



UNIVERSITY  
of  
LIMERICK  
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH



FEATURE  
*Cover Story*  
UL LINKS talks to  
Professor Zaworotko



OPINION  
*The Thrill of it All*  
- Joseph O'Connor  
on Coming to UL



NEWS  
*UL Receives*  
*Prestigious Athena*  
*SWAN Award*

# UL LINKS



*Engineering Crystals to*  
**CHANGE**  
**THE FUTURE**

WE TALK TO THE WORLD'S FIRST  
PROFESSOR OF  
CRYSTAL ENGINEERING  
MICHAEL ZAWOROTKO

SUMMER 2015

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*Front cover image:  
Professor of Crystal Engineering  
Michael Zaworotko.*

*Inside cover image:  
The newly-named Analog Devices  
Building, home to the Bernal Project.*



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## PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

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### WELCOME TO THE NEWEST EDITION OF UL LINKS MAGAZINE.

It is new in every sense and I commend the Corporate Affairs team on their evolution of the design of UL Links as part of our participation in Irish Design 2015.

**A**s we start this semester we have much to celebrate. We are particularly proud to be one of only two universities in Ireland to win the coveted **Athena SWAN Bronze award** recognising best practice in recruiting, retaining and promoting women in STEMM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine).

In UL we have worked hard to ensure equal opportunities for all, leading the way in gender equality with the **highest percentage of women at professorial level in Ireland** (31% at UL compared to 19% nationally). Winning this award has only made us more ambitious in this regard and I congratulate all involved in helping us achieve such important recognition.

We recently celebrated the conferring of over 2,422 new graduates who leave UL with much optimism, benefiting as they do from an **unbeatable employability advantage** over other Irish graduates. The employment rate of UL graduates one year after graduation is more than 20% higher than the average for the other six Irish universities. We call that the UL Edge – and it is something of which this university is very proud. Our most recent survey revealed that more than 7 out of 10 of our graduates are going into direct employment. And most of the rest go on to further study and research. Our doctoral graduates are also very much in demand, with 94% of last year's PhD graduates currently in employment.

Collaboration and partnership are key to UL's success and a further illustration of that is the recent naming of our newly-constructed science and engineering building as the **Analog Devices Building** to reflect our close relationship with the US-headquartered semiconductor company, Analog Devices (ADI). In Limerick for almost 40 years, ADI has a long and close history with UL and I am delighted that such a loyal supporter of UL since the very early years will have an association with a building that will be so instrumental in our future.

Our Research Impact initiative guarantees the relevance and impact of our translational research and we lead nationally in this space, making a



positive impact on so many fields across economic, social and cultural domains. At this year's President's Dinner we launched the **UL Research Impact PhD Scholarship Programme** to support the next generation of our brightest researchers. Johnson & Johnson, having already established the Johnson & Johnson Ireland Development Centre and the Automation Centre for Excellence here on campus, were the first company to sponsor this scholarship programme. This semester we are launching our **new Strategic Plan**. We have evaluated with pride what we have achieved over the last 5 years under our previous strategy Pioneering & Connected. Our collaborative efforts have created a solid base from which we know we can grow. We will now be even more ambitious as we pursue **greater global reach and impact** and secure an enhanced international profile that reflects our contribution to all our futures. I look forward to sharing our plan with you in the next edition of UL Links. But for now I hope this new-look edition will give you a taste of the global, innovative and creative path UL continues to travel so successfully with your support.

*Don Barry*

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PROFESSOR DON BARRY / PRESIDENT / UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK

# IN THIS ISSUE

ISSUE 15

4



62



1

## PRESIDENT'S WELCOME



4

## UL NEWS

UL Receives Prestigious Athena SWAN Award



20

## RESEARCH & INNOVATION NEWS

UL to Host €25million Dairy Processing Technology Centre



38

## OPINION

The Thrill of it All - Joseph O'Connor on Coming to UL



42

## UL FOUNDATION NEWS

Record Number of Business and Philanthropic Leaders Support UL President's Gala Dinner



49

## SPORT

UL Kids Run for Fun in May and other news on Sport in UL



62

## STUDENT NEWS

UL Design Showcase in the Heart of the City and other Student News



74

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT NEWS

International Scholarships and other stories on International Students



84

## GRADUATION DAYS

Graduation Days... Congratulations!



90

## ALUMNI

Graduate Interview and other ULAA News



# UL LINKS



49



20



56

78



SUMMER 2015



56

COVER STORY / Engineering Crystals to Change the Future.  
UL LINKS talks to the world's first Professor of Crystal Engineering Michael Zaworotko



78

FEATURE  
A Peek at the Past - UL Launches a 'Real Time' Window into World War I



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## UL NEWS

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### UL RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS ATHENA SWAN AWARD

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The University of Limerick was delighted to be one of the first Irish Universities to receive the prestigious Athena SWAN Institution award this Summer. UL, along with Trinity College Dublin, were awarded the Bronze Athena SWAN award which recognises and celebrates good practice in recruiting, retaining and promoting women in STEMM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine) in higher education. UL launched its bid for Athena Swan recognition on International Women's Day.

*Chair, RTE's Claire Byrne, UL President Professor Don Barry and former British MP Edwina Currie at the International Women's Day Conference UL.*



*At the Athena SWAN Charter launch in Dublin earlier in the year were UL HR Director Tommy Foy, Bernie Quilligan, Faculty Manager Science and Engineering, Dr Ita Richardson Senior Lecturer, Department of Computer Science and Information Systems, Principal Investigator, Lero – the Irish Software Engineering Research Centre, Dr Ruth Gilligan Athena SWAN, President Don Barry and Shared Services Transition Manager Marie Connolly*

The Athena SWAN initiative is run by the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU), which works to further and support equality and diversity for staff and students in higher education institutions across the UK and in colleges in Scotland. During 2015, the UK-based ECU announced that they would, for the first time, make access to their awards system possible outside of the UK by allowing Irish higher education institutions to sign up to the Athena SWAN Charter for women in science from Autumn 2014. UL officially launched its bid for Athena SWAN recognition at a conference to mark International Women's Day in March of this year.

Speaking after the announcement Professor Don Barry said "we are truly delighted that UL has received the Athena SWAN Bronze Award, I would like to commend all the staff members involved and all who promote gender equality in our workplace every day, that work has paid off. As a University we have illustrated often our commitment to ensure staff are supported to achieve their full potential through valuing diversity and equality of opportunity.



*RTÉ Broadcaster Claire Byrne who hosted the Civic Reception celebrating IWD.*

The Athena SWAN process will provide the institution with a framework through which gender equality can be measured and improved upon across the institution and within STEMM departments in particular. I think it's important to remember that a university is about more than just buildings and facilities – it is the people who give universities life – they create a sense of energy and they provide the power to achieve great things. And we, as a community, are so proud to have received this recognition today."

According to figures released by the HEA recently the University of Limerick continues to have the highest percentage of women at professorial level in the country, 31% or almost one third of professors at UL are female. This compares to a national average of only 19%.

The University of Limerick is currently leading a project which is supported by the 'Progress Programme' of the European Union as part of a suite of initiatives exploring gender equality in the EU. GEM (Gender Equality in decision Making) is led by the Human Resources Division in UL in conjunction with the Kemmy Business School, the national employer's federation IBEC and industry partners Dell EMEA, with other European higher education Institutions. The project's particular focus is on the impact of HR-related practices, i.e. selection, performance management and promotions/advancement on gender equality in decision making within organisations. UL is also a key partner and the only Irish University in a European Commission FP7 Funded cross national 5 year Project 2012-2017, FESTA - Female Empowerment in Science and Technology in Academia which is concerned with implementing changes in the working environment of academic researchers.



## Civic Reception celebrates IWD at UL

To celebrate UL's Athena SWAN ambitions and as part of the International Women's Day Conference, the University hosted a civic reception, the first ever held at UL, honouring three Outstanding Limerick Women of Distinction. Author, philanthropist and activist Charlotte Grace O'Brien, international aviator Sophie Mary Peirce and novelist and playwright Kate O'Brien were posthumously honoured at the event which was organised by Limerick City and County Council in association with the University of Limerick.

The event was kindly hosted by RTÉ broadcaster Claire Byrne who welcomed relatives of those being honoured and an invited audience which included Minister for Finance, Michael Noonan, TD; Minister for Education, Jan O'Sullivan TD and Mrs Sabina Higgins, wife of Úachtaráin na hÉireann, Michael D Higgins.

**Charlotte Grace O'Brien (1845-1909)** from Cahirmoyle, Co Limerick was an author, philanthropist, and activist in nationalist causes and the protection of female emigrants. She was also a poet, botanist and author whose writings shone a light on the Irish struggle. Among her achievements was her overseeing of the establishment of the Our Lady of the Rosary Mission in New York, dedicated to immigrant aid, and her O'Brien Emigrant Home, in Cobh, Co Cork.

**Sophie Mary Peirce (Lady Sophie Mary Heath) (1896-1939)**, Knockaderry, Co Limerick founded the British Women's Athletic Association and held the record as British Champion javelin thrower. She commands a litany of firsts, the first female member of the London Light Aeroplane Club, the first female aviator to qualify as an engineer in the USA, and the first female pilot to fly for KLM airlines. A breaker of numerous records and a mentor to Amelia Earhart, she was an inspiration and vanguard for many women.

**Kate O'Brien (1897-1974)** was a well-known Limerick figure and the inspiration for the Limerick Literary Festival which gathers and honours literary figures, attracts academics, renowned authors, critics, playwrights, journalists and poets of international status. Her work reflected the many struggles of middle class Irish women at the time, and their bid for individuality and love. Also of renown are her travelogue essays in her book, My Ireland.



- 1 | *The conference was the launch-pad for UL's Athena SWAN Charter. UL's Shared Services Transition Manager and conference organiser Marie Connolly with former MP Edwina Currie and Athena SWAN Advisor Ruth Gilligan.*
- 2 | *Mayor of Limerick Kevin Sheahan with Mrs Sabina Higgins, Minister Michael Noonan and President Barry at the Civic reception.*
- 3 | *Cllr Michael Sheahan, Mayor of Metropolitan District of Limerick, Cllr Kevin Sheahan, Mayor of the City and County of Limerick, Mrs Sabina Higgins Mr Pat Dowling, Deputy Chief Executive, Limerick City and County Council, Mr Richard Longford (Direct Relative of Sophie Mary Peirce), Iseult Murphy (Direct Relative of Charlotte Grace O'Brien) and John O'Brien, (Direct Relative of Kate O'Brien).*





## UL TO WELCOME GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS CONFERENCE IN 2016

The Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC) has announced that the 2016 IGC Annual Conference & AGM will take place at the University of Limerick. The conference, which takes place over the weekend of 26th to 28th February 2016, is being hosted by the Tipperary branch of the IGC. Approximately 450 guidance counsellors from all over the country are expected to attend the event. Pictured at the University of Limerick recently were Joachim Barnett, Deputy Admissions Officer UL, Betty McLoughlin, President IGC and Brendan Lynch, National Treasurer, IGC.



## 36TH WORLD MEDICAL AND HEALTH GAMES AT UL

Minister for Education and Skills, Jan O'Sullivan, T.D., leads the Official Opening of the 36th World Medical and Health Games which was held at UL recently. The Games welcomed over 1,000 athletes from more than 20 countries to compete across 25 different sports from golf and cycling to chess, fencing triathlon and football. This annual event brings medics from a range of medical professions, consultants, GPs, nurses and paramedics who compete in a spirit of friendship in their chosen sport.

## AIMING HIGHER GUIDE LAUNCHED AT UL



A guide for parents and guardians on the workings of the higher education system in Ireland brought parents, teachers, guidance counsellors and academics together for its much anticipated launch at the University of Limerick by Minister for Education and Skills Jan O'Sullivan, T.D.

**A**IMING HIGHER, which was authored by Patrice Twomey, Director of the Cooperative Education and Careers Division at UL and funded by the Higher Education Authority, is aimed at parents and guardians of prospective third level students, to give them a practical understanding of the higher education system in Ireland and to help them to support their daughter or son in making informed decisions around third level courses and career choices. It is the first guide of its kind that is specifically targeted at parents and extensive consultation with parents drove much of its content.

Speaking about the new guide Minister O'Sullivan said "Aiming Higher makes a hugely practical contribution in setting our young people on the pathway to success, armed with a very clear picture of the expectations and demands they will face during their higher education experience. It will equip parents with the

knowledge that they need to help their children make the right choices."

UL's Patrice Twomey said "Parents are the most significant influence on their children's third level and career choices. They don't need to have all of the answers. What "Aiming Higher" does is help parents to frame the questions that will prompt their daughter or son's thinking around their individual talents, strengths and interests, and ultimately their chosen course. We hope that the guide will help parents to approach the 'third level conversation' with a greater and more informed confidence."

The guide will complement the work of guidance counsellors who are a rich and vibrant source of expertise for second level students. Copies of the guide will be circulated to all second level schools in the country and it will be available in PDF format on the UL website [www.ul.ie/careers/aiminghigher](http://www.ul.ie/careers/aiminghigher)



1 | Pictured at the launch of *Aiming Higher* was Betty McLaughlin, President, the Institute of Guidance Counsellors, Tom Boland, Chief Executive of the Higher Education Authority, Patrice Twomey, Director, Cooperative Education & Careers Division, UL, Eilis Molamphy, Minister for Education Jan O'Sullivan, T.D., Catherine Duffy, General Manager, Northern Trust Limerick and President Don Barry.

2 | The 'Aiming Higher' Guide which was developed with input from many individuals and organisations including parents, students, guidance counsellors, the CAO, higher education careers advisors, admissions officers and academics, is funded by the Higher Education Authority's Strategic Innovation and Development Fund. The Guide is available to parents at [www.ul.ie/careers/aiminghigher](http://www.ul.ie/careers/aiminghigher).

3 | Tom Boland, Chief Executive of the Higher Education Authority launched 'Aiming Higher'.

## MA FESTIVE ARTS AT UL'S IRISH WORLD ACADEMY WINS 'BEST NEW COURSE' AT ANNUAL GRADIRELAND AWARDS

The MA Festive Arts Programme at the Irish World Academy, under its director Dr Niamh NicGabhann, was chosen as Best New Course at the 2015 GradIreland Awards which were held in April in the Mansion House, Dublin. The MSc in Sports Performance at UL's Department of Physical Education & Sport Sciences was also among the shortlist of 11 courses from third level institutions around the country. The MA Festive Arts Programme offers students the opportunity to develop skills in arts management, curating, production, performance and research with an emphasis on festivity and the role of festival in society. Bringing together artists, performers, curators, producers and researchers, the MA Festive Arts Programme provides a unique context for the acquisition and development of skills in this field. There is a strong emphasis on the development of practical skills and experience, with a central internship module and a focus on working with practitioners and experts. Commenting on the win, the judges said "not only is this course a world first, it supports national economic, social and cultural needs with a clear practical focus. Well done!"

More information on the MA Festive Arts programme can be found here: [www.irishworldacademy.ie/postgraduate-programmes/ma-festive2015](http://www.irishworldacademy.ie/postgraduate-programmes/ma-festive2015)



Dr Niamh NicGabhann is presented with the award by Gavan O'Brien, Sales Director, GradIreland and Tom Boland, CEO of the Higher Education Authority.



### RTE'S SIX ONE NEWS ANCHOR BRYAN DOBSON

gave his inaugural lecture as UL's Adjunct Professor of Public Service Broadcasting last semester.

Professor Dobson addressed a packed audience of staff, students and members of the public with a presentation entitled "Illuminate or Agitate: the future of Public Service Broadcasting," where he stressed the importance of good journalism basics and warned of the hazards that come with the ambition to produce programmes that make a real impact.



## UL CREATIVE WRITING BEALTAINÉ BURSARY AWARD RECIPIENT ANNOUNCED

To celebrate its 20th anniversary, the BEALTAINÉ/Age & Opportunity annual festival, in association with Listowel Writers' Week and the MA Creative Writing programme at the University of Limerick, launched a scholarship for applicants aged 60 plus, offering the opportunity to participate in the Creative Writing programme at UL, which is now entering its second year.

The bursary of €3000 (plus partial fee waiver) was initiated to support an older person to undertake the programme led by Professor Joseph O'Connor, with the aim of enabling applications to fulfill a long held ambition to take a formal writing course. The bursary was awarded to Limerick native Ainna Fawcett-Henesy whose background is in nursing but who is also a regular contributor to Newstalk Radio on medical matters.

*Pictured at the announcement of the Bursary were, Liz Kelly, Director Bealtaine Age & Opportunity 2015, Ainna Fawcett-Henesy, Limerick, Bealtaine Bursary recipient and Professor Joseph O'Connor, Frank McCourt Chair in Creative Writing, UL.*



## STATE PATHOLOGIST PROFESSOR MARIE CASSIDY SPEAKS AT UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL LIMERICK

**P**ictured recently at University Hospital Limerick was Professor Marie Cassidy, Chief State Pathologist, Ireland, and Professor of Forensic Medicine in the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland with Professor Austin Stack, Director Designate of the Health Research Institute (HRI) at the University of Limerick. Professor Cassidy was a guest speaker at an event organised by the Health Research Institute at UL which is a cross faculty institute that brings together researchers in the University of Limerick to focus on convergent and translational health research. The title of Professor Cassidy's presentation was "Trust Me I'm a Forensic Pathologist".



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- 1 | *James Kane from Saint Michaels' Infant School at the annual Teddy Bear Hospital hosted by Medical School students at the University of Limerick.*
- 2 | *Yeshua Iman Tofal from Milford National School.*
- 3 | *Hayley Ryan and Kiera Keane, St Munchins Girls School.*

## FURRY FRIENDS TREATED AT UL GEMS TEDDY BEAR HOSPITAL

**M**edical School students at the University of Limerick last semester hosted the University's annual Teddy Bear Hospital (TBH) with over 400 Limerick primary school children from 6 different schools and their teddy bears. The aim of the event, which has been organised by six Graduate Entry Medical School (GEMS) students with a particular interest in childhood medicine, is to alleviate childhood anxiety about the medical environment, its procedures and the professionals that work within it. Over 130, 1st and 2nd year medical students took part in the event which saw 10 medical stations set up in the University Arena focusing on activities including: Triage; Stethoscopes; Vital Signs & Vaccine Safety; X-ray; Exercise; Surgery/ Gowning; Asthma; Safety; First Aid, Ear Nose and Throat and Healthy Eating.

*Attending the launch at the University of Limerick were Professor Sarah Moore, Associate Vice President Academic UL, Jan O'Sullivan, Minister for Education and Skills and Dr Ann Ledwith, Director, Continuing & Professional Education, UL.*



## 230 SPRINGBOARD+ PLACES ANNOUNCED AS UL LAUNCHES ITS CONTINUING & PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION DIVISION

230 Springboard+ places are being offered to jobseekers in the Limerick region on 18 programmes in the areas of Science, Business, Computing, Engineering and Languages as the University of Limerick officially launched its Continuing and Professional Education Division (CPE) with Minister for Education and Skills Jan O'Sullivan in June.

**C**PE is a dedicated division of the University of Limerick providing continuing and professional development programmes to individuals, organisations, community and Government bodies. CPE provides professional relevant skills to develop careers, providing internationally recognised qualifications with programmes that are practically focused and applying the knowledge acquired back to the organisation.

Speaking from the launch event Director of CPE Ann Ledwith said, "key to the success of delivering programmes at CPE is being aware of the complex learning needs of adult learners juggling home, work and study. To address this, in addition to access to lecturers and coordinators, a broad range of support is available to ensure educational goals are achieved without losing sight of other important elements of day-to-day life. The student experience is enhanced by practitioner tutors who share real world experience. CPE programmes are designed with flexibility in mind to accommodate demanding work patterns and provide leading-edge theoretical content which is applied in practical

workplace settings. This usually involves industry based projects that provide significant benefits to the employer organisation."

The Springboard+ programmes are delivered flexibly allowing jobseekers retain their social protection supports and continue their search for employment. A key feature of the initiative is work placement of students in employer organisations, coordinated by CPE.

All courses lead to qualifications in enterprise sectors which are growing and need skilled personnel, including information and communications technology (ICT), manufacturing and international financial services. Qualifications are also available in cross-enterprise skills such as innovation, enterprise/ entrepreneurship, digital marketing and project management which are key skills required to help enterprises trade internationally. The Springboard+ programmes have had extensive input by industry into their content and design and have been developed to meet targeted skill needs and will maximise job opportunities for participants from these courses.



**A**s part of a major international three-day conference on “Women and Ageing”, Germaine Greer held a public lecture at UL, discussing the ways in which motherhood is being dismembered, so that the genetic mother, the womb mother and the legal mother may all be different individuals. The interdisciplinary conference organised by the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, the Centre for German-Irish Studies, Gender ARC, the School of Culture and Communication and the School of Modern Languages and Applied Linguistics at UL, discussed intersections of the cultural and social dimensions of women and ageing and their impact on the wider community.

## GERMAINE GREER HOLDS PUBLIC LECTURE IN UL

## UL STUDY FINDS HATE CRIME MUST ‘COME OUT OF SHADOWS’

**H**ate crime in Ireland is widespread, yet “remains in the shadows” of our criminal justice system according to research commissioned by the Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL) and carried out by researchers at the University of Limerick’s Hate and Hostility Research Group.

The report authors Jennifer Schweppe, School of Law at UL and Dr Amanda Haynes, Department of Sociology at UL interviewed hate crime victims, members of An Garda Síochána, representatives of civil society organisations and legal experts as well as 36 barristers. They found a consensus that hate crime was underreported and under-recorded. Speaking at the launch of “Out of the Shadows: Legislating for Hate Crime in Ireland”, ICCL Executive Director Mark Kelly said “This report, a result of Ireland’s only cross-sectoral research project dedicated to the reform of Irish hate crime law, is based on wide-ranging interviews with victims of hate crime, members of the Garda Síochána and legal professionals, and on detailed review of international best practice on tackling hate crime. It concludes that there is an urgent need to tackle the problem through introduction of robust modern legislation that creates dedicated criminal offences and enhanced sentencing for hate-motivated crime, and introduces better reporting and recording of incidents of hate crime.”

Co-director of the University of Limerick Hate and Hostility Research Group Jennifer Schweppe added, “While the state claims that hate crime is being adequately addressed,

our research shows that in fact it lives in the shadows, largely invisible in the criminal justice process. There has been a system-wide failure to recognise the harms of hate and to provide victims with appropriate protection under the law.”

Dr Amanda Haynes concluded, “The experiences of those we interviewed – hate-motivated assaults, vandalism, property damage and threats - are simply unacceptable. It is not the responsibility of victims to avoid being targets of hate crime; it is the responsibility of the legislature to send a clear message to society that this behaviour is not tolerated. By adopting our legislative proposals, the government can do just this.”

The Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL) is Ireland’s leading independent human rights watchdog, which monitors, educates and campaigns in order to secure full enjoyment of human rights for everyone.



# UL TO ACCREDIT BA IN APPLIED POLICING FOR AN GARDA SIOCHÁNA

**T**he University of Limerick and An Garda Síochána have signed a Memorandum of Understanding which will see the University of Limerick accredit the BA in Applied Policing delivered in the Garda Síochána College, Templemore. The Garda Síochána College is the national centre for police training, development and education within the Irish state.

The new programme is being coordinated by UL's Dr Eimear Spain and was developed by the Garda College in collaboration with the UL School of Law. The first Garda recruits on the new BA in Applied Policing have recently been attested with full Garda powers, the first cohort to be attested since 2009. The attestation and passing out parade took place in April at the Garda College, Templemore, Co. Tipperary and was attended by the Minister for Justice and Equality, Frances Fitzgerald, T.D. and Garda Commissioner Nóirín O'Sullivan.

The level of engagement between An Garda Síochána and the University of Limerick in accrediting the programme is novel, though it is very much in keeping with national strategy for higher education which calls on universities to



*Pictured at the attestation and passing out parade of the first Garda recruits on the new BA in Policing are Mr Seamus Hoyne, Chief Superintendent Anne Marie McMahon, Garda Commissioner, Nóirín O'Sullivan, Minister for Justice and Equality, Frances Fitzgerald, T.D. and Dr Eimear Spain.*

engage more widely with business, industry, training colleges and communities. In accrediting the programme with the University of Limerick, the Gardaí have opened the training programme up to continuous scrutiny from the governance structure of the University including accreditation visits, examination boards, quality assurance boards and reviews by external examiners. A governance structure of this kind will mean constant and meaningful dialectical engagement between the University and the training college on issues such as fairness of procedures, academic integrity, and the extent to which learning outcomes for the programme are being achieved.

The lecturing staff in the Garda College will also be undertaking the Specialist Diploma in Teaching, Learning and Scholarship offered by the Centre for Teaching and Learning in UL.



*Attending the event at the Southcourt Hotel were, Dr Ann Ledwith, Director of Continuing & Professional Education at UL with Christian Lynch, Pallaskenry Secondary School, County Limerick.*

## THE MIDWEST LEADS THE WAY IN ENGINEERING

**O**ver 1,200 students, parents and teachers attended the "Limerick for Engineering" showcase which saw the University of Limerick and Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) partner with over 20 leading companies, Government and local agencies and Engineers Ireland to showcase what engineering career opportunities are available in the Mid-West region. Students had a unique opportunity to meet with industry professionals who provided information about their chosen fields and demonstrated some interesting technologies they work with including a 'Surgery Knee Replacement Kit' and a state of the art 'High Magnification 2D microscope with 3D profiling capability'.



## A WEEK WITH KIM STANLEY ROBINSON AT UL

UL's Ralahine Centre for Utopian Studies and Cloughjordan Ecovillage welcomed one of the most renowned writers of science fiction, Kim Stanley Robinson, for a week-long residency at UL last Spring. A Week With Kim Stanley Robinson was a unique, interdisciplinary series of events which included readings, workshops, lectures, conversations, and site visits, many of which were free to the public.

**K**im Stanley Robinson is a towering, multi-award-winning figure in science fiction, and he has authored over 20 books, including the Mars trilogy (1993-1997) and *Aurora* (2015). His work deals with some of the most critical social, economic, and environmental issues facing our world, particularly in relation to ecological sustainability, world building, and utopian possibilities, topping the New York Times bestseller lists on several occasions.

Central to Robinson's visit were several student-based workshops that took advantage of his creative expertise across disciplines such as writing, architecture, and design. These include sessions with students from the MA in Creative Writing, the MA in Ethnomusicology, the School of Architecture (SAUL), and the Centre for Interactive Design. All of these workshops dealt with the creative process of 'world building' (the imaginative method of constructing alternative societies so as to generate a thoughtful perspective on the present).

Robinson's writing resonates with the ethos of the Ralahine Centre for Utopian Studies at UL which was established in 2003 with a research agenda based on the premise that social values, policies, and practices are shaped by hopeful, utopian visions which is critical to the betterment of life for all members of society. Robinson also launched 'Irish Science Fiction', a newly published monograph by UL's Dr Jack Fennell. Jack was awarded an Irish Research Council Fellowship to carry out his PhD research, which was supervised by Professor Tom Moylan and Dr Michael J Griffin. In this work, Jack completed the first thorough investigation of the tradition of Irish science fiction from 1829 to the present, doing so in both languages. Liverpool University Press then published his work in their distinguished science fiction series.

*Pictured above is Kim Stanley Robinson.*



# DOCHTÚIREACHTAÍ OINIGH Ó OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH DO CHRUTHAITHEOIR STAIRE AGUS DO CHAOMHNÓIR STAIRE

## UL HONORARY DOCTORATES FOR HISTORY MAKER AND HISTORY KEEPER

“An stair a chruthú a rinne duine amháin díobh, an stair a chaomhnú a rinne an duine eile.”

**B**hronn Ollscoil Luimnigh Dochtúireacht Oinigh ar an gcartlannaí is iomráití in Éirinn, Catriona Crowe – duine de na tráchtairí sóisialta agus cultúir is mó a bhfuil meas uirthi sa tír; agus bronnadh Dochtúireacht Oinigh leis ar Ard-Rúnaí an Choimisiúin Eorpaigh, Catherine Day, atá ar dhuine díobh siúd is mó a chuir dlús faoi fhorbairt an Aontais Eorpaigh.

Dúirt Uachtarán na hOllscoile, an tOllamh Don Barry: “Ócáid thar a bheith speisialta is ea é seo dúinne in

Ollscoil Luimnigh. Is é seo an lá a bhfuil deis

againn onóir a thabhairt dóibh siúd

atá tar éis sinn a spreagadh, atá

tar éis ceannaireacht mhisniúil

phaiseanta a thabhairt agus

a bhfuil a gcion tábhachtach

féin déanta acu ina réimsí

saothair féin. Inniu,

tugaimid onóir do bheirt

bhan eisceachtúla a bhfuil

cion éachtach déanta acu

ar son na hÉireann agus na

hEorpa. Inniu, bronnaimid

an onóir is airde dá bhfuil

ag Ollscoil Luimnigh ar

an mbeirt bhan seo den

chéad scoth. Inniu, rinneadh

baill oinigh de theaghlach

na hOllscoile de Catherine agus

Catriona; inniu, glacann siad lena n-áit

i stair na hinstitiúide seo.”



“One recipient has been involved in the creation of history, the other in its preservation.”

**U**niversity of Limerick Honorary Doctorates were awarded to Ireland’s premier archivist Catriona Crowe, described as one of the country’s most respected social and cultural commentators, and Secretary-General of the European Commission, Catherine Day who is credited as one of the key drivers of the development of the European Union.

UL President, Professor Don Barry said; “This is a very special event for us here at UL. It is the day when we get

the opportunity to honour those who have

inspired, who have led with courage and

passion and who have made great

contributions in their fields of

endeavour. Today, we honour

two exceptional women

who have made unique and

powerful contributions

to Ireland and to Europe.

Today we bestowed upon

these two outstanding

individuals the University

of Limerick’s highest

honour. Today Catherine

and Catriona became

honorary members of the

UL family; today they take

their place in the history of this

institution.”

*Dr Catherine Day and Dr Catriona Crowe*

## THE PERFECT ENVIRONMENT!

The University of Limerick has been ranked 11th in the world for its efforts towards campus sustainability and environmentally friendly university management. The Green Metric Ranking of World Universities placed UL overall 11th in the world out of 360 participating universities from 62 countries, and third out of 100 suburban universities worldwide.

## UL'S 'PINT OF SCIENCE' EVENT A BIG SUCCESS

The Lock Bar and the White House Bar in the centre of Limerick City were the venues for Limerick's Pint of Science event. One of 50 cities in eight countries taking part in the world-wide event, the aim of Pint of Science is to deliver science talks in a fun, engaging and approachable way, inviting people to sit back, drink, listen and engage with the scientist presenting ... over a pint.

Limerick's event was organised by UL with University lecturers and researchers taking centre stage with talks covering Health, Environment and Technology on topics including; Computers dreaming of electric music; Brains R Us; Health's contribution to the health of the Irish economy; Bringing Maths Eyes to the masses; and Flying to the moon. Following the talk a question and answer panel discussion was opened to the floor.

University of Limerick STEM Chair Professor Sibel Erduran said "this is another wonderful opportunity for UL's best and most innovative researchers to engage with Limerick City and talk about their research and application for society. It's an opportunity to open up the floor to debate and maybe gain some alternative perspectives, chat and network, but it is fun and relaxed".

The Limerick Pint of Science is organised and sponsored by University of Limerick's Faculty of Education and Health Science, Faculty of Science and Engineering, Lero, SSPC, MSSSI, MACSI and IComp.

Outside of Limerick, Pint of Science events took place in Dublin and Galway, and across the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, USA and Australia. Established in 2012 by Michael Motskin and Praveen Paul, two research



*Pictured at the Pint of Science at the White House Bar is Dr Aoife Smith, "Bringing Maths Eyes to the Masses"*

scientists at Imperial College London, the event started by bringing together Researchers and people affected by Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, Motor Neurone Disease and Multiple Sclerosis into their labs to show them the kind of research they do. They thought if people want to come into labs to meet scientists, why not bring the scientists out to the people.



# A 'SMARTER' YEAR FOR UL

It's been a tremendous year for sustainability awards at the University of Limerick with UL scooping many national awards including Smarter Travel Campus of the Year.

**T**he National Transport Authority's Inaugural Smarter Travel Awards recognise workplaces and campuses that support sustainable transport. University of Limerick took the lead amongst third-level institutions, taking home the award for Cycling Campus of the Year, Student Union of the Year, Sustainable Champions of the Year and Smarter Travel Campus of the Year award.

Speaking at a ceremony to celebrate UL's awards, President Don Barry said, "I am personally delighted that at the National Smarter Travel Awards, UL was acknowledged for its work. I'd like to congratulate all involved in those awards and I'd especially like to congratulate Ross Higgins and Sean Collins for their win as Sustainable Champions of the Year, and UL Students Aileen O'Connell for winning the Volunteer Sustainable Champion and for Alex Suchy for taking the runner-up prize for the student Media Competition. We are fortunate to have

so many staff working hard to ensure UL remains the beautiful environment it is, including those who have given their time to committees, initiatives and events."

Ross Higgins, University of Limerick Smarter Travel Coordinator said: "Smarter Travel is supported from the highest level in UL and the successes would not have been possible without the support of the Buildings and Estates Department led by Director, Robert Reidy, Limerick Smarter Travel and the UL Students' Union. We would also like to thank the National Transport Authority for their support with implementing a range of measures to encourage sustainable commuting to the campus community."

Earlier in the academic year, UL also won the Best Campus Award for the Student Cycling Challenge, a national competition organised by the National Transport Authority whereby teams from 18 campuses from all over Ireland sign up and log 10-minute cycling trips over a 10-day period. At a prize-giving

ceremony the University of Limerick won "Best Campus Award" for the highest weighting of trips across all students participating from UL, UL also won the Best Campus Implementation Team Award in recognition of their promotional work and efforts to motivate UL students to get involved in the Challenge. There was further success for UL with a number of UL students winning individual awards.

This year the University of Limerick's Smarter Travel Scheme was also chosen from over one hundred nominees to win the Further Education category at the Road Safety Authority's recent 'Leading Lights in Road Safety' Awards. The prize was awarded in recognition of work carried out to promote road safety to the UL campus community. As part of the initiative, hundreds of LED lights and thousands of high-visibility items have been given to staff and students over the last year.

Smarter Travel at UL will further be encouraged by the recent announced upgrade of the walkway from Corbally to Plassey which has been strongly welcomed by both Limerick City and County Council and the University of Limerick. Construction commenced this summer consisting of an improved walking and cycling surface along the banks of the River Shannon from the Guinness Bridge in Corbally to UL Boat Club in Plassey. The work will not only promote sustainable travel patterns among UL's 15,000 staff and students, but will also very positively support UL's efforts to connect with Limerick City.



## UL AMONG THE TOP UNIVERSITIES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

- 1 | *At a ceremony to celebrate UL's success at the Smarter Travel Awards were Sean Collins, Buildings and Estates Department at UL and Deputy Coordinator of the UL Smart Travel Initiative, President Don Barry, Sharon Daly of National Transport Authority and Ross Higgins, Lecturer at the Department of Civil Engineering and Material Science UL and Coordinator of UL's Smart Travel initiative.*
- 2 | *Sean Collins and Ross Higgins of the UL Smart Travel Initiative, winners of the Smarter Travel Campus Award.*
- 3 | *Pictured are the University of Limerick teams at the National Transport Authority's prize giving event for Limerick entrants to the Student Cycling Challenge hosted by Limerick Smarter Travel. The aim of the Challenge, which is open to all campuses who are partners of the Smarter Travel Campus Programme, is to clock up as many cycle trips as possible over the ten-day challenge.*
- 4 | *Sharon Daly, National Transport Authority, and accepting the Student Union of the Year award for UL Students Union was Welfare Officer Shane McCormack and General Manager Martin Ryan with Michael Aherne, Head of Transport Development National Transport Authority.*

**T**he University of Limerick has been ranked among the top universities for international students to study and live according to a recent international student survey. UL achieved multiple global top ten rankings including employability, language support, accommodation and campus environment in the International Student Barometer (ISB) survey, which involved over 160,000 international students across 180 universities in 18 countries.

UL was ranked 1st out of 39 European universities for providing a learning experience that will lead to good employability which echoes UL's leading position for employability in Ireland – UL graduates are 22% more likely to be employed after graduation than graduates from any other Irish university.

UL further excelled by being ranked in the top ten for International Office, host culture, visa advice, social facilities and activities, halls of residence support and sport facilities.

The ISB which is independently administered by the International Graduate Insight Group (i-graduate.org), examines four main aspects of the university experience – Arrival, Learning, Living and Support, and the University ranked highly in a number of key areas, particularly those related to the student experience and student support.



## RESEARCH & INNOVATION NEWS

### UL TO HOST €25MILLION DAIRY PROCESSING TECHNOLOGY CENTRE



The Irish dairy processing sector continues to ramp up its preparations for the end of milk quotas with the announcement of the Dairy Processing Technology Centre (DPTC) which will be hosted by the University of Limerick.

**T**he DPTC is a collaboration of 8 companies and 10 Research Performing Organisations (RPO's) creating 52 new jobs for highly-skilled researchers over the 5-year term of the Centre. The €25 million investment by Government and industry will position Ireland as a world leader in dairy innovation, and help to maximise the long term growth opportunities created by the anticipated increase of 50% in the Irish milk pool by 2020.

The DPTC was announced as part of an overall €35 million investment in the dairy sector by Richard Bruton T.D. Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and Simon Coveney T.D. Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine at Arrabawn Co-Op in Co. Tipperary. This sum includes a €10 million investment by Teagasc in their Moorepark Technology Ltd pilot plant facility in Co. Cork.

Dr Mary Shire, Vice President Research, University of Limerick said: "the DPTC is a collaboration which brings together a spectrum of companies working with academics drawn from a wide variety of disciplines. The challenges faced by the dairy industry require an interdisciplinary approach if they are to be solved. The University of Limerick has experience of successfully leading multi-partner interdisciplinary research centres and is delighted to be hosting the DPTC".

Launching the Dairy Processing Technology Centre Minister Bruton said: "The food sector is a key area that we have targeted as part of our Action Plan for Jobs. This is a sector which offers massive potential for regional employment, which is a major focus of our 2015 plan, and clearly the removal of milk quotas offers huge opportunities that we must exploit in a planned and strategic way in order to support jobs growth. That is why Minister Coveney and I have decided, through our agencies Enterprise Ireland and Teagasc, to make this significant investment in innovation in the dairy industry.

The recently appointed CEO of the DPTC, Pdraig McPhillips explained, "The two key outputs of the DPTC will be knowledge and people - both will be absorbed by the industry and used to deliver more efficient processes and better products and ingredients. The DPTC is like adding a new software engine to the dairy sector".

*Richard Bruton T.D. Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and Simon Coveney T.D. Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine with Gearóid Mooney, Head of Research & Innovation, Enterprise Ireland and Dr Mary Shire, Vice President Research.*



# JOHNSON AND JOHNSON ANNOUNCE 100 JOBS AT NEW FACILITY BASED ON UL CAMPUS



Information Technology Shared Services, a Division of Johnson & Johnson Services, Inc., will create up to 100 new jobs through the creation of a Development Centre on the University of Limerick campus.

**M**inister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Richard Bruton TD was joined by Minister for Finance Michael Noonan TD and Minister for Education, Jan O'Sullivan TD at the University of Limerick to make the announcement.

Dr Mary Shire, Vice President Research welcomed the announcement: "The University of Limerick is delighted to welcome the new Johnson and Johnson's Development Centre which will be based on campus in the UL Enterprise Corridor. Health and pharmaceuticals are among the research strengths of the University of Limerick and our ecosystem of innovation and excellence provides a pipeline of highly skilled graduates and a network of multidisciplinary researchers in these fields who will play an important part in the success of this initiative."

The J&J Development Centre will be based in the IBC Building, Enterprise Corridor, University of Limerick. This facility is adjacent to a number of key research and innovation facilities at UL including - Lero – The Irish Software Engineering Research Centre, Nexus Innovation Centre. Computer Science and Information Systems Department of UL and Analog Devices Building – UL's centre of excellence for science and engineering.



- 1 | Minister Richard Bruton T.D. with Jan O'Sullivan T.D., Minister for Education & Skills and Steve Wrenn, Global VP Application Services Johnson and Johnson at the launch.
- 2 | Dr Mary Shire, Vice President Research, UL and Mark Devine, Site Leader, Johnson & Johnson Development Centre UL.
- 3 | Steve Wrenn, Global VP Application Services, Johnson and Johnson, Vice President Research Dr Mary Shire and Martin Shanahan, CEO, IDA Ireland.



# ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY BACKUP SOURCE OF POWER AND ENERGY FOR STABILISATION OF IRELAND'S GRID

**E**urope's first grid connected hybrid flywheel-battery system service facility was recently announced by Ged Nash, TD, Minister of State at the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation. This system is being developed in collaboration with the Department of Physics & Energy at University of Limerick, led by Dr Robert Lynch and Professor Noel Buckley of the Materials & Surface Science Institute. The team is focusing on electrochemical batteries for large scale energy storage and grid stabilisation. These technologies are becoming increasingly important as an increasing fraction of electricity is derived from renewable sources such as wind.

The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and Irish company Schwungrad Energie Limited is behind the initiative which will be based in Rhode, Co Offaly and approximately 30- 40 jobs will be created through the construction phase and a further 10-15 sustainable jobs will follow.

This project is co-funded through Enterprise Ireland by the Irish Government and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) under Ireland's European Structural and Investment Funds Programme 2014-2020 and will include fundamental investigation of battery technology, flywheel-battery hybridisation and modelling of system services. It has received the support of Beacon Power, a US based company and global leader in the design, development and commercial deployment of proven flywheel energy storage technology at the utility scale.

Dr Robert Lynch, University of Limerick explained, "this project is of great significance for Ireland's renewable energy targets and the reliability of our electricity supply. Currently, whenever a significant fraction of the grid's power originates from wind, the system operator ensures the stability of the grid by keeping conventional power generators running on idle as a backup in case the wind should suddenly decrease. It follows that, due to the unpredictability of wind, greater penetration of the grid by wind energy indirectly results in carbon dioxide emissions. The synergy of flywheels and batteries will supply an alternative backup source of power and energy reducing the need for conventional plant to run on idle."

# MINISTER FOR SKILLS, RESEARCH & INNOVATION ANNOUNCES €1.5 MILLION SFI FUNDING FOR SSPC

**M**inister for Skills, Research and Innovation, Damien English TD recently announced a new industry academic collaboration at the Synthesis & Solid State Pharmaceutical Centre (SSPC), UL. The research led by Professor Kieran Hodnett, will work with seven industry partners – Allergan Pharmaceuticals Ireland, BioMarin Manufacturing Ireland Ltd., Eli Lilly and Company, Genzyme Ireland Ltd – A Sanofi Company, Janssen Biologics, MSD and Pfizer Ireland Pharmaceuticals– and three research performing organisations, the National Institute for Bioprocessing Research and Training (NIBRT), Trinity College Dublin (TCD) and Dublin City University (DCU) - as part of the new Advanced Biopharmaceutical Technologies research collaboration. €1,050,000 million funding will be delivered by the Department of Jobs through Science Foundation Ireland's (SFI) Spokes programme, coupled with €450,000 in cash and in-kind contributions from industry partners.

Commenting at the launch Minister for Skills, Research and Innovation, Damien English TD said: "Government and industry are setting a stake in the ground as to the direction of Irish research



into the future – creating centres of research excellence in areas that are strategically important and relevant to Ireland’s future. This new initiative in the Synthesis & Solid State Pharmaceutical Centre will deepen the roots of the pharmaceutical industry in Ireland, which supports over 60,000 Irish jobs and exports over €50 billion annually, by encouraging innovation and expanding career opportunities in the sector.”

The manufacturing process of biotherapeutic drugs is complex and costly, with problems relating to formulation and protein instability often affecting the biological performance of these therapeutics.

As a result of this new Advanced Biopharmaceutical Technologies collaboration, some of Ireland’s leading scientists and engineers will work with industry partners to develop innovative single-use disposable plastic bag systems for bioprocessing. This project will generate significant intellectual property for Irish universities and gain commercial advantage for Irish-based biopharma companies, with the goal of establishing Ireland as a Global Hub for Pharmaceutical Process Innovation and Advanced Manufacturing.

Professor Mark Ferguson, Director General of Science Foundation Ireland and Chief Scientific Adviser to the

Government of Ireland, welcomed the announcement: “The establishment of the Advanced Biopharmaceutical Technologies research collaboration is further evidence of the Government’s commitment to investment in science, technology and innovation, which is critical to Ireland’s continued social and economic success and to the creation of high value jobs. The addition of new Spoke projects to existing SFI Research Centres is how SFI ensures these Centres can grow and stay relevant by adding new projects, industry partners and academic collaborators.”

.....  
*Professor Kieran Hodnett, SSPC.*



HEALTH RESEARCH

ASSISTIVE EXOSKELETONS FOR OLDER ADULTS TO BE DEVELOPED BY UL RESEARCHERS

Researchers at the Design Factors Research Group at the University of Limerick have been awarded €250,000 funding to develop an exoskeleton to assist older adults. The research will be carried out as part of the AXO-SUIT project, which will run for 3 years with a total budget of almost €3 million. UL will partner with Cork based company MTD Ltd in the design and manufacture of the concept. The combined project value to the Irish partners is €650,000.

AXO-SUIT brings together three universities and five companies that are active and experienced in the research and development of assistive devices. The project aims to deliver lower-body, upper-body and full-body assistive exoskeletons which will support older adults in carrying out their daily tasks, and participating in occupational and social activities.

Dr Leonard O’Sullivan, Senior Lecturer Ergonomics and Human Factors in the Department of Design and Manufacturing Technology leads the research at UL, and describes the importance of the project: “This is a very exciting project for our

group, which will see our expertise in user centered design in health innovation make a significant impact to the quality of life for older age. The AXO-SUIT project further builds on the Design Factors Group’s continued success in national and internationally funded medical device design research.”

According to the World Health Organisation, the proportion of the world’s population aged over 60 years will double by 2050, from about 11% to 22%. As such, there is great demand for solutions which help individuals to maintain functional capacity and activity levels as they age, thereby preserving health, independence and well-being in later life. AXO-SUIT will combine expertise in engineering, robotics, ergonomics, and commercialisation to create a solution that meets older users’ functional needs at a feasible cost.

The AXO-SUIT project is funded under the Ambient Assisted Living (AAL) Programme and co-ordinated by Aalborg University, Denmark. The research is co-funded by Enterprise Ireland.



# MINISTER FOR EDUCATION & SKILLS JAN O'SULLIVAN TD VISITS GEMS PARTNERSHIP FOR HEALTH EQUITY PROJECT

**A** pilot primary healthcare clinic for marginalised groups that opened in April 2014 in Limerick City has marked its first year in operation with a visit from the Minister for Education and Skills Jan O'Sullivan, T.D. The aim of this clinic is to improve access to primary healthcare for groups such as the homeless, drug users, migrants and others who have difficulties in accessing and availing of primary care services in the city. This clinic has been established by the Partnership for Health Equity (PHE) which is a unique collaboration of clinicians, medical educators, social scientists and healthcare policy makers and planners. The PHE is co-funded by the University of Limerick, the NorthDublin City General Practice Training Programme and the HSE (Social Inclusion & Primary Care Services). The need for the clinic was identified during a consultation process undertaken by Dr Patrick O'Donnell of the PHE. The project is being supported by Safetynet which is a networking organisation for doctors, nurses and voluntary agencies who provide primary health care to homeless people and other marginalised groups in Dublin, Cork and Galway.

Dr Patrick O'Donnell, a GP who is employed as Clinical Fellow in Social Inclusion at the UL Graduate Entry Medical School, runs the clinics at two locations; the Ana Liffey Drug Project at the Fairgreen and at the St Vincent DePaul Drop-in Centre on Hartstonge Street Limerick. From these locations Dr O'Donnell works with many of the statutory and voluntary services in the City and he visits some of the homeless hostels across the City. Dr O'Donnell has seen over 200 patients for more than 500 consultations in the last year.

Speaking after visiting the clinic at the St Vincent DePaul Drop-in Centre Minister for Education and Skills Jan O'Sullivan TD said: "I am very supportive of the important work that the GP clinic is achieving. The clinic is reaching out to vulnerable people who may otherwise not receive the advice and care they need. Dr. O'Donnell and his partners in this initiative are making a real difference in people's lives."

Professor Anne MacFarlane, Professor of Primary Healthcare Research at University of Limerick Graduate Entry Medical School and Director of the Partnership for Health Equity said, "there is consistent evidence that people who need primary care are least likely to get it. Knowledge from the clinic will inform new research projects and recommendations for policy. This 'feedback loop' between practice, research and policy is essential for improving the nature of primary healthcare service provision."

*Dr Patrick O'Donnell with Minister Jan O'Sullivan, T.D.*





# UL STUDY LINKS INFANTS SLEEP PATTERNS WITH MOTHER'S MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

**A** study undertaken by researchers at the University of Limerick has identified four distinct sleep profiles in 9-month old infants in Ireland indicating that mothers of infants in the poorer sleep profiles are more likely to report higher levels of stress and depression and poorer physical health.

In data generated from the 'Growing Up in Ireland' study, a nationally representative sample of over 11,134 9-month old infants' mothers reported on their health and infant sleep patterns.

Only 1 in 6 mothers reported that their baby never woke a night. The most common sleep profile, representing almost half of the infants, were babies who sometimes woke in the night but their mothers reported that baby's sleep was not a problem for them. However, a quarter of infants were in a sleep profile where all mothers reported that baby's sleep was a problem for them with a third of these mothers reporting a moderate or large problem. Mothers in this group tended to have higher levels of education and income than mothers in the other profiles and reported getting an average of less than seven hours sleep a night.

Study co-author, Professor Ailish Hannigan from the Graduate Entry Medical School explains the significance of this study, "this is the first study on this scale to explore

infant sleep patterns in this way and provides valuable information for parents on common sleep behaviours." Co-author, Dr Stephen Gallagher, Centre for Social Issues, UL explains that "Inadequate sleep quantity and quality in infants can have adverse effects on family function, parental stress as well as marital relationships. Not surprisingly, given that mothers provide most of the night-time care for infants, we find here that there is variation in these health effects across different infant sleep profiles with some infant sleep patterns being more problematic than others." Further research will follow these infants at three years and investigate any long term outcomes associated with poorer sleep both for the mother and the child.

The study, which was published in the international journal *Maternal and Child Health Journal* was undertaken by Dr Aoife Hughes and Professor Ailish Hannigan from the Graduate Entry Medical School, UL and Dr Stephen Gallagher, from the Department of Psychology, UL. Growing Up in Ireland – National Longitudinal Study of Children is being carried out by a consortium of researchers led by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) and Trinity College Dublin. The Government has commissioned Growing Up in Ireland as part of its commitment to improving the lives of all children in Ireland.



## UL GEMS RESEARCH WINS HSE OPEN ACCESS AWARD

**P**rofessor Colum Dunne, Director of Research at the University of Limerick's Graduate Entry Medical School (GEMS), has been presented with one of the Irish Health Services Executive (HSE) Inaugural Open Access Awards by HSE Director General, Mr Tony O'Brien. The award recognises research completed by GEMS researchers Shane Knox (PhD candidate in GEMS) and his supervisor, Professor Dunne, at the Centre for Interventions in Infection, Inflammation & Immunity, UL. The winning paper was entitled, 'Continuous Professional Competence (CPC) for Irish Paramedics and Advanced Paramedics: a National Study'. The research will have a practical impact by informing the development of new CPC guidelines for Irish paramedics.



## UL ACADEMIC NAMED RECIPIENT OF NATO RESEARCH AWARD

**S**enior Lecturer and Course Director in Aircraft Maintenance & Airworthiness Engineering at the Department of Mechanical, Aeronautical and Biomedical Engineering Dr Kyriakos I. Kourousis has been conferred the NATO Science & Technology Organisation “2014 Scientific Achievement Award” for his contribution to the project “Qualification and Structural Design Guidelines for Military UAVs”. The results generated by Dr Kourousis and the other team members of the technical group were directly and immediately exploited within NATO and NATO nations, i.e. qualification of prototype UAV for flight testing by the French Ministry of Defence.

The Science & Technology Organisation is the largest NATO organisation for defence science and technology, encompassing a network of over 3,000 scientists and engineers who conduct co-operative research and information exchange across the full spectrum of defence research. It is the largest such research group in the world.

## BERNAL CHAIR, PROFESSOR HARRY VAN DEN AKKER DELIVERS INAUGURAL LECTURE

**O**n the 12th March 2015 the University of Limerick welcomed international family and friends to the inaugural lecture of Professor Harry Van den Akker, as Bernal Chair of Fluid Mechanics in the Department of Mechanical Aeronautical & Biomedical Engineering. Entitled “Profess, Professor, Professional”, Harry’s showcase of fluid mechanics flowed alongside a narrative of his own academic journey, which has involved industrial and geographical expeditions worldwide before finally bringing him to reside as a Bernal Chair at the University of Limerick. Professor Van den Akker joins the University of Limerick as a world leader in Fluid Mechanics and is contributing to all engineering disciplines with fluid mechanics at their core.



## UL CANCER RESEARCHER WINS PRESTIGIOUS TRAVEL AWARD

**C**atriona Dowling, a third year PhD student in the Department of Life Sciences and Materials and Surface Science Institute has this month been the recipient of two prestigious travel awards totaling over €7,500. The first of these was awarded by ACEA Biosciences, a California-based biotechnology company that awards 4 travel scholarships each year to researchers who have published high impact papers using their technology. This award will allow Catriona to attend the American Association for Cancer Research annual meeting in Philadelphia where she will present her work. Catriona has also been awarded a mobility grant by the Irish Cancer Society, which will allow her to spend the summer at the University of California San Diego where she will have the opportunity to work in one of the world’s leading cancer research laboratories. Catriona is funded by the Irish Cancer society and is supervised by Dr Pat Kiely.





## PROFESSOR DAVID MEAGHER WINS RESEARCH EXCELLENCE AWARD

Professor David Meagher is recipient of the 2014 University of Limerick Research Excellence Award, pictured here with Dr Mary Shire, Vice-President for Research. David is Professor of Psychiatry at the University's Graduate Entry Medical School and also established the UL Cognitive Impairment Research Group (CIRG) which focuses upon cognitive problems in medically-unwell populations, emphasizing the use of novel technologies in detection and management. He is one of the international research leaders in the area of delirium research, amongst the top five published delirium researchers worldwide over the past 5 years.

## AWARD WINNING UL RESEARCHER SET FOR YALE

Dr Michael Griffin, School of Culture and Communication at UL is joint winner of the 2015 Archibald Elias ASECS (American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies) Irish-American Research Fellowship. This award will enable Dr Griffin to pursue documentary research at the Beinecke Library, Yale University and at the Free Library of Philadelphia towards a new Cambridge University Press Edition (co-edited with Dr David O'Shaughnessy, Trinity College Dublin) of the Collected Letters of Oliver Goldsmith.

## UL PROFESSORS SIGN IRISH ACADEMY ROLL



University of Limerick Professors Bernadette Whelan, a leading scholar in the history of Irish-American relations and Anthony McElligott a leading historian of twentieth-century Germany recently signed the Royal Irish Academy roll. The honour is given to those who have made world-renowned contributions to research in the sciences or humanities.

*Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at UL Professor Tom Lodge, Professor Bernadette Whelan, President of the RIA Mary E Daly and Professor Anthony McElligott.*



## UL'S PROFESSOR MARK DAVIES ANNOUNCED AS NATIONAL ACADEMY OF INVENTORS FELLOW

**P**rofessor Mark Davies of the University of Limerick has been elected a Fellow of the National Academy of Inventors (NAI). Election to NAI Fellow status is a high professional distinction accorded to academic inventors who have demonstrated a prolific spirit of innovation in creating or facilitating outstanding inventions that have made a tangible impact on quality of life, economic development and the welfare of society. Professor Davies is the second University of Limerick staff member to be elected following the election earlier this year of UL Vice President Research Dr Mary Shire. UL was the first Irish university to become a member of the Academy in June of this year. In 2005 Professor Mark Davies, together with Dr. Tara Dalton, formed Stokes Bio Ltd to commercialise their patented UL research work on high throughput microfluidic polymerase chain reaction (PCR) technology. In 2010 the company was sold to Life Technology Corp for US\$44m. At the time of the Stokes Bio acquisition by Life the company employed 45 people, many of whom were former PhD students from the University of Limerick. Professor Davies returned to the University in 2012 where he continues researching and teaching.

## UL RESEARCHERS AWARDED ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY CHARLEMONT GRANTS

**T**hree University of Limerick researchers have been awarded the prestigious 2015 Charlemont Award grants for their research projects. These grants facilitate short international visits for early career researchers in the sciences, humanities and social sciences to pursue primary research and/or training. The winners include Dr Brendan Florio, Postdoctoral researcher at the Mathematics Applications Consortium for Science and Industry (MACSI), at UL; Dr Karol Mullaney-Dignam is a faculty member of the Department of History, Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences and the third recipient is Dr Klaas-Jan Stol, a postdoctoral researcher with Lero, the Irish Software Engineering Research Centre UL, all are pictured here with President Mary Daly and Professor Peter Kennedy.





## GLOBAL AWARD FOR LERO SOFTWARE RESEARCHER

**P**rofessor Bashar Nuseibeh of Lero – the Irish Software Research Centre at UL, has been named as recipient of the 2015 Distinguished Service Award by the US headquartered ACM (the Association for Computing Machinery). ACM ([www.acm.org](http://www.acm.org)) is the world’s largest educational and scientific computing society with more than 100,000 members from industry, academia and government institutions around the world. The ACM SIGSOFT (Special Interest Group on Software Engineering) Distinguished Service Award is made to an individual who has “contributed dedicated and important service to the software engineering community”.



## ICOMP AWARDED €240K BY THE EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY TO RESEARCH NEW BIO-COMPOSITE SPACE MATERIALS

**T**he Irish Centre for Composites Research (IComp) at the University of Limerick has been awarded €240,000 by the European Space Agency (ESA) for a new space materials research project, entitled; “Demisable Bio-Composite Materials”. The 18 month project is led by Dr Walter Stanley, Lecturer in Mechanical, Aeronautical, and Biomedical Engineering at UL. The project will develop a new bio-composite material for space applications within ESA’s Clean Space initiative. Developing new, green technologies as a means of complying with environmental legislation and making space activities

more sustainable are key elements of the Clean Space Initiative. IComp’s Demisable Bio-Composite Materials research will help develop new materials for space applications to further reduce the environmental challenges associated with space exploration and move toward a life-cycle that is capable of being continued with minimum long-term effect on the environment. The demisability - the ability of a material to disintegrate during an atmospheric re-entry - of the material is a key element of the research project. Carbon fibres when used in spacecraft could pose a risk upon atmospheric entry. Due to their intractability the fibres have limited

demisability and spacecraft structural parts may survive the atmospheric entry (or re-entry) and reach the ground with an associated casualty risk. Environmentally compatible alternatives are being investigated and examined. This is the first contract awarded by the European Space Agency to IComp, which is a Technology Centre funded by Enterprise Ireland. “It is a great privilege to be awarded this exciting research contract by the ESA, and to contribute to ESA’s Clean Space initiative to support a sustainable space environment as well as a more sustainable space industry” commented Dr Walter Stanley.



## UL RESEARCH TO HELP REDUCE ENGINE NOISE FROM AIRCRAFT

**R**esearch carried out at University of Limerick will play a major part in reducing aircraft noise and emissions in the future. UL researchers Dr Trevor Young and Dr Aidan Cloonan, Irish Centre for Composites Research (IComp) and the Materials and Surface Science Institute (MSSI) at UL, are collaborating on a major European research programme. “Clean Sky Sustainable and Green Engines” (SAGE) is an integrated technology development programme, dedicated to demonstrating new engine technologies for a range of future civil aerospace applications. The European Commission’s Clean Sky research programme aims to “green” the aviation sector in line with Advisory Council for Aeronautics Research in Europe (ACARE) targets. These targets require the industry to cut carbon dioxide emissions by 50%, nitrogen oxide emissions by 80% and external noise by 50%.

*Keith Campbell (Left)  
Chief Engineer, Strategic  
Technology at Bombardier  
and Dr Trevor Young,  
IComp, MSSI, UL at the  
handover of the demonstrator  
nacelle by Bombardier  
Belfast to Rolls-Royce.*

In a significant milestone for the SAGE programme, Bombardier Belfast has recently designed and manufactured a large one-piece composite engine nacelle component, namely a carbon fibre composite intake acoustic liner, which encases and attenuates the noise of large turbofan aircraft engines. UL was responsible for material testing and analysis of candidate materials for the exposed inner surface of the acoustic liner barrel. This involved fatigue testing, accelerated rain droplet and particle erosion testing and accelerated weathering testing.

The full-scale intake liner, assembled to a one-piece lipskin, was formally handed over to Rolls-Royce to support its composite fan demonstration programme. The intake liner will be assembled to the Advanced Low Pressure System (ALPS) demonstrator engine being developed at Rolls-Royce’s facility in Derby, prior to ground testing.

SAGE comprises six separate research streams dedicated to demonstrating new engine technologies for a range of future civil aerospace applications. Bombardier Belfast, which has significant expertise in nacelle technology development, has been leading a €3.75 million project within SAGE3, known as SAGE3 ALTD (Intake Acoustic Liner Technology Development), with research partners, the Irish Centre for Composites Research at the University of Limerick and the Institute of Sound and Vibration Research, University of Southampton.



## UL RESEARCH AIMS TO DELIVER SMARTER, GREENER AND MORE SUSTAINABLE LIGHT-BULBS!

Intelligent LED lighting systems will soon be found everywhere from energy-efficient skyscrapers to the average Irish home according to researchers at the University of Limerick (UL) who are taking on the challenge to make light bulbs 'smarter', greener and more efficient using digital control.

The research team, based at the Circuits and Systems Research Centre at UL, have received in excess of €380,000 funding from Enterprise Ireland to develop the technology which will allow homeowners to control the level, tone and even colour of light coming from their LED light bulbs. This technology will, in time, even allow homeowners to control their lighting systems remotely via an app on their mobile phone.

The new technology, which will essentially make LED light bulbs programmable, is set to have a significant impact on the microelectronics industry, for which the mid-west represents a fast-growing hub of expertise. The global power management semiconductor market was valued at US\$29.90 billion in 2012 and it is estimated to reach US\$46 billion, rising at a 6.1% compound annual growth rate from 2013 to 2019. The microelectronics industry accounts for €6 billion in annual exports to the Irish economy.



*Dr Mark Halton*

Senior Research Fellow, Dr Mark Halton, University of Limerick explains; "The lifetime of an LED is on average 35,000hrs compared with 10,000hrs for compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) and only 1,000hrs for incandescent bulbs. We expect that LED lights will replace all existing inferior lighting products still available on the market today within the next 5 years. Our research aims to develop 'smarter' digital control algorithms which will take lighting from an analogue system to a digital system allowing for much increased functionality as well as significant savings in energy consumption. This can potentially have a global impact on energy supply requirements and resources."

This is a high growth global market and it is envisaged that the outputs will create sustainable high-skill engineering jobs in this sector. Enterprise Ireland funded the research through its Commercialisation Fund.



## LERO WINS GOOGLE GLOBAL AWARD TO ENCOURAGE GIRLS TO TAKE UP COMPUTING

**L**ero, the Irish Software Research Centre at the University of Limerick, has been named by Google as one of the global winners of the 2015 RISE Awards. Google's RISE programme, which began in 2010, is designed to support organisations that encourage girls and underrepresented students in extracurricular computer science programmes. This year Google will contribute \$1.5m to 37 organisations in 17 countries.

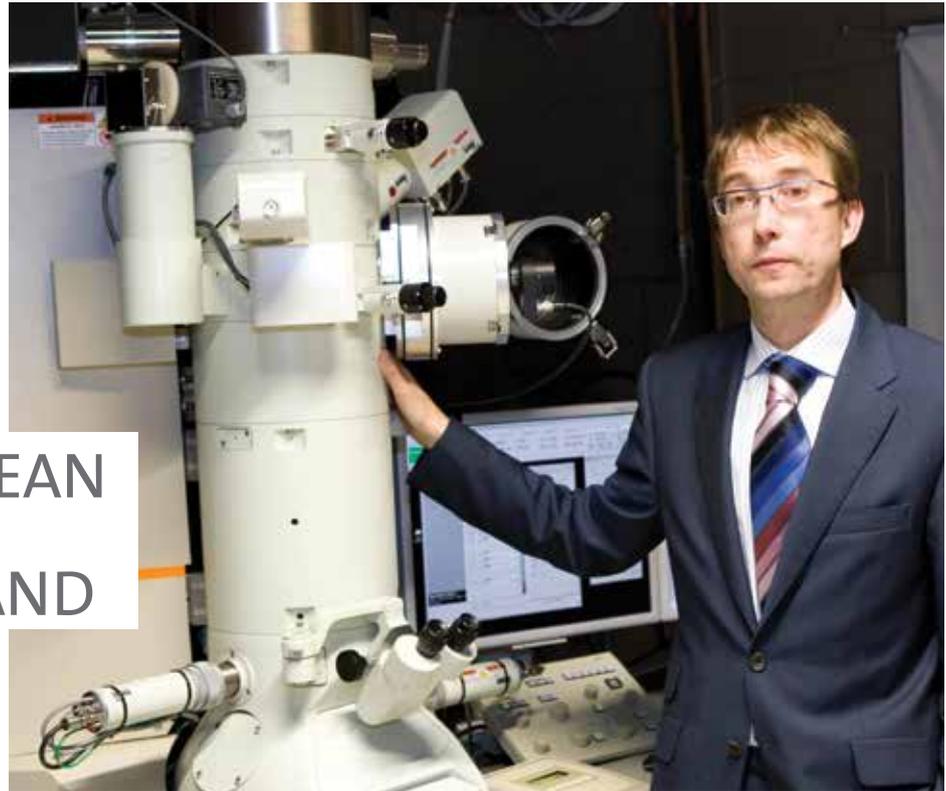
Lero will utilise its \$17,000 award to promote and organise computing summer camps at the University of Limerick aimed specifically at female secondary students from the age of 14 plus. "As a society we must encourage more girls to take up computing," commented Clare McInerney (pictured), Education and Outreach

Manager at Lero. "We aim to show girls that much of computing is about problem solving and collaborative thinking and that computing can be applied in diverse and varied domains."

Lero, which is supported by Science Foundation Ireland, specialises in collaborative software research with a strong industry focus across six universities and the Dundalk Institute of Technology. Lero has also played a key role in encouraging primary school kids to learn about computing through its Scratch programme and they've led the development of a schools course in computing which is due to be introduced to the Junior Cycle curriculum.



# UL JOINS PRESTIGIOUS PARTNERSHIP OF THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTE OF INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY



**T**he University of Limerick has been successful in joining the Raw Materials Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC), a partnership of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) which is set to deliver over 10,000 jobs to Europe over the next 7 years.

There are over 100 partners of the Raw Materials KIC, with a budget of over €800 million to invest in new innovations and up to 50 new SMEs in the supply of key materials for the manufacturing and ICT sectors in Europe. Ireland has three core partners among this prestigious partnership, including University of Limerick, Aughinish Alumina, Limerick, and Trinity College Dublin. A KIC (Knowledge and Innovation Community) is a highly integrated, creative and excellence-driven partnership which brings together

the fields of education, technology, research, business and entrepreneurship, in order to produce new innovations and new innovation models that inspire others to emulate it. They are to become key drivers of sustainable economic growth and competitiveness across Europe through world-leading innovation. The KICs will be driving effective “translation” between partners in ideas, technology, culture and business models, and will create new business for existing industry and for new endeavours.

Professor Noel O’Dowd (pictured), Director of the Materials and Surface Science Institute at UL said: “The inclusion of UL and indeed Ireland in this Innovation Community will allow Irish companies and organisations such as Aughinish Alumina to link into the partner networks, research, demonstration pilots and training programmes for staff. Irish SMEs also stand to benefit from the KIC by getting involved as task partners in future projects, with

increased access to European markets and business matchmaking services.”

The KIC focuses its activities to increase EU competitiveness in 4 main sectors as follows ICT, Machinery and Equipment, Mobility and Energy. KICs must address a long-term horizon of 7 to 15 years, but with short-, mid- and long-term objectives that follow the mission of the KIC.

The Raw Materials KIC focuses on the needs of Europe regarding supply of key materials for the manufacturing and ICT sectors. The Partnership aims to reduce the possibility that a shortage of raw materials may undermine EU industry’s capacity to produce strategic products for EU society. The KIC will have a clear, positive impact on European industrial competitiveness, with about 30 million EU jobs depending on the availability of raw materials. UL has been a key player in this space and hosts one of the larger and more integrated Raw Materials European Innovation Partnerships with 35 international partners.



## NOT SATISFIED WITH YOUR RELATIONSHIPS? BE MORE GRATEFUL AND KIND

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UL Research finds satisfaction with relationships is improved when people are asked to be grateful and kind toward others.

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**R**esearch recently published in the international Journal of Positive Psychology and conducted by psychologists from the Centre for Social Issues Research and the Study of Anxiety, Stress and Health laboratory at the University of Limerick showed that people who expressed gratitude or did something kind for someone they know every second day for a week reported higher relationship satisfaction compared to those who directed the gratitude or kindness towards themselves or those who just wrote about their day.

Brenda O'Connell, a PhD student specialising in Positive Psychology and her supervisors Dr Stephen Gallagher and Dr Deirdre O'Shea wanted to examine whether social relationships could be improved by simple pro-social exercises, specifically, to what extent does showing gratitude and kindness towards others play a part in explaining this association.

According to Ms. O'Connell, after randomising 225 healthy adult volunteers into three different groups (grateful and kind to others, grateful and kind to oneself and a control group) and asking them to complete measures of social support and relationship satisfaction, volunteers then did their tasks every

second day during the week. They then returned to complete the relationship satisfaction measure after the week and then again six weeks later. It was found that volunteers, who expressed sincere gratitude and kindness towards others and then took time to reflect on peoples' reactions, reported a statistically significant increase in relationship satisfaction from baseline six weeks compared to no change in the self-focused and the control group. This was also independent of original levels of social support.

Dr Gallagher; "We know that social relationships are very important for our health with those who have better relationships living longer and happier lives. Therefore any intervention that can improve social relationships should improve our health. Here we have shown techniques like gratitude and kindness toward others in a brief exercise intervention is a simple and effective way of improving our relationships."

Dr. O'Shea also adds "Although, our results show the benefits of these writing exercises for social relationships, to complete the picture we need to examine whether they can translate into health benefits. This will be the focus of our next research phase.



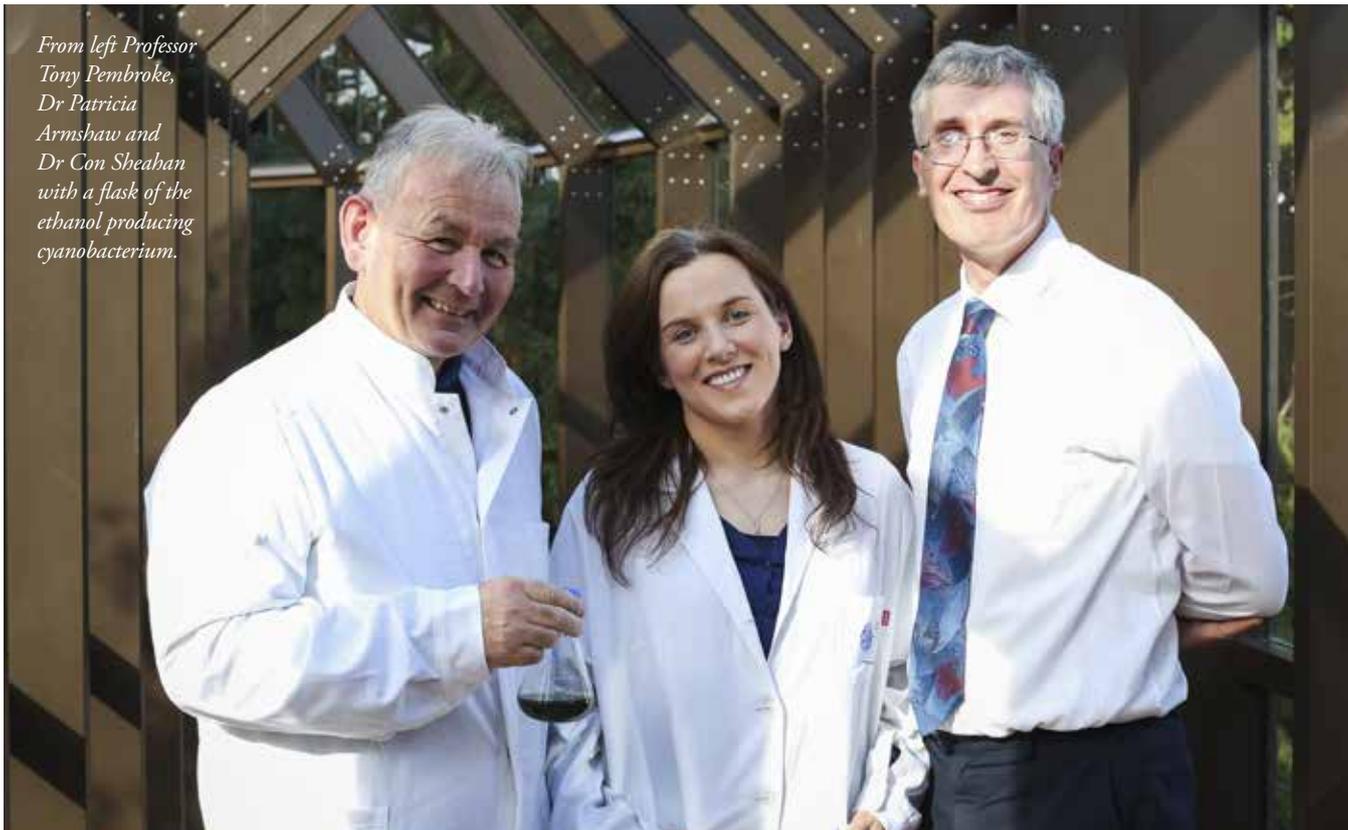
## ENGAGING SCIENCE: IRISH SCIENCE TEACHERS GO BACK TO THE UNIVERSITY LAB!

Second level science teachers and educators from across Ireland attended the 9th SSPC Annual Chemistry Demonstration Workshop on Engaging Science at the University of Limerick this Summer. The residential workshop, hosted at the Synthesis and Solid State Pharmaceutical Centre (SSPC) headquarters at UL, is designed to up-skill and promote engaging science amongst secondary school science teachers and educators in Ireland. The workshop provides participants with the skills to promote problem – and inquiry-based learning within the classroom and to conduct over 40 engaging and interactive science demonstrations which are linked to real world science applications.

*Pictured at the workshop is Jerry Ann Sullivan, De La Salle College, Churchtown.*



*From left Professor Tony Pembroke, Dr Patricia Armshaw and Dr Con Sheahan with a flask of the ethanol producing cyanobacterium.*



## BIOFUELS FROM SUNLIGHT AND CO<sub>2</sub>

**A** research team at the University of Limerick is investigating renewable ways of generating biofuels using bacteria to produce ethanol as a biofuel. Bacteria called Cyanobacteria are undergoing metabolic engineering to get them to make biofuels from just sunlight and carbon dioxide and a small amount of micronutrients which come from brackish water. The project is part of an FP7-funded project termed DEMA (Direct Ethanol from Microalgae) which is co-ordinated by Dr Con Sheahan Department of Design and Technology UL.

Cyanobacteria, were one of the first living things to emerge on earth, and are photosynthetic microorganisms capable of utilising sunlight to fix carbon dioxide. Cyanobacteria don't naturally produce biofuel so must be inengineered to do so by metabolic engineering. This involves the genetic manipulation of an organism to introduce genes that allow the organism change the way it does things and channel its activity towards

biofuel production. The project aims to produce ethanol from cyanobacteria at economic levels.

Principle Investigator UL's Professor Tony Pembroke, a molecular microbiologist and biochemist, who is leading a team of scientists involved in the project explains its significance "Success with the DEMA project could translate into renewable liquid transport fuels which are sustainable and at the same time contribute to a reduction in both fossil fuel use and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Thus DEMA can contribute significantly to the both the environment and to the economics of transport fuel".

UL is partnering with the University of Cambridge, University of Amsterdam, Imperial College and a number of industrial partners including Photanol in Amsterdam, A4F and LNEG Portugal and Pervatech in the Netherlands. Dr Con Sheahan's group at UL is modelling the LCA (Life cycle analysis) and optimising the design of the overall process.



# BUILDING RESILIENCE REVOLUTIONISING THE WAY WE TREAT BACK PAIN



Researchers in UL are revolutionising the way we understand and treat back pain and other musculoskeletal conditions through a holistic approach which ranges from diagnosis and treatment to impacting public health policy.

**D**r Kieran O’Sullivan explains: “It’s all about treating the person, not just the bones or the muscles. Globally there are vast levels of misinformation around conditions like back pain, such as the idea that structures such as bones and discs can go out of place. Not only is this inaccurate, the fear it creates actually adds to disability. What is important is that we identify the impact pain has on people’s lives, understand their personal and unique barriers to recovery and empower them to regain control of their lives.”

The team co-led with the HSE the establishment of a first-of-its kind National Musculoskeletal Triage Initiative across 12 HSE hospitals which reduced hospital waiting lists by 22,000 patients.

Dr Norelee Kennedy explains: “Each year, thousands of patients present in our hospitals with back pain and other musculoskeletal conditions, which if not treated appropriately, will reoccur and put further strain on our health-care system. Our ethos is to evaluate the person quickly and to give them the appropriate advice and treatment.”

Dr O’Sullivan explains that attempts in recent decades to treat chronic back pain by only treating the back itself through massage, manipulation, injections and surgery have had only marginal success. The effectiveness of medications to manage symptoms is similarly underwhelming. He explains: “While people with chronic pain may be very stiff and sore in their back, it appears that overall health factors such as stress, sleep, mood, activity levels are very important. In particular, how

a person thinks about their back problem is critical. If a person believes their back is vulnerable and could be easily injured, they are more likely to avoid usual activities or move too carefully, which limits the potential for recovery.”

Ultimately, this research has had a significant impact on public health through reduced hospital waiting lists, surgeries and medications and overall better outcomes for patients.

*Dr Norelee Kennedy and Dr Kieran O’Sullivan are Lecturers in Physiotherapy, in the Department of Clinical Therapies, University of Limerick. This research is supported by the Health Research Board (HRB), Irish Research Council and EU Social Fund/ Department of Social Protection. Read the full case study or watch the interview with the researchers at [www.ul.ie/researchimpact](http://www.ul.ie/researchimpact)*



**DR KIERAN O’SULLIVAN**  
LECTURER IN PHYSIOTHERAPY



**DR NOREELE KENNEDY**  
LECTURER IN PHYSIOTHERAPY

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OPINION  
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TO CROSS, EVERY DAY,  
*our magnificent Living  
Bridge, IS TO KNOW THAT  
everything in education  
IS ABOUT crossing bridges.*

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# The Thrill

JOSEPH O'CONNOR ON COMING TO UL



I have a theory that all practitioners of the arts should teach. We need to return to the wellspring. And I found, after twenty years of full time writing of fiction, that the call to teach was growing. I'd written eight novels of which I was proud, including 'Star of the Sea', 'Ghost Light' and 'The Thrill of it All', and two collections of short stories and several hundred radio diaries, also stage plays and screenplays and a good deal of non-fiction. And I had taught now and again at universities in Ireland and the States, but the longing to do more of it was strong. So when the position of Frank McCourt Chair in Creative Writing at UL was announced, I only dared to hope.

There were eight people on the interview panel, a rather formidable bunch, and in the end, after much deliberation, they decided to give me the job. I started in June 2014 and began teaching in late August, in those golden sunny days we were blessed with last year. It was one of the most precious autumns I've ever had.

For a start, of course, there is the particular environment and atmosphere of UL, surely the most beautiful modern university campus in Ireland. To teach is a privilege, and those of us who do it are fortunate, but to teach on the banks of what that genius of Irish song-writing, Shane McGowan, calls 'the broad majestic Shannon' is an honour given to few. To cross, every day, our magnificent Living Bridge, is to know that everything in education is about crossing bridges. At best, we help our students traverse a deeply human challenge: how can I be all I am?

I've met gentleness and collegiality here at UL, a sense that the University of Limerick really is a special place, worth protecting, defending and advancing. The relative newness of UL is, for me, one of our major assets. All of us at UL know that our best years are ahead of us. We're the new kid in town. And that's good. We don't have to do it the way it's always been done. We can learn, with respect and affection, from the achievements of others in the past. But we can also be ambitious to carve out our own territory and be distinctive. Indeed, we need to be.

I feel myself blessed to have this job. And I know I am privileged. I have huge ambitions for Creative Writing here at the University of Limerick. As Frank McCourt Chair, I am deeply aware of that writer's immense achievements. I knew Frank a little and he was a lovely man, witty, wise and more than a little mischievous, which of course

was part of the wisdom. I feel his legacy deserves my very best effort and that's what I'm going to give. And I think exciting things are happening, culturally, in Limerick. There's a sense of impatient renewal, a

wanting to get on with it. From the Éigse Michael Hartnett Festival to the Limerick Literary Festival, from our own journal, The Ogham Stone, to the reinvigorated Limerick Writers' Centre, I see writers and their passionate writing all around the region these days, with our Creative Writing programme at the heart. That is how it should be, and as Frank would have wanted it.

# of it All



I'm now working on establishing the UL/Frank McCourt Creative Writing Summer School in New York, I hope at NYU's Glucksman Ireland House. Those vital links between Limerick and New York were the stuff of Frank's unforgettably powerful books, and the connections still resonate now.

My inaugural cohort of MA students have been extraordinary to work with. They range from a four-time published novelist to a couple of younger people who are at the very start of a writing career. All of them are inspirational, hard-working and bright. They've also been highly fortunate, in that I've been able to organise teaching visits from some of the most important contemporary Irish novelists.

USA National Book Award Winner Colum McCann has come to visit, as have Claire Keegan, Christine Dwyer Hickey, Ruth Gilligan, Paul Lynch, Peter Fallon and the winner of the Guardian First Book Award, Colin Barrett. Local hero Donal Ryan is our inaugural Arts Council Writer in Residence, and we thank the Council for their warm support in bringing Donal

here. There's a sense of great excitement in the class about what we're trying to build at UL. We're working with Limerick City of Culture, the

Arts Office and the JP McManus Foundation, with Irish publishers, editors and literary agents. We're forging links with the Irish Writer's Centre in Dublin and Narrative 4 in New York. At every step of the way, I've felt highly supported by colleagues who have by now become friends. Our Associate Vice-President Sarah Moore was already a beloved long-time friend, and to be working closely with her now is an immense and happy blessing. I also mention Claire Ryan, assistant to our Dean of Arts, Tom Lodge. Claire has worked tirelessly and generously to get Creative Writing up on its feet at UL. We wouldn't be here without her.

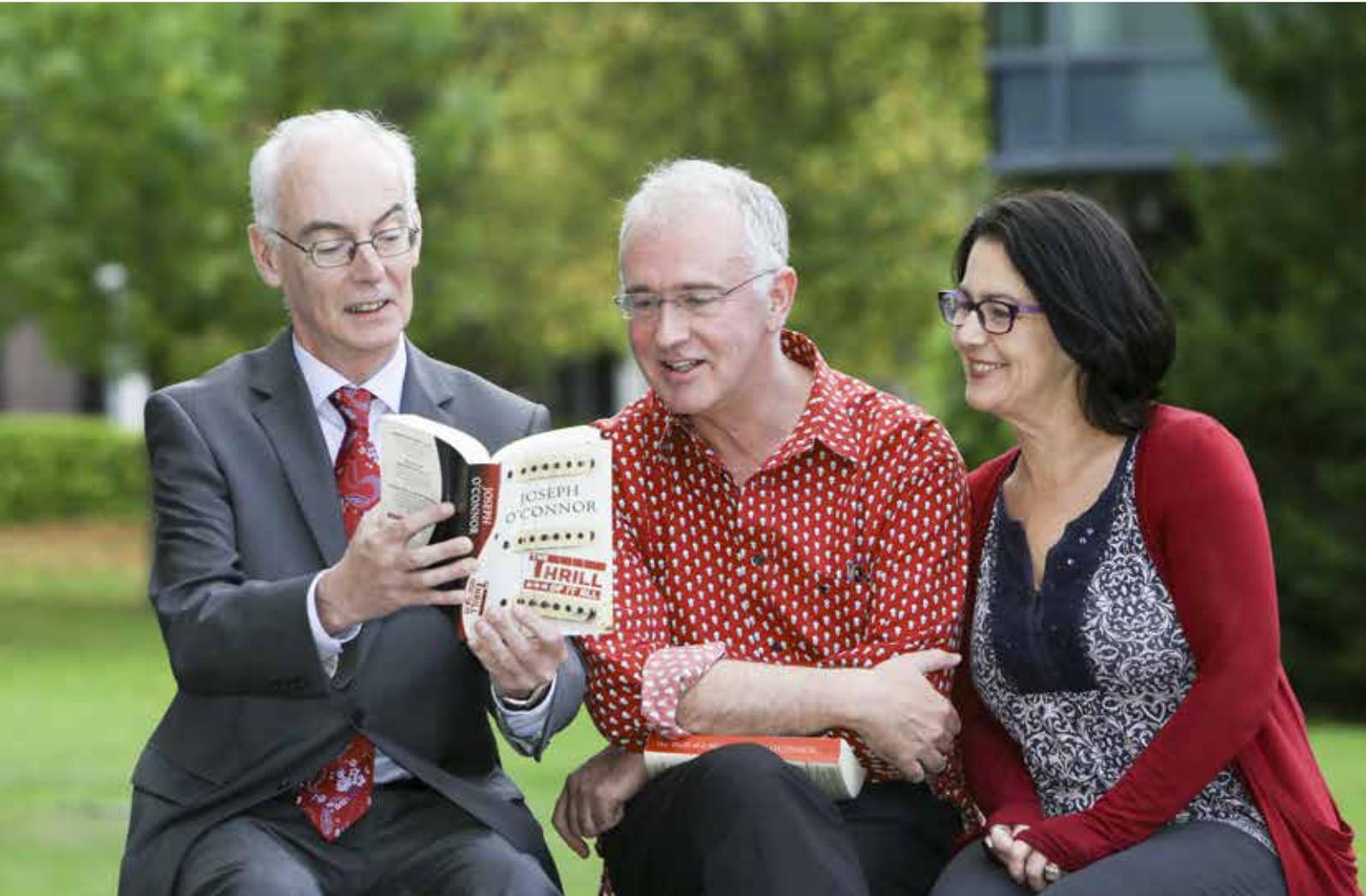
I thank Tom Lodge, Assistant Dean of Research Eoin Devereux, all my colleagues in the English department and in the new School of Communication and Culture, and our President, Don Barry, who includes among his many gifts a deep appreciation of literature. I thank my treasured colleagues in the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance who prove every day that

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ALL IN ALL, THEN, IT'S BEEN A *hugely enjoyable start* TO THIS ADVENTURE, *and I'm immensely thankful* FOR THE SUPPORT I'VE RECEIVED.

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*Pictured opposite: Joseph O'Connor, Frank McCourt Chair in Creative Writing, pictured here with Ellen McCourt, the late Frank McCourt's wife.*

*Pictured above: Professor Paul McCutcheon with Joseph O'Connor, Frank McCourt Chair in Creative Writing, and Professor Sarah Moore.*

excellence and the arts go hand in hand with education. I must also mention my colleagues in the HR department, who have been so helpful in every way. In my experience of certain other organisations, the phrase 'Human Resources' can sometimes seem deeply ironic, neither resourceful nor particularly human! But here at UL, Tommy Foy and Ellen Keegan and their wonderful colleagues have been so empathetic and supportive, to a newcomer with much to learn.

All in all, then, it's been a hugely enjoyable start to this adventure, and I'm immensely thankful

for the support I've received. I'm delighted to be able to announce that, in September, the Creative Writing programme will be host to a visit and public reading from Richard Ford, one of the world's foremost contemporary novelists. The occasion will be a milestone for all lovers of literature in our city and throughout the region and will celebrate an exciting and ambitious start to the new academic year, the next chapter for Creative Writing at UL. Hope to see you there!

*Professor Joseph O'Connor*



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## UL FOUNDATION NEWS

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### RECORD NUMBER OF BUSINESS AND PHILANTHROPIC LEADERS SUPPORT UL PRESIDENT'S GALA DINNER

A record number of almost 300 philanthropic and business leaders attended the 12th annual President's Gala Dinner which was organised by the UL Foundation and held on 15th May for the first time ever on the UL campus. Guests at the sell-out event enjoyed pre-dinner drinks in Plassey House followed by dinner and entertainment in a marquee on the lawns in front of the House overlooking the River Shannon.





**A**ddressing guests at the event, UL President, Professor Don Barry, said: "I want to pay tribute to each and every one of you here tonight for the role you play in the UL story and I want to pay a special tribute to Loretta Brennan Glucksman and her fellow directors of the UL Foundation, without whose amazing support we simply wouldn't have this wonderful university you see all around you."

Funds raised on the evening benefited the UL Research Impact Scholarship Programme which is a new initiative between UL Research and the UL Foundation to secure funding for PhD scholarships across all the University's disciplines.

Speaking at the event, UL Foundation CEO, David Cronin said: "I am delighted that so many friends, supporters and business leaders have turned out this evening to show their support for this event and the new fundraising initiative we have launched tonight".

Guests were treated to a special comedy sketch on the evening by impressionist and entertainer, Mario Rosenstock, as well as a musical performance by Donal Lunny, Mairtin O'Connor and Zoe Conway.

Main sponsors of the event again this year were Ulster Bank and Noonan Group. "We are delighted to continue supporting the University and the Foundation through our sponsorships and in particular through the establishment of the Ulster Bank Enablement Fund, which was established following our arrival to UL in 2005" said Maeve McMahon, Head of Product Development and Customer Experience at Ulster Bank.

John O'Donoghue, CEO of NOONAN said: "NOONAN is very proud of our long association with the University of Limerick, which spans over 20 years, and we are delighted to act as main sponsor of the President's Dinner for the 6th year running".





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- 1 | *Dr Veronica O'Regan and Dr Philip O'Regan, Dean, Kemmy Business School, UL.*
- 2 | *Attending the event were Founding President Dr Ed Walsh and Tommy Bolger, Student Union President.*
- 3 | *Dr Mary Shire and Professor Edmond Magner with Bernal Professors Gavin Walker and Harry Van den Akker.*
- 4 | *David and Aileen Wallace.*
- 5 | *Loretta Brennan Glucksman, Chairman UL Foundation.*
- 6 | *Lee and Donnagh Gregson.*
- 7 | *Eric Clarke, UTV Ireland Mid-West Reporter and Kathryn Hayes, Freelance Journalist.*
- 8 | *Don Barry, President UL.*
- 9 | *President Don Barry, Regina Kelly, Alan Kelly, Minister of Environment, Community & Local Government, Loretta Brennan Glucksman, Chairman of the University of Limerick Foundation and David Cronin, CEO UL Foundation.*
- 10 | *John O' Donoghue, NOONAN, with President Barry, Kieran Tuite, Campus Operations manager with NOONAN Staff.*
- 11 | *Mario Rosenstock, impressionist and entertainer, who treated guests to a special comedy sketch on the evening.*
- 12 | *Director of Cooperative Education and Careers Patrice Twomey.*



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# ATLANTIC PHILANTHROPIES VISIT UL

**T**he University was delighted to host members of The Atlantic Philanthropies for a special visit to campus on 11th March.

The visitors, comprised of Atlantic Philanthropies' employees and Board Members from all around the globe, came on campus to see first-hand the enormous impact that Chuck Feeney and the organisation he founded have had on the development of the University. The Atlantic Philanthropies has supported numerous projects over the years including the Foundation



Building, the Glucksman Library, the Arena, the Student Centre, the Irish World Academy, the Graduate Entry Medical School, many of the on-campus student residences and most recently the Bernal Project.

During their visit, the delegates were given a presentation by UL President, Professor Don Barry, before walking across the Pedestrian Living Bridge to the Irish World Academy, where they were hosted for a special performance of Irish traditional music, song and dance at the Academy followed by a farewell reception.

*Pictured above: David Cronin welcomes The Atlantic Philanthropies. Below: President Barry leads the group on a tour of UL.*





# NEW SCIENCE & ENGINEERING BUILDING IS NAMED IN HONOUR OF ANALOG DEVICES

The newly-constructed innovative science and engineering building at UL has been named the Analog Devices Building in honour of US-headquartered semiconductor company, Analog Devices (ADI), following a major gift by the company to the UL Foundation. The building was constructed as part of the ground-breaking Bernal Project which involves the recruitment of 10 world-leading professors, a start-up seed fund to support their teaching and research activity, as well as construction of this new advanced research building. Of the €54 million project, 30% of the cost is being met by State contributions and University funding with the remaining 70% being funded philanthropically, including €2 million from Analog Devices for the research building. Headquartered in Massachusetts in the USA and with significant research, product development and manufacturing in the Raheen Business Park in Limerick for almost 40 years, ADI has a long and close history with UL and has supported many of the UL Foundation's initiatives over the years. Referring to support of the new building, Vince Roche, President and Chief Executive Officer of ADI said: "Analog Devices and the University of Limerick have maintained a strong partnership for decades. This building is a beacon that will shine for many years to come, representing our shared enthusiasm for STEM and commitment to educating future generations". UL President Professor Don Barry added: "The University has a long-standing relationship with Analog Devices and we are delighted that the company has chosen to further cement this relationship by naming the new science and engineering building on campus".



David Cronin, Chief Executive of the UL Foundation, said: "As the work that is carried out in the Analog Devices building will significantly support Ireland's national research priorities and contribute to the economic development of the country, it is an excellent fit with a world technological leader like Analog Devices".

Approximately 150 construction jobs have been created in the construction of the new building with a further 75 long-term, sustainable research and teaching positions, amounting to a total of 225 jobs being created by the Bernal Project.

*Pictured above:  
Ray Stata, Co-Founder & Chairman,  
Analog Devices, Loretta Brenman Glucksman,  
Chairman of the UL Foundation, Vincent Roche,  
President and CEO of Analog Devices and  
UL President Don Barry.  
Architectural image of The Analog Devices Building.*



# JOHNSON & JOHNSON ANNOUNCE LEAD GIFT FOR NEW RESEARCH IMPACT PhD SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME AT UL

**T**he UL Research Impact PhD Scholarship programme has been established to nurture the next generation of researchers whose work will have benefits for industry, society, economy, culture and the world at large. With a gift pledge in excess of €300,000 to fund four UL Research Impact PhD Scholarships, Limerick-based company, Johnson & Johnson, has been announced as the first supporters of the new fundraising initiative. Each scholarship is valued at €20,000 per annum for a period of up to 4 years research.

Barry O’Sullivan, General Manager, Johnson & Johnson Vision Care Ireland said; “Building on our long-standing partnership with the University of Limerick, Johnson and Johnson are delighted to support the development of future R&D leaders through the Research Impact PhD Scholarship programme. Delivering committed collaboration between industry-academia-local government is fast becoming the hallmark of the R&D community in the Mid-West region and we look forward to continued success in this area.”

UL President Professor Don Barry said: “PhD students carry with them throughout their whole lives an ability and hunger for research. They are among the future R&D innovators and leaders who will contribute to our national competitiveness, social and cultural development and economic growth. The UL Research Impact PhD Scholarship programme is establishing a highly competitive and prestigious PhD initiative built on the foundations of excellence and impact.”

Dr Mary Shire, Vice President Research said; “We are delighted to build on our collaboration with J&J Ireland through the establishment of the J&J Ireland Development Centre (IDC) here on campus as part of the UL Enterprise Corridor. Their further investment in PhD research through the scholarship programme supports the next generation of researchers which will form the bedrock of R&D success in our region.”

UL Foundation CEO, David Cronin said: “We are delighted that Johnson & Johnson have pledged such strong financial support for this exciting initiative and look forward to working with other industry partners who are interested in supporting excellence and impact in research”.

# ANALOG DEVICES ESTABLISH NEW SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME AND MEDAL IN MEMORY OF ROBBIE McADAM

**W**e are delighted to announce a new scholarship programme which is being launched by Analog Devices in memory of the late Robbie McAdam, former Senior Vice-President of Analog Devices, who died in February 2015. The new Robbie McAdam Scholarship and Medal will follow on from the existing Analog Devices Scholarship and Hank Krabbe Medal, which have been in place since 2010 and will benefit qualifying engineering students across all 4 years of study.

Analog Discovery kits will be donated to all first years who require these kits as part of their course; a second year student will receive the Robbie McAdam Scholarship valued at €4,000 plus a Cooperative Education placement with the company; a third year student will receive the Robbie McAdam Scholarship valued at €2,000 plus a summer job placement with the company; and a fourth year student who will be joining ADI as a graduate will receive the Robbie McAdam Medal, plus €4,000.



*Robbie McAdam.*



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**SPORT**  
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**LET IT RAIN !**  
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3,000 kids did not let torrential rain stop them from doing their best at the UL Kids Run for Fun in May. With some famous sporting faces cheering them on, the atmosphere was exciting, joyous and infectious. The event is Ireland's largest single mass participation event for children and took place a day ahead of the Barrington's Hospital Great Limerick Run.



*Paul O'Connell and his son Paddy.*







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1 | Joseph Monaghan taking part in the UL Sport Kids Run. 2 | David Wallace braves the rain to cheer the kids on.

3 | Enda Twomey and Archie McNamara congratulate each other. 4 | Richie Clifford with Minister Jan O'Sullivan, T.D.

5 | Rhea Murphy is congratulated by her mother. 6 | UL Director of Sport Dave Mabedy, Professor Paul McCutcheon, UL Vice President Academic and Registrar and Minister for Education Jan O'Sullivan, T.D., at the starting line of the UL Run for Fun Junior and Senior Infant Race.



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## KEMMY BUSINESS SCHOOL LAUNCHES WOMEN'S GAELIC PLAYERS ASSOCIATION SCHOLARSHIPS

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**T**he Kemmy Business School at UL has announced a graduate business scholarship programme for female county GAA players. Dr Philip O'Regan, Dean of the Kemmy Business School and Aoife Lane, WGPA Chairperson, signed a memorandum of understanding at the launch of the programme recently.

KBS-WGPA scholarships will see recipients receive a 50% fee waiver for taught postgraduate programmes at the KBS, in areas such as economics, finance, taxation, human resource management, entrepreneurship, marketing, project management and many more along with the opportunity to study on a campus equipped with some of the best sporting facilities in the country.

Speaking at the launch event, Dr Fergal O'Brien, Assistant Dean, Postgraduate Studies at the KBS noted 'the shared

competencies in sporting and academic success – determination, persistence, hard-work and dedication'. WGPA Chairperson Aoife Lane spoke about the close ties between UL and the WGPA, with five of the seven founding members of the association currently or previously affiliated to the University. She went on to state that 'female athletes have an enhanced set of skills and characteristics around leadership, teamwork, respect and hard work that make them particularly suited to study and work in business and industry'.

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*Dr. Fergal O'Brien with senior inter-county players, Niamh O'Dea (Clare), Niamh Richardson (Limerick) and Julia White (Cork) and WGPA Chairperson Aoife Lane. All three have won both the O'Connor Cup (Ladies Football- 2014 and 2015) and the Ashbourne Cup (Camogie 2014) with UL in the past 2 years.*



## UL'S THOMAS BARR WINS GOLD AT THIS YEAR'S WORLD UNIVERSITY GAMES

**T**he University of Limerick's Thomas Barr has won gold at this year's World University Games in Gwanju, South Korea, in the 400m Hurdles in a time of 48.78. Thomas, from Dunmore East in Waterford, is the first Irish athlete to take Gold on the track for Ireland at these games since Sonia O'Sullivan in the 1500m in Sheffield in 1991. The only other two Gold winners for Ireland in Athletics were Niall Bruton and Ronnie Delaney. The World University Games is the largest and most prestigious multi-sport competition outside of the Olympic Games. Thomas is coached by PESS lecturer Drew Harrison

and his wife Hayley. His sister Jessie, also part of the same training group, competed in London Olympics and is also a UL student. The World University Games team was led by UL's Neasa O'Donnell, Assistant Head of Delegation to Team Ireland.

Thomas is the number one ranked athlete in Europe in his event and winning his first major international medal will give him a great boost with the forthcoming World Championships in sight. Further good news for Team Ireland at the event was Fiona Doyle capturing Silver in the 50m Breaststroke. Fiona, a student of University of Calgary, is a Limerick native.

## IRISH SWIMMING INTERVARSITIES 2015

In March some of Ireland's top swimmers took part in the most prestigious event of the swimming calendar. Twenty swimmers from University of Limerick travelled to NUI Galway for the Irish Swimming intervarsity. With a total of 21 teams represented at the event, 10 of UL's 20 swimmers made the finals, with a further 15 swimmers making personal bests (PBs). Overall this is the most successful competition of the club's history. UL left the event with 18 medals including six gold, five silver and seven bronze, which placed the University 3rd overall for Womens, Mens and Team events. Seven UL swimmers have been selected to represent Ireland at the upcoming Celtic Nations in Glasgow.

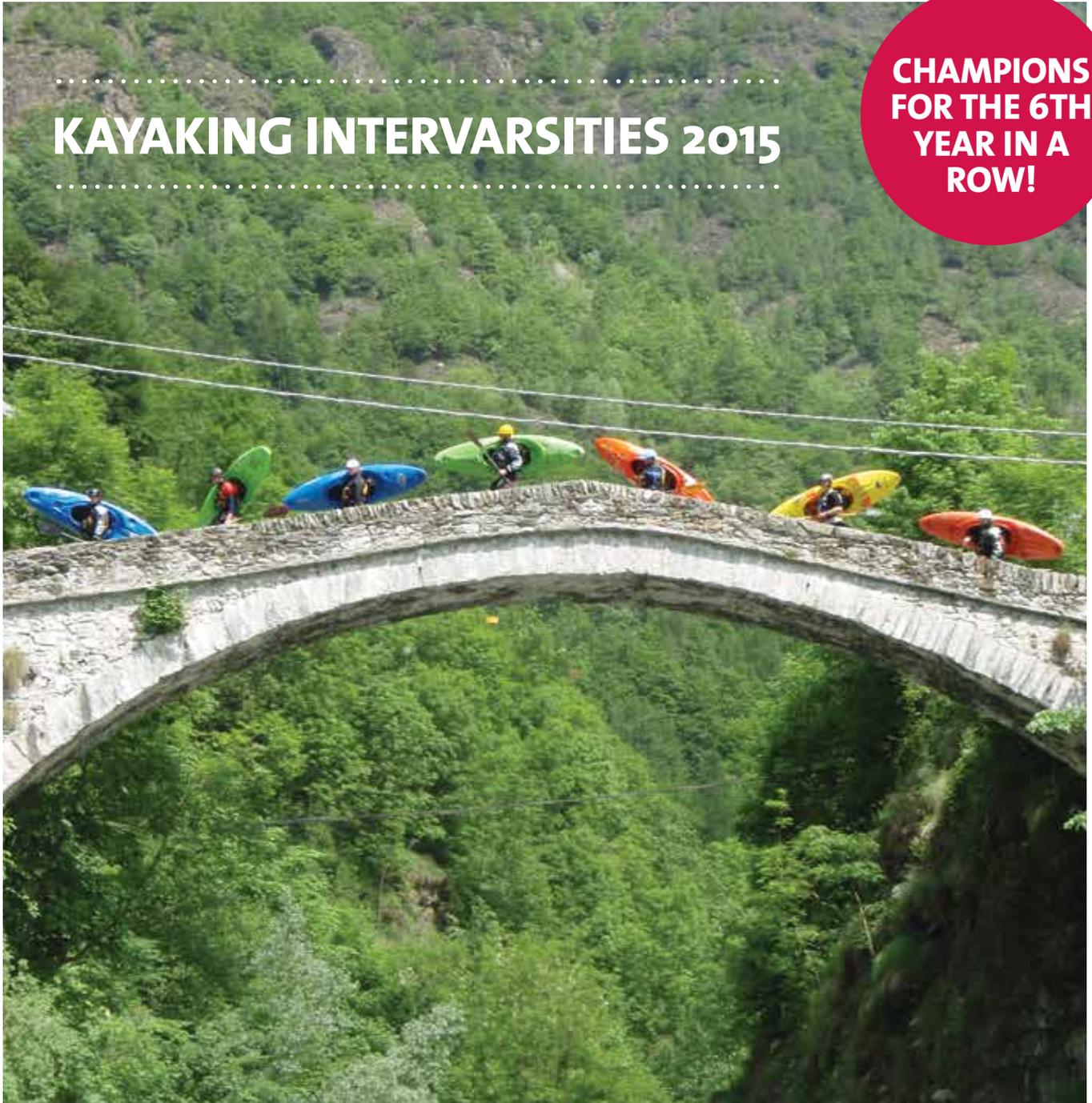
The Surf-lifesaving event saw UL win 24 medals in total spread across multi-disciplined events for men, women and the team.





# KAYAKING INTERVARSITIES 2015

**CHAMPIONS  
FOR THE 6TH  
YEAR IN A  
ROW!**



In February the University of Limerick Kayaking Club (ULKC) attended the national kayaking intervarsities hosted by NUIG/ GMIT kayak club. The first event was the white water race and paddling for ULKC were Eoin Keyes, Andrew Regan, Emer Farrell and Mark Scanlon. They all did amazingly well and UL placed an impressive 2nd place in that event. Canoe Polo was the next event, held in the Claddagh Basin where UL were placed a hard earned 3rd. More success followed over the weekend with Eoin Keyes and Mark Scanlon taking 1st and 2nd place in the GP men's category, while Gavin Sheehan and Eoin Farrell, both former captains, achieved 2nd place in the GP men's duo category. To finish off the weekend there was an awards ceremony held in NUI Galway. After a nerve filled wait, ULKC was crowned the Intersvarsities winners for the 6th year in a row!

*Another successful year by the UL Kayak Club, pictured in the Alps this year.*



## AN EPIC YEAR FOR UL EQUESTRIAN

**T**he Club began the year on a high with the annual tetrathlon competition (TET), hosted by the UL Equestrian Club, in Ennis. TET is a competition spread over an entire weekend, including running, swimming, shooting and show jumping. Not only did the UL club successfully organise the entire weekend with 14 colleges (and over 20 teams) in attendance, the UL team of Patrick Duggan, Brigitte Murphy, Kate Costello and Luke Sutherland also managed to secure 1st prize overall in addition to individual prizes – Caitriona Conry for equitation, Brigitte Murphy for shooting and Luke Sutherland for swimming to name a few.

Our success continued into second semester with 20 members heading to Cork for Intervarsities in February. With a team coming 2nd in show jumping (Amy Maloney, Kirsten McCormack and Laura Connors), 5th in teams (Paul McDermott, Aoife Leonard and Kate Costello), 1st in dressage (Brigitte Murphy, Shannon Pratt and Susan Hayes), 3rd in prix caprilli (Amy Doran, Killian Costello and Clíodhna McLoughlin) and Ian Foster in 3rd place overall, it was enough for UL to be crowned Overall Intervarsity Champions!

### O'CONNOR CUP FINAL UL 3-16. DCU 0-9



**C**ongratulations to our senior ladies football team who retained their O'Connor Cup title after a comprehensive 16 point victory over DCU. Two goals from Áine Tighe and a penalty from Roisin Leonard paved the way for the UL success. With 9 players getting on the score sheet, UL were in control from the outset. Despite having their 3 point advantage wiped out inside the first 10 minutes, Roisin Leonard scored a goal and point in quick succession to give UL a 4 point advantage. From there UL kicked on and with the UL defence keeping the dangerous DCU forwards under wraps, UL blazed ahead. The second half started like the first ended with UL in total control. The UL ladies never took their foot off the pedal and were clinical in their dominance of the game. UL captain and player of the match Niamh O'Dea accepted the cup and thanked management and players for their dedication and commitment throughout the year.

Well done to all panel members and management on bringing the O'Connor Cup back to UL for a second year in a row!

### ROUND UP OF THE YEAR GAA

**I**t was yet another successful year for UL GAA, both on and off the field. On the field the club captured 2 of the 4 senior championship titles, the Fitzgibbon Cup and the O'Connor Cup while also annexing UL's first ever Fresher 1 All-Ireland hurling title, along with two Division 1 senior league titles, a Fresher 2 league title, a Munster Fresher's Blitz title and an All-Ireland Fresher's Blitz title.

Our senior hurlers captured the Fitzgibbon Cup for the first time since 2011 and the 5th time in history. The final, played in the Gaelic Grounds, was the cracker everyone expected, resulting in a draw after extra time. The replay, in Pairc Ui Rinn, did not disappoint either as UL ran out winners on a score line of 2-18 to 1-14. Our Fresher 1 hurlers captured the All-Ireland title for the first time by defeating UCC in Mallow on a score of 1-24 to 1-18. Our Fresher 2 hurlers came out on top of the Fresher B league by defeating UCC on a score line of 3-10 to 1-12.

This year has been a very successful one for UL GAA as teams brought back a total of 8 trophies. UL was also represented on the Ashbourne Cup All Stars team with Laura McMahon, Niamh O'Dea and Cait Devane named among the best 15 in the competition. 8 UL players have also been nominated for the HEC Ladies Football All Stars team: Edel Murphy, Laurie Ryan, Beulah McManus, Julia White, Jen Grant, Áine Tighe, Niamh O'Dea and Roisin Leonard.



*Engineering Crystals to*  
**CHANGE**  
*THE FUTURE*

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WE TALK TO THE WORLD'S FIRST  
PROFESSOR OF CRYSTAL ENGINEERING  
MICHAEL ZAWOROTKO

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*“THINKING DIFFERENTLY,  
THINKING GLOBALLY”  
AND JUST “GOING AND  
DOING IT” ARE AMONG  
THE MOTTOES OF  
PROFESSOR MICHAEL  
ZAWOROTKO.  
PROFESSOR Z, AS HE  
IS KNOWN BY HIS  
COLLEAGUES IS AMONG  
THE TOP 20 RESEARCH  
CHEMISTS IN THE WORLD  
AND A PROUD WELSH-  
MAN WHO RETURNED  
TO HIS CELTIC ROOTS TO  
COMMENCE HIS ROLE AS  
A BERNAL PROFESSOR  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF  
LIMERICK.*

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# T

he University of Limerick's €52 million Bernal Project involves the recruitment of 10 world-leading professors across strategically important fields in Science, Engineering and Technology, a start-up fund to seed pioneering research and the construction of an advanced research facility. Professor Z joined UL just in time for the public launch of the initiative with An Taoiseach Enda Kenny and The Atlantic Philanthropies on a sunny day in October 2013 which gathered some of the nation's top pharmaceutical companies, scientists and industry leaders.

Since then he has eagerly set to work, attracting a young, dynamic and truly international group of researchers. Professor Z's team design innovative materials with the potential to solve some of the world's greatest challenges such as cleaner and more sustainable energy sources.

When asked why he decided to move to the University of Limerick, Professor Z cites its reputation as a world-leading institution in terms of its solid state pharmaceutical research, particularly through the presence of the SFI-funded Synthesis and Solid State Pharmaceutical Centre (SSPC) as being a significant factor. But he also reflects on people's ability to collaborate. "Why is Ireland different? The people are more than happy to work in groups and share the glory which is the only way we are going to compete in this area."

### THINK DIFFERENTLY

So what is crystal engineering and why is it important? "Crystal Engineering is a new approach to the discovery of new materials, in essence, instead of making material hoping it has the right

properties to be relevant, we design a material from first principles using what we call 'molecular building blocks'. The real world applications are vast. Anywhere a solid is involved in a process or a product it has the potential to be impacted by crystal engineering. The two most obvious low-lying fruit, as I like to say, are pharmaceuticals, in particular solid pharmaceuticals like tablets and materials for energy sustainability, e.g. carbon capture, gas storage and industrial processes. In order to be successful in this field we need certain techniques for rapid characterisation of the structure and properties of these materials". At his inaugural lecture Professor Z spoke of the importance of having "a belief in science". He added; "It's about doing the right thing at the right time, I do believe that this is the point in time when the big breakthroughs are going to happen in energy sustainability and pharmaceutical materials. The study of crystals really matters, not because of diamonds or minerals but because of our ability to create new materials, build structures with properties which are targeted at particular applications."



To truly understand how ground-breaking this research is it helps to look at the history of crystallography. 2014 marked the centennial of the birth of X-ray crystallography, thanks to the work of William Henry, William Lawrence Bragg (father and son), and Max von Laue who was awarded the 1914 Nobel Prize in Physics for his discovery of the diffraction of X-rays by crystals. In 2012 the UN General Assembly proclaimed 2014 as the International Year of Crystallography. However, despite its beginnings over 100 years ago, by 1988 the concept of crystal engineering was considered an oxymoron. A former editor of Nature, John Maddox said; “One of the continuing scandals in the physical sciences is that it remains in general impossible to predict the structure of even the simplest crystalline solids from a knowledge of their chemical composition”\*.

Prof Z explains; “Even today, it is at best extremely difficult to predict crystal structures from the knowledge of a molecular structure. Even if you do manage to predict the structure of a crystal, it doesn’t tell you how to make them. In 1988 if you said you were going to design crystals people would have said you were crazy.”

In the late 1980’s a book by Desiraju ‘Crystal Engineering – The Design of Organic Solids’ finally gave a definition of crystal engineering, “the study of how molecular or ionic structure influences the structure and properties of crystalline materials”.

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*IT’S ABOUT DOING THE RIGHT THING AT THE RIGHT TIME, I DO BELIEVE THAT THIS IS THE POINT IN TIME WHEN THE BIG BREAKTHROUGHS ARE GOING TO HAPPEN IN ENERGY SUSTAINABILITY AND PHARMACEUTICAL MATERIALS.*

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This book was followed closely by a paper by Richard Robson in which he presented the first prototype of an engineered crystalline material subsequently termed a metal-organic material (MOM).

Also around that time, the FDA issued a directive to pharmaceutical companies that future approval of new drugs would require detailed information on the pharmaceutical activity of every form of the drug in the prescribed formulation. Professor Z explains; "All of a sudden, polymorphs, solvates and molecular crystals really mattered for the most valuable substances we know, pharmaceutical products". These different forms can lead to billion dollar patent extensions. By 1999, a field which was slowly growing in terms of the number of publications per annum took off with over 4,000 papers a year in this area. The impact of this research is enormous. China has made major investments in research infrastructure with 75% of the papers in this field now coming from China. "This research is really global" Professor Z confirms. Improved medicines for neglected diseases, poorly biodegradable drugs which account for 80-90% of new chemicals for drugs and the creation of porous materials are among the real-world applications of crystal engineering. Professor Z explains; "If we can make a porous material that will be conducting it will change the future. For the next 100 years or so we are still going to rely on coal and natural gas which gives us problems with carbon dioxide. And if electrical cars are ever going to take off they need better ways of thermoelectrical cooling. Natural gas, mainly methane, has 30-40% less of a carbon footprint and is lower cost than other hydrocarbons, but it's really volatile so how do we move it around? Natural gas is going to be the fuel of the future. The challenge is who is going to be the first person to make a material that enables the safe and affordable transport of natural gas?"

## WHY SHOULD WE CARE ABOUT POROUS MATERIALS?

Industry uses  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the world energy production.

Commodity purification consumes >10% of world energy.

Distillation process consume > 5% of world energy production.

Natural gas - 30-40% less of a carbon footprint and is lower cost than other hydrocarbon fuel sources.

## JUST DO IT

In a lab at the University of Limerick there are 17 international researchers solving 2 crystal structures a day. "The number of co-crystals we can solve is only proportionate to the amount of time, energy and money you spend researching them." Collaborations are crucial to success and Professor Z has built partnerships with Professors Brian Space and Tony Pham, University of South Florida, Professor Mohamed Eddaoudi, King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, Professor Praveen Thallapally, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, U.S. Department of Energy and his Brazilian Collaborators include Javier Ellena, USP Sao Carlos and Alejandro Ayala, UFC Ceara.

## THE BERNAL PROJECT

Arguably the most influential Irish Scientist of the 20th century, John Desmond Bernal (1901 – 1971) is described by Professor Z as 'cut from a different cloth'. He was well known as an excellent collaborator and two of his students (Dorothy Hodgkin and Max Pertuz) went on to win Nobel Prizes. Professor Z describes Bernal as "a man who could see the future and the need for vast amounts of data to be archived and properly addressable." The idea for the creation of the Cambridge Structural Database (CSD) is credited to Bernal. "Without the CSD there would be no crystal engineering because we mine this database for information. This was way ahead of information technology as we know it today," added Professor Z.



A vision for a global approach to impactful research underpinned by true belief in science drives Professor Z, or as he says, “maybe it should now be Prof O’Z’. The torch of J.D. Bernal’s ethos of difference and collaboration is in safe hands. “In my humbler moments I say we are going to change the future for the better. But that’s an understatement. When you think about it the long-term goal of energy sustainability, it isn’t just a luxury it’s a necessity and that’s just one of the goals of our research in crystal engineering.”

*\*Editorial, Nature, 1988, 335, 201.*



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*THE NUMBER OF  
CO-CRYSTALS WE  
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TO THE AMOUNT OF  
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RESEARCHING THEM.*  
”



# STUDENT NEWS

# UL DESIGN SHOWCASE IN THE HEART OF THE CITY



2015 is the Irish Year of Design and UL showcased its contribution to Irish Design at a packed-out Design@UL Graduate Showcase.



## Students:

Future graduates of Architecture, Product Design & Technology, Digital Media Design, Civil Engineering and Technology Education.



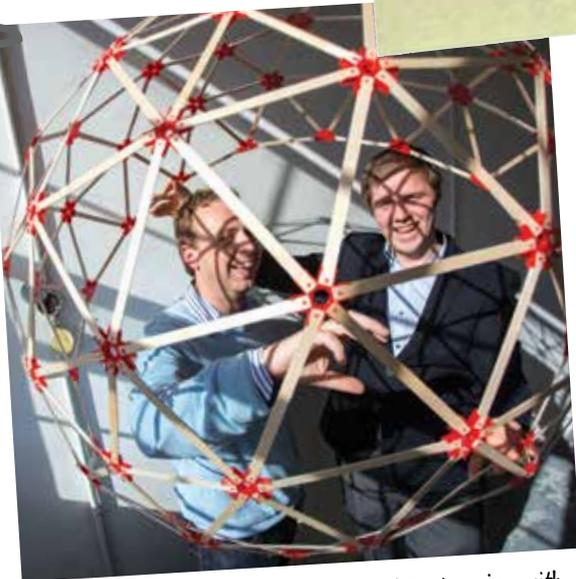
## Work:

Final Year creations and innovations – drawings, prototypes, models, visualisations, projections, photographs, applications, texts and sketchbooks.



## Where:

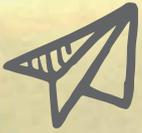
Over two floors of Fab Lab and a number of vacant retail units along Rutland Street, Limerick.



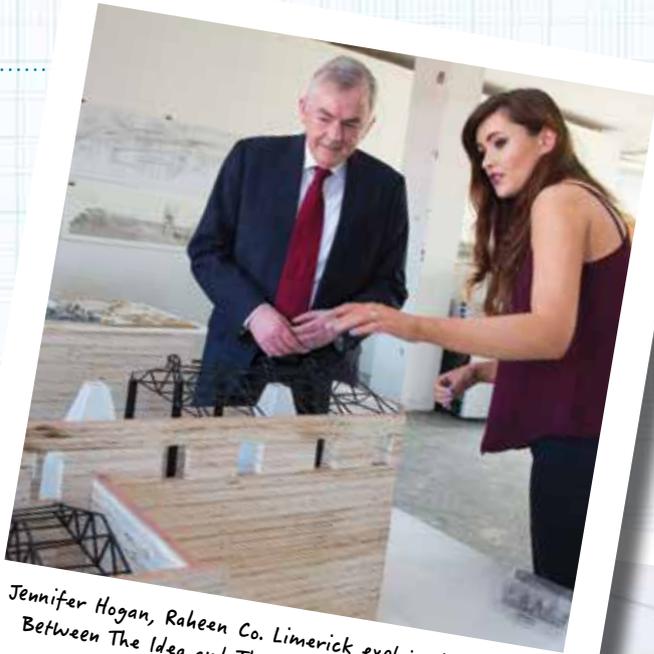
Michael Quilligan, Course Director Civil Engineering with student Kevin Cahir, Ennis Co. Clare, and his project – Structural Examination of Geodesic Domes.



Aine Hannigan Dunkley, Renvyle Co. Galway with her project, Lingo Communications, an Aid for Sign Language Users.



Launched by:  
Alex Milton,  
Programme Director of  
Irish Design 2015  
and  
President Don Barry.



Jennifer Hogan, Raheen Co. Limerick explains her project, *Between The Idea and The Reality Falls The Shadow to* President Barry.



Aidan O'Sullivan, Tralee Co. Kerry pictured with his project, *Evade Extravascular Closure Device* and Product Design Lecturer, Dermot McInerney.



Peter Dowling, Dunmore East Co. Waterford with his project, *Wheels of Power*.



Safa Jaber, Saudi Arabia pictured with her project, *Zone Fitness*.



"This is STEAM thinking in action, where Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) are augmented, and improved by Art and Design thinking (STEAM)".

President Barry



# STUDENT AWARDS — WELL DONE!

## PRESIDENT'S ACCESS SCHOLARS

**T**his year's recipients of the President's Access Scholars Awards for the academic year 2013/14 are: Brian O'Mahony, 2nd Year, Mechanical Engineering, Robert O'Shea, 2nd Year, Computer Games Development, Conor McCarthy, 3rd Year, Economics and Mathematical Sciences, Aurimas Jankauskas, 3rd Year, Aeronautical Engineering, Shane Harrington, 4th Year, Business Studies and Jeffrey Daly, 4th Year, Electronic & Computer Engineering. This is the 4th year of the awards with each recipient awarded €2,500 each for achieving the highest annual QCA for the academic year.

## UL LAW STUDENTS WIN THE ADVOCATE 2015 MAKING IT TWO IN A ROW FOR UL!



**A**fter four rounds of intense competition, two UL Law Plus students, Colin Higgins and Katie-Alice Murphy, were crowned the winners of The Advocate 2015, McCann FitzGerald's All-Ireland Business Law Challenge. The challenge is run in association with the Courts Service and the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service. The UL winners will share a prize fund of €3,000 and a place on the summer internship programme. Colin and Katie-Alice are pictured here with John Cronin, Chairman, McCann FitzGerald, The Honourable Mr Justice Peter Kelly and Blanaid Clarke, McCann FitzGerald, Chair of Corporate Law, Trinity College Dublin.



# THE 11TH ANNUAL KEMMY BUSINESS SCHOOL OUTSTANDING STUDENT AWARDS



**1** | Dr Philip O'Regan with David MacAogain, Rosslare, BA Economics & Mathematical Science and Clive Bellows, Country Head Ireland, Northern Trust.



**2** | Maeve Brosnahan, a graduate with a BBS Human Resources who was awarded the Academic Achievement Award.



**3** | David Watters, Ardara, Co. Donegal, 4th year BBS Human Resources who received the highest in 3rd year HRM Major Option with Dr Philip O'Regan.

UL's Kemmy Business School Outstanding Student Awards recognise the excellence of Business students, both national and international, who have displayed an outstanding level of performance across a range of Certificate, Diploma, Degree and Postgraduate programmes offered at the School. The awards are sponsored by Northern Trust which has a Limerick branch employing over 300 people. The majority of awardees are Irish but also included students from the Netherlands, France and India.

**4** | Linda Fitzgerald, Killonan, Castletroy who was awarded 1st Place in Diploma in Management.



**5** | Dr Philip O'Regan, Dean, Kemmy Business School; Emily Caddy, Bantry, Cork BBS Insurance & Risk Management student and winner of the Louise Newman Memorial Prize, and Paddy Redmond, President Insurance Institute, Limerick. Back row Ian Griffin, Insurance Institute, Limerick and Robert Ford, lecturer, KBS, UL.





*Sinead Hyland checks her team's model aircraft in the reflection of team member Martin Keogh's glasses.  
Below: Aashiq Hussain, Jean Morgan and Morgan Laning, testing their aircraft.*

## UL AERONAUTICAL ENGINEERING STUDENTS TEST MODEL “SENSOR DELIVERY” AEROPLANES

**F**ourth year UL Aeronautical Engineering students were put through their paces at the end of this academic year as they partook in final year flight tests. This involved the design and construction of remotely-controlled subscale aircraft capable of meeting two separate challenges. The first required the aircraft to carry a 2.3 kg package that simulated airborne sensors, and the second required the aircraft to drop a payload (9 cm-diameter plastic balls) onto a target on the ground. R/C (radio-controlled) pilot William Gaule (Limerick) took the aeroplanes through the ground and flight test programme, with both aircraft completing key tasks.

Dr Trevor Young, Senior Lecturer in Aeronautical Engineering, UL said “This challenge requires our students to design, build and fly complex air vehicles designed to a demanding set of requirements. The students need to use the knowledge and engineering skills acquired over the entire engineering programme to create an aircraft that is strong enough to support the loads, yet light enough to fly with small electric motors. Good teamwork and good project management are essential ingredients for success. These attributes are highly valued in industry, but are often ignored in engineering courses.” UL offers the only Bachelor of Engineering in Aeronautical Engineering programme in the Republic of Ireland, and has developed strong links with many of the world's leading aerospace companies, including Airbus, Boeing and Bombardier Aerospace.





## UL ARCHITECTURAL STUDENTS & STAFF CONTRIBUTE TO OPEN HOUSE LIMERICK

Open House Limerick (OHL) architectural festival had its third annual event recently, showcasing outstanding architecture in Limerick City and County. Students of the School of Architecture UL (SAUL) and their lecturers actively contributed to the many events run over the weekend including a full programme of building visits, lectures, walking tours and children's educational events. Part of this year's event included an Open Education programme which explored architecture, spaces, and the built environment with schools, museums and other spaces of education. Also, Open Photo was an online photography competition based on images that showed how we engage with, are inspired by and interact with the buildings on the programme. SAUL faculty members, Declan Feeney and Morgan Flynn, together with local architects Senan Killeen, Niki McMahon and Eleanor Moloney presented two projects in 'Open House Limerick', the first, entitled 'Mortuary Mosaic', consisted of highly detailed drawings showing the elaborate internal mosaic decoration of the Gothic revival mortuary chapel in Mount St Lawrence Cemetery, Limerick City. The second project, entitled 'Beta-Block', is a 3m square, 1:50 scale model of one block of the Georgian Newtown Pery area of Limerick City. The model describes a variety of typical streets, house-types and mews lanes, and is intended to provoke a conversation and eventual consensus about how this 18th century architectural conservation area can be adapted and redeveloped into the 21st century. UL student volunteers attended and helped out with the opening of more than 40 buildings of all types and



periods, allowing visitors to explore quality architecture, with tours by architects, home owners and professional historians. OHL is a member of the international and ever expanding Open House Worldwide family which holds weekend architectural festivals at locations including London, Dublin, New York, Melbourne, Barcelona and Buenos Aires.



## AN IONTRÁIL NUA IS FEARR CUMANN GAELACH OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

**B**a chúis mhór bhróid í do Chumann Gaelach Ollscoil Luimnigh an gradam “Iontráil Nua Is Fearr” a bhua i gcomórtas náisiúnta Glór na nGael 2015 de bhárr na hoibre a rinne siad ar son na Gaeilge timpeall an champais.

Bhuaigh an Cumann teideal an ghradam agus bronnadh duais 500 euro orthu ag oíche na ngradam i gCaisleán Baile an Bharbaigh ar an 25ú Aibreán.

Ghlac breis is fiche cumainn eile páirt sa chomórtas iomráiteach seo, a bhronnann duaiseanna ar Chumannn Ghaelacha timpeall na tíre bunaithe ar a n-iarraichtaí chun an teanga dhúchais a spreagadh i measc na mac léinn. Scrúdaíodh na

hiomaitheoirí uilig ag triúr moltóir ó Chonradh na Gaeilge.

Ag caint mar gheall ar an ngradam, dúirt rúnaí an Chumainn, Aedín Ní Thiarnaigh, “Ba chúis iontach í dúinn gan amhras, ach is comhartha iontach é go bhfuil stádas na Gaeilge ag fás is ag feabhsú i measc na mac léinn in Ollscoil Luimnigh. Gan amhras, is ábhar dóchais é seo dúinn don chéad bhliain eile”.

I mbliana, ba mhór an rath a bhí ag an gCumann le himeachtaí cosúil leis an turas chun an Oireachtais i gCill Áirne, an Lá Gan Béarla ar son Pieta House agus an “Géili” a cuireadh ar siúl in éineacht le Out in UL, an Cumann Idirnáisiúnta agus ULFM.

Chomh maith leis na himeachtaí sin, moladh imeacht seachtainiúil an chumainn, “Déardaoin Ramhar” ach go háirithe, nuair a chuir an Cumann Gaelach lón saor in aisce ar fáil dá mbaill. Bailíodh na baill le chéile i Seomra na Gaeilge, atá suite in Áras na dTeangacha (LC-016) chun teacht le chéile go neamhfhoirmeálta agus Gaeilge a labhairt lena chéile.

Tá tuilleadh eolais margheall ar Chumann Gaelach Ollscoil Luimnigh le fáil ag [www.facebook.com/cumanngaelachul](http://www.facebook.com/cumanngaelachul).

*Aogán Ó Fearghail Uachtarán CLG, Éamonn Ó hEargáin Foras na Gaeilge, Pat Carey Glór na Gael & Áine Maunsel, Adhna Ní Bhraonáin & Aedín Ó Tiarnaigh ó Chumann Gaelach Ollscoil Luimnigh*





## ‘AR BHRUACH NA SIONAINNE’



*Máire Ní Ghráda, School of Culture and Communication, during the recording of the new 6-part UL-RTÉ RnaG summer radio series ‘Ar Bhruach na Sionainne,’ with Irish World Academy students Aisling Lyons and Lisa Kelly.*

University of Limerick students will take to the national airwaves this summer with the launch of an innovative radio series ‘Ar Bhruach na Sionainne’. Comprising six hour-long programmes, the series is a collaborative venture between RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta and undergraduates of the Irish World Academy and the School of Culture and Communication UL. It features interviews with staff and students, along with performances and chat from a wide section of the campus community.

Máire Ní Ghráda, coordinator and developer of applied-Irish modules for Irish World Academy students, pitched the idea for the series to well-known RnaG broadcaster and producer, Dr Áine Hensey and to Niall Keegan, Associate Director

of the Academy and is glad to see it come to fruition, “RnaG see this student-led radio series as being a perfect fit with their strategic vision for the station and, of course, our UL students stand to benefit greatly too. This kind of collaborative engagement with leading professional partners is what the University of Limerick excels at.”

The potential of this UL-RTÉ RnaG initiative for professional and personal development was greatly received by the students. “First Year student Gordon Nolan explains ‘All of us in the Irish class are musicians, singers and dancers. Working on a radio series for a national broadcasting body is a chance to extend our skills into an area that is pretty relevant to our careers. I could see myself doing more of this kind of work – I certainly would love to!’”



## AHSS POSTGRADS REPRESENT UL AT THE MODAL EUROPEAN UNION



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## UL & LIT STUDENTS LAUNCH 'OUR CITY, OUR CULTURE'

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*PhD Candidate at the Irish World Academy RAS Mikey Courtney, leads the audience in a flash performance at the 'Our City, Our Culture' event in Limerick City Centre.*





UL Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences postgraduates, Anthony Woods (Human Rights in Criminal Justice), Mark Walsh (Sociology) and Ruairi O'Donnell (International Commercial Law) recently represented UL at the Model European Union (MEU) hosted by the State University of New York and City College New York in Manhattan. The trio assumed the roles of Poland's political leadership at the prestigious EU Summit simulation during which parliamentary protocols are followed.

Teams representing all EU member states and the Commission debated major policy issues in parallel and plenary session covered by a student Press Corps. Led by faculty advisor Dr Ruan O'Donnell, Senior Lecturer in History, the UL team was facilitated by SUNY colleagues Professor Kathleen Dowley (MEU Director) and Dean Bruce Sillner (Director of International Programmes).

UL previously hosted the MEU for its first relocation to Ireland in 2010.



Limerick was alive in colour as international flags flew proud in April when students took to the streets for 'Our City, Our Culture'. The event was a collaborative initiative driven by Higher Education students in the University of Limerick, Limerick Institute of Technology, and Mary Immaculate College and co-ordinated by the Community Liaison Officer at UL, Gabriella Hanrahan. Its main objective was to profile Limerick City as a vibrant intercultural student city by displaying and showcasing the intercultural diversity of Limerick's student population, through music, dance, song, symbols, rituals, costumes and flags. PhD Candidate at the Irish World Academy RAS Mikey Courtney directed the street performance on the day, which included audience participation in a final flash performance.

## AICUR HIGHLIGHTS THE VALUE OF UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

The second All Ireland Conference of Undergraduate Research (AICUR) was held in the Kemmy Business School UL last semester. The event is a collaboration between the UL faculties, students and the Centre for Teaching and Learning, under the leadership of the Dean of Teaching and Learning, Dr Fiona Farr. AICUR is a conference of a different kind in that the primary content was delivered by undergraduate student presenters from across all the disciplines. On the day, AICUR attendees were presented with insights into a wide variety of topics: from the effects of oral contraceptive use on psychological and physiological health to fitness profiling of female GAA players. Attendees and presenters also came from NUIG, TCD, LIT among others. Again this year the event highlighted the value of undergraduate research in higher education and the results it can achieve.



*Pictured Left: CTL Manager Mauna Murphy with UL student William Nolan. Pictured Below: NUIG students Maria Ni Fhlatharta and Amy Houlihan with Professor Con Hussey, UL.*





# AN UNDERGRADUATE MAKING A SPLASH IN THE WORLD OF RESEARCH

*Aoife Synott /  
BSc Physiotherapy*

“I always wanted to be a physiotherapist. I saw it as an exciting, person-centred career that would allow me to make a meaningful difference to people’s lives in terms of rehabilitation. I was somewhat surprised to find that research would form such a major part of my learning as a student Physiotherapist, and I definitely had not considered publishing journal articles as a possibility while studying at university.





**W**hile completing the BSc in Physiotherapy in the Department of Clinical Therapies at UL, there is an extensive emphasis placed on evidence-based practice, such that the available research can be translated into meaningful results, benefiting both the clinician and the patient.

My research was conducted on chronic low back pain, as I was fascinated by the poor recovery rates and lack of clinician confidence in managing it. A range of existing research demonstrates that many non-physical factors such as stress, fear, depression, poor job satisfaction and what people with low back pain think is wrong with their back are important in determining whether a person with low back pain recovers. While the precise mix of factors involved in their low back pain might vary for individual patients, most patients with chronic low back pain will present with at least some need for these latter factors to be addressed. Unfortunately, professionals who treat people with low back pain (e.g. doctors, surgeons, physiotherapists and chiropractors) have been mostly trained to deal with physical and structural factors in low back pain. Consequently, I wondered whether physiotherapists had a role in treating any of these “non-physical” factors.

I conducted a systematic review and meta-synthesis of the existing literature on physiotherapy management of these non-physical factors for a 3rd year assignment. The findings demonstrated that physiotherapists perceived that neither their initial training, nor currently available professional development training, instilled them with the requisite skills and confidence to successfully address and treat these factors in people with low back pain. Consequently, even though physiotherapists acknowledged these factors were very important, they questioned whether there was any point in even identifying these factors, as their treatment was considered to be beyond their expertise. Therefore,

it is clear that a lot of physiotherapists desire further training related to treating the non-physical dimensions of chronic low back pain.

I was then able to complete two further pieces of research related to this topic. I was fortunate enough to be awarded a HRB studentship during which I interviewed 13 physiotherapists who had received a small amount of training to help treat these factors, and for my final year research project I interviewed another 13 physiotherapists across four countries who had also received extensive training in this area.

These two projects showed that the confidence of physiotherapists in identifying and treating these factors developed as they received more training, especially when it was practice-based.

When my supervisor, Dr Kieran O’ Sullivan, first suggested the possibility of publishing my research, I presumed that the process would be long, drawn out and time-consuming. However, while there were periods of redrafting and revisions, I was pleasantly surprised that my research was accepted for publication pretty quickly in a respected open-access ISI journal. Similarly,

I have already presented the study findings during an oral presentation at the National Physiotherapy Conference in Dublin. The support I received from my supervisor, and the availability of other supports at UL such as the Regional Writing Centre and the excellent library facilities, facilitated this process. The fact that I had the opportunity to work as part of an international research group highlights the extensive and meaningful research links at UL. What I was particularly excited about was that the results of this study were meaningful; they would make an impact on physiotherapists out there that were treating patients with low back pain, one of the most common musculoskeletal conditions of the western world.

The research has received significant attention to date. Consistent with the Research Impact ethos at UL, the findings will be shared with clinicians in clinical practice and be used to inform service developments in the HSE in collaboration with clinical partners.”

“  
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## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT NEWS

# INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS

### YEATS SCHOLARSHIP LAUNCHED BY UL



*Brazilian Students at UL*

**T**he University of Limerick has established a W. B. Yeats Scholarship with the University of São Paulo in Brazil (USP) as the latest initiative of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between the two institutions in 2012 during the visit of President Michael D. Higgins to São Paulo.

Building on the links forged by Professor Laura Izarra (USP) and Dr Tina O'Toole (UL), the scholarship was launched on the 150th anniversary of Yeats' birth, and celebrates the relationship between USP and UL. The scholarship invites undergraduate and graduate students from USP to research and study at the Faculty of Arts Humanities and Social Sciences at UL in a range of programmes, but of particular interest is the new MA in Critical Irish Studies. This interdisciplinary programme was established by Professor Margaret Harper, Glucksman Chair

in Contemporary Writing in English and a renowned Yeats scholar. Professor Harper gave the opening lecture of the W. B. Yeats Chair of Irish Studies at USP on St Patrick's Day.

The MOU between USP and UL was developed to enhance the teaching and research relationship between the institutions and has accelerated the sharing of knowledge and ideas through exchange at academic and student levels.

Speaking about the importance of Brazilian students to UL, Josephine Page, Head of International Education Division said: "UL welcomed 150 students from Brazil to the campus during the last academic year, the largest intake of the seven Irish Universities. Six of these students are from the University of São Paulo, and we very much look forward to welcoming a further nine students from USP in September 2015."



## LAUNCH OF THE GENERATION STUDY ABROAD UL SCHOLARSHIP

The University of Limerick has launched a scholarship offering US students the opportunity to study at UL. UL Vice- President Academic and Registrar, Professor Paul McCutcheon officially launched the Generation Study Abroad US Scholarship at the NAFSA - Association of International Educators conference in Boston which attracted 11,000 international educators. The Scholarship illustrates UL's commitment to Generation Study Abroad TM, an initiative led by the Institute of International Education (IIE) which seeks to double the number of US students studying in Ireland over the next five years.

Minister for Education and Skills, Jan O'Sullivan TD was the guest of honour at the scholarship launch event which was attended by US academic partners and UL alumni, and hosted at the Irish Consulate in Boston. During her address, the Minister spoke on the importance of international education at UL. Boston Consul General Mr Breandán Ó Caollaí and Mayor of Limerick City and County, Cllr Kevin Sheahan were also among the guests at the event. The NAFSA conference is the biggest such gathering in North America and Europe and brings together international education staff and academics for five days of exhibitions, training workshops, educational sessions, networking opportunities and special events.

*Pictured at the Generation Study Abroad UL Scholarship launch are Boston Consul General Mr Breandán Ó Caollaí, Minister for Education and Skills, Jan O'Sullivan TD and UL Vice-President Academic and Registrar, Professor Paul McCutcheon.*

## UL SIGNS MOU WITH SICHUAN UNIVERSITY

The University of Limerick and Sichuan University have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to formally launch collaborative programmes between the two universities. The MOU will see the introduction of two new articulation programmes, namely 3+1 and 3+2 programmes. The 3+2 programme will facilitate Sichuan University students from all faculties to undertake a one-year Study Abroad programme at UL and then transfer to a Taught Master programme. The 3+1 programme, which is specific to the School of Law at UL, will allow students from Sichuan University to transfer to UL.

The new MOU encourages student exchange between both institutions and the benefit of the collaboration will be seen as early as this summer with 10 UL Law school students travelling to China to attend a two-week International University Immersion programme at Sichuan University. The students will be accompanied by Dr Kathryn O'Sullivan, School of Law at UL, who will teach on the programme.

Sichuan University is one of China's leading universities and is a key high-level comprehensive research university under Project 985 and Project 211. Since UL began working in China in 2004, it has forged partnerships with a number of prestigious Chinese universities. Further information is available from the International Education Division

*Professor Paul McCutcheon, Vice President Academic and Registrar, UL and Professor Yan Shijing, Vice-President of Sichuan University pictured following the signing of the MOU.*



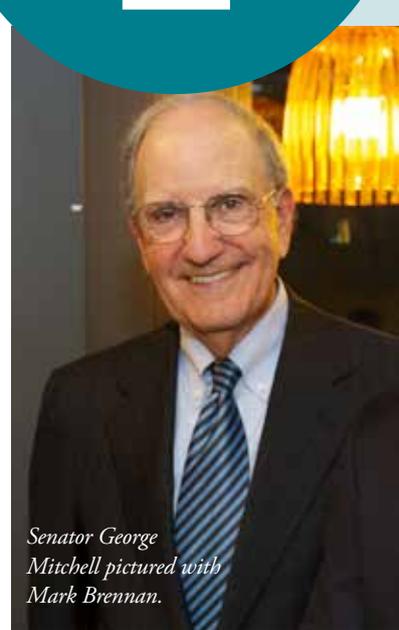


# INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS HONOURED AT UL

The International Education Division at the University of Limerick honoured the academic achievements of over 100 international students, including students from Brazil, Canada, China, India and USA, at a ceremony last semester. The students were presented with scholarships, including the Faculty of Education and Health Sciences scholarships, Kemmy Business School scholarships, Faculty of Science and Engineering scholarships and Study Abroad Progression scholarships. Three students were presented with Government of Ireland International Scholarships which entitles students who have gained a place on a one year Taught Masters Programme, to a full fee waiver and a stipend of €10,000 to cover living expenses.

Faculty and staff, including staff from the International Education Division, attended the ceremony to honour the outstanding academic merit of the international students.

Further information on International Education at UL is available at: [www.ul.ie/international/](http://www.ul.ie/international/)



Senator George Mitchell pictured with Mark Brennan.



Mark Brennan in Uganda.



1 | The Department of Nursing and Midwifery scholarship recipients pictured with Dr Pauline O'Reilly, Head of Department.

2 | Fernanda Zamboni, Brazil and Surendra Kumar, India both Government of Ireland International Scholars pictured with their scholarship certificates.

3 | Hannah Janega, Canada and Kelsey Harris, USA pictured with Dr Philip O'Regan, Dean of Kemmy Business School following presentation of their KBS Scholarships.





## MARK BRENNAN *MSc Mathematical Modelling '15*

I'm a proud New Jersey native, who grew up just outside the sprawling Rutgers-New Brunswick campus and across the Rarity River from the City of New Brunswick itself. New Brunswick and the City and County of Limerick are actually 'twinned' cities, just recently reaffirming their relationship in November 2014 during a visit from Cathaoirleach of Limerick City and County Council, Councillor Kevin Sheahan.



I attended Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD as an undergraduate in International Studies as I was always interested in international affairs. In the fall of my third year, I began coursework for a BA Applied Mathematics and Statistics too. I graduated with both degrees in 2012, and just before graduation won Hopkins' Walsh Award, which is a post-bachelors fellowship for travel and work outside of the US. I took the Walsh Award to spend a year examining fish supply chains and aquaculture in Senegal. While in Senegal I was named a Senator George Mitchell Scholar, and I took the Scholarship to study at UL. The Mitchell Scholarship is a nationally competitive scholarship for American students to study on the Island of Ireland, and it commemorates the role that Senator George Mitchell played in the 1998 Good Friday Agreement.

I had completed my applied mathematics coursework at Hopkins in two years, so I had a broad but shallow maths background. Already in Senegal, there were moments where I realised that I needed more coursework, but I wanted that coursework to be in a department that would be friendly to my interdisciplinary interests. The University of Limerick has a math department that includes coursework focused on biology and geoscience, and boasts a strong relationship with industry that is leveraged to furnish MSc students with industrially-oriented dissertation topics. I knew that UL

would be the right place for me.

At the University of Limerick I enrolled in an MSc Math Modelling, and had the chance to take coursework to prepare me for further graduate studies. I took on a dissertation that was a part of a bigger University of Limerick project examining the Island-wide electricity grid. Quickly scheduling electricity production on a grid that includes substantial wind power is challenging. Outside of the Department of Maths and Stats I tutored high school math downtown in the St. Mary's district with the Limerick City Community Development Programme. I also became involved in a Kahn Academy supported Island-wide maths programme called MATHletes Ireland, writing problems used in their many competitions.

After graduating UL, I accepted a Research Assistantship at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), where I am working in the MIT Humanitarian Response Lab and at the same time I am studying for a MS Technology and Policy. I am currently on a project that examines supply chains in developing countries. My Limerick coursework in mathematical programming and statistics is essential for my research. This January, I took an MIT Public Service Fellowship to work with the United Nations World Food Programme in Uganda for 3 weeks to study grain silo and bag supply chains. I will return to Uganda again this summer for more extensive research on grain, and grain silo and bag supply chains.

I knew that UL would be the right place for me to continue to deepen my quantitative toolbox, I really enjoyed my time there and feel the course opened up further opportunities for me.



# A Peek at

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## UL LAUNCHES A 'REAL TIME' WINDOW INTO WORLD WAR 1

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**T**he University of Limerick Glucksman Library enjoys within its walls a treasure trove of historical material under the guardianship of Head of Special Collections & Archives Ken Bergin and his team. Special Collections remains to be one of the most delightful experiences for visitors to UL offering within an environment of newness and innovation a trip back to the past. But UL's newest archive material offers a unique combination of the old and the new.

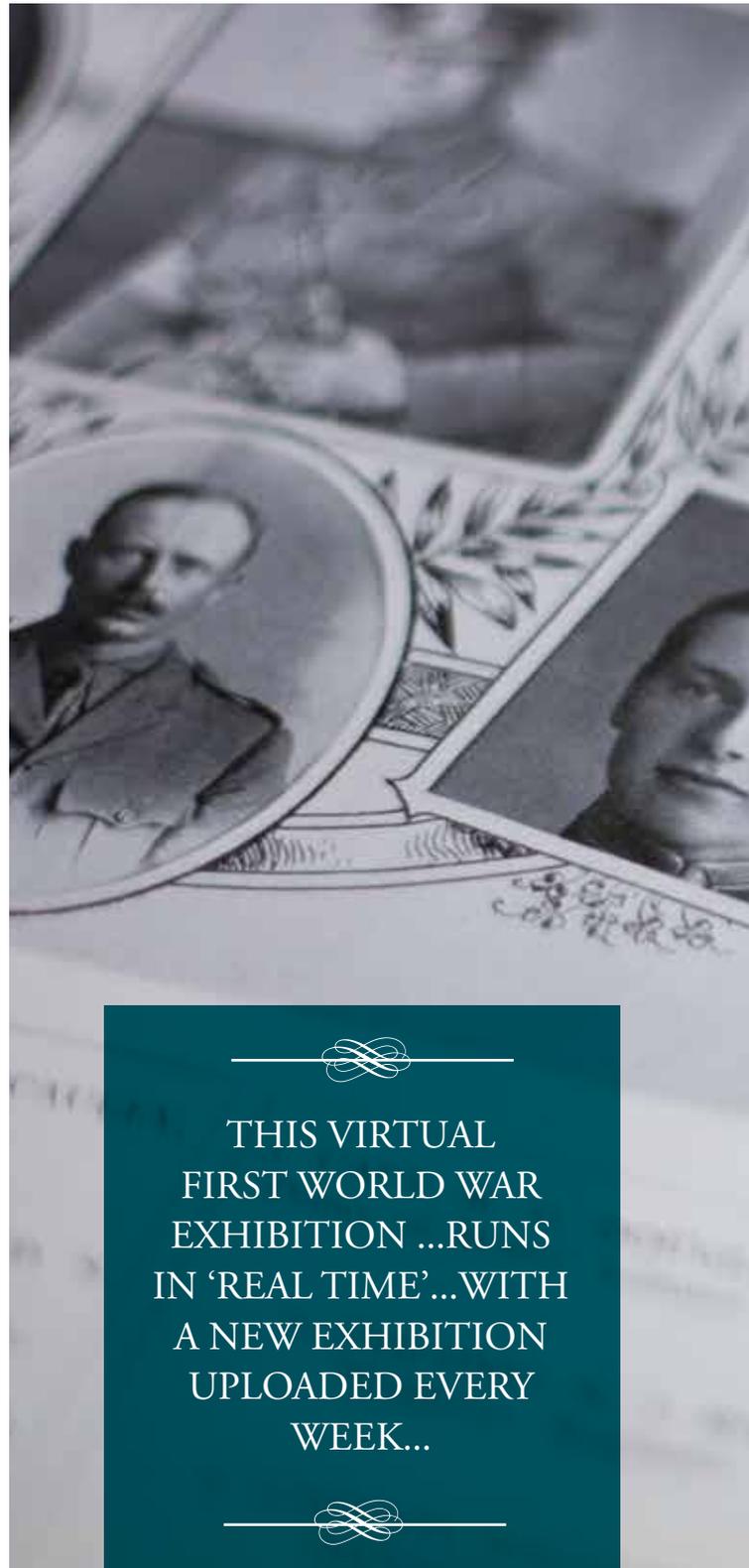
# *the Past...*





The University recently launched a real time window into the past with a dynamic archive project entitled “It’s a Long Way to Tipperary – An Irish Story of the Great War”. Officially launched by the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Heather Humphreys T.D. The initiative involves an active online archive following the lives of a single family in weekly online bulletins throughout the First World War. The diaries, correspondence, photographs and memorabilia of the Armstrong family of Moyaliffe Castle, County Tipperary, provide a fascinating insight into the social, physical and emotional impact of the conflict on individuals, families and society.

This virtual First World War Exhibition [www.longwaytotipperary.ul.ie/](http://www.longwaytotipperary.ul.ie/) runs in ‘real time’ until November 2018, with a new exhibition uploaded every week, allowing visitors and subscribers to the site to relive the events of the war as they unfolded exactly 100 years previously. The weekly exhibitions comprise of updates of the current stage of the war, photographs taken by Captain Pat Armstrong, press cuttings, and extracts from diaries and correspondence to give both the soldier’s and the civilian’s experience of the war. “It’s a Long Way to Tipperary is an exciting departure for the Special Collections & Archives Department at the Glucksman Library. It is the first time the library has created an online exhibition of original archival material to coincide with the commemoration of a defining event in history such as the First World War. The weekly narrative of our project is presented in a blog. It is designed to draw people into the world of 1914-1918 and experience what life was like for those at war and their families at home. There is almost a soap opera feel to the regular letters and photographs sent and received by



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THIS VIRTUAL  
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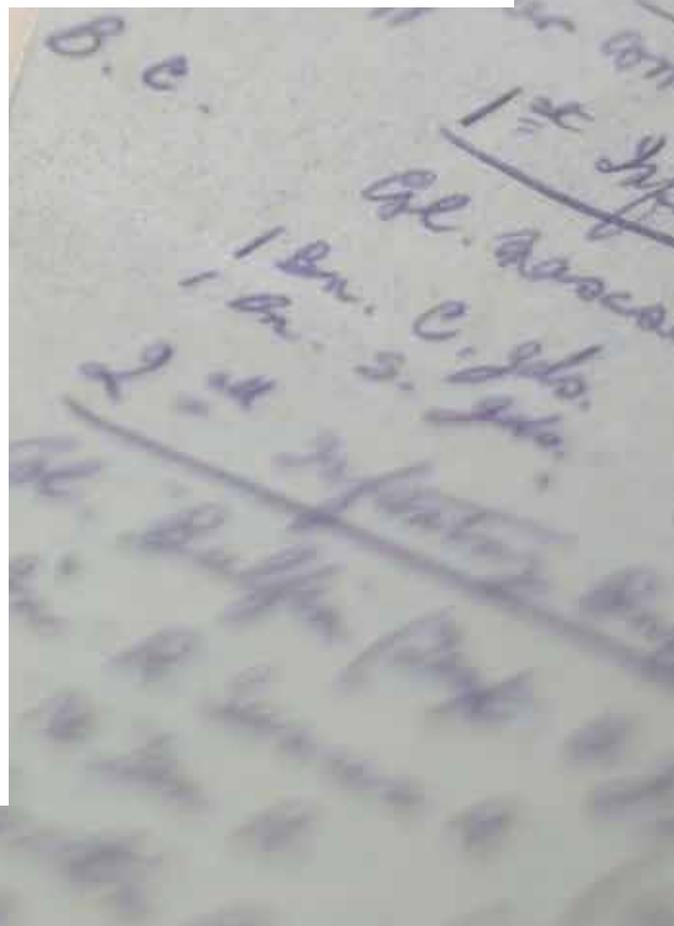


the Armstrong family. You are drawn into a world of a family at war. The library has employed extensive use of social media including Facebook and Twitter to promote the venture, with weekly tweets to subscribers using Jess Armstrong (Pat Armstrong's sister) as the narrator", says Ken Bergin.

"The material is part of a collection of some 50,000 items, including over 13,000 photograph albums, prints, negatives, metal and glass plates, slides and film, items dating from 1662 to 1999 donated to the University in 2001 by Graham and Susan Armstrong of Natal, South Africa. The weekly posts, primarily based on the letters and diaries of Captain William Maurice 'Pat' Armstrong, provide first-hand accounts of events as they unfolded and the diaries of his sister Jess and mother Rosalie illuminate the civilian life of the time." adds Anna-Maria Hajba – Consultant Archivist at the Glucksman Library. Anna is also responsible for generating the weekly posts which have attracted over 4,000 people a week who are logging in to check on Pat Armstrong's wartime service.

The material maps out the progress of the Great War in graphic detail with first-hand accounts of the first Battle of Ypres, the Gallipoli campaign, the campaign in Palestine, the Battle of Arras to name but a few, but it serves a much more valuable purpose. While the grand campaigns of World War One are illustrated it is the human struggle, the endurance, the sense of duty that is of even more

interest, keeping people tuned in online. Dr David Fleming, Lecturer in History at UL, gives an insight. "The Armstrong's were not grandees of the first rank, but were certainly of the second, and played an important role in the Church of Ireland and the army. For them, military service was expected and eagerly pursued. It was no surprise then that young Pat Armstrong, already in the army when war erupted in August 1914, was eager to fight. That sense of duty is certainly seen throughout the letters and diary entries in the exhibition. But far more revealing, is the story of how a family dealt with competing emotions, newly created by the outbreak of war. →





On the one hand, army service for any young Armstrong was nothing new, and danger was expected. And for Pat's father, Marcus, himself a retired officer, it was 'the chance of a lifetime'. It was an opportunity to fight and make a reputation, and to be 'manly'. Indeed, for many the nature of modern war, as they saw, would be quick and decisive, so there was no time to be lost. 'A good defeat at the start might knock the punch out of them', as Pat's father put it in August 1914.

*Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Heather Humphreys  
T.D. with Vice President  
Academic and Registrar, Professor  
Paul McCutcheon and Gonnait  
O'Riordan, Director of the UL  
Glucksman Library at the launch of  
the exhibition.*



THE EXHIBITION HAS  
MARRIED THE MEDIUM  
OF SOCIAL MEDIA TO THE  
WOOD PULPED PAPER OF  
THE PAST...

Tipperary did seem a long way from where Pat's mother Rosalie and her daughters were living in Kent. For them, Pat's departure for France was difficult. But outwardly they kept a stiff upper lip. One family friend asked Pat's sister, Jess, 'if her mother held up alright' when saying goodbye to Pat in mid August. Keeping one's emotions in check was important. Pat wrote to his mother from the middle of the English Channel, to thank her for being 'simply splendid yesterday.

I know how horrid it was for you, far worse for you than for me'. Indeed as the exhibition unfolds week after week, the full waste, horror and brutality of war is revealed, and with it the language used in these letters and diaries changes from creepiness to awfulness to loss and sadness."

The exhibition has married the medium of social media to the wood pulped paper of the past whilst opening up the doors of the Glucksman Library to an international audience. Speaking from the launch of the archive Gonnait O'Riordan, Director of the UL Glucksman Library, said "accessible to a worldwide audience the exhibition has great currency and is much more penetrating than a once-off physical exhibition of archival items or books which commemorate the First World War. The exhibition is providing the University of Limerick with an international platform to tell the story of the Irish contribution to the War." Ken Bergin continues "Learning and discovery should be open to all and what is most satisfying about this exhibition is that it is an effective vehicle for promoting our unique and distinct collections for both the amateur and professional researcher.... giving everybody access to a peek at the past".

The exhibition has something for everyone but above all is a vehicle of remembrance, Dr Fleming who spoke at the official launch sums it up here, "Commemoration can mean many things to many people. For some, particularly families like the Armstrongs, remembering was about recalling and respecting the sacrifice of loved ones.



*Pictured above left: Dr Pat McMahon, WWI Researcher, Sinead Keogh, Digital Developer Special Collections with, Ken Begin, Anna-Maria Hajba and Jean Turner, Special Collections. Pictured above right: Dr David Fleming addresses the audience at the launch.*

For others, especially governments and states, it is not only about remembering sacrifice, idealism and heroism, but also reflects current political imperatives and relations. For universities, it must be about seeking understanding and meaning from past events, and searching for that elusive truth". All of the original material in the Armstrong archive can be viewed, by appointment, in the Special Collections and Archives Department of the Glucksman Library as well as many other estate, political and literary collections.

**FOLLOW THE ARMSTRONGS ON SOCIAL MEDIA**

 /ArmstrongFamilyMoyaliffe

 /ww1ul



## GRADUATION DAYS

This year's Winter Conferings saw the graduation of over 1,800 students including 74 PhD graduates.

CONGRATULATIONS!



**1** | Sharon Forde, Annaghdown, Co. Galway, Aisling Barnes, Corbally, Limerick and Lorraine Higgins, Abbeynockmoy, Co. Galway who graduated with Masters in Human Resource Management. **2** | The Department of Nursing and Midwifery had their first cohort of International students graduate with MSc Nursing Studies awards, are pictured here with Department faculty. **3** | Vice President Academic and Registrar Professor Paul McCutcheon pictured with UL Governing Authority Deputy Chairperson, Michael Houlihan, who represented the Chancellor at the ceremonies. **4** | PhD graduates Elizabeth Finnegan, Banagher, Co. Offaly, Michael Vaughan Bezuidenhout, Johannesburg, South Africa and Claudia Coughlan, Cratloe, Co. Clare.



- 5 | *Majella O'Gorman, who was conferred with an MBA (Corporate), pictured with her husband Tom Feeney and their sons Eoin, Conor and Brian Feeney all from Castletroy, Limerick.*
- 6 | *Helen Leddy from Redhills, Co. Cavan who graduated with Masters in International Tourism pictured with her niece Alyssa.*
- 7 | *Woody Schiettecatte, France, BA Irish Music and Dance Irish World Academy of Music and Dance at the University of Limerick and also recipient of UL Cooperative Education Award.*



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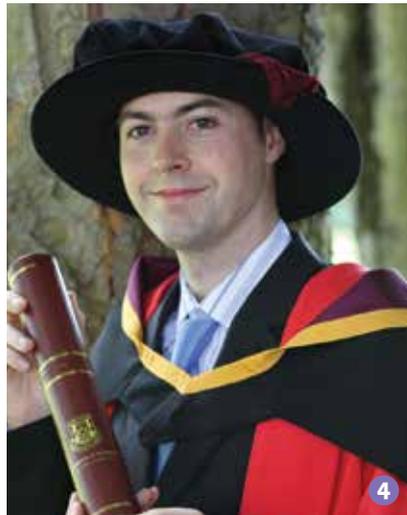


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# A SELECTION OF THIS PAST ACADEMIC YEAR'S SUMMER GRADUATES ...



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- 1 | *Dr Patrick Kieley, Tarbert, Kerry who received the Award for Excellence in Teaching 2014.*
- 2 | *Connor Cunnane from Ardnacrusha who was conferred with a BEng Biomedical Engineering with First Class Honours.*
- 3 | *Maha Alotaibi, Limerick who was conferred with a HDip. Science & Engineering with First Class Honours and with English as a Foreign Language.*
- 4 | *Dr Stephen Broderick, Cloonacastle, Kylemore, Loughrea, Co. Galway who was conferred with a Doctor of Philosophy.*
- 5 | *Newmarket natives Michael Donnellan, conferred with a BTech(Education) Materials and Architectural Technology and his first cousin Carol O'Leary, conferred with a BSc (Education) Biological Sciences.*



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- 6 | Attending the conferring were graduates, Caroline Jennings, Sanymount Co. Dublin, Cliona McGowan, Lismore Co. Longford and Tayana Kelly, Limerick.
- 7 | Richie Corcoran, Rosegreen, Tipperary conferred with a Diploma in Management photographed with his daughters Jane(5) and Amy(3).
- 8 | Triona O'Sullivan, Rosscarberry conferred with a BBS.
- 9 | Kian Eichholz, Cappawhite, Tipperary conferred with a BEng Biomedical Engineering with First Class Honours and winner of the Silver Medal for First Place Science & Engineering 2014.
- 10 | Padraig O'Carroll, Cappagh, Limerick, and Brendan Giltenane, Mungret, who were both conferred with a BSc (Education) in Materials and Architectural Technology.



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- 16 | Marie Ryan from Dripsey, Cork, Gerald O' Nolan from Annacotty Limerick and Olubunmi Ipinnaie from Nigeria, all received their PhD's. from the Kemmy Business School.
- 17 | Anushree Dwivedi, Castletroy, Limerick, Orlagh Scanlon, Clonlara, Clare and Anne O'Sullivan, Lahinch, Clare all conferred with a BEng Biomedical Engineering.
- 18 | Athlete siblings Thomas Barr, Dunmore, Waterford conferred with a BEng Mechanical Engineering pictured with his sister Jessie Barr.
- 19 | Kevin Brosnan, Newcastlewest, Co. Limerick who was conferred with a BSc in Mathematical Sciences. Kevin won the University's Gold Medal for best overall student 2014 out of 2,634 graduates. He was also awarded the Silver Medal Co-Operative Education Award. Thankfully we get to hold on to Kevin as he plans to spend the next 4 years here studying towards a PhD.
- 20 | Aine Condon, Clonmel conferred with a BSc(Education) Biological Sciences.



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- 21 | Pictured are Special Distinction Awards recipients from Graduate Entry Medical School and Clinical Therapies conferring ceremony, from left to right, Jennifer Johnson, First Prize in the Discipline of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Aine Fox, Swords Co. Dublin, First Prize in the Discipline of Paediatrics, Carla Henderson, Canada, First Prize in the Discipline of General PracticelPrimary Care, Deirdre Smith, Kilbride Co. Meath, First Prize in the Discipline of Psychiatry, Emma Tierney, Ennis Co. Clare, First Prize in the Discipline of Medicine and winner of overall student prize, and James Dalrymple, Curragha Co. Meath, First Prize in the Discipline of Surgery.
- 22 | Pictured was Special Distinction Award recipient, Deirdre Smith, Kilbride Co. Meath, First Prize in the Discipline of Psychiatry at the GEMs and Clinical Therapies Conferring.
- 23 | Bachelor of Medicine Bachelor of Surgery Tatyana Kelly, Limerick with her two year old son Moses.
- 24 | Special Distinction Award recipient Emma Tierney, Ennis Co. Clare, First Prize in the Discipline of Medicine and winner of overall student prize gets a helping hand from her sister Kate Tierney at the GEMS and Clinical Therapies Conferring.



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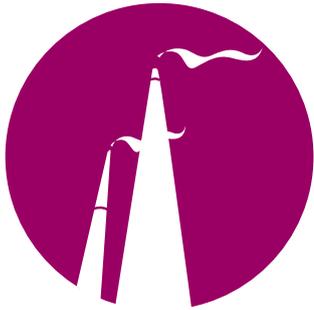
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## ALUMNI

# GRADUATE INTERVIEW

As the Boston Marathon Bombings Trial ends, we profile UL alumnus and US Police Officer Richard (Dic) Donohue MA '05 as he continues his recovery. Richard was critically wounded during the manhunt for the bombing suspects in 2013. He recalls his time as an international student at UL...

*Dic, how is your recovery going?*

The short answer is that I am not 100 percent, but I feel pretty good. I am lucky to be alive and I can't help but also think of the people who have helped me every step of the way since then.

*Tell us about your early life:*

I grew up in Winchester, Massachusetts, a suburb of Boston with my brother, Ed, and sister, Consuelo. As a kid, I played many sports and as a family, we enjoyed family trips across the US, and abroad to countries including Mexico, Panama, Colombia and the UK. I didn't take the "normal route" for college and instead enrolled at a challenging military college - the Virginia Military Institute (VMI). At VMI, I enrolled in a rigorous military, academic and athletic programme and completed a degree in history. Following completion, I commissioned as an officer in the US Navy.

*Why did you decide to study at UL?*

I had studied and lived in Europe while in school and in the military, which definitely played a part in me pursuing an international education. I have always had a passion for travel, making the Master of Arts in International Tourism at UL a major draw for me. Overall, it was a combination of the location, programme and atmosphere that made UL an excellent pick. Plus, I have Irish heritage, my relatives emigrated from Ireland to New York and Boston over 100 years ago.

*Tell us about your time at UL:*

It was much different than my undergraduate atmosphere! The campus offered us all the tools we needed to get the studying complete, as well as a great background for other activities. My friends and I also had the chance to take advantage of the sports facilities on a daily basis.

Academically, I was a little surprised on day one because our class size was small which was advantageous to learning and interacting with each other. The overall variety of projects and courses allowed us to share thoughts and experience, contributing to our academic development. We had students from Poland, China and the Czech



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OVERALL, *it was a combination of the LOCATION, PROGRAMME AND ATMOSPHERE that made UL an excellent pick.*

”

Republic who also shared an international perspective. The class trips to key tourism sites and infrastructure in Ireland were an essential part of the programme. As an international student, this also allowed me to take in some of the sites while studying and learn more about Irish culture. The most challenging part of the course was completing a dissertation. However, it gave me the opportunity to work on a project that truly interested me: the impact of the Olympic Games.

Overall, I had a lot of fun at UL. I made a lot of friends and friendships I have to this day, and so many great memories especially of our class trips, Munster rugby matches and being able to travel around Ireland. And I know I would disappoint people if I didn't mention some of the legendary nights we had at The Lodge and other Limerick hotspots (or early mornings at Abrekebabra!).

As an international student, I was always made feel welcome and invited to peoples' homes for the holidays or for weekends, which is a tremendous gesture for someone who came to Ireland alone. One particular memory I have is of panicking a little bit at the end of January, 2005, as the New England Patriots made the Super Bowl and I needed a place to watch it. A friend from the course had Sky Sports at home and invited me over to watch it, even though it started late at night. We ended up having a great time and watched the Patriots win the game!

***Do you have any advice for international students coming to UL?***

My advice would be to not sit back and keep to yourself or other international students. Reach out and become part of the programme and campus community. You'll easily learn more about Ireland and feel like you are family. For me personally, it's been advantageous to have been an international student, since I've made contacts and friendships with people from Ireland and beyond.

***When did you decide to become a Police Officer?***

After I had served as a naval officer and studied at UL, I worked in the hospitality industry, specifically in hotel marketing with Omni Hotels, working at Omni Parker House, the longest continuously operating hotel in the US. I later transferred to hotel and hospitality consulting with PKF Consulting's Boston office where I worked with clients across the US and at military base quality of life projects.

Then, in 2010, I decided to make a career change and enter the police academy at the age of 30. I wanted to make a difference in my community and for me, this felt like a job with a true purpose. Following graduation from the academy, I was offered a position with the MBTA Transit Police Department based in Boston where (prior to April, 2013), I worked in the patrol division and also at several major events each year including New Year's Eve, the Boston Marathon and July 4th. Nowadays, I work in a somewhat non-traditional police department. We are specifically tasked with serving the MBTA, or the "T," which provides mass transit to people in 175 cities in towns in the area and beyond. On average there are over one million trips taken per day on the T, making it a busy department.

***How have the events of two years ago impacted you?***

On April 18, 2013, even three days after the Marathon Bombings, things were still "normal" for me. That night, however, everything changed for me forever. I responded to the scene of where my friend and fellow police officer was murdered, and just a couple of hours later I nearly lost my life. These are facts I can never take for granted.

Physically, it took me two months to



get out of the hospital and back home. This was followed with many months of rehabilitation and separate surgeries. I have been left with some lingering nerve pain and damage in my left foot and leg, but have learned to manage it at this point. And I have seen so much good come out of a horrible experience. It started when I was still in surgery with family, friends and fellow officers coming to the hospital to offer a prayer or be by my side. A friend of mine I met at UL flew to Boston from Missouri as soon as he heard the word I had been injured. I remember the “Boston Strong” feelings and efforts from people all over the world and I’ve had the opportunity to meet the President and visit the White House.

The experience also introduced me to the American Red Cross – specifically its blood donation mission. My wife, Kim, has really been a driving force as well. I learned that I received 46 units of blood –platelets, plasma and red blood cells, to keep me alive after I was shot. I hosted my first blood drive in July, 2013 and helped collect over 170 units of blood, with the ability to save over 500 lives. Since that time, I have hosted and promoted several blood drives throughout the area. Last year, I became a member of the Red Cross Blood Services Board of Directors and was recognised at the National Leadership Awards Dinner for volunteer service.

*Dic is able to give blood for the first time in April 2015 since his injuries in 2013.*



*Dic introduces his son Richie to some of his UL classmates on a visit to Ireland in 2015, from left to right: Will Duggan, Martin Gildea, James McHugh, John Townsend.*



*Dic with his wife Kim and son Richie.*

I have also worked with the Red Cross to record public service announcements and unveil the blood donor smartphone app. In April of this year, I was finally able to give blood at a blood drive in Watertown, Massachusetts which is the same town where I sustained my critical injury.

***Finally, tell us about your recent visit to Limerick:***

My wife, Kim and I returned to Ireland in April for a wedding and this resulted in a reunion with college friends from UL. Our visit also meant our two -and-a-half year old son, Richie had his first trip to Ireland.



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## UL ALUMNI *masterclass*

In keeping with ULAA's commitment to deliver opportunities for graduates to network and enhance their educational experience, ULAA hosted a stimulating and topical Masterclass in Economics in Dublin in April.

Joint Speakers at this well-attended event were the University's Senior Lecturer in Economics and well-established media commentator, Dr Stephen Kinsella and UL alumnus, Professor Alan Ahearne BBS '89 Head of Economics at NUI Galway, a Non-Executive Director of Central Bank of Ireland and advisor to the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The Masterclass entitled "Ireland in the Global Economy: Where to Now?" provided a platform for both Economists to present their views on Ireland's future and was followed by a lively Q&A session with the alumni audience.

The Masterclass was held at Iveagh House where graduates were welcomed by fellow UL alumnus, Jimmy Deenihan T.D., Minister for Diaspora Affairs who shared his personal memories of his time as a PE student on campus in the mid-1970's. This event was made possible through support from the UL/ Ulster Bank Enablement Fund and all proceeds on the night were donated to the University of Limerick Student Financial Aid Fund which assists students facing genuine unexpected hardship by providing them with a loan or a modest bursary so that they can continue with their studies.



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**1** | Bobby O'Connor BBS '00 & Chairman, ULAA; Dr Stephen Kinsella; Professor Alan Ahearne BBS '89 and Majella O'Connell BA '91 & Executive Director ULAA.

**2** | Oisín Collins BSc '08; Adrian O'Higgins LLB '11 and Allison Cavanagh LLB '11. **3** | Craig Cannon; David White BBS '06 and Colm Dawson LLB '07.

**4** | Hannah Twomey BEng '13; Stephen Byrne BA '13; Dr Stephen Kinsella, and Elaine Kennedy. **5** | Dr Stephen Kinsella and Professor Alan Ahearne BBS '89. **6** | Patrick Molloy MA '06 poses a question during a Q&A.

**7** | Eleanor Treanor and Julie Kennedy BA '92.



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# graduate LIVES

## 1 LOUISE RYAN | MSc Marketing Consumption and Society '10

Limerick-born, Louise lives in Cork where she co-owns and runs a busy design and branding agency called Ball & Socket which specialises in brand activation. In her role, Louise oversees strategy and account management to ensure best results for clients, including Musgraves, Mars Ireland, Shannon Airport, Molson Coors and Actavis Ireland. She previously worked in agencies such as Huguenot and Impact Media and was also a director of JOE.ie which allowed her to gain a vast knowledge of digital media and how to engage and activate brands in the digital sphere.

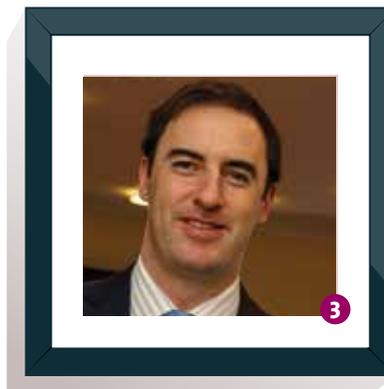
## 2 ROBERT O'DOWD | BA European Studies '94

A native of Ennis Co. Clare, Robert is Director for International Training at the University of León in Spain. His area of research involves bringing learners of different languages together in collaborative project work using online communication tools. He recently coordinated a major European project on the subject which was financed by the European Commission.



## 3 JOHN HARTY | BBS Personnel '03

Limerick native John has established himself as a leading Executive Search Consultant in the area of Non-Executive Director Appointments and his sectorial expertise lies mainly in financial services. John spends his time between Dublin and London where his company, Harty International, is part of the Board Partners organisation which has a global footprint and one which focuses solely on board room appointments.



## 4 DENISE MANGAN-FAHY | MBA '11

With GE Capital Aviation Services, the largest Aircraft and Engine Lessor globally since 1998, Denise recently changed roles and is now Senior Vice-President Portfolio and Operations looking after approximately 490 lease engines. Married to Tommy, Denise lives in Co Clare where the couple have three children, Denis, Peter and Clare.



## 5 EANNA MURPHY | Masters in Innovation Management '14

Clare native, Eanna is Technical Account Manager for Payback Loyalty Systems who provide loyalty solutions for a large number of clients. The company was recently shortlisted for two awards in the Irish Software Association Awards and has announced 28 new jobs at their offices in the National Technology Park next to UL. Eanna lives in Ennis with his wife Martina and daughter Leah.





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**8 DR SINÉAD KENNY** |  
*BSc Materials Science '99, PhD '02, Masters Project Management '09*

Having spent over 15 years working as an engineer in various medical device companies, Sinéad recently returned to her “roots” in materials science. As Co-Founder & CEO of DiaNia Technologies, she is now working on developing and commercialising a new material for use in catheter based medical devices, which will eliminate the need for Teflon liners and hydrophilic coatings in reducing friction.

**9 DR JAMES RING** |  
*BSc Environmental Science '03*

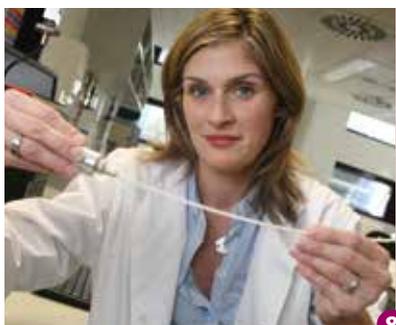
Limerick native James recently stepped into the role of Chief Executive at Limerick Chamber where he is responsible for the operational management and development of a new strategy for Limerick Chamber as it seeks to strengthen and support the economic vitality of the region. He previously held the position of CEO of Limerick Civic Trust for four years and was also project manager at UL where he worked specifically on improving education attainment rates in regeneration communities. He began his career with IBEC as an Environment and Public Affairs Executive.

**10 SIOBHAN NOLAN-MULKERRINS** | *BA New Media and English '09* and **ROBERT MULKERRINS** | *BEng Biomedical Engineering '08*

Following his graduation from UL, Robert was recruited as part of a Professional Development Programme with Abbott Ireland where he spent two years rotating four assignments in different locations. He has been based at their Clonmel plant since 2010 and has recently relocated to Abbott's Puerto Rico plant to take up the role of Engineering Manager. Originally from Galway, Robert is married to Siobhan and they have a son, Michael. To facilitate the family's move abroad, Wexford native Siobhan has stepped away from her role with the Department of An Taoiseach where she was Parliamentary Assistant to Government Chief Whip Minister Paul Kehoe. Prior to this role, she was Munster Regional Fundraising Manager for Special Olympics Ireland.

**11 LOUISE O'BRIEN (NEÉ NAUGHTON)**  
*B Eng (Production Engineering) '89*

After a 20 year stint as a self-employed management system consultant, preceded by a role as Quality Manager with SPS Hi life Tools in Shannon, Louise changed direction in 2012. She is now a qualified Master Chocolatier with her own artisan chocolate company, MoonRiver Chocolates. Married to fellow-alumnus Pat (B Eng Mechanical '89), they live in Limerick with their three children, David, Maebh and Sean.



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**6 & 7 LISA LEENANE** | *BBS '94 & MBS '96* and  
**JOHN LEENANE** | *BBS '94*

Originally from Co Limerick, Lisa (Neé O'Dea) is based in the San Francisco Bay Area where she provides strategic and executive communications services to start-ups and FT100 companies such as Cisco. John, originally from Tipperary, is a Partner at ZURB, a product design company based in Campbell, CA. They currently live in San José and have four young boys.



## LIBRARY MEMBERSHIP FOR UL ALUMNI

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UL Alumni may now continue to come and use the University of Limerick's Glucksman Library long after they have graduated, by applying for free membership. This new service was introduced as part of an expansion of library services to external readers following the implementation of an access control system in the building. Alumni can apply via the library website and will receive a card for a three-year period which confers access to the library. Alumni Plus membership is fee-based and includes both access and borrowing rights for alumni who wish to have full use of the library's spaces and collections.

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*Pictured are diaries from the Armstrong Collection, the newest acquisition at the Glucksman Library Special Collections Department.*



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6-year-old Cormac Downey from Shanagolden, Limerick is cheered on by his mother Catherine at the UL Kids Run for Fun in May.

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