

Primary Science Education Across the Counties



Part of the Western Seaboard Science Program, Scoil Roisin National School in County Donegal incorporates use of laptops and other technology to explore the wonders of science.

The Partnership has been supporting science education through a number of initiatives. With the Irish Government's focus on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), the Partnership has joined the effort to educate students in the basic principles of science and to develop their curiosity at a young age.

Facilitating children's interest in science is not only found in resource availability, but perhaps most importantly, through the methods of teaching. As such, the Partnership supports many major initiatives that give teachers ways to engage and exchange best-practices, thus helping enable a better learning experience for students.

Collaborating with St. Patrick's College, Dublin, and Mary Immaculate College in County Limerick, the Partnership has worked on three initiatives that organize teacher networks, particularly within rural areas, which often lack accessibility to new developments and applications of science for primary schools.

Over a decade ago, the Partnership established a professional development program in science education for teachers in Counties Kerry, Galway, Donegal, and Mayo, under the direction of Dr. Greg Smith and Dr. Paula Kilfeather of **St. Patrick's College, Dublin**. The initiative, called the Kerry and Western Seaboard Science Program (WSSP), trained many teachers and brings them together at a skills-training workshop each year. In addition, each teacher remains connected throughout the year by the Partnership co-produced and funded "Connecting with Science" newsletter. The newsletter has now taken on a wider distribution to any school that receives a grant from the Partnership.

Recently, Dr. Smith published an evaluation of these programs in his article, "An Innovative Model of Professional Development to Enhance the Teaching and Learning of Primary Science in Irish Schools," which was accepted into the *Journal of Professional Development in Education*.

The Partnership is pleased to find that his study shows the WSSP initiatives have led to positive changes in the way teachers instruct on science, resulting in their students becoming more motivated and interested to learn about science. *Upon request, the Partnership would be delighted to forward a copy of the completed research report to any interested parties.*



Dr. Gregory Smith and Dr. Paula Kilfeather of St. Patrick's Teaching College, Dublin, met and discussed Kerry and Western Seaboard Science Program progress with the Partnership Leadership Mission to Ireland in August 2012.



COLÁISTE MHIURE GAN SMÁL
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH
MARY IMMACULATE COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK

The Partnership and **Mary Immaculate College** at the **University of Limerick** formed two initiatives to invigorate primary science education and push typical methods. First, the Partnership has funded the development of a "Science School" at Mary Immaculate College, which operates hands-on interactive workshops for students every Saturday. The workshop allows young students to explore outside the formal, day-to-day classroom setting.

The "Science School" at Mary Immaculate College also offers professional development opportunities for teachers to experiment with innovative lesson plans, gather feedback, and implement them in their normal, full-time classroom.

Similarly, in the Munster area, the Partnership sponsors continuous professional development workshops coordinated by Mary Immaculate College.



Teachers in Counties Clare, Cork, and Limerick attend two-hour, interactive workshops sponsored by the Partnership and Mary Immaculate College, that allow them to carry out scientific investigations for classroom application. Here, they are pictured making preparations for an egg-drop experiment.

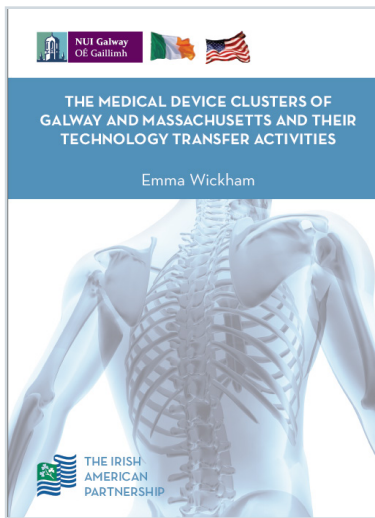


Named "Sherlock Bones" by students at Scoil Ronain in County Galway, this skeleton is a new teaching device purchased through a 2013 Partnership grant. The school was also able to enhance its teaching materials to include a magnetism and bridge building kit to instruct on physics.

Partnership-funded Masters Degree Scholarships Provide In-depth Research on Ireland - United States Economic Relationship



The Partnership has funded five students in Masters Degree research scholarship programs at the National University of Ireland Galway, Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School at University College Dublin, and the Cork Institute of Technology. Each student analyzes different aspects of Ireland - United States industry interaction and provides insight on future opportunity, particularly in the areas of business, technology, and innovation. The Partnership desires to fund Masters Degree students at all Irish universities, funding opportunities are available from \$8,000 - \$25,000 in year 2013-2014.



At **National University of Ireland Galway (NUIG)**, the scholarship supports a student pursuing a Masters Degree program in the College of Engineering and Informatics. Under the direction of Dr. Frank Barry, the student completes research on the medical device sector in Ireland and the United States.

Ms. Emma Wickham, originally from County Wexford, Ireland, was selected for the 2012-2013 NUIG Scholarship. With a background in science and a specific interest in the industry, Emma pursued a Masters Degree at NUIG. After a year of research, she successfully submitted her findings in the report, **“The Medical Device Clusters of Galway and Massachusetts and their Technology Transfer Activities.”**

Her research found that both the Irish and U.S. economies benefited greatly from the local clustering of medical device companies. Galway is a young cluster that is expanding and could look to the technology-sharing initiatives between private, public, and academic institutions in Massachusetts. Ireland remains an attractive place to invest with its low tax incentives, educated workforce, and growing R&D focus.

At the **Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School at University College Dublin**, the scholarship supports a student undertaking an MSc in Business at the Smurfit Graduate Business School. Under the direction of Dr. Jacob Eisenberg, the student conducts research on Ireland as a catalyst for U.S. economic links with Europe.

Ms. Linh Nguyen successfully completed her research on **“The role of Ireland in the Export Platform Strategies of U.S. Multinationals in the Information Technology Industry, 1990-2010.”** Her research objective was to examine the impact of host-government investment incentives on subsidiary development in Ireland.

Using data from chief executive officers of U.S.-owned Irish subsidiaries in Dublin, her research found that U.S.-Irish owned subsidiaries now place a higher value on Irish government subsidies when compared to 5 years ago. She also found that government subsidies encouraged internal competencies, thereby giving the subsidiary more bargaining power when in discussion with its parent group in the U.S.



Ms. Mai Vu, the 2013 Smurfit Scholarship recipient, recently published her research entitled **“A Pretest for the new Instrument to Assess the Knowledge Transfer within Multinational Companies (MNCs) in the Knowledge Intensive Business Services Sector (KIBS).”** Mai developed the model of a questionnaire to assess the transferability of knowledge within multinational companies.



At **Cork Institute of Technology**, the scholarship supports a student undertaking research on **“The History of the Electronics Industry in Ireland.”** The student, Ms. Sarah Davis, is being mentored by Professor Larry Polland and is under the supervision of Dr. Brenda Kenny of the Hincks Centre of Entrepreneurship Excellence in CIT’s School of Business. We anticipate that Ms. Davis’ research paper will be available in late 2014.

Upon request, the Partnership would be delighted to forward a copy of completed research reports to interested parties.

Comprehensive Support for Disadvantaged Students

An Opportunity to Attend University

Finding the motivation and resources to transition from second to third-level education in Ireland can be hard to achieve alone. With the recession still impacting many communities, the enthusiasm to pursue additional study can drop off when compared to immediately entering the workforce. Access programs work to lessen qualms - whether financial or the fear of the unknown - and provide a range of supports to enable students to reach their full potential. In 2013-2014, the Partnership supports a total of four students in the Access

At **Dublin City University (DCU)**, more than 760 students are participating in the Access program this year. The DCU Access program provides two unique ways of support that starts during the first year and extends throughout students' time in university. A 3.5 day orientation program takes place at the beginning of September which all first-year Access students attend. At orientation, Access students live together, learn about campus resources, and meet with their advisor and peer mentor, who both provide one-on-one support for the

“Along with the financial support I received, being an Access scholarship student helped develop a belief in myself I didn't have before. There are so many supports offered to you. The entire Access program developed my confidence and pushed me to continue to try and reach for the unimaginable.”

Vicky Kavanagh
DCU Access Scholarship Recipient

Since 2008, DCU has hosted a Student Advice Center specifically for Access students, which acts as a 'go-to' resource hub for information and guidance for academics, health and wellbeing, and extra-curricular activities.

From 2011-2013, the Partnership has supported nine students in the DCU Access program, providing full-year scholarships for each student to study within their chosen field. *Beside, three of these students are featured.*

Ms. Karen Kuras, originally from County Monaghan, is the first in her family to go to college. She studied for a Bachelor of Science in Enterprise Computing. Mr. Philip McMahon (Caffrey), hailing from Ballymun, County Dublin, says he came from an area with “less opportunity and very little belief,” but the Access program gave him the support needed to find a successful future. He studied for a Bachelor of Science in Education and Training, while also playing for the DCU football team. Ms. Vicky Kavanagh, originally from Donaghmede, studied for a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism and was highly involved in DCU's campus newspaper, *The College View*, and participated in the Washington Ireland Program.



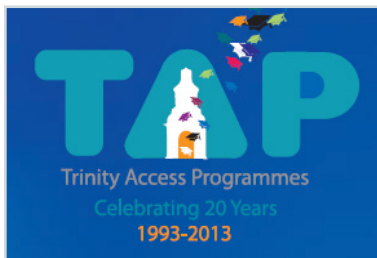
Ms. Karen Kuras
Origin: County Monaghan
Study: Enterprise Computing



Mr. Philip McMahon (Caffrey)
Origin: Ballymun, County Dublin
Study: Education and Training



Ms. Vicky Kavanagh
Origin: Donaghmede, County Dublin
Study: Journalism



At **Trinity College Dublin**, the Trinity Access Program (TAP) has made significant advancements in supporting students before, during, and after their university experience, over its 20 years of existence. For the 2013-2014 academic year, the Partnership is pleased to support Mr. Kevin Sewell, a junior freshman, who is studying for a Bachelor of Science in Theoretical Physics. Mr. Sewell is passionate about studying math and physics, as well as, playing the bodhrán, tin whistle, and traditional flute. Just in his first semester, he credits the Trinity Access program as essential to his success thus far.

Encouraging Dialogue in Northern Ireland, Moving Integrated Education Forward

The greater divides of Northern Ireland's past have since lessened with time, but work still remains to be done. The Partnership supports many programs that aim to promote better understanding of differences and create sustained dialogue between those with varying views. People of all ages and backgrounds - young and old, Catholic, Protestant, or other faiths - can find a mutual vision for the future.

Among many initiatives, one of the most significant is Integrated Education. Proven to be one of the most successful programs in Northern Ireland, that both Irish and British governments and the international community have championed, Integrated Education serves as a model for an enriching, co-educational environment. In this setting, resources and teachers are needed to teach all traditions.

The Partnership has been proud to support numerous schools in the growing network of integrated schools in Northern Ireland. Most recently, funding has been granted to enhance library and multimedia materials that reflect religious and cultural diversity, and/or funding for an additional teacher that can span all sides in their teaching curriculum.

Partnership grant recipients for Integrated Education have included:

Ballycastle Integrated Primary School
Ballymoney Integrated Primary School
Glengormley Integrated Primary School
Groarty Integrated Primary School
Round Tower Integrated Primary School
Blackwater Integrated College



Children at Glengormley Integrated Primary School raise the American flag on a day learning about the United States. The Partnership is pleased to support Glengormley's "Growing Pains" Initiative, which funded an additional teacher at the rapidly expanding school.

R.G. McVeigh, Principal of Ballymoney Integrated Primary School, writes...

"Please pass our thanks to The Irish American Partnership for the generous donation which has enabled us to purchase books to assist with our journey of integration. With the supply of new reading materials, the children's minds will be further enlightened, so that not only they, but their friends and families, will have a bright future to look forward to."



Pictured above is the Partnership supported school, Round Tower Integrated Primary School located in County Antrim, Northern Ireland.

An Opportunity for Donor-advised Gifts



The Board of Directors of The Irish American Partnership welcomes donor-advised gifts. If you would like to make a gift to a specific school, organization, county, or townland, please contact us. The gifts are processed efficiently, insuring that all conditions are met. In order to qualify for IRS tax consideration, the donor may not personally benefit from the gift and, for the Partnership to accept and transfer the funds, the gift must be part of our stated mission.

*In year 2013, designated gifts have been made to many
educational institutions and organizations:*

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Northern Ireland Trust

Pushkin Trust
Shannon School of Hotel Management
Ulster-American Folk Park
UCD School of Engineering
UCD Smurfit Graduate Business School
Willowfield Parish Community Association