

PROSPER Times



Say Hello - Wave Goodbye

Here in Seatown Road, October is our month of 'Hellos' and 'Fond Farewells'.

We are delighted to welcome our new recruits to the fold! They are: Andrew Armitage, Lauren Baker, Heather Berger, Jordan Cooney, Neil Farrell, Daniel Hickey, Luke Honan, Darragh Starr and Rebecca Warren. You are all very welcome and we know you will enjoy your time here in the Training Service.

And of course as much as we are delighted to see our new people, we are always sad to bid farewell to those transferring to other centres:

- Mary Ellen Maughan has moved to the Rush Service, our loss is their gain!
- Eilis Conaty, Sarah McCormack, Rachel Bannon, Ryan Johns and Ian Brady have all progressed to our North Street Service, we wish them well.
- Howth Service will now have the pleasure of the company of Ruth Murphy, Claire Finn and Christina Montague.
- And finally Chloe Holmes has moved to the new Balbriggan Service and is hopefully enjoying all that the town has to offer.

What a Difference a Day Makes

An experience with a difference happened for Prosper Fingal on

Thursday 27th September 2012 when a company called *Difference Days* came to lend its support. *Difference Days* provides opportunities for corporate team building through the execution of community projects. Once such project was the development of a sensory walkway in our Piercetown site. This circular walkway has been specially designed to maximise the site and give a unique experience of nature to our older clients in Piercetown.

The Corporate client sponsoring this project was Distilled Media - a large IT design company with a young and very enthusiastic workforce. On the day, 85 employees of that Company arrived in Piercetown to take on a significant 'gardening' project. Under the guidance and supervision of *Difference Days* and qualified horticulturists, the volunteers divided into teams and set about the task of building 6 horticultural features around the walkway. A number of Service Users from Prosper Fingal came along to lend their support and of course their expertise. Everyone put their body and soul into making the sensory circular walkway special – helped by an edge of competition between each of the teams.

As a result, today the Piercetown Centre has a unique walkway that will be enjoyed for years to come. The section that captures most attention is the 'sound' feature with its chimes, whistles, pipes and rustling plantation. It's worth a visit!

We are very grateful to one of our parents, Barry Hall, who nominated Prosper Fingal to *Difference Days*, to Distilled Media for sponsoring the event and to all the staff and Service Users for their massive contribution on the day.



Getting stuck in!



Caught on camera!

What a Picture

The Prosper Fingal Rush Photography Group held its first ever exhibition during the month of September. The group is mentored by Grainne O'Callaghan a North Street Service User who has always been a real photography enthusiast. They have been going for over a year now and recently decided it was time to show the general public their hidden talents. The exhibition was held in the beautifully renovated Rush Library (a church built in 1866) with the photos prominently displayed on what would have originally been the church's sanctuary.

The photos all had a very personal importance to each of the exhibitors. They included photos from Geraldine Murray's family strawberry farm, David O'Kelly's view of Skerries Mills, Grainne O'Callaghan's images of Dublin city and John Byrne's photos of animals. The group's camera and computer skills have grown considerably since the first work they produced (a Calendar this time last year) and it was time to upscale to a full public exhibition which was officially opened by Director of Services Pat Reen and mentor Grainne O'Callaghan. Pat had high praise for the superb work of the talented group.

The exhibition was a major success and the group has received a number of donations from interested parties in return for some of the inspiring photos. These donations will now be used by the camera group to organise a photography trip and help them with their next project.

We look forward to seeing what's next for the photography group.



All dressed up and somewhere to go!

A Night at the Oscars

Two groups from the Piercetown and the Rush centres attended a very special event in Trinity College recently. An awards night to rival the Oscars took place to celebrate the achievements of the talented actors that featured in the unique 'Scenes from Our Lives' DVD.

'Scenes from Our Lives' is made up of six short films that present the findings of the Intellectual Disability Supplement to the Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (IDS – TILDA). All of the actors in the short films are people with intellectual disabilities who portray scenes about issues that are important to this group.

The group from Piercetown: Patricia Nulty, Claire O'Higgins, Fiona Savage, Paula Thornton and Roy Fay, depicted a scene about employment while Helen Cooney, Darren Ward and Janice Ryan from the Rush centre acted out the script for healthy eating. The DVD is available from IDS-TILDA direct or these films can be seen online at [HYPERLINK "http://www.idstilda.tcd.ie" http://www.idstilda.tcd.ie](http://www.idstilda.tcd.ie)

To celebrate this fantastic achievement and to officially launch the 'Scenes from Our Lives' DVD, the glitz and glam of Hollywood was brought to Trinity College. All the actors from the DVD dressed in their finery and had to walk the red carpet, taking time to pose for the photographers before entering the film premier, party and awards ceremony. Mr. Brendan O'Connor was Master of Ceremonies and praised all the actors for their achievement and hailed the initiative as cutting edge. He then presented each group of actors with a beautiful glass award on which all the actors' names were engraved.

"It was such a surprise, we didn't know we were there to receive an award. I felt like a star walking the red carpet wearing a beautiful dress and everyone looking at me. I was nervous getting up to collect the award on the stage, and couldn't help but cry because it was so emotional. Learning our lines for our short film was difficult but we had a great time acting in front of the film crew and the awards night was the icing on the cake." – Helen Cooney .



Horses for courses



Feed the birds



Gentlemen - Chillaxing!!!



I remember that summer in Ireland



Hi Hoe - off to work we go!



We made a difference



Romeo Romeo



Tiernan - winner alright

A Mother's Dilemma A parent's view

"What am I going to wear today?" We all ask ourselves this question every morning. This decision can be hard for all women, but never more so than when we are advising a teenager/young adult with special needs who doesn't conform to the 10-12 "ideal" size. My advice is to set a budget and try to stick to it! Try to find clothes that are comfortable, age-appropriate, hard wearing and don't cost the earth. After a lot of searching, I think I have cracked the code! Here are some tips for all:

- Dorothy Perkins has a great range of jeggings in stock. These sit high on the waist, are very comfortable, wash well and cost around €30. They come in a rainbow of colours and are suitable for all seasons.
- Don't be afraid to buy jeans that need to be taken up on the leg. It is better to find jeans that fit well on the waist and worry about shortening the legs afterwards.
- Jeans and jeggings can be matched with a simple t-shirt, shirt or hoodie. H&M currently have a great range of coloured shirts and t-shirts in their 'Basic' range for only €5- €15.
- For larger frames, hiding in oversized and ill-fitting clothes are not solutions. Supporting our young adults to dress appropriately allows them to be more confident.
 - Dresses are a great alternative to jeans and Penneys always have a good selection. Team it up with pumps or boots and tights as an easy alternative for day wear.
 - Penneys also have a range of coloured tights for dresses for only €3- €4.
- Finding appropriate shoes for smaller feet can be tricky. My daughter wears a size 2-2 ½ and it is very difficult to find shoes and boots for her age. If anyone can help I would welcome your advice!



"Alas, Poor Yorrick...."

The famous words of William Shakespeare could be heard around Swords as part of the Summer Programme at Seatown Road. Trainees and Service Users learnt famous lines from Hamlet, Macbeth and Romeo & Juliet as part of their drama group.



I knew him well

Tragedies were deliberately chosen to test the abilities of individuals to display emotions like sadness, confusion and heart-break. They had to think about how life is sometimes serious and hard to deal with. For example, Hamlet was sad because he lost his dad and he also found out someone who looked after him as a child had passed away.

To set the tone we even filmed some of the scenes at Swords Castle to feel like we were living in the time of Prince Hamlet.

When doing Hamlet's famous "Alas, poor Yorrick" line Ross Guinan said, "you had to look serious and upset when you're doing it. Hamlet was shocked when he knew the skull. It was his friend, Yorrick!"



Techie guys!

Techtastic

The first week in September was 'Technology Week' in Seatown Road. The meaning of technology was described as "things we use that make life easier and better". The Trainees and Service Users were able to think of lots of examples like mobile phones, computers and self-checking machines in shops.

The whole week was given over to learning more about the technology that we use everyday and some that was new to us. People learned about video cameras, internet safety and about using mobile phones.

Trainees and Service Users went on some technology-themed outings. There was a visit to the Bristol-Myers Squibb laboratory in Swords where people saw how medicines were made. They had to wear special suits, masks and boots for the tour. Two other groups were lucky enough to visit actual recording studios and learnt how songs are recorded and how technology can improve someone's singing voice. Helen McLoughlin told us; "it was amazing how they could make someone who didn't have a good voice sound so brilliant in the end".

So that's how Justin Bieber got so successful. Blame technology!

Tony's Flair for Art

Ozanam House Resource Centre is a recently refurbished Community Centre operated by the St Vincent de Paul based on Mount Joy Square in the North Inner City. Since it opened in September 2002 it has developed various programmes and projects aimed at addressing social exclusion as well as the many needs of the local community.



Tony - a star pupil

Tony Grimes (Rush centre) has been taking part in a mainstream art class at Ozanam for the past year. Each Wednesday Tony would travel to Mountjoy Square, initially with support but more recently totally independently. Once there, he would spend an hour and half 'being creative'. His art teacher (French native Ida Hitrani) quickly recognised Tony's natural artistic and creative ability and she encouraged him greatly in his work. The participants took photos of Dublin City and used these images as inspiration for a number of pieces of modern art.

In June Tony's artwork was included in an evening exhibition in Ozanam House. The exhibition was a great success with many different styles of artwork on display and Tony was thrilled when his fellow art students and teacher came along to support him. Afterwards, he celebrated his achievement in a trendy bar in Sandymount over a few beers with his friends.

Tony got great satisfaction and a real sense of achievement from the classes. He enjoyed it so much that he has enrolled again for another year and is thoroughly enjoying the independence the experience gives him.



Editors' meeting

Hot off the Press!

A new group of Service Users has taken over the task of producing the Rush centre newsletter - 'Voices'. This is an internal publication written by Service Users, for Service Users, and focuses on what is important to them. The group wants their newsletter to follow the layout and feel of a national newspaper and so they recently paid a visit to The Irish Times to see what they could learn.

The production editor, Liam Ryan, took the group under his wing and gave them a tour of the building, showing how the national paper is put together on the computer and answered the many questions the group had about how the paper is produced. They met many other editors all hard at work trying to get their stories and headlines finished in time for press. They sat in and got involved with the paper's daily news conference where all the editors come together to decide what stories will make it into the next day's edition. They discovered that you can actually find out tomorrow's news today! Liam then sat with the Service Users to discuss their own local centre newsletter and gave the budding reporters some expert guidance and tips.

"The trip to The Irish Times was so interesting, we had a great time and Liam and all the editors were so helpful. They gave us lots of time and answered all our questions. We also got to see the new version of The Irish Times Newspaper that will be unveiled to the public in a few weeks' time." Suzanne Griffin (Editor, Rush Newsletter).

Are you entitled to these?

Carer's Allowance is a means-tested payment for carers of people who require full-time attention due to age, physical or learning disability or illness (including mental illness). If you are in receipt of another social welfare payment you may qualify for a reduced rate of carer's allowance in addition to your original payment. There are rules for entitlement including that you must not be employed or in training/education outside the home for more than 15 hours a week. Two carers who are providing care on a part-time basis in an established pattern can both be accommodated on the scheme.

Carer's Benefit is a payment for people who have made social insurance contributions and who have recently left the workforce and look after somebody in need of full-time care. You can get Carer's Benefit for a total of 2 years for each person being cared for.

The Respite Care Grant is an annual payment of €1700 made to carers each June. Carers can use the grant in whatever way they wish. The grant is automatically paid to those in receipt of Carer's Allowance, Carer's Benefit and Domiciliary Care Allowance. This payment is NOT means-tested though certain eligibility criteria apply including that you must not be working outside of the home for more than 15 hours per week and you must be caring for the person on a full-time basis for at least 6 months.

For more information see www.welfare.ie



City farmer!

Residential Holiday to Courtown

Courtown is a beautiful family-friendly seaside resort in Wexford that has a wide variety of attractions for holiday makers. The residents from Knock Cross and Seal Cove spent a week's summer holiday there staying in four lovely holiday homes within walking distance of the town centre.

It was raining when they arrived but they didn't let that dampen their spirits! Everyday was packed full of different activities and outings; from feeding the pets in the Secret Valley Farm, to the bumping cars and arcades. Some enjoyed a relaxing day at the Spa while others enjoyed a trip to the Circus. They also found time for bowling, swimming, shopping, crazy golf and visiting the Pirates Cove.

Thankfully, the weather improved during the week, which made the outdoor activities and sightseeing much more enjoyable. It certainly was a holiday to remember and the residents are looking forward to next year's adventure already!

Congratulations

Congratulations to Fiona Ferguson (Skerries) and her husband Philip who welcomed a son Tadhg, to Ciaran Nolan (Seatown Rd) and wife Helen on the birth of their son Cathal and to Lisa Hanlon (Seatown Rd) and husband Liam – on the safe arrival of twins Oliver and Emily.

Contact Clare Murray
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Seatown Up the Ante!

This year the Annual Basketball Competition was a one-day blitz format held in ALSAA sports centre at the end of August. Four centres took part – North Street, Portmarnock, Rush and Seatown Road. In the morning 'grading' games were held where all teams played against each other in a round-robin format. The result of these games saw North Street face Seatown Road in the main Cup competition and Rush against Portmarnock in the Plate.

Portmarnock got off to a flying start in the Plate and were well ahead by half time. However, the Raiders came out with all guns blazing in the second period and the experienced Rush team dug deep and eventually ran out winners.



To the Victors - the spoils

On paper the North Street team had all the talent and experience to retain the Cup. However, this year they were up against the very well coached and fit Seatown Slashers who set off at rocket speed and led 14 – 2 at half time. In the second half, North Street came back strongly but were unable to topple the determined Seatown team who proudly held on and lifted the Cup.

Artistic Winners

This year the Annual Art Competition attracted a high number and level of entries from each of the centres which made the judging all the more difficult. The theme was left open which led to many imaginative pieces using different artistic materials like clay, silk, paper maché and collage. Once again there was one winner picked from each centre and then one of those was chosen as overall winner. They were:

- North Street: **Jackie Scully** – African friend
- Piercetown: **Group entry** – Collage
- Portmarnock: **Andrew Moore** – Basketball
- Rush: **Seamus Reilly** – Self portrait
- Seatown Road: **Tiernan O'Briain** – Parrot
- Skerries: **Tara Casey** – Paper Rose

Congratulations to Andrew Moore who was the overall winner and won a supply of art materials for the Portmarnock centre.



Top Artist - Andrew

Come Fly with Me



Frequent Flyer

My name is Grainne Killeen and I attend North Street in Swords. Every year I travel to my auntie who lives in Cannes in France. I also visit my brother in London. I travel alone and have been doing this since I was 18. Usually my mum or my brother helps me to book the plane tickets. On the day I leave, I phone for a taxi to take me to the airport. I have my passport and ticket ready and head straight to the check-in desk and give them my one bag to check in. Next I go through security which can be a bit off putting as sometimes I beep!

Sometimes I look around the airport shops and buy a puzzle book before going to the gate. When the plane is ready to board I prefer to wait till the end because I don't want to sit in the wrong seat! I like when the plane takes off and I can see all around the countryside and the lights of the houses below.

When I get to Cannes my auntie collects me at the airport and takes me to her house. If I am going to my brother's I get a taxi to his house. I really like travelling because I like being independent.