



Issue No. 1

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NEWSLETTER

In this Issue:

**Student
Spotlight:
Garry Hyland**

**CWELL
Expresses
Gratitude**

**Meet the team:
CWELL
Contributors**

CWELL Launch

Meg Callan *Staff Writer* Some of you might remember that all the way back in November, King John's Castle hosted the first official CWELL Launch. Guests were greeted at the door by lively music from the Tin Whistle Group who practice in St. Mary's CDP House and from there made their way to a packed room of visitors who came out to support the CWELL programme.

The keynote speakers of the night were Minister for Housing Jan O'Sullivan and Co-Directors Bernie Quillinan and St. Mary's own Geraldine Reidy. These passionate speakers expressed the important link between the CWELL programme and St. Mary's Park region.

On the 13th of January, the applicants who were successful in applying for the CWELL course came together for the first time as a group for a coffee evening. The students got to meet their classmates, their course directors, the research assistant and one of the student supports. There were ideas galore coming from the students on some of the potential projects they could undertake in the community.

The next week, all of the new students got the bus out to the University of Limerick for an Orientation Day. Although they don't have any classes on campus this semester, they will attend classes there in the future.

After everyone received their Student ID cards it began to finally sink in that they were actually UL students. It was a busy day and there was a lot to take in, but by the end everyone was very excited to get down to work for class the following Monday night.



Leaders of the CWELL Program pose for a photo at the Launch in King John's Castle.

Special Thanks to...

The CWELL project management team wish to acknowledge the tremendous support of individuals and organisations who help us continue in our mission to deliver a Diploma programme in Community Wellness, Empowerment, Leadership and Lifeskills. The programme aims to bring together St Marys community, university staff and students through practice-based, educational activities to work collaboratively and build capacity in well-being and lifestyle education within a local community.

The programme structure focuses on three areas, mental health, physical health and personal and professional development. Within each of these areas, health and well-being issues related to the young person, middle age and

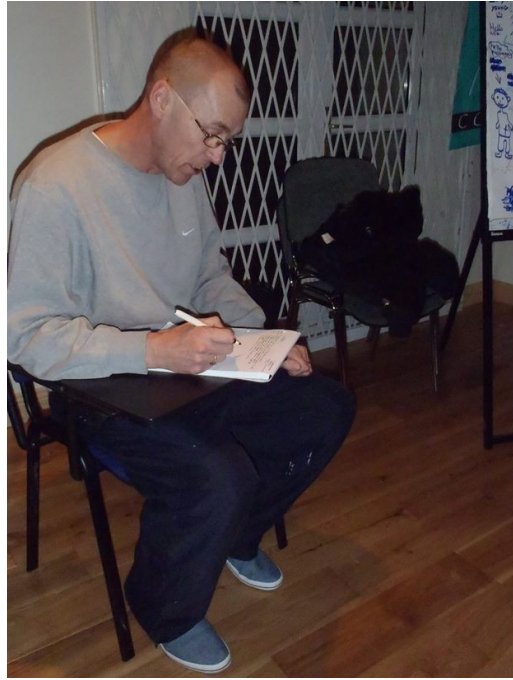
older person are addressed. Specifically, the programme participants will be empowered through education, to better contribute to the promotion of health and well-being within the community.

In particular, a note of thanks to Limerick City Community Development Project (CDP), St. Marys Adult Education Centre, Limerick City and County Council, King's Island Youth and Community Centre, Northside Regeneration, Canon O'Malley of St. Mary's parish, Limerick and Kerry and Ken Gorman, University of Limerick. We are grateful to you all for your enthusiastic assistance which enables us to continue our work with St Marys Community.

Student Spotlight: Garry Hyland

Raychel Steven
Staff Writer

Garry is one of fifteen students in their first semester of the CWELL diploma programme. He is from St. Mary's and originally left school at age 12. He saw this course as a first step to bettering himself through education. When other people told Garry he couldn't do it, he knew that just wasn't true and he is here to prove it. Garry is very committed to completing this course which he describes as "hard, but very enjoyable." According to Garry, the most difficult part of the course so far has been the essay he is currently writing. He finds a great deal of his motivation comes from knowing he is able to make some-



Garry Hyland hard at work taking notes during Monday class.

thing of himself despite what anyone else might think. At the end of the day, when he's got his diploma in his hand he knows he will have the satisfaction of saying "I told you I could do it," to everyone who told he that he would never be anything. Garry believes this programme can have an effect on the whole St. Mary's community as well and that hopefully his success and willingness to get involved will show others that they can join in the learning no matter what their story may be. Garry is also looking forward to the next steps in his education after the diploma, there are many options once you get started. Garry's final words to the community were, "If I can do it, anyone can do it."

CWELL Contributors



Geraldine Reidy:

As a community activist working alongside with Conor Carmody and Carmel Duggan we welcomed the arrival of the CWELL programme to our community.

It is a unique opportunity to have the university at our doorstep. Working alongside University of Limerick staff and Limerick City CDP a programme was developed to meet the needs of

the people in St. Mary's. These requirements were defined by local people through focus group meetings, with the focal points being positive mental health, physical health and personal development across the lifespan.

Being a new project it has been a challenging time for all involved from the development to the delivery of the programme. The participants are close to finishing their first semester and although many challenges have arisen during the semester the students and the project management group have worked hard to overcome them.



Mary O'Sullivan:

I grew up in the parish from age 10 years and went to St. Marys Secondary School just off Nicholas Street and still have ties to the parish today. My aunt Laura and her family lived on the Island Road for many decades and I passed her house daily on my way to school. She now lives across the road from St. Mary's church. We lived in Corbally and I am a long time supporter of the Athlunkard Rowing Club. I want to see that the people of St. Mary's thrive and I think the students

on this programme have a deep commitment to that goal also. My vision for the programme is that students will be successful and use their skills in support of their own development and to benefit one or more groups in the community. The students will encourage others to get engaged in their community and show that with work and commitment you can further your education and help your community. St. Mary's has a deep history and I would like to see it have a great future.

Professor Mary O'Sullivan is the Dean of the Faculty of Education and Health Sciences at the University of Limerick. She is a Professor in the Department of Physical Education and Sport Sciences at UL.

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