriculum.

There were certificates presented by the Chairperson to all 76 nominees and the 8 awards were then presented to the various winners in each category.

Mr Shaun Purcell congratulated all recipients of certificates and awards. He also referred to the important of sharing best practice in the scheme and communicating good ideas, *'occasions like this help us to acknowledge, recognise and more importantly share the wonderful work that is happening throughout our scheme. In providing education it is important that we inculcate creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship in our interaction with students and learners.'*

Dr Martin Gormley thanked the organising committee of Frank Quinn, Fiona Temple, Ursula MacPhearson, Shaun Purcell, Johnny Sweeney, Mary O Malley and Danny McFadden. There were small presentations to Michael Meenan and Eileen Dennison who helped with the administration of the awards process.

The range of projects included a booklet for small farmers and the use of computers, the school musical 'Oklahoma' as well as a recycling project for bicycles.

The eight award winners were:

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)

Gairmscoil Chú Uladh

Healthy Living and Well Being

Gairmscoil Chú Uladh

Green Projects

Errigal College, Letterkenny

Inclusive Project

Letterkenny Centre for Education, Youthreach

Arts and Culture

Abbey Vocational School, Donegal Town

Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Adult Education Service – Learning for Living

Promotion of Irish language and Culture

Colaiste Phobail Cholmcille, Oilean Thorai

Open Category

Adult Education Service – Learning for Living