



# news

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## Ballot on Third Level Action Plan Carried

Curriculum and Assessment Seminar • Further Education Update

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DELEGATES AT TUI CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT SEMINAR, TULLAMORE COURT HOTEL, FEBRUARY 2ND 2007

# A Word From The President



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**Now that the Towards 2016 Action Plan has been accepted by TUI members at third level by a margin of 2:1, it is time to move forward towards ensuring that the plan is implemented in a way which minimises the impact on the conditions of service of members.**

As the only agreement available to the Trade Union movement, it was the TUI Executive's view that there was no viable alternative to the plan, notwithstanding serious reservations.

Recent reports in the media have endorsed TUI's long standing concerns with disruption in the classroom. Specifically, the increase in serious incidents of violence against teachers is worrying in the extreme and highlights the burning need for Minister Hanafin to implement all the recommendations of the Task Force on Student Disruption. Complacency on this issue can no longer be tolerated.

The High Court, at a recent hearing, vindicated the right of two Adult Education Officers to retain their seats as members of their respective VECs.

Credit is due to our legal team - Sara Moorhead, S.C., Siobhán Stack, J.C. and Mary Cullen, for our victory. The success of Mary Farrell and Tom Costello in seeing the case through to completion has established an important principle which will encourage and assist others in the same situation into the future.

The recent provision of €252m from the National Development Plan for computer facilities in schools is to be welcomed, but the situation must be audited to make sure

that this is enough. We would estimate that this figure equates to less than €50 per student per year, and unfortunately the levels of equipment in most schools are at a stage where the vast majority of computer hardware needs to be replaced.

There is also the perennial problem of the lack of technical support available to schools. Information technology has a short shelf life in comparison with other school equipment. It is therefore vital that a multi annual budget be presented which would allow schools to strategically work towards ensuring computer facilities are of premium benefit to the learning experience and not antiquated museum pieces.

The annual Congress of the Teachers' Union of Ireland returns once again to Co. Donegal – to the lively resort town of Bundoran. TUI Annual Congress is always noted for the passion of its debates and I expect that Congress 2007 will be no different. One of the issues on the agenda for consideration at Congress this year is the development of a new and different strategy in relation to National Agreements that hopefully will have wide acceptance across the trade union movement.

Finally, it is with great sadness that the news of former TUI President Mick Hanly's death was received. Mick was a stalwart of the trade union movement and made a great contribution both to education and TUI.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam.

**Tim O'Meara,**  
**TUI President**

# Institute News – Action Plan Accepted in Institutes of Technology

A ballot on the acceptability of the Action Plan for the operation of the current National Agreement Towards 2016 has been carried by ballot of members in the Institutes of Technology. The results are as follows:

Result of ballot on acceptance of Action Plan negotiated under the Agreement Towards 2016.

<b>Total Entitled to Vote per TUI Schedule</b>	<b>3,763</b>	<b>%</b>
Total Poll	1,467	39
Spoiled Votes	(40)	1
Total Valid Poll	1,427	38

## Result of the Count

Decision	Count	Result %
Yes	941	66
No	486	34
Total	1,427	100

The Department of Education and Science has been formally advised of the acceptance of the action plan and the Union has immediately sought the payment of the outstanding increase of 3% due under the first phase of Towards 2016. While the Union has not been guaranteed that this will be payable with effect from 1st December, we will be seeking such retrospection.

The second round increase under Towards 2016 is 2% due with effect from 1st June.

Progress Reports will be completed through Institutes in the same manner as under Sustaining Progress and it is not expected that there will be any obstacles to the payment of this 2% with effect from the due date.

Meanwhile, the Union will be involved in each of the items set out in the action plan,

such items having been set out in detail in the TUI News special sent to the members in question as part of the ballot process.

## Application of Incremental Credit Circular

Were you appointed to the Institute between the 1st September 1998 and the 15th March 2005?

If the answer to the above question is yes and you were appointed from outside of the Institute [i.e. had no employment connection with the Institute in the previous twelve months] then your starting salary and current incremental point may fall to be adjusted under a recently agreed application of a Labour Court recommendation won by the TUI in respect of incremental credit.

The first phase of the application of this will be to new appointees to the Institute that is those not employed in any respect in the Institute in the twelve months prior to their appointment for people appointed between the 1st September 1998 and the 15th March 2005.

Those appointed prior to the 1st September 1998 are not covered by this retrospective application; those appointed on or after the 16th March 2005 have already had the full effect of Circular Letter IT01/05 applied to them.

The main difference between the new circular and the old arrangement is that the award of increments is no longer dependent on the salary of the person in question immediately prior to appointment. Under the old regime, in order to gain increments, one had to have relevant experience and a salary above the first point of the scale in question. It follows therefore that a person who had relevant experience for the job in question but did not

have the salary above the first point of the scale to which they were appointed would not have received incremental credit and may now get it.

All persons in Institutes of Technology appointed between the dates in question are to be written to within the near future by the Institute. They will be advised that this new regime may apply and that they may gain increments. Persons are asked to indicate whether it is their belief that it applies and they have three weeks to claim this. They may be asked to complete a simple claim form. Members are strongly advised that if they are in any doubt as to whether or not they should receive further increments they should make a claim. If claims are not made within the three-week period this may cause a difficulty. If claims are made and turn out to be claims without substance then there is no loss.

Persons claiming credit for experience prior to appointment will be required to produce evidence, normally from a previous employer, for such experience.

In the event of being granted additional increments these will be retrospective to the 1st September 2002 and in the case of Assistant Lecturers this is likely to bring forward the date of progression to the Lecturer grade.

As part of the letter going from the Institute advising you of this matter the Institute has agreed at the request of the TUI, to seek the permission of the individual that in the event of there being a dispute in relation to the number of increments, that the personal case could be brought to a National working party which has been established to deal with what is expected to be a large number of individual

cases. You are strongly advised to agree to grant this permission.

In addition to the benefit of t has awarded €1,500 to each claimant. The present Circular Letter has provided that in the event of persons benefiting by the attainment of further increments they will also receive the €1,500.

The application of this provision to persons who had previously been employed within the Institute before the date of the 1st September 1998 remains to be considered and further Circulars will deal with such application.

A detailed memorandum on the application

of this provision has been circulated to branches together with worked examples. Queries on this should in the first instance be addressed to the branch.

### Apprentice Summer Courses

TUI has been requested to discuss the involvement of its members in Summer Apprentice courses as a result of the continuing backlog in some trades, particularly Electrical, Carpentry/Joinery and Plumbing.

Last year the Union took the view that it would not agree to participate in apprentice summer courses as the removal of the backlog could run counter to the interests of

members who have been employed on three year fixed term contracts and whose continuation of employment would be jeopardised.

The Union has agreed to discuss the summer courses along with discussion of the three year contracts in the trades areas and will only agree to summer courses in the event of there being a satisfactory arrangement on the members employed on fixed terms contracts.

Branches have been asked to give information to Head Office on its members in the trades areas who are employed on three year or other fixed term contracts.

## Union Victory in High Court

The High Court, at a recent hearing, vindicated the right of two Adult Education Officers, Mary Farrell (Longford) and Tom Costello (Roscommon) to retain their seats as members of their respective VECs.

Both Mary and Tom had been elected as staff representatives on their VECs. However, following their election, the Department of Education and Science sought to have them removed from the positions to which they had been elected. The device used was section 70 (1) of the Local Government Act 1925, as amended, which provides that “No person shall hold any office of profit under or be employed for remuneration by or under any local authority while he is a members of such local authority”. Local Authority, in this context, embraces Vocational Education Committees.

The Minister for Education and Science subsequently exempted all employees of a VEC from the restrictions of the 1925 Act, with the exception of the following categories:

- (a) offices to which the Local Authorities (Officers and Employees) Act 1926 applies

- (b) offices which are administrative, executive or clerical in nature and whose maximum remuneration exceeds that of a clerical officer  
 (c) a librarian or assistant librarian, or  
 (d) a superintendent, assistant superintendent, or similar office, the maximum remuneration for which is more than the maximum remuneration for a clerical officer.

The Department of Education and Science maintained that Adult Education Officers were a grade which could be described as “administrative, executive or clerical” and on that basis sought to deny our two members their seats on the VEC.

The Union challenged the Department ruling on this matter but without success. In these circumstances the Union initiated a Judicial Review of the situation. Pending the outcome of the Judicial Review, it was agreed that both persons would continue to serve on the V.E.C.

The Judicial Review was held in the High

Court on Wednesday, 28th February, Mr Justice Kevin Feeney presiding.

Both the Roscommon and Longford VECs made statements to the Court advising of the positive contribution both Tom and Mary had made to the VEC and undertaking to abide by the Court’s decision.

Following a day long hearing, Mr Justice Feeney made an ex tempore finding, ruling that in essence the grade was educational as opposed to administrative, executive or clerical, and thus ensuring that both of our members could continue to serve on their VEC. Costs were awarded against the Department of Education and Science.

Credit is due to our legal team - Sara Moorhead, SC, Siobhán Stack, JC and Mary Cullen, for our victory. The tenacity and steadfastness of Mary Farrell and Tom Costello in seeing the case through to completion has established an important principle which will assist other persons in the same situation into the future.

# TUI Professional Development Seminar – Curriculum Development and Assessment



DELEGATES AT TUI CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT SEMINAR, TULLARMORE, FEBRUARY 2007

## Curriculum Development and Assessment at Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle: Future Directions, Trends and Possibilities

Thanks to everyone who attended the seminar on curriculum and assessment held in February in the Tullamore Court Hotel. The seminar provided an opportunity to TUI members and TUI representatives on NCCA committees to meet and consider

current trends and issues facing teachers. Tim O’Meara, TUI President, opened the seminar acknowledging the time and effort of participants and inviting people to engage in an open and frank manner in the event. Jacqueline Sheil (TUI Executive and Member of the Teaching Council) chaired the seminar highlighting the importance of the ‘voice of the classroom teacher’ as a measure of how successful changes in curriculum and assessment are in reality.

Core objectives of the seminar were

- to address current trends in curriculum and assessment
- to support informed and effective participation in future development
- to consider TUI policy
- to consider effective communication mechanisms.

A number of inputs were delivered by speakers from the TUI and the NCCA as follows:

**Key Influences on Curriculum Change and Challenges Ahead - Some Reflections** (Bernie Judge, Education and Research Officer TUI)

**The Ncca – The Council, Its Committees and How It Operates** (Majella O’Shea & Peter Johnson - Directors, Curriculum and Assessment, NCCA)

**Effective Participation & Communications Mechanisms** (Bernie Judge, TUI)

**Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle: Current and Future Developments: Priorities and Possibilities** (Majella O’Shea & Peter Johnson, NCCA)



L-R MAJELLA O’ SHEA (NCCA), TIM O’ MEARA (PRESIDENT, TUI), PETER JOHNSON (NCCA), JACQUELINE SHEIL (TUI EXECUTIVE), BERNIE JUDGE (EDUCATION & RESEARCH OFFICER, TUI)



TOP TABLE AT TUI CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT SEMINAR, TULLARMORE, FEBRUARY 2007

## NCCA High Level Objectives – Challenges and Opportunities

(Bernie Ruane - TUI Executive Member and John MacGabhann - Assistant General Secretary, TUI)

Together these inputs offered a good level of detail and ideas, blending policy influences with practical developments and the realities facing teachers and those representing teacher interests on NCCA Committees.

A key focus of the seminar was to encourage active participation and debate by TUI members in order to shape TUI policy and influence future developments. Lively and useful discussion took place throughout raising a number of pertinent issues and concerns such as:

- the value of teacher involvement in shaping change
- the need to support those who participate on NCCA committees
- the importance of regular feedback to TUI Head Office and membership

- the need to revisit and clarify TUI policy.

Approximately 80 people attended and the feedback received was very positive indicating that participants found the seminar especially useful in terms of meeting people, exchanging views and clarifying current developments.

The seminar set the base for future work and discussions. TUI plan to hold further seminars in the next academic session as part of a long-term strategy to support and engage in curriculum and assessment developments.



# Durcan Agreement Finally Arrives

At the time of going to press, the long awaited Agreement on the aggregation of certain part-time teaching service given since December 2001 is at draft DES circular letter stage – please refer to the TUI website.

While somewhat complex to follow, the key elements of the Agreement are as follows:

- Written fixed-term contracts of 150 hours will be aggregated, and carried forward from year to year, towards reaching a threshold of 600 hours = one increment. Hours in excess of 600 cannot be carried into the next year or aggregated.

- Members who were not given written contracts are not necessarily disadvantaged: if the circumstances of their work since 2001 were such that it would now qualify the teacher for a fixed-term contract, they will have their 150-hour fixed-term work aggregated.
- Each 300 casual and non-casual part-time hours are aggregable also and may be carried forward into a succeeding year for the purposes of aggregation.
- 150-hour fixed-term contracts and 300-hour non-casual and casual periods of employment will be aggregated together.

Teachers employed under a fixed-term contract or who have other part-time service since the 20 December 2001, funded by the Department of Education and Science will be automatically credited by the Payroll Division of the department with that service for salary purposes in line with records held by the department – queries should be directed to the Payroll Division of the department.

Teachers in vocational schools and community colleges will be paid by their VECs and may direct queries to their VEC.

# Annual Congress 2007 - Bundoran, April 10th-12th

## CONGRESS 2007

**Bundoran, Co. Donegal,  
10th-12th April 2007**

### Congress Crèche

A crèche under professional supervision will be provided in the Great Northern Hotel. Delegates who wish to avail of the crèche

facilities should complete the official crèche form which may be obtained from the TUI website ([www.tui.ie](http://www.tui.ie)) or from:

Anne Shanley, St. Joseph's Traveller Training Centre, Dublin Road, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim.  
Mob: **086-8538412**

Email: [annesoh@eircom.net](mailto:annesoh@eircom.net)

Completed forms should be returned to Anne **IMMEDIATELY**.

Please note that there is a late booking fee of €60 per child for children booked into the Crèche, the deadline for which was 23rd February 2007.

## Organised Congress 2007 Tours/Outings

### Wednesday 11th April

#### Donegal Town

Participants on this tour will enjoy an afternoon in Donegal Town, an historic town with an abundance of tourist attractions. Donegal Town is located at the mouth of Donegal Bay and surrounded by the vista of the Blue Stack Mountains.

The visit will include a guided tour of Donegal Castle situated in Donegal Town. The castle was built by the O'Donnell family in 1505 who were the ruling Gaelic family in Donegal for over a thousand years until they left Ireland in 1607. The Castle has recently being renovated and is well worth a visit.

Participants on this tour will also enjoy a 1 hour trip of Donegal Bay in a new Water Bus delivered in June 2006. Bar and refreshments on board. The skipper tells you the history of the old houses and islands en-route. All in all this should be a very enjoyable and relaxing trip. Tour leaves at 2pm.

#### Lissadell House and Drumcliff

Tour to Lissadell House, home of Countess Markievicz and home of one of the largest private collections of paintings and literature by George 'AE' Russell, Jack Yeats, WB Yeats and contemporary artists. The tour also includes a visit to the Yeats burial place in Drumcliff and other places of interest in the Sligo area. Tour leaves at 2pm and returns at 6pm.

#### Enniskillen

This tour will cover the town of Enniskillen, Enniskillen Castle and other places of interest. The guide is writer and broadcaster Brid McCusker, who is a well known local historian and has a slot every Saturday morning on BBC Radio 2. Tour leaves at 2pm and returns at 6pm.

#### Golf Outing

The golf outing at this year's TUI Congress will take place at Donegal Golf Club, Murvagh, outside Donegal Town and about a 15 min drive from Bundoran. Lying in the bosom of beautiful Donegal Bay and backed by the magnificent Blue Stack Mountains,

Donegal Golf Links (or Murvagh Golf Club as it is also known) was designed by the master of Irish golf course architecture, Eddie Hackett. Following his designs at Connemara and Waterville Golf Links, the links at Donegal was his third such project and it was destined to be on a similarly grand scale as his two previous creations.

Configured in two loops of nine holes, Donegal Golf Links is often described as the Muirfield of Ireland and the course can provide a fearsome challenge when the wind rises, as is reflected in its standard scratch of 75. Isolated from the rest of the mainland by a thick mass of woodland, the site is spectacular by any standards. And as the designer recalled with a crushing simplicity "The greens are on natural sites, only the levels of some were adjusted by hand. All I had to do was to develop the course on what nature provided."

If you wish to participate in the golf outing at Congress please sign on Tuesday morning during registration. Numbers are strictly limited and tee of times will be allocated on a first come first served basis. Green fees of €30 are payable in advance.

# Further Education – An Update



DELEGATES AT TUI CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT SEMINAR, TULLARMORE, FEBRUARY 2007

## Quality Assurance Demands

The rolling out of FETAC policies and procedures in relation to the implementation of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999 has brought into sharp focus the major resource deficits that exist in centres of Further Education.

Colleges and other providers are obliged to implement FETAC's requirements as of January 2007 and as yet the Department of Education and Science has not signified its intention to provide the resources, training and supports required to implement the legislation. This, clearly, is not acceptable. The department is running a great risk in pre-supposing our members' co-operation.

Policies and procedures to be implemented by centres include policies on Communications, Equality, Access/Transfer/Progression, Programme Development/Delivery/Review and Assessment. In addition centres will be required to engage in Programme Validation processes, Recognition of Prior Learning, and in Monitoring and Evaluation procedures, both internal and external.

TUI is willing in principle to embrace the demands of the legislation including formalized Quality Assurance of Further Education provision. Ours is a contingent agreement, however, which is underpinned by an insistence that procedures/processes which may be introduced are fair and are resourced. Clarification is required on many of the new and imminent requirements. Issues relating to the new assessment procedures, RPL, and monitoring and evaluation require further consideration.

The maintenance of national standards is absolutely central to the delivery and assessment of FE. Standards must be assured in the new arrangements. Dublin City PP Branch has raised many of these issues in its submission to the Executive Committee and identified the resources required for implementation of FETAC and DES procedures. TUI intends to build on the Dublin branch's work and conduct a more widespread analysis of the issues identified/examined in the first half of 2007 and hold a consultative conference at which a paper on the research findings is presented.

The full implementation of the Mclver

recommendations would go a long way in providing FE centres with the structural, technical, management and learner supports required to service the education, training and re-skill needs of its learners and also allow centres to fulfil their legislative requirements. However, in outlining the responsibilities of teaching and management staff and in its recommendation to reduce teaching hours, Mclver anticipated only some of the additional work required of teachers resulting from the implementation of the Qualifications Act. The report did not and could not have envisaged the full extent of the new work being demanded of teachers and of management by FETAC's interpretation of the act.

TUI recognises that the legislative demands of the Qualifications Act apply also to centres of education and training not comprehended by Mclver - Youthreach, VTOS, Traveller Education Centres, BTEI (Part-Time Programme), Adult Literacy Provision, schools with small numbers of PLC courses and Community Education. These centres must be given similar resources to larger centres in order to implement FETAC and DES demands.

## 'Structures' Discussions Under Towards 2016

Discussions on the implementation of the Mclver Report in the light of the commitments in the National Agreement commenced with a meeting with the department and IVEA on 19 December 2006. It was and remains a source of concern to the Union that the department did not commit fully to the implementation of the report. TUI has advised the department that it is difficult for the Union to conduct meaningful discussions if the Official Side is not prepared to make a fulsome commitment to implement the Mclver recommendations. TUI made a detailed written submission to the department subsequent to the meeting and receipt of an IVEA submission in respect of the Mclver report. TUI set out the priorities of the Union as follows:-

- Implementation of the recommendations of the Mclver report
- Adequate resources to implement FETAC policies in further and adult education centres not dealt with under Mclver
- Establishment of a representative Working Group to recommend overarching mechanisms and systems to support the future development of Further Education in Department of Education and Science-funded courses.

In addition to the ongoing discussions on the implementation of Mclver and FETAC/DES demands, a series of meetings has taken place between the TUI and the Department of Education and Science, the IVEA, and FETAC. At these meetings, TUI sought to clarify a number of matters and presented the TUI perspective and demands on the following issues:

- (1) Continuation and funding of programmes of more than two years' duration

- (2) Certification from agencies/bodies other than FETAC.

### Conditions of Approval of Courses

The Department of Education and Science circulated Conditions for Approval for Vocational Education and Training Programmes / Post Leaving Certificate Programmes (2006/2007) in June 2006. A number of the conditions set out were of particular concern to TUI and its members; for example the proposals that: –

- all programmes will have to carry FETAC Certification in the future
- programmes in excess of two years could not commence from September 2007
- courses leading to HETAC awards would not be eligible for funding.

The TUI prepared a detailed written response setting out strong opposition to these proposals and seeking that they be reviewed. The response addressed a range of issues including:-

- the needs for new resources to put in place Quality Assurance policies and procedures as required by the Qualifications Act and related FETAC policies and
- the problematic nature and negative impact of moving toward the exclusive provision of FETAC awards.

Other bodies such as the IVEA and the PDA made similar representations and the Conditions of Approval were revised to allow discussion take place in relation to what changes might be made in future years. Discussions are ongoing with the Department of Education and Science in this regard. Further to TUI representations, the department confirmed leeway sought by

### Circular 0135/2006 - Special Educational Needs Allowance

A number of members have contacted Head Office over recent months following refusal by the Department of Education and Science to apply to them the terms of Circular 0135/2006 regarding payment of an allowance to recognised Post-Primary Teachers who hold a Graduate/Higher Diploma in Special Educational Needs.

The TUI and ASTI have met with the Department of Education and Science to discuss the anomalies and associated issues that have arisen. It is the intention of the unions to secure a process to deal generically with these matters. Members will be kept advised of developments.

TUI in respect of 3-year programmes: the Conditions of Approval document, which issued to schools on 1 March 2007, states as follows:-

“No new programmes of a duration in excess of two years should be commenced from September 2007”. This is agreed to mean that a different/new course title cannot be introduced. However, schools which currently offer 3-year programmes will be permitted, in September 2007, to take in a new cohort of students to commence programmes offered at present in schools. The conditions of approval of courses are the subject of ongoing TUI representations to the department.

We would welcome submissions from branches regarding these FE issues, particularly the matter of implementation of FETAC/DES requirements on Quality Assurance.

# Teaching Council - Update

In ongoing contacts with the Teaching Council, the union has addressed the issues of

- Registration
- Vetting
- Adult/Further Education – regulations in regard to pedagogic qualification
- Codes

## Registration

### Protecting the Livelihood of Members

In respect of the sectors in which TUI organises teachers, the union has sought registration under Subsection 31.2 of every “person who (was) employed as a teacher” on 28th March 2006. This requires a decision by the Teaching Council that every person employed as a teacher on March 28th last is eligible to be deemed to be registered under Subsection 31.2, irrespective of whether or not s/he is fully qualified.

At the time of writing, the Council had not yet made such a decision and we have expressed our strong concern at the failure, to date, of the Council – in spite of representations by TUI – to confirm our clear understanding that unqualified teachers who were in service on 28th March 2006 are to be registered under Subsection 31.2 of the Teaching Council Act 2001. The Council has been reminded that the union received assurances that they would be so registered, balloted members on this basis, addressed the Registration Committee of the Council to this effect and remains committed to ensuring that the livelihood of members is not endangered.

We have made it clear that what we are demanding is merely the maintenance of the current employment status of the unqualified members concerned. We are seeking to protect the livelihood of persons who have

timetables in their own right, who have, in most cases, several successive years service with their current employer, persons who are not replacing or displacing qualified teachers, who have served the economy in providing leading-edge PLC courses and public policy in teaching the marginalised in Youthreach, VTOS and STTCs. The Union has advised the Council that, if the first significant action of the Teaching Council were to jeopardise the livelihood of members of TUI, the credibility of the Council among our members would be most adversely affected.

### Application to Register for the Year beginning 28th March 2007

We also sought a straightforward administrative mechanism to enable those persons whose details weren't returned to the Council by their employers (and who, therefore, haven't received Data Verification Forms from the Council) to make valid application, under the terms of Subsection 31.3, for registration for the twelve months commencing 28th March 2007. The Council confirmed that submission of an application for registration is the minimum required to satisfy 31.3. It would result in all applicants being considered, including those of whom the Council currently has no record. To meet the requirements of the Act, an application would have to be received by the Council by 27th March 2007. However, the submission of an application would not, of itself, guarantee registration. That would depend on later verification of the applicant's details by the employer and upon the decision to be made by the Council regarding the categories of persons to be registered under Subsection 31.2 (see above).

Following confirmation of this procedure by the Council, the union advised all members

in the sectors concerned to return the necessary application by 27th March 2007.

The Council agreed that it will process all forms submitted, including those downloaded from the website or copied and distributed by the union and, therefore, not bar-coded.

## Vetting

The union fully accepts the need for an effective vetting process as an element of child protection. However, we are concerned about the excessively intrusive nature of the vetting form currently used by the Garda Central Vetting Unit. This matter will be further discussed with the Teaching Council and the other authorities involved.

### Adult/Further Education – Regulations in Regard to Pedagogic Qualification

The union also raised the matter of the proposed introduction of a pedagogic requirement for new teachers in the Further Education sector. The Council has approved regulations for teaching qualifications which are to supersede the existing regulations from a date yet to be confirmed. Among the issues to be addressed is a training-in-teaching qualification for the FE and non-mainstream areas. The union expects to be centrally involved in the discussion that is to commence regarding the type of qualification that might be deemed appropriate.

## Codes

The Union noted that VEC schools and colleges had not been notified about the series of regional consultative meeting regarding the Codes of Professional Conduct that the Council had organised. The Council expressed its regret for the oversight and indicated a willingness to arrange further meetings, if requested to do so.

# International News

## Iran: Education International Condemns Arrest Of Over 300 Teachers

Education International, the international body TUI is affiliated to, wrote to the President of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, on 16 March condemning the harsh repression and arrest of hundreds of teachers who were protesting on 14 March for better pay and working conditions.

### Over 300 teachers arrested on 14 March

Over 300 teachers were arrested in the protests that took place on 14 March in front of the Parliament following hours of futile discussions with government representatives the day before.

Among the arrested were the heads of several teachers associations and the Co-ordinated Council of Cultural Workers Associations including Superintendent of the Teachers Trade Association of Iran, Ali Akbar Baghani, Association Spokesperson, Mahmoud Beheshti Langroodi, and the Superintendent of the Iranian Teachers' Association, Alireza Hashemi, as well as four Superintendents of Young Adult Schools and a reporter from "Teacher's Pen" who was reporting on the situation.

The teacher protesters were transferred by bus to the Intelligence Office on Vahdath Eslami Street and then transferred to the Evin Prison. Some of the women arrested were released upon their husband's claim.



The teacher associations and the Co-ordinated Council have appealed to both the general public and attorneys to help secure their release.

### Education International Reinforces Partnerships to Combat Child Labour

**Last month Human Rights Watch and Anti-Slavery convened a meeting in London between trade union and non governmental organizations to discuss the issue of child domestic workers.**

Representatives of ILO-IPEC (International Labour Organisation's Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour) also participated in the event. Taking place over two days on February 22-23, it specifically addressed the issue of child domestic workers. The main objective was to facilitate information sharing on strategies and approaches to tackle child labour and to identify scope for cooperation. EI was there to make a presentation on its current action plan, focusing on how teachers' unions can, and are, actively contributing to the fight against child labour.

The meeting was an excellent opportunity for EI to reinforce its partnerships fighting against child labour. Future working areas will include information sharing on national laws and policies to improve the protection of child domestic workers, trafficking/migration and child domestic labour, research on the psychosocial impact of child domestic labour and working on global advocacy messages. For more information, please contact : [efaids@ei-ie.org](mailto:efaids@ei-ie.org).

**The Fight for Gender Equality Must Continue, says EI on the occasion of International Women's Day**

**On the occasion of International Women's Day, Education International reminded its member organisations that the fight for gender equality must continue, especially when there is still a huge gap in pay parity and working conditions between men and women in many parts of the world.**

Representing over 30 million education workers worldwide, EI marked International Women's Day with various activities.

# International Success for Ennis Community College

On the 3rd of December last staff and students of Ennis Community College bid a fond farewell to 5th year student Victor Akujobi, as he embarked on an adventure of a lifetime to Sao Paulo, Brazil to represent Ireland in the International Junior Science Olympiad. In November of last year Victor was chosen on the strength of his Junior Certificate grades, in Science and Math's, to take part in the DCU/ Damova Irish Junior Science Olympiad in DCU. He competed against the top 200 students in the country, in a grueling three hour exam. He won a gold medal in this event entitling him to represent Ireland in the International Junior Science Olympiad.

Victor was on a team of six that traveled to Sao Paulo. Over 30 countries were represented at the competition, which ran from the 3rd to the



VICTOR AKUJOBI

12th of December. The competition consisted of three 3 hour exams that spanned both the theoretical and experimental aspects of the four disciplines of science; biology, chemistry, physics and math's.

On the 12th Victor was announced as one

of the silver medalists, the first silver medal that Ireland has ever won at this event. This is a dream come through for the 15-year-old Nigerian, who came to Ireland in January this year to join his parents. The buzz of pride and excitement in the school is a clear reflection of the immense magnitude of his achievement.

# Young Scientists – Balbriggan Community College



BALBRIGGAN YOUNG SCIENTISTS

Balbriggan Community College had four projects accepted for the finals of the BT Young Scientist exhibition 2007, which was held in the RDS from 9th – 13th January.

Craig English (14) 2nd year, was awarded 3rd place in the Junior Individual Section

of Maths, Physics, Chemistry category. His project, "Nature's glue, a safer alternative" was very well received by the judges. Aaron Creighton (15) 4th year entered the Social and Behavioural Section at Senior Level. His project "Are over the counter, non-prescription drugs overused by the under

eighteens" was awarded 3rd place in its category.

In the same category were his fellow 16 year old 4th year students Tony Carr and Ciaran Halpin. Tony Carr asked "Is driver safety compromised on our roads today?" Ciaran Halpin's research "Should mobile phone masts be located in residential areas? St. Patrick's Close, a case study" drew high attention from the general public.

Their teacher Theresa Gannon said that the students were a credit to their school and the students should be justly proud to take home their well-earned awards. The boys received a great reception from their fellow students and the delighted staff of Balbriggan Community College.

# Equality Issues

By Niall Crowley, Chief Executive Officer, Equality Authority

This year has been designated as European Year of Equal Opportunities for All by the EU Council and the European Parliament. This provides an opportunity to celebrate the progress made in promoting equality in Ireland, to acknowledge the significant inequalities that persist and to review and enhance the ambition to achieve full equality in practice in all sectors.

The Equality Authority is the National Implementing Body for the European Year in Ireland and has published a strategy of activity for the Year. The TUI proved ready and willing to be involved in this strategy with a commitment “to incorporate a high profile equality theme as part of the annual conference”. This builds on work already done by the TUI on equality issues including previous joint work with the Equality Authority.

At the annual Congress, teachers could usefully affirm their commitment to proactively promoting equality for teachers and students across the nine grounds, covered by the equality legislation, of gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion and membership of the Traveller community.

The preliminary agenda for the TUI Congress is encouraging in this regard. Nearly 12% of the motions put forward relate to equality. Some of these motions relate to equality in employment but the large majority relate to equality for students. There is a particular and dominant emphasis on the grounds of race and disability in these motions.

During 2007 it will be important to work to build on this evident commitment and on the progress on equality issues already made.



NIALL CROWLEY, CEO, EQUALITY AUTHORITY

The goal for this work should be to seek full equality in practice for teachers and students from across all nine grounds covered by the equality legislation.

This goal can usefully be pursued through taking action to create inclusive educational institutions that:

- prevent and combat discrimination experienced by teachers and students,
- respect, value and accommodate diversity of students and teachers across the nine grounds,
- seek positive experiences, a sense of belonging and equality outcomes for all students across the nine grounds – outcomes include access, participation, personal development and achieving educational credentials,
- seek full equality in practice for all teachers across the nine grounds.

‘Play Your Part’ is the slogan chosen by the

Equality Authority for the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All. Teachers can valuably play their part by ensuring their educational institutions have:

- equality policies that set out the commitment to equality for teachers and students across the nine grounds,
- admission policies that maximise the diversity of students present,
- development plans that set out the action that will be taken to achieve full equality in practice for students and teachers across the nine grounds,
- codes of behaviour that require and support behaviour from teachers and students that respects and values diversity across the nine grounds,
- learning and training opportunities for teachers and students to develop a knowledge and understanding of inequalities and how these inequalities could be challenged effectively.

# The Ombudsman for Children's Office – An Outline

The Ombudsman for Children's Office was established under the Ombudsman for Children's Act, 2002. An official of the Office recently advised the TUI that a number of cases it has investigated relate to how schools implement policies and procedures. It is therefore important that principals, teachers and other education personnel are familiar with the roles and duties of the Office.

The purpose of the Office is to promote and safeguard the rights and interests of children and young people under the age of 18.

It undertakes work in three main areas:

- Promoting children's rights
- Complaints and investigations
- Research and policy.

The Ombudsman for Children's Office can investigate a complaint when an action has had a bad effect on a child and it was:

- taken without proper authority;
- the result of negligence or carelessness;
- based on wrong and incomplete information;
- based on discrimination;
- based on bad management practice; or
- not based on fair practice.

The Ombudsman for Children's Office

cannot deal with a complaint if:

- it is about an organisation other than a public organisation, school or hospital or any organisation not specified in the Ombudsman for Children Act, 2002;
- a child has not been treated unfairly;
- the person complaining has not made every effort to resolve the situation with the organisation concerned, for example through the organisation's own complaints or appeals procedure;
- it has already been investigated by any other Ombudsman's Office;
- it relates to a court case specifically excluded from the Ombudsman for Children's powers under the Ombudsman for Children Act, 2002, (see out of remit list below); and
- it relates to a social welfare payment given to a parent for the child (for example, child benefit or foster care payment) in which case, the Ombudsman for public services will deal with the complaint.

A case is out of the remit of the Ombudsman for Children's Office if:

- it is being dealt with by a court;
- it affects or relates to national security or military arrangements;

- it relates to the recruitment or appointment of staff;
- it relates to a contract of services or employment;
- it relates to how asylum, immigration, naturalisation or citizenship is granted;
- it is taken in the running of prisons or other detention places (this does not include children's detention schools – the Ombudsman for Children's Office does have a role in investigating the running of such schools);
- it relates to exam results;
- the action happened before the 24th of April 2004; and
- it was taken more than two years before the Office was contacted.

The Ombudsman for Children Act, 2002 can be downloaded from [www.oireachtas.ie](http://www.oireachtas.ie) or a printed version can be obtained from:

Government Publications Office  
Sun Alliance House,  
Molseworth Street, Dublin 2

The Ombudsman for Children's Office can be contacted at:

[www.oco.ie](http://www.oco.ie) , Lo- call **1890 654 654**  
or by post at Millennium House,  
52-56 Great Strand Street, Dublin 1



## Motor Engineering & Metalwork Teachers Training Course 1966 40th Anniversary Reunion Function at the Radisson Hotel in Cork

INCLUDED: DONAL BUCKLEY (CORK), LIAM DONOVAN (LIMERICK), PATRICK DUGGAN (DONEGAL), JOHN DYER (DUBLIN), FRANK EDWARDS (CORK), PAT MALONE (DUNDALK), JOE MOTHERWAY (KERRY), MICHAEL NOONE (DUBLIN), DICK SEWELL (KILKENNY).

ALSO TRAINING COURSE TEACHERS: TERRY LAYTON, JACK LYNCH, CHRISTOPHER MCCARTHY, AND FORMER ASSISTANT CHIEF INSPECTOR DEPT OF EDUCATION & SCIENCE, JOHN P BYRNE. ABSENT FROM THE PHOTO: BENNY JORDAN (MAYO).

# VTOS and Traveller Education Concerns – Latest News

## Management Structure Claim

“That the in-school management structure for post-primary schools be applied equally to VTOS and traveller education centres”.

This matter was brought back to the independent Arbitration Board on 9 January 2007. The board had dealt with the claim in late 2005 and had determined that a further bout of negotiations should take place (TUI and DES/Department of Finance) between both sides. The board exhorted both sides to seek to resolve the claim in these new negotiations “to the satisfaction of both sides” but stated also that the claim would be determined if the re-opened discussions failed. These discussions in the early part of 2006 did not succeed.

In the re-opened discussions, TUI sought the application of the Prison Education Unit management structure to traveller education centres and the creation of a post-primary management structure for VTOS centres

under 1.5 weighting for generating posts. The department’s offer fell so far short, it could not be contemplated.

At the January meeting, the board asked both sides to set out what had happened in the re-negotiation process. The meeting concluded on the basis that written submissions from both sides in this regard be provided to the board. Last month, both the department and TUI forwarded written papers to the Arbitration Board: we now await the board’s determination of the claim.

## Supervision and Substitution

Circular Letter 49/06 gave effect to the ruling of the Arbitration Board that teachers in traveller education and in VTOS centres be paid for supervision/substitution undertaken in the period 2002/03 to 2004/05 on the basis of the standard 37-hour commitment and on the same terms as those applying to teachers in schools. This circular did not apply to members in Junior

Education Centres/Special Schools for Travellers.

Whilst this circular – with the exception of the exclusion of teachers in Junior Education Centres – put to bed the question of arrears for work done up to August 2005, a new circular was needed to establish the new permanent and pensionable S & S Scheme from 1 September 2005, on the basis of 30 hours per equivalent in traveller education centres and 16 hours per equivalent in VTOS centres. A circular which will do this is now ready – please see the website. In structure, the scheme and arrangements agreed for S & S in the centres mirror those in schools. Teachers will receive arrears for supervision/substitution since September 2005 and will be invited to enter the scheme on a pensionable basis before 1 May 2007. They should, of course, do so. Finally, the department will advise VECs in writing that 49/06 should be applied to teachers in Junior Education Centres for their work in the 2002/03 – 2004/05 period.

# Sad Passing of Former TUI President

It is with great sadness that we reflect on the passing of former TUI President and former vice principal of Lough Allen College Mick Hanly, who passed away in Sligo General Hospital on February 8th last.

Mick was born in Clare and moved to Drumkeerin in Leitrim in 1966 to take up a position at the Vocational School. He had a strong concern for the welfare of students and was a union activist from early in his career. Mick served with distinction as Chairman of the Leitrim Branch and on the

TUI National Executive, before becoming President of the union in 1987.

Popular and respected, Mick will be long remembered for the huge contribution he made to his profession, the TUI and his community.

Mick is survived by his wife Bernie, sons Michael and Shane, brother John, daughters in law Sonia and Louise and granddaughter Amber Dee. He is predeceased by his daughter Sinead.



MICK HANLY

# TUI Golf Society News

There were questions! After the splendid Vilamoura trip, was it wise to go elsewhere? Which alternative would be suitable? What about non-golfers? What about the weather?

Thankfully, Estoril, near Lisbon, came up with the right answers – an excellent location, near the beach and all amenities; twenty minutes from Lisbon; good restaurants and entertainment – perfect for non-golfers. And for golfers? Well, our chosen courses were “interesting”, and all unforgettable in their own way. The Belas course inspired many members to believe they had mistakenly joined the TUI Hillwalking Club on tour. The difficulty of the terrain did not deter golfers like Seán Daly from returning excellent scores.

Penha Longa was compared by the knowledgeable to the K Club. It was magnificent, and will long be remembered by all who played it. Our final course, Quinta da Marinha, carried on the Society’s now

well-embedded tradition - “How wet can you get playing golf?” Thunder and lightning, torrential rain and sporadic sunshine tested the mettle of our members. Michael O’Brien reassured us that we were in no danger as there was a five second gap between the flashes of lightning. Right!! Clearly, Michael is the Lee Trevino of the TUI Golf Society. When asked why he had imperilled himself by holding aloft a One iron whilst walking back to the Augusta clubhouse during a suspension of play in the Masters because of lightning, Trevino replied: “Not even God can hit a One iron!”

The TUI members were spotted in big numbers at the Champions League Benfica v. Glasgow Celtic match, others were noticed jiving in a club at four in the morning, and others cashing in their chips at the roulette table in the Estoril Casino. Some found time to visit Fatima. It was that kind of trip – and here’s to another good one on the Costa Brava in October 2007.



JOSEPHINE SCANLON, EILEEN DALY AND JOAN O’ SULLIVAN AT QUINTA DA MARINHA

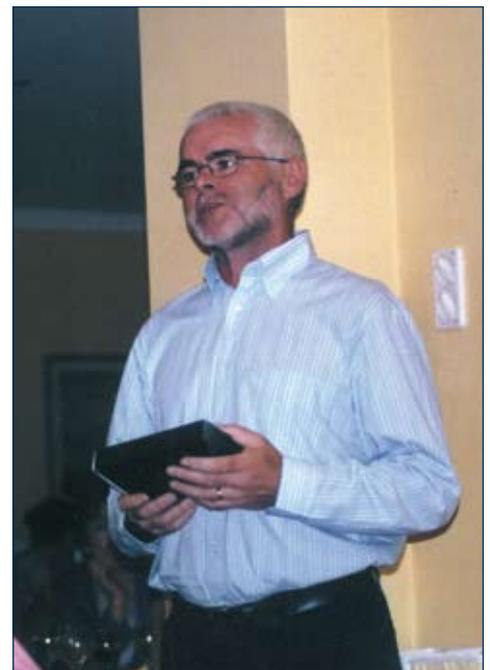
## Our Kingdom Come

The society’s February mid-term visit to the Kingdom of Kerry was an outstanding success. Dooks Golf Club, a beautiful links course on the delightful Ring of Kerry, provided our first challenge. Brilliant scores were returned, legends created and... everybody was drenched.

The Tipperary Raparee struck again, Jim Kenny played brilliantly and local Kerry star, Mary Sheehy, played superb golf again. But the sun also shone, the staff at Dooks were perfect



WINNERS IN ALL COMPETITIONS ON TRIP



SEAN DALY’S PRIZEWINNING HOMILY



TUI GROUP PRIOR TO PLAY AT PENHA LONGA

ambassadors for Kerry, and we loved it. Thanks to Tony Lyons and Declan Mangan of Dooks for all their help.

The mist on the mountains turned to rain on Wednesday morning, rain on Wednesday afternoon, and rain on Wednesday evening. The wind turned to a gale. Would we get out on Mahoney's Point, Killarney? No, we did better! The great Dan Joe Cahill saved

the day and our golf was transferred to the famous Killeen course.

It was a mighty experience – one of the great courses in Ireland. Well done, Dan Joe, and also Tom Prendergast on the staff of Killarney Golf and Fishing Club. Mary Sheehy's team won the event – congratulations. Our most sincere thanks go to the wonderful Brandon Hotel, Tralee, for its generous sponsorship

of two weekend breaks. This help, and that of the munificent, magnificent, TUI Credit Union is huge for us.

In all, 52 players competed in Dooks and 42 in Killarney. 79 travelled to Vilamoura in 2005 and 74 to Estoril last year. Not bad golf so far – Athlone, Dundrum Golf and Country Club, Tullamore, Mount Juliet, the Killeen course, to name just a few. We'll have 80 at the Marsh Ireland-sponsored outing on 2nd April, at the stupendous Druid's Glen, and the majestic challenge of Carton House presents on 28th June.

The society is vibrant, fun and flourishing. Our home is at 'Benefits and Services' on the TUI website.

**Note**

A small number of places are left on the exciting trip to Costa Brava/Barcelona next October.

**Interested?**

Details are on the website!

**UL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**  
*... nurturing a life-long relationship*

**Thomond College of Education  
(incl. NCPE)**

**WHERE ARE YOU NOW?**

Over 30 years on from when the first graduates of Thomond College of Education (formerly the National College of Physical Education) celebrated their conferring, the University of Limerick Alumni Association is delighted to host the first-ever college-wide reunion for all graduates of the former TCE and NCPE.

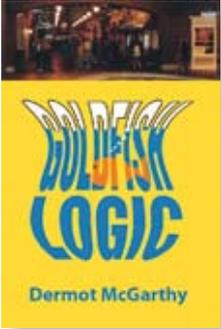
When? **Saturday, 8 September, 2007**  
Where? **University of Limerick Campus**

To receive your invitation, all you have to do is contact:  
Niamh Madden, UL Alumni Association, Student Centre, University of Limerick, Limerick.  
Telephone: **061-202475** Fax: **061-202228** Email: **ulaa@ul.ie**

Our aim is to issue an invitation to all former Graduates in addition to former Faculty and Staff.

**Please help us to complete our mailing list by contacting us TODAY! <http://ulaa.ul.ie>**

# Notices



## Goldfish Logic

Goldfish Logic is a new volume of poetry from TUI member Dermot McGarthy.

“Goldfish Logic is one man’s version

of events as he has experienced them.

Everything written here is true, that is to

say, that it happened, is happening, or will happen in the future. The material is neither distilled, derived, nor fabricated. On the contrary, it is first hand reportage from the front line of living. It is living itself, that is art and poetry is a vital documentary about that artistry. Feelings never die, they are merely suppressed and produce other feelings in their wake. You will find all of these in this collection.”

The book can be purchased from Books

Upstairs, College Green Dublin 2, or from The Winding Stair Bookshop, Dublin 1 at a price of €16.

Dermot McGarthy was born in Dublin in December 1963. He has been involved in teaching for nearly twenty years and has been a Lecturer in the Dublin Institute of Technology since 1996. This is Dermot’s second collection of Poetry. His previous collection, Standing Room Only, was published in 2004.

## INTO/STSG Separated Teachers’ Support Group

Separated, divorced, widowed, lone parents. ASTI, TUI, IFUT members welcome.

The INTO/STSG aims to provide support, information and a forum for social exchange for its members.

For further information, please contact;

Chairperson  
Maura Killackey

T **0505-21694**  
M **087-1233456**

Secretary  
Christina Henry

T **01-8481405**  
M **087-6201153**

## Teen Between Training For Professionals

Teen Between training programme is aimed at staff in the caring professions - it is designed to equip them with the skills to work with young people caught up in family breakdown.

The training will take place at Marriage and Relationship Counselling Services (MRCS) on Fitzwilliam Street Upper, Dublin 2 and encompasses two weekends.

The programme will provide professionals with a framework for working with young people caught up in the distress of their parents’ separation and divorce.

The knowledge base will encompass key concepts around:

- loss and grief;
- family and social transitions associated with marital break up
- and an understanding of how parenting skills can be affected by the process.

MRCS was founded in the early 60s to provide a non-denominational counselling service to those experiencing difficulties in their marriage or relationship.

A certificate of attendance can be supplied to those who complete the two weekend training course.

### Course Dates for 2007

Course 1  
Part A May 26th/27th  
& Part B August 25th/26th 2007

Course 2  
Part A September 22nd/23rd  
& Part B October 20th/21st

Course 3  
Part A October 13th/14th  
& Part B November 3rd/4th

Cost for both weekend training is €700 (€350 per weekend). For further information contact **mary@mracs.ie**

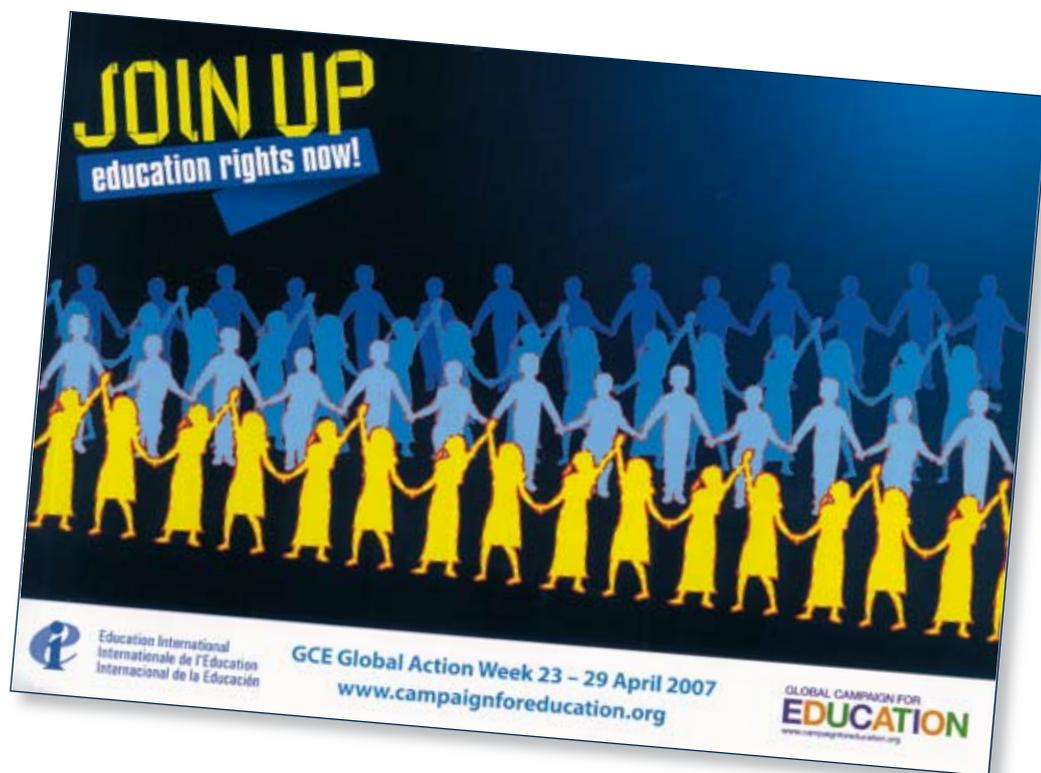
## Global Campaign for Education

This year's Global Campaign for Education is focussing on the right of everyone to an education. But there are 80 million children out of school and almost 1 billion adults who cannot read or write.

The campaign has a truly unique value in its ability to mobilise trade unions, NGOs and CSOs to work together in unison and solidarity.

See [www.campaignforeducation.org](http://www.campaignforeducation.org) for resources and information.

This year's Global Action Week runs from 23rd – 29th April.



## MA IN HUMANITIES

Applications are invited for places on the Taught MA Programme in Humanities in the following academic subjects:

Irish, History, Children's Literature, Theatre Studies, French, Human Development and Music (Two Year Part-time Courses), A One Year Full-time Course is also available in History and Theatre Studies.

Applicants require an Honours BA or BEd Degree or equivalent, with a minimum grade of 2.2 (2.1 in French) or equivalent in the subject in which they intend to specialise.

St. Patrick's College also offers an MA in Humanities by Major Thesis in the following subjects:

English, Irish, French, Geography, History, Music.

Applicants for this course require an Honours BA or BEd Degree with a minimum grade of 2.1 or equivalent in the subject in which they intend to specialise.

Applicants for all courses will be interviewed as part of the selection process. Applications are welcomed from suitably qualified candidates who wish to undertake research leading to the Degree of PhD.



Application forms and additional information may be accessed at [www.spd.dcu.ie](http://www.spd.dcu.ie) or on request from **Admissions Office, St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra, Dublin 9**  
T 01 8842000 / 8842025 / 8842096 / 8842013 F 01 8376197 E [admissions.office@spd.dcu.ie](mailto:admissions.office@spd.dcu.ie)

**Closing date for the receipt of applications is 30th April 2007.**

# Cecil Horan – An Appreciation

Colleagues and friends of the late Cecil Horan were deeply saddened by the news of his passing last November. A lecturer within the Business School at the Athlone Institute of Technology since 1974, he had retired earlier in the year.

Cecil is remembered as a quiet, dignified professional for whom the best interests of students and staff were always top of the agenda. A native of Athlone, and a qualified Certified accountant, Cecil brought significant business experience to his academic role at the college.

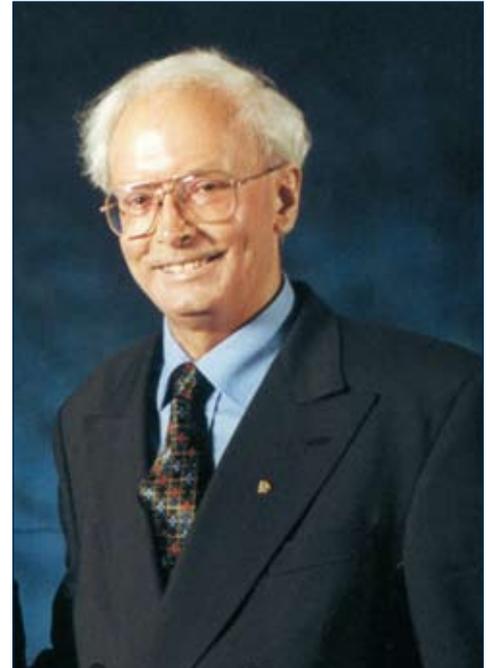
From the beginning, he displayed a keen interest in trade union matters at branch level, where he acted as Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. On the national stage, he became Chairman of the Standing Orders Committee of Congress and Chairman of the Colleges' Advisory Council. To each position, he brought a keen mind and a

focused perspective which invariably shone the spotlight on any issue which he perceived as affecting the rights of members.

Cecil had a strong interest in sport and in all types of artistic endeavour, particularly drama and music. A devoted family man, he espoused deep Christian values and a work ethic which was undiminished by the early stages of his illness prior to his retirement. His social conscience was reflected in many ways, not least by the leading role which he took in helping provide housing schemes for those unable to compete with market forces.

The deepest sympathy of TUI members and all staff of the Athlone Institute of Technology is extended to Cecil's wife Annette, daughter Avril, and members of the extended Horan family.

May he rest in peace.



CECIL HORAN

## Sympathies Extended

Deepest sympathies are extended to Marie Hegarty and family on the tragic death of her 18-year-old daughter Laura on Sunday March 18th.

Marie, a lecturer in Letterkenny Institute of Technology, previously served on TUI's Standing Orders Committee and is currently on the Security Fund Committee and Colleges Advisory Committee.

The union extends heartfelt sympathies to Marie at this distressing time.

# Kathleen Marron – An Appreciation

Ba mhór an chúis bhróin duinn uilig a chloisteáil le déanaí go raibh Caitlín Ní Mhearáin, iar-mhúinteoir i gColáiste Beaufort imithe ar shlí na fírinne. Múinteoir díograiseach ab ea í Caitlín a chaith formhór a saoil i seirbhís Choiste Gairm Oideachais na Mí. Bean í a raibh suim thar cuimse aici i ngach gné den saol, cultúr, litríocht, dramaíocht, ealaíon, taisteal gan trácht ar bheiristé agus cursaí gailf.

Kathleen had been in ill health for a short time and bore her illness with great dignity, courage and a determination to overcome it. Alas, Kathleen slipped away peacefully on Thursday, 7th September, 2006 at the residence of her brother, John, in Carrickmacross (her home town).

Kathleen was the youngest of a family of eight. She obtained a B Comm Degree and H Dip from UCG. She subsequently secured the Ardteastas na Gaeilge and chose a career in teaching.

Her first teaching post was in Ballybay Community School in County Monaghan. This was followed by a period in The Bush Vocational School in Carlingford, Co Louth before Kathleen finally settled in Navan and took up a post in the Vocational School, Abbey Road. In 1984 a new school, Beaufort College, was opened and it was here that Kathleen remained until her retirement in August 2005 with 38 years service to Meath VEC. She taught Irish and Business Studies and was actively involved in the Post Leaving Certificate Business Studies Course. She was one of the first women in the county to hold an 'A Post' of Responsibility (Assistant Principal).

Kathleen acted as an Oral Irish Examiner and as a Superintendent for the State Examinations and the viewing of scripts in Beaufort College until 2005.

Kathleen was highly respected and widely admired for her teaching skills. This was very evident at her retirement function in December 2005 where a large gathering of past and present colleagues attended a most enjoyable evening at which Kathleen spoke eloquently and wittily (which came easy to her).

Kathleen was a very competent bridge player and an excellent golfer (though she always pretended not to be!!). She also had a great interest in and appreciation of art – her beautiful home was testimony to this – she could not resist buying paintings wherever she went and attended many exhibitions. She was a keen gardener and enjoyed long summer evenings sitting in her beautifully maintained garden.

Kathleen was a great lover of the Irish language and culture. She was quick witted, had a fantastic sense of humour and enjoyed life to the full.

Kathleen will be sadly missed by all who knew her, both in her private life and in her professional life. She was a lady, a sincere and loyal friend and this was evident from the large attendances at the removal of her remains to St Mary's Church and at her Funeral Mass concelebrated by her brother, Canon Paddy Marron. She was laid to rest in Old Kilcarne Cemetery.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a hanam! Go dtuga Dia suaimhneas sioraí dí i measc na Naomh!



KATHLEEN MARRON

# RMA News

At one of the largest gatherings of the RMA, held in the Aishling Hotel, Dublin, a motion was passed by an overwhelming majority authorising the RMA to submit three nominations to the Executive Committee of the TUI for them to select one, for appointment to the Trustee Board of AVC's as the RMA representative. Also, that the RMA accepts the decisions of Annual Congress and the Executive Committee of the TUI. This being a Newsletter of Record the following is the full text of the motion passed:

"That the Retired Members Association (RMA) of the Teachers Union of Ireland (TUI) accepts the Executive Committee of TUI as the governing body of the TUI and the RMA accepts the decisions of the Annual Congress and the Executive Committee. And as the RMA has already decided to take up its place on the Trustee Board of AVCs it complies with the Executive Committee's requirement to nominate three people."

Unfortunately the meeting was not as amicable as one would have expected from a gathering of retired professionals. Many expressed their shock and horror at the behaviour of some members. Some even expressed reservations about future attendance, but I can assure all of you our breaks and meetings are very enjoyable events. This was just a "blip".

The issue of delayed payments of pension increases to our members is still a matter of concern to us. Unfortunately, this only applies to teachers employed with VEC schools. Teachers employed in Community and Comprehensive schools receive payments at the same time and in fact in respect of one payment before serving teachers. It is always a wonder that when issues like these are identified that they are not speedily resolved. As you know the problem is that pensions paid to teachers employed by VECs are paid not by the VEC but by the Local Council after receiving notification and authorisation from the VEC. We are keeping the pressure up on this.

Another problem for our members is the Income Continuance Scheme. Teachers

paying into this scheme after the age of 59 years will not benefit from the scheme in respect of those years. Anyone who has made these payments is entitled to a refund of the contributions made for this period. Also anyone claiming from the scheme should have used up their sick leave entitlements before they can benefit.

The Spring break to Kinsale is booked out. Dora has organised a great programme for us. We are looking forward to a wonderful time. Don't forget the dates for our AGM/Conference, which is being held in White's Hotel Wexford, the dates are Tuesday 8th May to Thursday 10th May more details later.

One of the difficulties of people approaching retirement is the lack of ability to let go, to change and go forward. However this does not apply only to people who are retiring it can also apply to people who are retired. Happiness is improved by the ability of people to move on.

Some people have asked 'Christy who?', so I've amended my sign-off accordingly!

**Christy Conville**, Secretary, RMA



DELEGATES AT THE RMA'S SPECIAL CONFERENCE, MARCH 7TH 2007