

EQUALITY

Update.....

Issue 3

Human Resource Department



August 2010

INTRODUCTION

The Equality Update was developed as a mechanism to inform staff of the progress made throughout the year in relation to the College's commitment to Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the Disability duties under Section 49A and 49B of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended by DD (NI) Order 2006). The update also acts as an important reminder to all staff of their obligation to promote Equality and Good Relations and to promote positive attitudes towards people and encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

PROGRESS MADE IN THE LAST YEAR

During the period 2009/10 the College has made progress in a number of areas in meeting equality and good relations objectives.

- **"Cartwheel of Equality" finds its home**

"The Cartwheel of Equality", a piece of art designed and developed between the College and Derry Travellers' Association to celebrate Travellers Focus Week, was officially launched in December and located at the College's Springtown Centre.



Travelling Community Children are joined by (from back left) David Kinnaird, Director; Gaenor Speer, Tutor; Ronan Boyle, Travellers Association.

The cartwheel was located in the College's Springtown Centre because the Centre is "trade" related; a view with which members of the travelling community perceive their own culture.



Travelling Community Children

- **Equality Working Group**

If you have any issues in respect of Equality please feed through this group by contacting the Workforce Development Department.

- **Consultation**

In accordance with the Equality Scheme the College has continued to consult with recognised consultees in respect of policy development and screening. Consultees this year included RNIB, The Rainbow Project, Foyleview Special Needs School, Foyle Women's Aid, Derry Travellers' Association, and Community Groups such as Surestart, Old Library Trust and Steelstown Extended Schools Cluster Group.

- **Disability Action Plan**

The Disability Action Plan was developed in accordance with the requirements of the statutory duties in respect of disability which requires staff to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and to encourage the participation by disabled people in public life.



Continued monitoring of the Disability Action Plan has resulted in improving the Complaint feedback process which contributes to the College's commitment to a higher quality of service for all students.

- **SENDO**

The College SENDO Committee meet regularly to embed processes to support the implementation of SENDO and the DDA.

- **Equality Training**

In the last year training in the area of equality has been delivered to staff in respect of the following:

- ❖ Domestic Violence;
- ❖ Child Protection;
- ❖ Disability Awareness;
- ❖ RNIB Visual Awareness;
- ❖ Good Relations;
- ❖ On-line Equality/Cultural Diversity;
- ❖ SENDO;
- ❖ Texthelp Software;
- ❖ Aspergers Syndrome.

- **Deaf Awareness Week**

To promote Deaf Awareness Week the College provided staff with communication tips prepared by the Royal National Institute for Deaf People, and included advice on how to speak clearly and to use natural facial expressions and gestures when communicating with someone with a hearing impairment. This guidance is available on the HR section of the intranet.

- **Anti Racist Workplace Campaign**

To highlight Anti Racist Workplace Campaign the College organised a quiz for all staff and students. The quiz tested knowledge on migration. A winning entry was selected from both the staff and student bodies with prizes of meals for two in the College's restaurant.



L-R Helena Gallagher, Student, and Kathleen O'Connor, Staff Member with the Principal and Chief Executive who presented them with their prize

- **Mental Health Day**

The College confirmed its commitment to promoting positive mental health by information staff of the Mental Health Foundation's promotion of a "Tea and Talk" day which encouraged staff to share their cares with someone else to help mental health and wellbeing. The College also advised staff of the Department of Health's New Horizons Consultation which would make services for adults with mental health problems better in the future and to help everyone have better mental health.

Students from the School of Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy, in liaison with NUS-USI, also took part in an event called "Open your Mind" in which they provided Indian Head Massage treatments to participants to raise awareness of mental health issues among all students.

- **Breastfeeding Awareness**

The College advised staff of the location and availability of a Breastfeeding Room during Breastfeeding Awareness week in May 2009.

During Breastfeeding awareness week, a number of college staff and students were invited to attend an event "Celebration of Breastfeeding" which was organised by hospital midwives and the Health Promotion Department of the Western Health and Social Care Trust.

- **Anti Homophobia Week**

To raise awareness of homophobia issues the College, in collaboration with the Rainbow Project, arranged for a themed lorry to be stationed in car parks at Strand Road and Strabane campuses.



The themed lorry which was designed to promote awareness of homophobia had been a venture organised by the Equality Commission, the Rainbow Project, Cara Friend and LSAI (Lesbian Advocacy Services Initiative).

- **Domestic Violence**

As part of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, the College arranged training for Line Managers on Domestic Violence delivered by the local community group, Foyle Women's Aid. Participants were advised on how to identify the signs of abuse and how to deal with these issues.



Back L-R Jean Browne, Barbara Magee, Sheila Stewart, Les Mayers, Gerard McCole and Carole McLaughlin. Front L-R Christine McLaughlin, Helen Blackburn, Muire Coyle and Marion Mullan (Foyle Women's Aid) and Liam Morrow,

- **Cancer Awareness for different Genders**

In order to raise awareness of certain cancers gender specific to men and women during the month of March 2010 (which was both Prostrate Cancer and Ovarian Cancer month), staff were encouraged to consider the information provided and make their own families aware

of these specific Cancers. More information can be obtained from www.actioncancer.org.

- **Online Cultural Diversity/Equality Training**

Following the commencement of the online equality/cultural diversity training programme to non-teaching staff last year, the College continued to roll out this training to all staff.

- **Age Awareness Week**

To celebrate Age Awareness Week, all staff were invited to browse through the programme of events organised through Changing Ageing Partnership (CAP). The Programme outlined the various events and activities that were organised throughout Northern Ireland and categorised the events into Exhibitions, Films, Dance Events, etc.

It was hoped the theme of "representation" would challenge attitudes and practices of how older people are portrayed and represented in society through a range of arts, theatre and dance.

- **Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender History Month**

The month of February was Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender History Month and to commemorate this, a student support group was successfully established, and an Awareness Day was held in March 2010 with high visibility promotion through the College.

- **Chinese New Year – Year of the Tiger**

To celebrate Chinese New Year in February 2010, students and staff were advised of the Chinese themed food on the menu of Mount Charles Canteen, and at the Flying Clipper, Northland Building.



• Cultural Diversity through Art

Students from the School of Art and Design in the Strand Road and Limavady campuses took part in a cultural field trip to London. The aim of the field trip was to bring students from both campuses together, but also to introduce, develop and further embed the students' cultural awareness. London itself exposed the students directly to other races, cultures and ethnic minority groups.

Students in the Foundation Art & Design (Fine Art) course undertook a project with the theme of "Cultural Diversity". The students produced excellent pieces of art and one student, Conor Quinn, whose art was purchased by the College, identified with cultural diversity as a "variety of human societies, or cultures, in a specific region based on other people's perceptions."



Seamus Murphy, Director, with Conor Quinn, student from Foundation Art & Design. Conor designed this piece of art entitled "Hoodies" under the theme of "Cultural Diversity".

The student focused mainly on how "teenagers, hanging around with hooded tops, are often depicted as up to no-good and as trouble makers". He presented his work in a "non-threatening way". The piece of art is displayed in Level 1 of the Tower Building, Strand Road Campus.

Another student Andrea O'Rourke from the Foundation Art and Design course produced a piece of art entitled "The Beauty of Diversity" and for this piece, various cultures native to each corner of the world were explored. This highlighted the different cultural identities that exist, and brought together how these cultures may live in one society, but, simultaneously live in a multicultural society in harmony together.

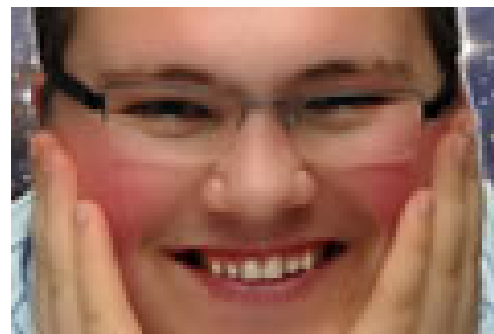


Andrea O'Rourke's cultural diversity artwork

Cultural Diversity through Media

Students from the College's School of Media, Multimedia and Performing Arts addressed the issue of equality through their entries into the Investment for Health's Student Media Awards, designed to encourage up and coming media professionals to examine a more balanced approach to issues surrounding health and well-being.

The students looked at alienation/discrimination because of gender, sexuality and ethnic origin and as a result and within the equality theme, Phillip Beattie from the College was awarded a first in the Photography category for "Autism Initiative UK".



• Work placements

As a result of regular consultation with the Royal National Institute for Blind People work placements were provided in the Administration Department for two people who were blind/partially sighted. One placement was based at the Strabane Campus and the other 12 week placement was based in the Limavady Campus. The individuals had opportunities to update a range of skills including IT which helped them in their search for more permanent employment.



• **Student Equality Survey**

A student equality survey was carried out this year and a lucky participant won an Ipod Nano. The survey is currently being analysed and an action plan will be set up to address any issues that have arisen from this report.



Seamus Murphy, Director, with Thomas Irving, National Diploma in ICT Practitioners, winner of the Ipod Nano following the Student Equality Survey 2010

• **Examples of New / Continued Course provision**

The School of Construction, Engineering and Science plan to include within their Edexcel BTEC Level 3 Nationals in Engineering, a new specification which gives learners opportunities to develop an understanding of social and cultural issues, as well as an awareness of citizenship and equal opportunities issues.

In the School of Early Years, Children and Young People, students in Year 3 of the Foundation Degree in Early Childhood Studies have for the first time undertaken a module on "Anti-discriminatory Practice". This module is designed to allow participants to explore the diverse needs of young children in early years' settings and aims, among other issues, to develop knowledge and understanding of the effects of discrimination on the child, family and wider community.

Students undertaking the BTEC National Diploma in Children's Care Learning and Development at the College studied a module on "Meeting Additional Requirements for Children's Care, Learning and Development". Students continued to learn how to deal with and contribute to the inclusion of children with disabilities and special educational needs, and support the participation of a full range of activities and experiences.

In the School of Hospitality, Tourism and Sport, students within the National Diploma in Hospitality have had a European cookery unit integrated into their assignment work. This has encouraged students to be aware of the ethnic aspect of food within different countries.

• **Study China Programme**

Three first year students from the Higher National Diploma in Business went on a trip to experience life at prominent Chinese universities during this period. The College was the only Higher Education Provider in Northern Ireland where three students won places on the exclusive programme. The students were given a unique opportunity to experience the different aspects of Chinese culture.



HND Business students Leigh McLaughlin, Amanda Williamson and Aislinn McDevitt

• **Diversity Calendar**

The College contributed to the Diversiton's Diversity Calendar and as a partner received 60 copies. As well as distributing the calendars to key personnel within the College, all staff were able to access a copy on the College's intranet.

• **Braille Embosser**

The Braille embosser, purchased to provide an improved service to blind and partially sighted people, has been located within the Administration Department and was used in the organisation of the College's Dining in the Dark event. Training on its use was provided for key staff within the College.



• **Childcare Vouchers**

The College maintained its association with the Employer's for Childcare Scheme and several members of staff benefited from a reduction in the cost of their childcare provision.

• **Policy Development**

The following policies were equality screened and representative groups were consulted:

- ❖ Car Park Procedure
- ❖ Application and Enrolments Policy
- ❖ Voice Recording Policy
- ❖ Data Protection Policy
- ❖ Conflict of Interest Policy
- ❖ Race/Equality Policy
- ❖ Risk Management Policy
- ❖ Records Management Policy
- ❖ Workforce Development Policy
- ❖ Malpractice and Plagiarism Policy

The following were agreed at Sector level

- ❖ Probation Procedures
- ❖ Appraisal Scheme
- ❖ Associate Lecturers Agreement
- ❖ Part time Lecturers Contract
- ❖ Policy for Handling Redundancies
- ❖ Career Break Policy
- ❖ Maternity Leave Procedures
- ❖ Adoption Leave Procedures
- ❖ Guidelines for the Operation of Fixed Term Contracts
- ❖ Joint Facilities Agreement
- ❖ Job Share

• **Provision of support for applicants with disabilities**

The College has nominated one member of staff from the Administration Department to be a direct contact person for any admission or enrolment queries from students with a disability who may require support, or from an organisation acting on behalf of a group of people with disabilities who may require support.

• **International Catering**

Students from the College's Hospitality Section hosted visitors from Turkey, Finland and France for the culmination of a 2 year project. Over the past two years exchange visits and online work have allowed students and staff to identify how commercial and domestic eating practices have evolved, and to build up close friendships.

Another student from this School entered the ethnic category in a recent International Food Exhibition Competition in which a certificate of merit was achieved.



Left to right: tutor Emmett McCourt, Student Culinarian of the year – Silver Medal winner and Second in class – Simon Curran, Junior Duck – Certificate of Participation – Andrew McKeever, Open Ethnic International Dish – Merit Award – Anoush Salee with Director of Curriculum Calum Morrison.

• **Civic Pride**

Students from the Travel and Tourism section of the College held an event aimed at promoting civic pride in the city entitled "A City to Celebrate". The event was created to attempt to improve the sense of civic pride among young people. Discussions centred on topics such as "Are the walls a noose or a necklace?" Representatives from across the community included those from Derry City Council, Holywell Trust, Apprentice Boys of Derry and SEEDS, a multi-cultural organisation from the city.



Mayor of Derry Councillor Paul Fleming is pictured at the Civic Pride event with Seamus Murphy, College Principal and Chief Executive, Karen McLaughlin Head of School, and students Sean Breslin, and Melissa McGonagle.



- **Liaison with Community Groups**

Students from the College’s School of Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy took part in helping students from Foylview (a controlled special school for children with severe learning difficulties) prepare for their formal by carrying out nail art. They also assisted with providing beauty treatments to various community groups including Surestart, Old Library Trust and Gransha Hospital. The participants enjoyed the different treatments such as facials, manicures and reflexology.

The School of Early Years, Children and Young People participated in, and led, an Extended Schools Project in partnership with Steelstown Extended Schools Cluster Group. Participants on this programme were parent/grandparent volunteers and all successfully completed the Entry Level 3 NOCN qualification “Introduction to Making and Using Story Sacks for Family Learning”.

First Diploma Children’s Care Learning and Development students in the College’s Strabane campus went on an outing to a nursing home in order to gain an insight into the level of care of support required in caring for older people, which showed them the importance of treating everyone as an individual regardless of their religion, race, disability, etc.

First Diploma and National Diploma Students at the College’s Strabane campus attended Diversity Training in conjunction with Strabane District Council, as well as a play delivered by the Travelling Community in the Alley Theatre. This was a joint venture to give an understanding of the culture of the Travelling Community. It highlighted how equality is essential and diversity should be respected.

The School of Community Education has provided a number of courses to various special needs groups. The students were presented with certificates to acknowledge the achievements made.