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**Leadership in Changing Times** This FETAC 5 course is being offered in Jigginstown over 24 sessions and aims to help learners understand and practice effective leadership in their community roles. This is a particularly timely course given the changed circumstances community groups are working in. There are 17 participants and the tutor is David Joyce

who has many years experience working in the area of Community Development and Human Rights both at both local and national level, in particular with the Irish Traveller community. He is currently in legal practice at the Irish bar.

**Women's Studies Circle** – Have you ever wanted to delve deeper into some interesting feminist topics and have a lively group discussion on the subject matter –

then this group may be of interest to you.

If you would like more information about any of the above or to find out what current courses Network Kildare is offering please contact Nora O'Hanlon, Development Worker on 045-881106

## Education Development Officer

Margaret Cline was appointed Education Development Officer for Adult & Further Education last September. Having been a VTOS co-ordinator for twenty years, she brings a wide experience and knowledge of adult education. Margaret is now involved as Development Officer in enhancing, supporting and developing the Kildare adult education service with particular emphasis on FETAC, BTEI and training.

## Services

Centre	Service	Name	Telephone	Email
Athy	ABE	Imelda Carroll	059-8633270	adulthood@eircom.net
Athy	BTEI	Imelda Carroll	059-8633270	adulthood@eircom.net
Athy	VTOS	Mary Campbell	059-8632044	vtosa@eircom.net
Athy	Youthreach	Ellie Reddy	059-8638412	yrathy@eircom.net
Kildare	ABE	Imelda Carroll	045-522003	adulthood@eircom.net
Kildare	BTEI	Imelda Carroll	045-522003	adulthood@eircom.net
Leixlip	ABE	Mary Faughnan	01-6246528	lalc@eircom.net
Leixlip	BTEI	Mary Faughnan	01-6246528	lalc@eircom.net
Leixlip	VTOS	Dolores O'Brien	01-6246420	vtosleix@eircom.net
Leixlip	Youthreach	Lorraine O'Sullivan	01-6244084	yrleix@iol.ie
Nass	ABE	Pat Bennett	045-866314	pbennett@abce.ie
Nass	BTEI	Pat Bennett	045-866314	btei@abce.ie
Naas	Community Ed.	Susan Cullinane	045-881863	scullinane@abce.ie
Naas	Youthreach	Jonathan McNab	045-888938	jonathanmcnab@youthreachnaas.ie
Newbridge	Adult Guidance	Angela Doherty	045-448512	kildareadultguidance@eircom.net
Newbridge	VTOS	Ray Creighton	045-434297	nbvtos@eircom.net

Education Development Officer:	Margaret Cline	045-837001	clincem@eircom.net
Education Development Officer:	Brendan Dunning	045-448512	bdconvsn@eircom.net
Adult Education Officer:	Des Murtagh	045-988000	desmurtagh@kildarevec.ie
Education Support Officer:	Stephen Hartnett	045-988000	stephenthartnett@kildarevec.ie
Chief Executive Officer:	Sean Ashe	045-988000	ceo@kildarevec.ie



# Education Brief

COUNTY KILDARE VEC – ADULT & FURTHER EDUCATION NEWS

2010 Volume 1, Issue 1

## Athy Youthreach

*In December Youthreach Athy took part in a poster Competition which was run by the Athy Community Development Project. The competition was aimed at raising the awareness of violence against women.*

The theme to be used in the poster was "Violence against Women" and we were delighted to see that the trainees were so enthusiastic at getting involved in such a worthwhile project.

A great deal of research went into each poster, incorporating newspaper articles, the internet and group discussion. It was brilliant to experience the positivity that each of the trainees displayed throughout this project. Each of them felt this was a way for them to be heard. This form of expression could be their voice in the campaign to stop violence against women.

The hard work that went into the posters was rewarded on the 4th of December 2009, when Trainees from Youthreach Athy, scooped 1st and 2nd prize. The winners were Hayley O'Connell, Shauna Quinn Lawler and Stephanie Perse. In second place was Darren O'Rourke.

The winning entry will be used in the Nationwide Violence against Women campaign. Congratulations to all involved.



Athy Youthreach

## Welcome

This is the first issue of what I hope will become a publication three times a year. Its purpose is to highlight the positive work taking place in Adult & Further Education within County Kildare VEC. This sector covers a wide range of programmes offering continuing education and learning opportunities to thousands of adults throughout Kildare.

Having read this Newsletter, I hope you will feel optimistic about the many good things going on in Adult Education in what can be described as the challenging times that we are living in.

To the Co-ordinators and staff within all our centres along with all the VEC staff who enable these programmes to happen, I wish to express a deep sense of gratitude for the work you are doing for County Kildare VEC.

*Des Murtagh*  
Adult Education Officer



## Farewell to Noel Dalton

*Noel Dalton, former Adult Education Officer and Co. Kildare VEC's first Education Officer retired in December after long and distinguished service as an innovative educator in the service of adult and more recently, second-level education.*

In the 1970's, he was one of a group of young, enthusiastic and idealistic people who were appointed as the first AEO's to VEC's throughout the country. It is probably difficult for more recent colleagues to the Service to visualise the past landscape but at that time Adult Education consisted of night classes and virtually nothing else. Noel immediately set about rectifying this and he worked tirelessly at developing the service to the point where it has become recognised as one of the most vibrant and innovative in the country.

He established and developed the four

Literacy centres, Community Education, BTEI, three Youthreach's, three VTOS' and an Adult Education Guidance Service as well as developing and expanding the range of more traditional part-time courses and outreach centres.

The growth and development of Adult Education Services, is due in very large measure to the enthusiasm, dedication and person-centred approach which Noel brought to his work. His immense achievement was in his ability to share his vision, enthusiasm and understanding of the values which underpin a sound education philosophy to those who worked with him.

We would like to wish him and his wife Grainne a very fulfilling and contented retirement.

# The National Ploughing Championships

Participation at the National Ploughing Championships grew from a seed planted at an Adult Basic Education Co-ordinator's meeting in Kildare into a collaborative project with the neighbouring counties of Wicklow, Carlow and Laois.

This instantly made it bigger and required more planning and preparation involving the four counties. It also got the creative juices flowing and put the organisational skills into overdrive. The four VECs worked together to create a bright and modern corporate image to represent them. A leaflet with the details of VECs throughout the country was produced, a website [www.vec.ie](http://www.vec.ie) was set up and promotional material to hand out at the event was selected.

Staff and management were very enthusiastic and supportive of the project and there was no difficulty getting people to work on the stand over the three days. The leaflets, bookmarks, hats and key rings were distributed and these will be with people long after the event and will enable people to find out more about VECs.

The National Ploughing Championships had 180,000 visitors and as well as the ploughing had a very comprehensive exhibition area. It attracted interests from all sectors of the community and from all parts of Ireland, incorporating all age groups. There was a lot of interest in the stand from the young and the more mature. Queries were about courses, grants and general education matters. 'I'm too old to learn' was stated by a large number of people.

The aim of attending the event was to promote the services provided by the four VECs present and VECs throughout the country and to deliver the message that learning is a lifelong experience. Having engaged with so many people during the three days it is hoped that this message was received into a large number of households.



# Community Education Service (CES)

2009 has been a very exciting year for Community Education with new projects beginning and existing ones making important steps forward.

## Self and the Bigger Picture

Community Education is an approach to education that builds the capacity of local communities to play an active role in their community and create a better society for all. It differs from Adult Education in that the focus is not only on the individual but on the learning community and the potential to take collective action to achieve change. We work in a continuum from **Personal** Development to **Community** Development to **Social** Analysis to **Political** Participation. Each area is equally important and in working from best practice we want to integrate the four areas rather than focusing on one only. In order to embed this in our practice we are in the process of developing a course called Self and the Bigger Picture. Often in personal development courses the focus is only on the individual and what change they can achieve. This course will integrate personal and social awareness so that the participants can explore what is possible for them as individuals to change and what needs broader collective action. This course has been piloted in the Spring term in Naas, Prosperous and Maynooth.

## Older Voices Kildare

This is a project that grew from the experience of AwC in offering Ageing with Confidence courses in conjunction with Age and Opportunity and Kildare LEADER Partnership's experience of offering Voices through Art course. This course explores all aspects of ageing including looking at how society views people as they age. Voices through Art explored the issues affecting older people in their community using community art methods. Together with KLP and the HSE we have developed a project that will offer taster workshops, AwC and VtA across the county and explore whether there is a need for a countywide forum for older people to come together in Kildare. For more information contact Denise Croke – Project Co-ordinator on 087 141 1669

## Mens' Pilot Project.

We have long been concerned with the low participation of men in Community Education. A one day workshop 'Engaging Men' resulted in the setting up of a steering group of those interested in developing Mens' work. Together we developed a pilot project to be located in three locations, Athy, Newbridge and Celbridge. Building on stand alone work already done an outreach worker supported by the CDP Co-ordinators in Athy and Newbridge and the Respond Co-ordinator in Celbridge is setting up and developing three Mens' groups. So far some of the activities include a Mens' Health Workshop, a Computer Club and Community art sessions. For more information contact Liam Mc Glynn – Outreach Worker on 087 177 9086

## Community Art Tutor Training

'Community art is that which is rooted in a shared sense of place, tradition or spirit. Not all community art has an activist agenda; it is likely to celebrate cultural tradition or provide a space for a community to reflect. The artistic expression is created by the group / community and is process driven. The journey is at least as important and sometimes more important than the destination. This collective response may be through visual art, drama, sculpture, music, craft, photography, dance or any other artistic process' by Jan Cohen Cruz. In order to train a pool of Community Art Tutors who will be available to support our Community Education work we have joined forces with Kildare LEADER Partnership to offer FETAC 5 training. This training took place in Croi Anu, Moone.



## Best Practice in Community Education

Following an annual review in May 09 it was felt that while many groups and organisations offer 'Community Education' there was a lack of clarity about what that means in practice. As a CES we decided to develop guidelines so that we are clear about the way we work and hopefully others will find them helpful too. The guidelines and definition were drawn up as a result of two subsequent in-service days on the theme 'Sharing Good Community Education Practice' and will be available early 2010. Contact Susan Cullinane for a copy.

## Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender Groups (LGBT)

We are working as part of an interagency grouping to set up supports for LGBT people in County Kildare. The Steering Group has undertaken awareness training given by Belong2 and are undertaking research to establish the particular needs in the county. Part of the work of the group will be to offer awareness training to other organisations to increase the sensitivity to LGBT people and referrals to the groups when they are set up. For more information contact Susan Cullinane 045-881863

## Network Kildare

This term Network Kildare have been very busy with the following projects

**Stress Management** This workshop was held at the Jigginstown Centre and 15 people attended. It is planned to follow this up with a Meditation and Movement course next term.

**Making Sense of Society** This was a 5 week introduction to Social Analysis held at the Bridge CDP Newbridge.

**Exploring Learning Styles** Kildare Women's Group hosted this 5 week course which was a very thought provoking exploration of the different ways we learn and provided great support for those with exam year children.

# VTOS

## Newbridge

Over 150 VTOS students attending the VTOS Centre Newbridge were presented with FETAC, ECDL and NUI Maynooth certificates on Friday 27th November 2009 in the Keadeen Hotel.

Awards and Certificates presented were in: Childcare, Community & Health Services, Business Studies, Art Craft & Design, General Education, Psychology and Social & Human Studies, Leaving and Junior Certificate.

Noel Dalton, Education Officer for Co. Kildare VEC made the presentations to the students, all adults who have spent up to 2 years at the VTOS Centre preparing for these awards. Also present were members of the VEC committee and Adult Education Board. Mr Martin Quilty represented F.E.T.A.C.



The VTOS Centre in Newbridge is an Adult Education Centre catering for the needs of men and women aged 21 years and over wishing to return to education and gain new vocational skills or upgrade existing skills. People in receipt of social welfare payments receive a training allowance, travel allowance and an allowance towards childcare while on the courses which last from 1 to 2 years. All courses are designed to suit the individual needs of students and prepare for employment or progression to Colleges of Further Education and Third Level colleges.

## Athy Awards Night



## Kildare Adult Learning Centre 2010 Calendar – E.V.E Ltd. The Harvest Centre

The Harvest Centre Calendar 2010 was launched by Liam Kett of KFM in Aras Bride in Kildare town.

The Calendar is the result of months of hard work by the Centre members as part of their Literacy through Photography Course. All the Photographs are of Kildare town and its surrounds, were produced by the members and photographs from events during the year. The Centre provides a service for People with Mental Health difficulties in Kildare town. This Initiative was funded by the Co. Kildare VEC, the local Mental Health Association and HSE/Lotto.



## Farewell to Mary Whelan

Mary, who retired in October last, was the VEC's Back to Education Initiative Co-ordinator.

When the BTEI was first initiated by the DES, Mary was appointed and was responsible for setting up and developing BTEI activities throughout the County. She took to the task with zeal and enthusiasm and it is a testament to the work she did that the BTEI has flourished and continues to do so in all regions of Co Kildare.

We wish her all the best in the future.

## On-line Registration

The new on-line registration for fee paying classes enables 60% or over 1,000 adults to enrol on-line and book classes without having to attend enrolment nights in schools and centres. This new facility was introduced to Kildare VEC last September. As well as being of great benefit to learners who can view all classes that are available and pay for classes on-line, it will also reduce the administration associated with collecting fees and producing reports.

## Training for Volunteer Tutors in Leixlip

The Adult Basic Education Service has a large reliance on volunteer tutors to cope with the needs of students who wish to avail of the one to one literacy and numeracy provision. People who volunteer to work with the service are required to attend an initial tutor training course.

In September the centre organised a training course for twenty new volunteers. These were a very motivated group and all contributed in a meaningful way to class discussions and over the period of the course developed a deep understanding of adult learning and the ethos that underpins adult education.

The training course has been quality assured by Waterford Institute of Technology. It is managed and delivered by a tutor from the centre and she is assisted by tutors who specialise in different areas of the service. There is also input from the Guidance Service and the AEO. Students are invited to speak of their experiences and this usually has a big impact on the volunteers. Many of these volunteers are now working with students and will help maintain the one to one provision in the near future.

## Open Learning Week in Leixlip

The aim of the week is to explore different learning opportunities in a fun and threat free environment and is open to everybody in the centre.

A series of workshops on various topics was organised during the week. These included art, photography, cake decorating and a sewing session which was facilitated by a student in the centre. There was also an exhibition of paintings completed by the art group during the year.

A collection of writings by students was launched by Pat Dunne, an author who lives locally. This is an annual publication and students get a great sense of achievement when they see their words in print. On the night many students read their pieces and for most it was their first time to read in public.

The week culminated in a very enjoyable trip to Kilmainham Jail and Farmleigh House.



## ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

## Integrating Literacy in Further Education programmes

### Naas

A research and practice conference organised by the IVEA and NALA was held on December 1st 2009.

This conference reported on integrating language and literacy into vocational education programmes and FETAC Level 5 programmes:

### Some Language/Literacy Issues at Level 5

- Note taking – Transfer of ideas to the page
- Sentence Structure – Paragraphs
- Grammar – Spelling
- Dictionary skills – Research skills
- Report Writing – Assignments

### Integration of language and literacy is successful when:

- It is learner centred
- The entire team is involved. This can mean tutors sitting in on each others classes to see what is needed to help learners succeed.
- All staff engage in further education and training on an on-going basis
- All tutors carry out a literacy analysis of their work
- Staff prioritise and define literacy. Many learners are not aware they have a problem
- Create literacy friendly systems i.e. language and literacy is part of the course
- Employ literacy specialists
- Build literacy resources
- Provide Literacy Awareness Training

Integrating language and literacy takes time and can be difficult to do. There are practical implications for integrating language and literacy into programmes such as timetabling and structural issues. There may be a need to familiarise oneself with a new role and many tutors feel threatened going outside their area of expertise. However Research has shown when language and literacy is integrated into programmes learners stay with the programme and achieve certification.



# Youthreach

## Naas

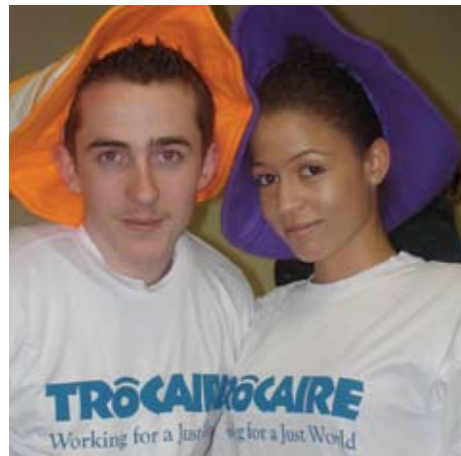
Apart from their FETAC work students are encouraged to have a more global view of life. With this in mind the students organized fundraising events last year to raise funds for the National Children's Hospital by hosting a **pancake party**.



Jonathan McNab presented the winning students with prizes sponsored by "McCarthy's Homevalue" and "Clane Cut". Youthreach Naas is one of 20 centres chosen to participate in the piloting of the **Special Education Needs** initiative. It has been run very successfully over the last 3 years. The SEN initiative has allowed us to extend the counselling service and put in place intervention programmes and other supports to suit the individual needs of its students.



In response to the Indonesian Earthquake, the students quickly responded again with great generosity and spirit and organized a **mad-hatters tea party**, donating all proceeds to Trocaire for the victims of the earthquake. They baked loads of goodies and held a tea-tasting competition using a range of herbal teas.



## Leixlip

### Michael Ryan helps raise much needed funds for Haiti Earthquake disaster

Congratulations to Michael Ryan who organised a Sports Charity Blitz in the Amenities Centre in Leixlip, Co. Kildare. As part of his F.E.T.A.C. Personal Effectiveness Level 4. Michael and his fellow students helped raise €50.00. The proceeds of the Blitz will be donated to Haiti Earthquake disaster fund.



### Charlene receives special Merit Award from Concern

Youthreach Leixlip would like to congratulate Charlene Tola on receiving a special Merit Award from Concern. She was entered in the senior category of the 2009 Concern Creative Writing Competition entitled "Dear President Obama". Her composition was published in a book of winning and selected letters. The book was based on letters from students on child labour, climate change and world hunger. Well done Charlene. We are very proud of you.



## Songcraft put Youthreach on the Map in developing their creative and musical talents

### Leixlip

Before the Christmas break up, students of Youthreach Leixlip created four songs with the help of Kenn Davis and Maeve Townsend of Songcraft. They really enjoyed this experience and it helped to develop their creative and musical talents.

Songcraft is an interactive song-writing workshop using the fun of making music as a simple and effective way for people to enjoy community spirit, team building and personal development.

"It is also about giving people of all ages and all walks of life the chance to experience what it is like to write your own song and above all the fun of recording it onto CD,"

Ken explained "For the past few weeks these young adults have come together as a group and produced four remarkable songs. The lyrics intelligently tackle the pressures of today that young people are faced with. The songs talk of drugs and crime and the pressure of having to 'fit in'. However, the students' lyrics also reveal their awareness that it is ultimately their responsibility how they choose to live their life.

The benefits of doing the Songcraft workshop:

*Helps build confidence and personal development.*



(left to right) Ken Hogan, Michael Ryan, Sean Lothian, Cillian Carroll, Simon O'Donoghue and Brian Carey. Students of Youthreach Leixlip.

*Enhances communication skills.*

*Generates Teamwork and builds a sense of community spirit.*

*Explores creativity and discovers hidden talents.*

Ken said the young adults at Leixlip Youthreach were "a treat to work with. They broke through their barriers and showed great interest and willingness", He said. "they also found their creative side and revealed a thoughtful, intelligent and at times funny side to their characters".

This is a testament to the important and

great work that the staff of the centre have done over the years.

Student Testimonials:

*"It was a great experience and I would love to do it again in the future". (John)*

*"It was class, deadly and a great experience to create musical fusion". (Harry)*

*"It was really good. I really enjoyed it and I enjoyed writing the lyrics and singing the chorus". (Sarah)*

## Brewing up a Storm

As part of Ireland's biggest coffee morning, students from Youthreach Leixlip brewed up a storm as they organised their fundraiser for National Hospice Day. As part of the F.E.T.A.C. Leadership and Personal Effectiveness Module students linked in with the fundraiser and raised €70.27.

Youthreach student, Luke Cummins organised and selected his hard working team and on the morning a magnificent spread of freshly baked apple tarts, delicious scones with fresh cream and jam and appetizing quiches and homemade sausage rolls were presented.



From left to right are: Leadership and Effectiveness Module Team – Simon O'Donoghue, John O'Sullivan, Luke Cummins and Kieran Meade.

