

Winter 2012 Edition

# Links



The Magazine from The Schools' Business Partnership



In this issue...

*A unique take on the Day in the Life Session with Bord Gáis Networks in Cork  
The Time to Read Programme rolls out nationally  
IT Companies make an impact in Donegal*

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### Front Cover Photos

#### Top Row: Left to Right

William Roche, ESB Moneypoint, with students from Kilrush CS at a recent site visit; Edenderry Power open their site to the students of Oaklands CC - Plant Manager Tom Egan pictured with students from Oaklands CC and their teacher Trisha Hynes

#### Middle Row: Left to Right

Time To Read library visit - volunteer reader Claire Kavanagh from Elavon with JP Murray from Arklow BNS; Dulux volunteer, Wesley O'Shea, with students from North Presentation SS at their site visit; Chelsea Richardson from Oliver Plunketts NS tasting Time To Read with Kate Mellon, HR Manager at Workday

#### Bottom Row: Left to Right

Natasha Hamilton from Workday, with scholarship winners Jason Kane and Joseph Brennan, from St. Vincent's SS and Frank Kieran, school coordinator at their graduation night presentation; Niamh Brennan and Aleisha Yermark from Ardscoil Mhuire, Corbally with Principal Collette McGrath and the Cook HR VP, Alice O'Dwyer

# Welcome



Check out our website  
[www.bitc.ie/schools-business-partnership](http://www.bitc.ie/schools-business-partnership)

It is a time to reflect and take stock of the goodwill that the business community in Ireland has continued to generate this past year and the openness of all in our education sector to develop partnerships with their local company. You have inspired our European counterparts in the Czech Republic to replicate Student Mentoring, Management Excellence for Principals & Teachers, Skills @ Work and now I'm delighted to say that Slovakia wants to commence SBP!

Since our summer edition we are delighted to tell you that **Dundalk IT, Pettitt's Supermarkets, AOL, Shell** (2nd link), **Communicorp, KBC Bank, Smurfit Kappa, Veolia, Thermo King, Covidien, Dairygold** (2nd link), **Dunbia, Mazars, Verizon & 3M** have all joined SBP and established a link with a local School Completion Programme school.

The Department of Education & Skills' latest report issued in November on **Student Retention in Ireland** demonstrates the considerable success of the School Completion Programme and also the Schools' Business Partnership to improving the retention rates at post primary level in Ireland. The average retention rate for DEIS schools stands at 80.1% (2006 cohort) up from 68.2% (2001 cohort). Ireland must

continue to provide support to schools in need and I believe we can make Ireland the leading EU member state for school retention by 2020.

2013 will be a challenge for us as the **Department of Children & Youth Affairs** has applied a 6.5% cut to our annual funding. This is disappointing as we know our model provides significant value for money and we are an evidence-based initiative.

The 2012 evaluation reports of our programmes demonstrate the significant impact and benefit that the business input and contribution is making to the Irish education sector. 90% of the teachers saw a positive impact on the attitude, commitment and focus of students as a result of participating in the Skills @ Work Programme.

Season's Greetings to all involved in SBP programmes: volunteers, students, teachers & principals - thank you for your continued support!

**Germaine Noonan**  
**Programme Manager**



# Meet the...

## ...Students from the Skills @ Work Programme

*Students from around the country share the advantages of this year's Skills @ Work Programme and the benefits of businesses working with local schools.*



"We are interested in the S@W Programme as this is a once in a lifetime opportunity which will greatly benefit us in the future. We hope to engage with new people and improve our social skills while also learning new skills. The S@W Programme will help increase our knowledge of the business environment based on the practical experiences of the staff at Abbott. We're particularly looking forward to the CV & interview aspects of the programme as it will help us prepare for future work opportunities."

**Students from Mercy College, Sligo who are linked with Abbott**

"I find it very good to know what it's like to work in a real job when I'm older, and to learn about all the different roles that Boots have to offer."

"I will learn how to show up in a nice way to an interview and how to have a nice CV."

"I am finding this programme very interesting - I would never have thought that I would. It's very helpful and can help students feel good about themselves."

"I think it's a great idea, it's giving me a practical approach to the real world."

"I have already learnt better skills on writing out CVs and tips on a good interview."

"It's good... it builds our confidence and helps us go out there and look for a job, it teaches us not to be afraid, to go for what you want to do."

"As 6th year students we are leaving education and will be looking for jobs, the information provided by the Boots team is very beneficial for us."

**Students from Collinstown Park Community College who are linked with Boots**

"It is great to hear from people who work in business. We've learned all about Boots and what goes on in a normal day for someone who works there. We've had a chance to be interviewed and got feedback so that we can improve. If I ever go for an interview I know that I will be confident enough to give it my best shot - to know what to say and the way to dress - so to make the most of my abilities."

What would I say to a student who is thinking of doing the S@W programme? I'd tell them to do it - they would benefit greatly from it!"

**Ciara, Presentation Secondary School in Limerick who are linked with Boots**



"I feel the link between my school, the Donahies CS, and Walls is very good. It's a very smart idea to link schools with businesses because it gives a good perspective on the work that businesses do day-to-day. We are heading on a site visit to Walls soon. I am really looking forward to this because it will give us an idea of how they do business. I will ask lots of questions on the day."

I think if I work hard and attend all the sessions with Walls, I will learn a lot about business and hope that this link could possibly lead to job opportunities when I leave school in the future. I am looking forward to the year ahead with SBP and Walls Construction."

**Thomas Rooney, LCA 1 student**

**The Donahies Community School are linked with Walls**

## Irish Life Group - Back For More!

*Time to Read rolled out nationally this year, with 15 schools and companies participating. Irish Life Group enjoyed themselves so much in the pilot programme they are involved once again.*

**Time to Read** is a primary school literacy enhancement programme which was piloted in 2010 with six schools and six companies. **Irish Life** were one of the companies who took part in this pilot and their volunteers enjoyed it so much they are back for more! As in the pilot programme Irish Life are linked with **St. Finian's National School** in Finglas.

**Deirdre Rigby**, Head of HR at ILIM comments "as a programme Time to Read fits in well with the ethos of Irish Life's CSR initiatives. We are so delighted to be part of this again."

**Philip Hearty**, who was a reader on the pilot programme, tells us why he has volunteered again:

"Martin Luther King once claimed to have a dream. If I could have a dream it would be that the greatest gift of all would be given to all children and that gift is a love of reading.

Having seen how my own nephew benefited when he was given the opportunity to participate in a similar program with a support teacher in his school, I was inspired to participate in the pilot Time to Read program run by the Schools' Business Partnership in 2010. When the program was rolled out nationally it was great to be chosen to take part once again.

I am a management accountant and when I took part in the pilot



**Irish Life volunteer reader, Philip Hearty, with Dean Morley and Arron Egan from St. Finian's NS in Finglas**

program I was outside my comfort zone at first, but great support was given to all the volunteers by SBP, the school principal and all the teachers. With the roll out of the programme this year I'm back in the same school and it's as though I have never been away. What a difference that bit of experience makes!

There is a great buzz in the school and the two children I am working with are very enthusiastic about their reading. Both are already looking forward to the library visit and the visit to our office which will take soon. I am buddied with two boys, Arron and Dean.

In the last few weeks, both children have really opened up. Each week, as well as some great reading,

there is a general discussion about their football achievements during the previous week, the book they took home and more importantly how Liverpool FC did the previous weekend!

*"I would highly recommend that colleagues and companies get involved with the programme."*

After six weeks, I have watched the two children discover the enjoyment that can be got from reading. I look forward to every Tuesday morning, when I get to read with them. I have seen how their confidence is soaring and who knows where this new found confidence may take them in their adult life!"

## Site Visits from Around the Country

*Students and BITCI Coordinators highlight some of the unique Site Visits taking place.*

### Boys and Their Toys

“A 5km underground conveyor belt, scoop trucks that can carry 12 tonnes of gravel in one load and tipper trucks with €2,000 tyres – it was all on a massive scale the day the 6th year lads from North Mon went to the Roadstone Wood’s gravel quarry at Ballincolling, Co. Cork. Tim O’Mahony, a self confessed Roadstone Wood ‘lifer’, gave a great account of working at the sharp end (literally) of the construction industry. We all agreed that lads, big and small, have a life-long affinity with diggers and trucks!”

**Celine McGrath**, SBP Coordinator

**Roadstone Wood are linked with North Monastery SS**



### Great Sounds at Bose!

“Students from Inver College got a great insight into working life at Bose GP when they were taken on a tour of the state of the art lean manufacturing facility in Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan. Bose Corporation commenced its operation in Ireland in 1978. The prime function of the Carrickmacross facility is to manufacture home entertainment systems for the European market. The students were really impressed when they were given a demonstration of the latest sound technologies which included the Bose SoundDock® a digital music system as well as the Bose VideoWave entertainment system.”

**Mary McNally**, Bose GP

**Bose GP are linked with Inver College**



### M&S Through the Eyes of A Student

“Excitement was soaring as high as a kite with the unique opportunity that my fellow peers and I would be seeing the behind-the-scenes of a local business. It was extremely interesting to learn about the daily cycle of products arriving in the loading bay, being unpacked, stocked, and ultimately landing on the shelf for the consumer. Being given the reign of €150 and partnering up with my friend Niamh to decorate a mannequin with the clothes we “bought” was the highlight of my day. It was a great, positive learning experience which couldn’t have happened without the dedicated M&S staff.”

**Darragh Egan**, 4th year LCVP student

**Marks and Spencer are linked with Killarney Community College**



## DHL Delivers for Trinity Comprehensive

*Teresa Tyrrell, Marketing & Communications at DHL Global Forwarding, describes some of the benefits and impacts of participating in the Student Mentoring Programme*



Trinity Comprehensive Mentee Nathan Ryan with Teresa Tyrrell and Colin Fogarty from DHL

DHL Global Forwarding, based in St. Margaret's, has partnered with Trinity Comprehensive in Ballymun for the past three years. The company started by successfully delivering the Skills @ Work Programme and recently they extended their activities and involvement to include the Mentoring Programme. Since September 2011, 10 DHL mentors have been actively engaged in the two year programme with 6th year students.

The programme is a huge success with positive feedback coming from all those taking part – mentors and mentees alike. In addition to visiting for an hour every three weeks on-site at DHL with their mentors, the students get to see first-hand what it is like in a busy company involved with international trade.

Year 1 of the programme was really about everyone coming together and getting to know each other - this year we can see the relationships developing and the trust and friendship is evident at each of the sessions.

One of the mentors recently commented that:

*"This is a learning experience for everyone and most of us felt completely out of our comfort zone when the programme kicked off – but we had a social event that broke the ice early on last year and we hope to do something similar in the New Year. We are actually learning from each other."*

*"It's really been a great journey and I am definitely learning things about myself too through the process."*

Another DHL mentor said:

*"This is something completely new to me and I found it a bit difficult at first to find common ground with my mentee but I am delighted now that things are going so well. It takes time to build an open and respectful relationship and I think year two is when everything is really coming together."*

*"The student that I mentor is really working hard to get into a particular course and I hope that the small amount of time I spend encouraging and listening will help her to achieve her potential."*

So what does everyone get up to for their hour? Well it varies quite a lot! Some students look for help and support with CV development or preparation for interviews, while others are still trying to decide between courses to apply for so the mentors will explore and discuss the options – often just probing with questions, trying to get the student to come up with the answer themselves. Each session is different and each relationship between mentor and mentee is different but what is the same is the positive experience that everyone is having being part of the programme.



## The Schools' Business Partnership Links 2012

A&L Goodbody  
Abbott Diagnostic Division  
Abbott Diagnostics Division  
Abbott Diagnostic Division  
Abbott Fournier Laboratories  
Abbott Laboratories  
Abbott Mature Products  
Alkermes Pharma Ireland  
Allergan  
Allianz Worldwide Care  
Allied Irish Banks  
Analog Devices Ltd.  
AOL  
Assurant Services Ireland  
Athy Int'l Concentrates  
Aviva  
Ballina Beverages  
Ballina Beverages  
Ballygowan  
Bank of America Merrill Lynch

O'Connell PS, Dublin 1  
St. Michaels BNS, Longford  
Templemichael College  
Mercy College, Sligo  
St. Colman's CC, Cork  
Killinarden CS, Dublin 24  
Mater Christi SS, Dublin 11  
St. Aloysius College, Athlone  
Carrowbeg College, Westport  
St. Dominic's SS, Dublin 10  
Errigal College, Letterkenny  
Colaiste Mhichil CBS, Limerick  
Mercy SS, Inchicore  
Bishopstown CS, Cork  
Athy CC, Kildare  
Galway CC  
Scoil Iosa, Ballina, Mayo  
Moynes College, Ballina  
Desmond College, Limerick  
Ballinteer CS, Dublin 16

Cornmarket Group  
Covidien  
Dairygold  
Dairygold  
Danone  
Danske Bank  
DHL Global Forwarding Ltd.  
DHL Supply Chain  
Diageo  
Donegal Creameries  
Dublin Airport Authority  
Dulux Paints  
Dulux Paints  
Dulux Paints  
Dunbia  
Dundalk IT  
Dunnes Stores  
Edenderry Power Limited  
Elavon  
Elavon

St. Paul's CBS, Dublin 7  
Tullamore College, Offaly  
St. Fanahan's College, Cork  
Davis College, Cork  
McEgan College, Cork  
C.B.S. Synge Street, Dublin 8  
Trinity Comprehensive School  
Plunkett College, Dublin 9  
Pres. SS, Warrenmount  
Deele College, Raphoe  
St. Finian's CC, Swords  
Scoil Iosagain, Cork  
North Presentation SS, Cork  
Greenhills College, Dublin 12  
Ard Scoil Chiarain Naofa  
Ardee CS, Louth  
Gorey CS, Wexford  
Oaklands CC, Edenderry  
St. Columbanus NS, Dublin  
St. Killian's CS, Bray

Bank of Ireland  
Becton Dickinson  
Boots  
Boots  
Bord Gáis Networks  
Bord Gáis Energy  
Bose GP  
BWG Foods  
C & F Automotive  
Cahill May Roberts  
Carbery Group  
Carlow Local Authorities  
Cisco Systems  
Citi Bank  
Communicorp  
Cook Ireland Ltd.  
Cornmarket Group

St. Thomas' CC, Bray  
Cabinteely CS, Dublin 18  
Presentation SS, Limerick  
Collinstown Park CC, Dublin  
Gaescoil Úi Éarcain, Finglas  
Beneavin DLS College, Finglas  
Nagle CC, Cork  
Scoil Aiseiri Christ, Cork  
Scoil Iosagain, Cork  
Mount Carmel SS, Dublin 1  
Inver College, Carrickmacross  
Drimnagh Castle SS, Dublin  
Mullingar Community College  
Palmerstown CC, Dublin  
Maria Immaculata CC  
Carlow VS  
Ringsend College, Dublin 4  
St. Laurence O'Tooles CBS  
Our Lady of Mercy, Drimnagh  
Ard Scoil Mhuire, Corbally  
St. David's CBS, Dublin 5

Elavon  
Elavon  
ESB Headoffice  
ESB Network Fleet  
ESB Network Services  
ESB Moneypoint  
Fexco  
Fujitsu  
GE Healthcare  
Generali Guernsey Group  
Genfitt  
Glanbia  
Grafton Group  
Hitachi Koki Europe  
Horse Racing Ireland  
IBM  
IBM  
IBM  
Inishowen Engineering  
Inishowen Engineering

Arklow BNS, Wicklow  
Arklow VS, Arklow, Wicklow  
Pobalscoil Rosmini, Dublin 9  
St. John's College, Dublin 10  
Ardscoil Phadraig, Granard  
Kilrush CS, Clare  
Killorglin CC, Kerry  
St. Joseph's SS, Rush  
Cobh CC, Cork  
St. Joseph's SS, Navan  
Scoil Mhuire & Padraig, Mayo  
Duiske College, Kilkenny  
Moyle Park College, Dublin 22  
Chanel College, Dublin 5  
Curragh PPS, Kildare  
St. Aidan's CC, Cork  
Riversdale CC, Dublin 15  
Presentation SS, Galway  
Scoil Iosagain, Buncrana  
Crana College, Donegal

## The Schools' Business Partnership Links 2012

International Fund Services	Piper's Hill College, Naas
Investec Ireland Ltd	Marino College, Dublin 3
Irish Cement	St. Oliver's CC, Drogheda
Irish Life Group	St Finian's NS, Finglas
Irish Life Group	Patrician College, Dublin 11
Irish Pride	Colaiste Abbain, Adamstown
IT Blanchardstown	Castaheany Educate Together, Dublin 15
IT Blanchardstown	Blakestown CS, Dublin 15
Janssen Pharmaceutical	Mayfield CS, Cork
Johnson & Johnson Medical	Tallaght CS, Dublin 24
KBC Bank	Cabra CC, Dublin 7
Kefron Group	Caritas College, Dublin 10
Kerry Foods	Vocational School, Bunclody
Kirby Group	Colaiste Chiarain, Croom
Kostal	Colaiste Ide agus Iosaef
KPMG	City Quay N.S., Dublin 2
KPMG	C.B.S. Westland Row, Dublin 2
Kraft	Grange CC, Dublin 13
Kraft	Deansrath CC, Dublin 22

Nielsen	Old Bawn CS, Dublin 24
Office Depot	Mercy College, Dublin 5
Oral-B Laboratories	St. Conleth's VS, Newbridge
PEI	Loreto College, Dublin 12
PepsiCo	St. Vincent's SS, Cork
Pettitt's Supervalu	Enniscorthy VS, Wexford
Pfizer	Deerpark CBS, Cork
Pramerica Systems	Mulroy College, Letterkenny
Procter & Gamble	Rosary College, Dublin 12
Procter & Gamble	Newport College, Newport
Roadstone Wood Limited	North Monastery SS, Cork
SCA Hygiene Products	Coláiste Eoin, Dublin 11
Shell E&P (Ireland) Ltd	Coláiste Chomain, Rosspport
Shell E&P (Ireland) Ltd	St. Brendan's Belmullet
Siemens Diagnostics	Fingal CC, Swords
Silver Hill Foods	Beech Hill College, Monaghan
Sisk Healthcare	Colaiste Bride SS, Dublin 22
Sisk Stone Developments	VS Mhuine Bheag, Carlow
SITA	Finn Valley College, Stranorlar
Smurfit Kappa	O'Carolan College, Meath

Lagan Cement Group Limited	St. Fintina's PPS, Meath
Laya Healthcare	Colaiste an Chraoibhin, Cork
Letterkenny IT	Carndonagh CS, Donegal
Letterkenny IT	Rosses Community School
Limerick IT	St. Nessan's CC, Limerick
Lionbridge Technologies	St. Tiernan's College, Ballina
Lisheen Mine	Colaiste Mhuire, Thurles
LM Ericsson	Marian College, Dublin 4
LM Ericsson	Ballymahon VEC, Longford
Marks & Spencer, Cork City	St. Patrick's College
Marks & Spencer, Dublin	Larkin CC, Dublin 1
Marks & Spencer, Killarney	Killarney CC, Killarney
Marks & Spencer, Letterkenny	St. Columba's College
Marks & Spencer Galway City	Scoil Phobail Mhic Dara
Marks & Spencer, Clonmel	Clonmel VS, Clonmel
Mazars	Scoil Phobail, Clifden
MET life	St. Joseph's SS, Dublin 7
Microsoft	St. Tiernan's CS, Dublin 16
Musgrave Retail Partners	Ursuline SS, Cork
Musgrave SVC	St. Kevin's CC, Dublin 22

SSE Generation Ireland	Listowel CC, Kerry
State Street International	O'Connell School, Dublin 1
State Street International	Kilkenny City VS, Kilkenny
Sulzer Pump Solutions Ireland	Wexford VC, Wexford
Tallaght Hospital	Mount Seskin College
Tara Mines	Beaufort College, Navan
Telefonica o2	St. Joseph's CBS, Dublin 3
Thermo King	Archbishop McHale College
Trend Technologies	Columba College, Killucan
Ulster Bank	St. Laurence College, Dublin
United Drug	St. Mark's CS, Dublin 24
Veolia	St. Aidan's CS, Tallaght
Verizon	Balbriggan CS, Dublin
Vistakon	St. Enda's CS, Limerick
Walls	The Donahies CS, Dublin 13
Wexford Creamery	Bridgetown VC, Bridgetown
Workday	St. Oliver Plunkett NS, Finglas
Workday	St. Vincent's CBS, Dublin 11
Yahoo!	Ardscoil La Salle, Dublin 5
3M	Holy Child CS, Sallynoggin

## Management Excellence for Teachers

This programme is now in its third year, and it's great to see new schools and companies coming on board and new ideas emerging. We are particularly excited in Cork where Bord Gáis are rolling out, over 7 sessions, Steve Covey's 7 habits of highly effective people to the staff of Nagle CC in Mahon. Nationally we have had 13 sessions so far this academic year with over 350 teachers participating. Here is what some of them had to say:

**"It got me to reflect on myself as a person and how I bring skills/strengths and weaknesses to the job."**

*Limerick IT & St. Nessian's on Self-Care for Teachers*

**"This helps me to understand why some students judge on sight and underlines my role as teaching tolerance, understanding and acceptance of others."**

*Dulux & Greenhills College on Diversity*

**"I really enjoyed the training and will allow me to continue with same. I feel that the staff will accept what I propose and engage more effectively. Thank you!"**

*Ballina Beverages & Moyne College Session on Teamwork*

**"Much better than other in-services."**

*Proctor & Gamble and Newport College  
Session on Personal Leadership*

**"The session allowed us to scratch the surface of some issues which need further discussion. Got us thinking about the issues that need/warrant attention."**

*Diageo & Presentation SS, Warrenmount on Teambuilding*

**"It made me feel positive about 2012/2013. It made me realise I always have people to turn to when things get tough."**

*Ballygowan & Desmond College  
Session on Teambuilding*

**"It helped me focus on the challenges that I can do something about rather than on the ones I have no control over."**

*GE Healthcare & St. Colman's Session on Managing Change*

## IT Companies - a Click Ahead in Donegal

*Donegal Regional Coordinator, Elaine McFadden, reports on two global IT companies, SITA and Pramerica, making an impact in Donegal*



**Students from Finn Valley College using security software system at SITA**

There is much to celebrate in Donegal and it's not just the Sam Maguire! Two leading Letterkenny-based global companies, **Pramerica** and **SITA**, are making an enormous impact within the local community through the Schools' Business Partnership.

Pramerica, an operations, systems and information technology services subsidiary of U.S. Prudential Financial Inc., initially became involved with SBP in 2008 when Mary Howick, VP of HR delivered a seminar on Performance Management to local principals. In 2010 Pramerica partnered with Mulroy College and participated in Skills @ Work. Recently, an additional seven Pramerica volunteers led by Emma McCleary commenced the Student Mentoring Programme.

**Martin Davies**, Pramerica company coordinator, reflects:

*"Working with the students at Mulroy College has been tremendously rewarding. Their*

*enthusiasm and eagerness to learn is inspirational. We at Pramerica get as much out of the whole experience as they do! It challenges us, and gives us an opportunity, outside of our work environment, to make a positive difference in our local community. I sincerely hope this relationship continues, and grows, for many years to come."*

SITA is the world's leading specialist in communications and IT solutions for the air transport industry and its global presence includes a software development centre in Letterkenny. They partnered with Finn Valley College

in 2011. Elizabeth Gillooly, Leona Barron and Clare Fitzpatrick, have delivered a first-class series of sessions.

**Chris Carlson**, Director of Software Development Ireland, SITA, said:

*"Our employees have been eager to volunteer for the programme as they see it as a tangible way to give back something to the local community. Working with Finn Valley College, we have been able to give the students a glimpse into the fascinating world of the air transport industry. By visiting our centre in Letterkenny, the students have gained a truly global view of how airlines and airports are run."*

Those involved in both companies have been inspirational & exceptional. They have provided an insight into their unique operations, cultures and practices that encourage and challenge the students. This skills-sharing will have a legacy, relevance and memory with the students, lasting as long as the memories of when they met Mr Sam Maguire.....

**Pramerica volunteers with students and teachers from Mulroy College at the S@W Wrap Up Session**



## Students Put On The Spot at Galway Community College

*In this article Nuala Greenan, Galway Regional Coordinator, looks at some interesting outcomes from Aviva's link with Galway Community College*

The CV & Interview Skills training delivered by **Aviva**, Galway to 5th year students at **Galway Community College** combined theory and practice on the day with some very interesting results. **Mike Peyton** of Aviva delivered a succinct but enlightening summary of the key points of a CV as well as covering the essentials of Interviewing. He pointed out that there is no excuse nowadays for not researching a company before turning up for an interview given the wealth of data available on line as well as the value of testing out the journey time to an interview by doing a "dummy run" – but only if you do it at the same time of day as your interview!

### First Impressions Count

The students then got a chance to put it all into practice with some real life scenarios played out in the classroom.

First up was a role play of sitting in the interview chair, strictly no slouching, fidgeting or foot tapping allowed. Then each student in turn shook hands with both Mike and SBP coordinator Nuala Greenan to test out their first impressions. We were very glad not to encounter any "cold fish" handshakes although a little less shoulder pumping was encouraged.



Students from Galway Community College at their CV and Interview Prep session with Aviva, Galway

### On-the-Spot CV Review

Next up was an on the spot review of student CVs pointing out opportunities to provide more detail, particularly on interesting achievements. One student got a warning not to get caught out with fictitious hobbies and interests - If you say you enjoy reading books expect to be asked what you read recently!

### Strengths & Weaknesses – What’s The Story?

This was followed by small groups working on identifying their strengths and weaknesses with Mike and Nuala asking for examples of both to really show the interviewer it’s true. The important point on weaknesses was emphasised – show that you are aware of a weakness and that you are working on addressing it. Individual stories were developed

to show off strengths including organisation, the example of a camogie team trip to Dublin; soccer as an example of being a team player; determination to get on the school basketball team and many more...

Last year 47% of the students at Galway Community College reported that the Mock Interviews were the most enjoyable part of the Skills @ Work Programme, while well over two thirds considered it the most beneficial. With such great preparation we can expect those figures to rise even further this year.

*“It was obvious the students understood from the activities on the day that good CV and Interview preparation is really important.”*



## ‘Meet the Professionals’

*Celine McGrath, Regional Coordinator for Cork, explains Bord Gáis Networks’ take on the Day in the Life Session*

‘Meet the Professionals’ – is a new take on the ‘Day in the Life’ session by **Bord Gáis Networks** in Cork and TY students from **Nagle Community College** in Mahon. This is the second year that Bord Gáis has rolled out ‘Meet the Professionals’ and it’s one of the highlights of the programme.

Inspired by Speed Dating tactics (though no one will claim responsibility for the idea), 6 volunteers from Bord Gáis undertook rapid fire interviews with the students who were broken down into small groups.

Cork Regional Coordinator, Celine McGrath, was in charge of the stop watch and after ten minutes the volunteers moved on to the next group. The initial 10 minutes were slightly hesitant, the students had prepared questions and stuck to the script, however as everyone warmed up the conversations became more animated and the noise levels in the room increased considerably. After the third move the scripts had been abandoned and it was hard to get the volunteers to move along, such was the free flow of conversation and genuine interest in the professionals and their jobs.

The volunteers enjoyed the session as much as the students and for graduate trainees, Rachel Gill and Kevin O’Donoghue, it was an integral part of their development programme.

*“Meet the Professionals is a great way to deliver ‘Day in the Life’ talks - everyone gets involved and it’s great fun. For those who might be tempted to go speed dating in the future – well they’ve had plenty of practice!”*

The students took notes on what interested them most and will write up a report on their favorite career. Bord Gáis will showcase some of the reports in their next newsletter. It will be a difficult choice though as the professionals, all Cork natives, had very interesting stories to tell - Eddie Dillon is a business intelligence specialist with expertise in IT, Linda O’Brien is a Community Liaison officer, John O’Connor manages fibre optic projects in the west of the country, while John O’Shea manages the payroll.



Students from Nagle CC at the Meet the Professionals session talking to staff from Bord Gáis in Cork



## A Quacking Good Link!

*A great way of giving back to the community - we hear about Silver Hill Foods who are linked with Beech Hill College in Co. Monaghan*



Philomena Hannon, ICT Manager along with Peter McConnell, R&D Manager interviewing Beech Hill College student, Mohammed Naeem

In 2011, **Silver Hill Foods** were delighted when they heard they were to be partnered with **Beech Hill College** which is only ten minutes away from the company.

**Stuart Steele**, Managing Director, believes that the staff at Silver Hill Foods can make a real difference to the community in which they live, work and serve. Silver Hill Foods care about their communities and believe in investing in them. Corporate social responsibility is very important to the company. The Skills @ Work Programme has been an enormous benefit not only to the students but it has shown Silver Hill employees what they can contribute to the future generation.

Silver Hill Foods got great feedback from the students through the end of year evaluations which endorsed their belief in the programme such as:

*"I liked to see how a company worked."*

*"It showed us that someone cared about us."*

*"It was good fun mixing with my friends and learning about the workplace and the business."*

*"It was fun visiting [Silver Hill Foods]. It was good to meet the workers and talk to them."*

To hear positive feedback from the students gave the company a sense of achievement and they were very proud of how much the students have developed on the programme. It was evident that the students' confidence and interpersonal skills had increased along with the benefits of helping the students make decisions which will benefit their future career.

Silver Hill Foods definitely inspired them to do well at school!



## BITCI Member's Education Initiatives

The following is a snapshot of education initiatives offered by some BITCI member companies

### Secondary Schools Work Placement Programme

One of the objectives of the Step Up Community Programme is to help young people in our local community to be aware of the career opportunities that are available to them. To achieve this, **A&L Goodbody** have created a bespoke educational programme which gives 21 students aged between 15 and 17 the opportunity to avail of a work placement in the Firm.

A&L are partnering with three schools in the local community on this programme:

- O'Connells Secondary School, North Richmond St, Dublin 1
- Mount Carmel Secondary School, King's Inn St, Dublin 1
- Presentation Secondary School, Warrenmount, Dublin 8

The Programme includes a three stage process; Careers Day in A&L Goodbody, Interviews and Work Placement.

A&L Goodbody



### DCU team wins inaugural KPMG - supported Enactus competition

A student team from Dublin City University was the winner of the inaugural Enactus Ireland National Competition (formerly known as SIFE) for their work in developing a number of outreach projects to mobilise student engagement in society, address the issue of loneliness on public transport and encourage at-risk children in Ballymun to stay in education.

The winning team represented Ireland for the first time at the 2012 Enactus World Cup in Washington DC among finalists from around the world at an event hosted by the US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton. This is the first time Ireland has been represented in the Enactus competition.

**KPMG** in Ireland began work with the organisation in 2011 to bring the organisation to Ireland.



### EirGrid: From Power Station to Playstation Road show for schools

**EirGrid** has created a schools science programme - "Understanding Electricity - From Power Station to PlayStation" which is touring second level schools in Ireland.

This dynamic, vibrant and interactive show is based on the electricity module of the junior cycle science curriculum, with particular emphasis placed on practical experience and audience participation and is free to attendees.

It aims to help students develop an appreciation of the impact that electricity has on our lives and environment. The programme was devised by EirGrid, the state-owned operator of the national transmission network, as part of the company's support programme for Dublin City of Science 2012. The programme will continue throughout 2013 with a target of reaching 2,000 students nationwide.

If your school is interested, contact Aisling O'Brien on 2370713 or [aisling.obrien@eirgrid.com](mailto:aisling.obrien@eirgrid.com)



### Think Big for Young People's mental health

Think Big is a programme designed by **O2** and Headstrong to enable young people to do projects in their community that make a difference to young people's mental health. Young people, aged 14 to 25, can submit ideas for projects. Approved projects receive support from Think Big in the form of funding, and O2 mentoring and training to help make it happen. Since September 2010, 230 projects have been funded across the country with up to 3,500 young people getting involved.

To find out more or to submit an idea go to [www.o2thinkbig.ie](http://www.o2thinkbig.ie)



## The Schools' Business Partnership

Adding value to the Department of Children & Youth Affairs and the School Completion Programme, the Schools' Business Partnership aims to positively impact on educational inclusion and address key issues in areas of educational inclusion in Ireland. The programme does this by matching one school with a large local business and engaging in various programmes. The number of schools currently matched nationally is 187. Through the Schools' Business Partnership a menu of programmes has been developed to address key educational issues for these schools across the country. Marks & Spencer Ireland have been the lead sponsor of the Schools' Business Partnership since its inception - a remarkable commitment.

### Lead Sponsor



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Find Business in the Community Ireland on



The Schools' Business Partnership  
Business in the Community Ireland  
32 Lower O'Connell Street | Dublin 1  
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