

In this Issue:

*Keeping Up with
CWELL*

*Pride of Place
Awards*

*CWELL Express
Gratitude*

*Student Spotlight:
Bridget Cropper*

*Meet the team:
CWELL Contributors*

Keeping up with CWELL

Madeline Clarke Staff Writer

The Holiday season has been a busy one for CWELL! The students have embraced the transition from their first module of the semester, Managing Health in the Home and the Community, to their next module, Communications and Lifeskills, and have enjoyed the new material which brings their first year to a close. A social night out with the CWELL Practicum students and other programme coordinators might have helped that transition as well as some much deserved celebrating!

While the students are busy with their workload, CWELL has received lots of publicity in and outside of UL. The course co-directors Bernie Quillinan and Geraldine Reidy spoke at an open conference that was held by the Institute of Public Health on the 14th of October 2014 in the Titanic Building, Belfast. Furthermore, Ciara Dempsey, Geraldine Reidy, Garry Hyland, Jennifer Humphrey, and Jessica Keyes spoke about the progress and impact of the programme to the UL Education and Health Sciences Faculty Board and CWELL steering group members and also gave a similar report to Limerick Regeneration. While many were nervous about speaking to such a large crowd, the feedback was all positive and has everyone looking forward to what next year has in store for the programme!

CWELL Wins Big at the Pride of Place Awards



Pictured are the CWELL Students with the course co-directors and members of Limerick City and County Council

The Irish Pride of Place Awards was held at the West County Hotel in Ennis, Co. Clare on November 15th 2014. Towards the end of the evening, CWELL were feeling less hopeful of winning an award as award after award were presented to other groups. Finally at the end of the event, it was announced that there was a “Special Award” to be presented to the CWELL Programme. Ten people were there to represent the programme and everyone rushed to the stage to accept the award. They were also informally awarded the “loudest and most energetic group” title, which was very fitting for CWELL! Big congratulations to everyone involved in the programme and thank you to the community for your continued support.

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 our Steering Committee meetings, Limerick Regeneration and Canon O’Malley of St. Mary’s Parish.

We are planning a Community Gathering on January 20th 2015 at 7pm in the Absolute Hotel. This is being held to discuss changes which would strengthen health and wellbeing in your community. Watch out for information from CWELL about this exciting event!

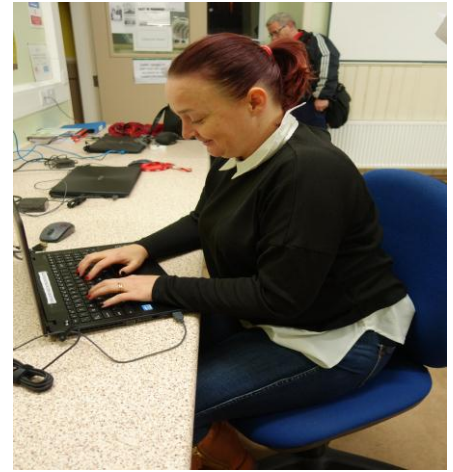
Student Spotlight: Bridget Cropper

I became involved in the CWELL programme after I heard about it through my volunteer work with the CDP. I attended the open night for the programme and, after speaking with the coordinators, I was talked into applying. At first I was nervous about participating in the programme and going back to school, but I have already learned and changed a lot!

So far CWELL is different from my previous experiences in education because we are not only allowed to voice our thoughts and opinions, but we are encouraged to, which was not the case in primary and secondary school for me. CWELL does not feel like school in the traditional sense because it is more engaging and I enjoy the positive learning environment and the support that I get from the other CWELL students.

The changes that I have seen in myself include an increase in self-confidence since starting the programme almost a year ago. For instance, I would not have agreed to be interviewed this time last year! I also have the confidence to speak up in class or at community meetings whereas I previously have felt shy and modest about voicing my opinions.

I have high hopes for the future of the programme. I hope the projects and the CWELL programme rolls over and continues on for St. Mary's Community and spreads throughout the rest of Ireland and other countries as well. This community could benefit from the projects that CWELL students have in mind and hopefully our children, including my own, will be able to participate in more local programmes.



Pictured at the Adult Education Centre, Bridget Cropper, student, University of Limerick, works on an assignment at a workshop.

CWELL Contributors



Stephen Gallagher:

I initially got involved with the CWELL via the UL Course Director, Bernie. She approached me to see if this would be something I thought would be a good idea, and would I sit on the steering committee. I said I would as I was very familiar with the local community and was already involved with the local community development group there. My current role on the programme is being a member of the Steering Committee and I am also involved with pastoral care for some CWELL Students.

I have seen changes in CWELL over the last year. Given that this is a pilot one would expect that things will happen and the unexpected happens (floods, some students drop out, funding issues). However, the good thing about CWELL is that the research that is monitoring all of these issues will allow us to learn what is working and what is not working so it can inform better programmes in the future. I have seen students worry, be anxious and stressed about their ability not to complete assignments, but through support from the UL Practicum and Coop students, they are able to overcome these personal challenges and it is wonderful to see the students grow in confidence as a consequence. I look forward to seeing the practical element of the CWELL programme being put into operation. This is where the students will have to apply their knowledge to date and develop new projects or help out other existing groups in the community. This is where the transferability of individual expertise to community level should happen so that the community can also reap the benefits of CWELL. My wish is that the programme will realise its original aim in that it will help to improve the health and quality of life of those living in St Mary's.



Cian Conroy:

I live in San Jose, California, but I am originally from Limerick. I am studying abroad at the University of Limerick, but I am currently pursuing a Business legal studies degree at Arizona State University in Tempe, Arizona, USA. When I first heard about the CWELL programme and its mission to improve the health and quality of life in St. Mary's community, I knew I wanted to be a part of it.

I have seen an immense amount of growth within the CWELL students since I first got involved in the programme. It is evident that the students have much more confidence within themselves as their education progresses. This increased confidence has allowed them to become more opinionated and vocal individuals, which were essential skills that they needed to learn in order to make a difference within their own community. I have thoroughly enjoyed my experience with the CWELL project. The group of students I have met have truly blown me away by how dedicated they are to this programme and its future success. I believe that this project will have an extremely positive impact within St. Mary's community, and hopefully one day in other communities in Limerick, and Ireland as a whole.