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Keeping up with CWELL

Jessica Keyes
Staff Writer

There has been so much happening that I may need two newsletters to fill you all in with what CWELL has been up to! From the Culture Night, to the students finishing their first semester, to receiving their results, to the Pride of Place Awards, to starting their second semester, it's hard to know where to begin! I think it's best to start from where we left off in our last newsletter, when the students were attending their classes, and, since then, they have submitted their coursework and finished their first semester as UL Students. They received their results on the 23rd June 2014 and are all very happy and proud of what they have achieved to date on the CWELL programme. Not only were the students working hard on their assignments, they also attended a Cultural Night which took place in the Community Centre on the 26th of April. The hall was packed and it was great to see the masses of support from the community for the CWELL students. The night was a great success with St. Mary's Aid providing the food and the local young musicians from St. Mary's Prize Band and CDP's Guitar Group singing and playing instruments, keeping everyone entertained.

CWELL Nominated for the Pride of Place Awards

On the 7th of June 2014 two judges came to the CDP House to adjudicate CWELL for the Pride of Place Awards. The morning began with introductions and Bernie Quillinan spoke about the structure of the course while Geraldine Reidy shared what the CWELL course means to the community.



Pictured are the CWELL Students with the Pride of Place Adjudicators

Afterwards, the CWELL students spoke about how the course has been academically and personally beneficial to them. They also spoke about their community project ideas and then provided the judges with a tour of the area to show them where these possible projects would be implemented. We would like to acknowledge the Limerick City and County Council for nominating the CWELL programme and for their help and advice leading up to the competition.

Special Thanks to...

The CWELL management team would like to acknowledge those who have contributed to the continued success of the CWELL programme. In particular, we would like to thank the Limerick City Community Development Project (CDP) for the continued use of a shared office space and facilitating the students' lectures and St. Mary's Adult Education Centre for facilitating our workshops. We would also like to thank King's Island Youth and Community Centre for the use of their space for the Culture Night, St. Mary's Aid for providing the buffet on the night, Limerick Regeneration and Cannon O'Malley of St. Mary's Parish.

We are planning a consultation in December regarding changes which would strengthen health and wellbeing in your community. We value your input so watch out for information from CWELL about how you can have your say.

Student Spotlight: Elaine McDonnell

I am one of the eleven students who completed their first semester of the CWELL programme. Along with my classmates, I completed four assignments in total which included a presentation, an academic essay, a reflection booklet and a study skills portfolio. The presentation was the most daunting assignment of them all for me as for the first time I had to stand in front of an audience and keep them captivated throughout the duration of a presentation.

We finished our first semester in April and we received our results in June. I was anxious to see the end results from my efforts throughout the semester but when I received my results I was happy and relieved with what I had accomplished. I felt I got out what I put in which is very rewarding as I put a lot of effort into my assignments and because of this I feel highly motivated and I am ready for any challenges that may come this semester.

During my placement with CWELL, I attended the Campus Engage Charter on Civic and Community Engagement along with the course co-director Geraldine Reidy. This Charter was a landmark occasion in the progression of strengthening the ties between campuses and communities all over Ireland. The event took place in Dublin Castle on the 16th of June where the Minister of Education and Skills at the time, Ruairi Quinn launched the charter and the President of the University of Limerick, Don Barry, along with 19 others, signed it. It was a fantastic opportunity, I really enjoyed it and I was more than pleased to have been invited to attend.

I am now enjoying settling in to second semester and I am looking forward to the practical side of the programme where the other students and I will be completing a First Aid course and a Basic Life Support course on campus in the University of Limerick. I am enthusiastic about getting more involved in the community and I am excited about continuing my studies with CWELL and seeing what the future holds.



Pictured at the launch of the Campus Engage Charter on Civic and Community Engagement, Elaine McDonnell, student, University of Limerick, previous Minister for Education and Skills, Mr Ruairi Quinn TD and Geraldine Reidy, Course Co-Coordinator of the CWELL Programme.

CWELL Contributors



Ciara Dempsey:

Since I have started working with CWELL, I have received a very warm St. Mary's welcome from the students, the community and those involved in the management team. Even though I am from Limerick already, I am from the county so I am really enjoying getting to meet the local community, getting to know what the community are proud of and becoming more familiar with the services in the area. Apparently I need to read up on the rules of rugby and wear red when the home games are on in Thomond in order to be accepted into the community!

I have a few roles within CWELL. My main job is to check in with the CWELL students and the course management group four times a year to see how CWELL is developing and record their experiences. This will help future roll outs of the programme to be more successful and in turn have better outcomes for the students and the community the course is run in. I also support the CWELL students in developing skills they require for the course, bouncing around project ideas that they have and assisting them in any way they require. I look forward to continuing to working with those I have met to date and to meeting new faces also.



Carmel Duggan:

Along with others, I represent the community on the CWELL project. I have been involved from the beginning of CWELL when they were recruiting people for the committee and I was a part of the group that designed the course. By having community representatives on the committee, it grounded the content of the course. I loved meeting all the staff from UL and from the start there was a great buzz about the programme starting here as the course was greatly welcomed. First we went to local groups and explained the course to them. I feel the students have learned a lot and have gained confidence from the course.

CWELL benefits the students, their families and the community as they can bring their knowledge and experience back to the community. I would love to see CWELL flourish, not only in this community, but other communities as this course helps people to help themselves. I would like to see the students get involved more with the community and do a project with them. On a personal note, it's been a privilege to be a part of the design of this course.

Contact CWELL: Like us on Facebook or email us at: ciara.dempsey@ul.ie