



**etb**

Bord Oideachais agus  
Oiliúna Dhún na nGall  
*Donegal Education and  
Training Board*

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Donegal ETB Further Education and Training Fair 2015**

#### **Helping you find a brighter future...**

Spring is a time of new beginnings; a time when we can choose how we want our lives to be different. For many people education and training is a wonderful way of making changes you want in your life, be it retraining for a new career, brushing up on forgotten skills or simply taking up a new hobby or interest. You may also be feeling that you want to find your spark and create plans for the future so that you can create the life you really want! With a recovery now showing in the economy and more opportunities becoming available, it is an excellent time to find out all the opportunities that are available to you.

**The Donegal ETB Further Education and Training Fair 2015 will be taking place in the Mount Errigal Hotel, Letterkenny on Thursday, the 26<sup>th</sup> March, from 10.30am to 3.30pm. The organisers are hosting an Employers Panel discussion from 10.30am to 11.45am followed by the Fair from 11.45am to 3.30pm.**

Over the last 12 years, the Donegal VEC Adult Learner Fair has been one of the most important annual events in the education calendar. Donegal ETB replaced Donegal VEC in 2013 following the establishment of SOLAS, the Further Education and Training Authority and the implementation of the most comprehensive reform of further Education and Training since the foundation of the State. This year Donegal ETB will be showcasing all its education and training courses following the transfer of the former FÁS Training Services and Apprenticeships Services to Donegal ETB last July. "This is a really important day for education and training in Donegal as this is the first time the public will be able to access information on adult and further education courses, training courses and apprenticeships under the remit of Donegal ETB – we see it as VEC + FÁS = ETB!" says Mary O'Malley, Manager of Training Services, Donegal ETB.

With the publication of the Further Education and Training Strategy by SOLAS in 2014, Donegal ETB has been charged with providing a more integrated approach to the delivery of education and training in the county with a central focus on providing courses that meet the needs of employers. "Education for its own sake will always be important and we will continue to provide education for the simple enjoyment of learning a new hobby or as a first step to further learning. Our vocational courses have always been aimed at helping people to gain qualifications needed for employment, which include basic certificates in English, Maths and I.T. as well as higher level courses in a variety of subjects. We are now finding however that more and more people are returning to education and training in order to find employment and we have a

renewed focus on making sure that our courses provide appropriate certification and meet the needs of local employers” says Cróna Gallagher, Donegal ETB Adult Education Officer.

To celebrate this change, Donegal ETB is hosting an Employers Panel from 10.30 am to 11.45 am where local experts will be sharing their top tips on what companies now look for when they take on new employees, how you can make yourself more employable and how education and training can help you find work. “Many people are struggling to find work, they feel unprepared for the job hunt and are disillusioned by continually sending out C.V.’s and getting nothing back in return” says Dearbhla Kelly, Guidance Counsellor with Donegal ETB, “this is why we are hosting an Employers Panel and we are delighted to announce that Padraig Monaghan, Managing Director and Senior Vice President, Government Claims of United Healthcare, Catherine Monahan, HR Manager of SOLÍS Lough Eske Hotel, Declan McBrearty, General Manager of KER Group and Declan Thomas, HR Executive with IBEC will be with us on the Employers Panel. Their experience will give participants a fantastic opportunity to hear directly from successful employers and employment experts and give those looking for work a vital insight into maximizing their employability” continues Dearbhla Kelly.

The Employers Panel will be followed by the exhibition of education and training opportunities and Donegal ETB hope this will be their best yet with over 45 organisations providing information and advice on courses, training, education and support covering a range of programmes from return to learning through to access to third level education and beyond. “We are really excited about this year’s event and we hope that the Fair will inspire adults to make informed decisions about their future - for those who need a little help in deciding what they would like to do, experienced Guidance Counsellors will be on hand to point people in the right direction” says Sean Debney, Adult Guidance Co-ordinator with Donegal ETB.

The Fair will be of particular interest to those who are facing an uncertain time or are recently unemployed, those who are interested in returning to learning, maybe for the first time since leaving school, or for those who are on a course and want to find out where to go next. It will also be a great opportunity for those who are considering a career change or who want to improve their current job prospects.

**For further information on the Adult Learner Fair, please contact the Donegal ETB Adult Guidance and Information Service. Tel: 074 91 78088.**