

BLACKROCK COLLEGE NEWSLETTER



February 2018

Dear Parents,

At the end of last term, the College lost two great men whose commitment to the school over many years was rich and remarkable.

Sean Dunne was an extraordinary man. As a Dean and Teacher, Mentor and Coach, colleague and friend, husband and father, he walked the walk putting others first, making time for that kindly word, that phone call, that visit to the sick and those in need. Sean had a quiet, thorough, respectful way about him that inspired determination, integrity and love in others. Sean was a man of Fides et Robur. This is how we will remember him.

Fr Malachy Kilbride was a loyal, reliable and wise member of the Spiritan Congregation and of Blackrock. As Teacher and Dean, Coach and Counsellor, Principal and President he gave unstinting service. With Christ as his mentor, Malachy offered insightful advice to so many of us and did so in a measured way.

Two generous men. We know something of the good they did. We commend them to God's mercy. May they rest in peace.

The theme for this year's Catholic Schools Week, January 29th - February 4th, was "Catholic schools: called to be a family of families".

Blackrock College is a "family of families". We have a strong sense of identity. There is a common bond, a connectedness that is evident in all that we do.

In any organisation/community, it is the first principles that hold it together. For us this is Fides et Robur.

Fides – Faith – a belief in God, who is with us at all times including those of difficulty, of challenge and of heartbreak. Sometimes we struggle with this. But that is o.k. as faith is not an exact science. It accepts our own imperfections, our own personal battles, gracing us with encouragement and comfort.

Robur – Strength – is at the heart of our "family and families", from the prayerful presence of our Spiritan Community to the cohesive spirit within our staff, the vitality within our boys and the deeply appreciated support of our parent body and past-pupils, all of whom contribute to a significant bond which embraces and sustains us.

Our "family of families" was evident this term at the Leman Concert, our Anti-Bullying Day, at the Cup Rally, in our Careers Programme of lectures and mock interviews, at the Rock MUN, on pastoral placements, at parent-teacher meetings, in celebration of the success of our Senior Soccer Team, the competitiveness of our Badminton, Cross-Country and Squash Teams, in the energy and industry of our classrooms, at the Transition Year Family Mass and the launch of the 2nd Year Auxilium Programme.

Midterm again. Lent and spring beckon. Life is full of things we do not fully understand.

The first principles of Blackrock – Fides et Robur - encourage us to reach out to others, but also to reach in to ourselves, to care for ourselves, to take time for ourselves.

I thank you all – Spiritans, colleagues, parents, boys, past-pupils and friends of Blackrock - for your faith, your strength, your care.

God Bless,

ALAN MacGINTY
Principal

Photos from L to R :

- a) Matthew Byrne with his mother at the Fourth Year Family Mass
- b) Theo Boland and Pearse Woods (3rd Year) members of the College Rowing Team in Seville.
- c) Sam Cahill (2nd Year) singing Voice Solo at the Leman Concert



Second Year



The beginning of 2018 has seen our Second Year group continue to achieve in their weekly **Application Cards**. This card, which each boy brings home on Mondays, is a great opportunity for parents to congratulate their son on another good week's work. More than half the year group is on the Principal's List every week. The Principal's List compliments those boys who have achieved at least seven ones on their card for that week, reinforcing good practice and organisation. A student who continually achieves the Principal's List gives himself the opportunity to be nominated for an Honours Award at the College Prize Giving in May.

The **House Competitions** in Second Year continue and the Table Tennis and Chess competitions will finally conclude in the coming weeks before the Easter break. The 2nd Years attended the **BT Young Scientist Exhibition** in January, viewing not least the projects on display by Rory Luff (2nd Year) and Conor Slattery (3rd Year).



(L to R) Sean Patterson, Jack Rogan, Tim Jordan, Rory O'Shea, Jacques de Patoul, Rory Luff, Matthew Berwick, David MacHale and Andrew McCarthy at the Young Scientist Exhibition.

The Second Years have begun their **Auxilium** Programme. Already they are participating with enthusiasm and commitment in their service to the community. We wish them well as they embark on this journey.



Auxilium in action at Booterstown Church – James Boyle, Adam Tunney, Patrick Curley, Philip Breen and James Carroll. (2nd Year)

Bullying Awareness Day took place on 21 January with Graham Mullhern of BeSecure

Online, giving a talk to the Second Years about appropriate online behaviour. His message was that nothing is private online and everyone should reflect before posting anything. **Catholic Schools Week** focused on the family and provided an opportunity to reflect on and celebrate the relationship that exists between home, school and the parish. Among other events, the programme for the week included an exhibition of Family Trees in the Learning Centre including some excellent contributions from our 2nd Years.

Two of our Second Years, **Eoin McGrath** and **Harry McLaughlin**, attended the **Holocaust Memorial** Commemoration in the Mansion House. They were privileged to be part of a group of only 600 people invited to attend the event which provides an opportunity to remember and to care.



"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."
ANNE FRANK

Extra -curricular

A great many Second Year boys have achieved in the area of extra-curricular involvement. Our **Cross Country** Junior Team finished in 2nd place in the DCU invitational and well done to our 2nd Year representatives, Oscar Lubliner, Eoin Dunne, James Carroll, Ronan McNamara and Jamie Blackburn.

Also in **sports**, congratulations to Captain Jimmy Gilligan and his 2nd Year **Basketball** squad on winning their opening league match against St Michael's College. Well done to Daniel MacDermott who scored 11 points with the captain contributing 6.

Well done to the many 2nd Years competing regularly in squash, badminton, table tennis and rugby and to the boys who commit with energy and dedication to rowing each week, those on our tennis team and all those involved in our many school activities.



Richard Ainsworth (2nd year) Ski Team Ireland

Well done to **Richard Ainsworth (2nd Year)** who was selected to represent Ireland as part of 'Ski Team Ireland' in the 26th Trofeu Borrufa Junior World Ski Championships in Andorra. Richard was skiing in the under 14 category – he was one of only 4 under 14s selected. Following 3 days of training Richard then competed in 4 days of competition races including Slalom, GS, Super G and Super Combined.

Well done to Sean O'Connor who was placed 4th in the pool of 104 players, and 1st in his grading category in the Gonzaga **Chess** Classic. He reported that it was a great learning experience and that he "learned the most from the game he lost, as he got the opportunity to play a very skilful player who gave him advice on how to improve after the game".



Sean O'Connor (2nd Year) Gonzaga Chess Classic 2018



Stephen Wong singing at the Leman Concert

The **Leman Concert** was again a wonderful display of musical talent amongst the boys. Congratulations to the Second Year boys who performed so well in the orchestra, the Corless Choir, and Ceoltoiri Carraige. A highlight was of course Sam Cahill who opened the concert with a magnificent solo in Go Ye Afar. The soloists in Pompeii were Second Years Mark Phelan and Stephen Wong who did a superb job. Well done boys!

Dates for your Diary

- 22 February – 2nd Year Parent-Teacher Meeting
- 23 February – Modern Language Easter Aural
- 27 February – Irish Easter Aural
- 5 March – Start of Lenten Reconciliation Services
- 14 March – House Examinations begin

Third Year



We welcomed the Third Years back to what has proven to be a very action packed and engaging half term. The students have had the opportunity to participate in and demonstrate their many talents in the areas of science, sports and the arts. We were delighted to be represented by Conor Slattery at the BT Young Scientist, which took place at the RDS from the 11th – 13th January. Conor's project 'The prevention of sodium chloride build up on glass' was very well received by all in attendance, no doubt due to his confident and comprehensive presentation of the project.



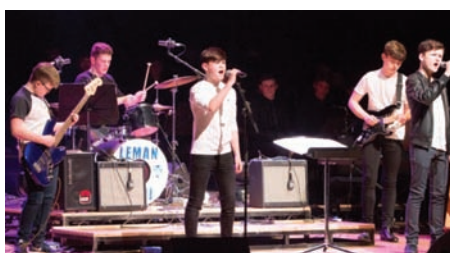
Conor Slattery with Principal Mr A. MacGinty and Councillor Cormac Devlin at the BT Young Scientist

Days of Reflection

On the Tuesday, Thursday and Friday of the week of January the 15th the students travelled with their houses to the Disciples of The Divine Cross on Newtownpark Avenue for a day of reflection and prayer. It was an opportunity for the boys to take stock and reflect on recent events. We were delighted with the feedback we received from the students and have no doubt they benefitted from the day.

Leman Concert

It was fantastic to see so many Third Year students involved in the Leman Festival Concert on Sunday 21st of January. The musical talent on show was extraordinary to say the least. Third Year was represented right across the board in the orchestra, the Corless Choir, soloist the Trad group and of course our very own band Paradox. Well done to Alex Kelly on his solo performance. A truly inspiring and uplifting event.



Robbie Gallagher, Sam Loscher, Oscar Burke Maloney, Sean Probert and Alex Kelly

Bullying Awareness Day

On January 22nd as part of Bullying Awareness Day the students attended a talk by Mr Liam Challenor from the National Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre in DCU. He spoke to the year group about the challenges and threats of cyber bullying through social media.

Whole School Gathering

The Third Years were in full voice as we geared up for the JCT and SCT Cup Campaigns with a whole school gathering in the Sports Hall on Wednesday 24th. Past pupil Bob Casey was the Guest of Honour at the event and spoke of his pride in representing the school on the rugby field. We are very proud ourselves to be so well represented by the JCT captain James Culhane. He spoke with confidence in urging the whole school to get out and support the J and S squads. It was great to see so many Third Years in the stands for the opening game against Castleknock.

MUN

Well done to the Third Year members of the Model United Nations: John Cawley, Joey Haughton, Thomas Kerr, Michael Lucey, Kier MacKay, Andrew McSweeney and Finn Sheahan who helped organise and made a significant contribution to the third annual 'ROCKMUN' held in the college on the weekend of the 3rd and 4th of February. The weekend conference proved to be a great success and is becoming ever more prominent on the yearly calendar. The society meet every Friday in the Creative Arts and Digital Learning Centre. I would encourage Third Years to get involved.

Extracurricular

In badminton we were delighted to see our U16 B and C team challenging for a place in the final of Division 3. The B team were victorious over Gonzaga in the quarters with the C team beating St Aidan's. Unfortunately, neither team made it beyond the semis, but Joey Haughton and Andrew Ryan played very well in their matches. The B team of Robert Byrne, John Dennison, Colm Kelly and Seán Probert lost their match by a mere three points. Our U16 A team of Darragh Dempsey, Darragh Harrison, Stephen O' Nualláin and Liam Prior contested the final of Division 2 held in Whitehall, narrowly losing 4-2.



Robert Byrne, John Dennison, Colm Kelly and Seán Probert

Following an impressive showing at the DCU Cross Country invitational on the 17th of January our intermediate cross-country team including James Crowley, Darragh Dempsey, Eoin Kelly, Joseph Neary, Michael O' Sullivan and Nathan Van Steenberge finished 2nd in the East Leinster held recently in Avondale Co. Wicklow. The result sees the team progress to the Leinster Championships which will be held in February.



Tom Henderson and Michael Maloney (JCTV St Michael's)

Congratulations to Alex Bolger who was winner of a recent Third Year golf outing held in Woodbrook golf course. Despite some pretty awful conditions in the morning, it was a very competitive outing with Alex going on to win by 16 points.

The U16 basketball team, following a tough day out at the all-Ireland playoffs can look back on some performances of real character and determination as they competed in the event held in Drogheda on the 14th of January. The team captained by Feargal Keane now look towards the upcoming Dublin South semi-final.

In squash, the Third Years have taken part in two single day tournaments held in Sutton. On the 24th of January our team including Alex Byrne, Fred Hamilton and Ned Fitter finished in 3rd place in the nine-team tournament. On the 31st of January the U17 team including Alex Byrne, Ed Bourke Kennedy, Maxie Cosgrave and Eoin Whooley finished 2nd in their one day tournament.

Our Junior 3rd, 4th and 5th rugby teams are now up and running in their respective leagues, and with the obvious strength in depth of this squad, should all be challenging to the end of the season. Both the 4th and 5th team have won their opening matches and look to progress from their groups. The Junior 3rd face St Columba's in their opening game



Ben Brownlee (JCTV St Michael's)

Our Junior 2nd team face a tough opening game against St Michael's in the first round of the Seconds League.

Well done to Captain James Culhane and the Junior Squad for their victory over a strong St Michael's team in the first round of the Junior Cup. We look forward to the draw and next round.

Dates for your Diary

Modern Languages Easter Aural – 23rd February
Addiction awareness Day – 1st March
3rd Year Parents Social – 23rd March
Easter Exams – 14th – 23rd March

Transition Year



Leadership Programme

On return after the Christmas break the students attended the second part of the Self Leadership programme given by Mr Denis Hevey. With so much happening in TY before Christmas from BCR to the Soccer Marathon, and equally with so much more to come in the second half of the year; we feel it is the perfect time for students to reflect on the year so far and to kick start their motivation to get as involved as possible for the rest of the year! Mr Hevey encourages the students to analyse their motivation and attitude and how they can get more out of themselves. He also looks at techniques to develop resilience and manage moods. The feedback from the groups as ever was fantastic and we thank Mr Hevey for all his efforts.

Lecture Series

The Transition Year Lecture Series continued with the students attending 3 talks. On the 18th we had the annual Dell workshop given to the boys with the focus of the talk being on the variety of career paths open within an IT company, that a career with Microsoft/Dell etc is not just for 'tech savvy' individuals. The second half of the workshop will be run at a later date. On Bullying Awareness Day on the 22nd January, there was a talk given by Liam Channellor from the National Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre, DCU who spoke about the challenges and threats of cyber-bullying on any of the social media platforms. On the 25th of January, there was a talk given by Theresa McEvoy on behalf of Oesophageal Cancer Fund (OCF) to give boys a background to the work that OCF do in advance of the boys taking part in a collection on their behalf for Lollipop Day on 23rd February.

Pastoral Programme

Since Christmas two more groups have gone out on Pastoral Placement with the Matthew 25 programme. The feedback continues to be excellent. Our Faith Friends Group (a religion class helping with preparation for the Willow confirmation) has attended a workshop in Kimmage Manor in preparation and have a busy programme of workshops coming up towards midterm and afterwards. We thank Mr. O'Reilly for his work with the group. The boys have a wonderful reputation amongst various charitable causes and there is certainly great demand for their help. As we speak we are gathering 40 names for a collection on behalf of Down Syndrome Ireland in early March, 30 names for the Lollipop Day collection mentioned above, another 20 or so for a collection on behalf of Blackrock Alzheimer's Social club and we look forward to helping the 2018 Machakos Committee with their church collections as well.



Blackrock College Bank (Bank of Ireland) and AIB Build a Bank

The student team running the school bank on behalf of Bank of Ireland will be finishing up before midterm. This bank has been running since well before Christmas and it has been a busy time for the boys securing customers and setting up accounts in the push for the finish line.

What was once the Blackrock College Radio studio has been commandeered by a group of TYs and is now the headquarters of the AIB Build a Bank team. This is a regional (and hopefully national!) competition run by AIB. The Build a Bank team ran an excellent Table Quiz in the recreation area on Thursday 25th January with over 70 students attending in order to raise money for their Guest Speaker Series which is the basis of the theme of the bank 'Investing in Education'. They are also busy preparing for the regional finals taking place in the Talbot Hotel Stillorgon on February 9th.



Seb Lowe, Jamie Yarr, Harry Cullen, Nathan Dinn and Jamie Dowling at the Table Quiz

Corporate/Family Duck Race and 5k4Kenya

The activity will certainly continue in Transition Year after the midterm as we will have two major fundraisers happening in April. The date for the Corporate/Family Duck race is to be confirmed before midterm and all will be informed at that point, with the location of the race to be in the Grand

Canal Basin. The race will be in aid of Goal and Aidlink. The date for the 5k4Kenya is set for Sunday 22nd April with a location to be confirmed and will be in aid of Goal and Machakos. The year has been divided into groups for each event; Sales, PR/Media and Promotion, Prizes and Logistics and have already been busy getting each event up and running!

Leman Concert

An absolutely incredible show once again! It was great to see so many students involved in orchestra, choir, backstage, Ceoltóirí Carriage amongst other performances. A huge well done to the many talented TY students involved!

Trips abroad

Tuesday January 9th saw the Tropical Medical Bureau visit to administer the vaccinations to the 24 students travelling to Kenya and the 60 students travelling to China. The boys displayed their usual levels of bravery and cheer as they sat down for their vaccinations. As you read this there are 24 students visiting our sister school in Machakos and another group travelling with the Willow Wheelers in Ethiopia. Three preparatory workshops were kindly facilitated by the charity Aidlink in advance of the trip. The immersion trip in conjunction with Aidlink will also take the students to Kaijado County, home of the Masaai tribe where they will visit some of the Aidlink projects, part funded by previous fourth year charity collections. There will be a debriefing workshop from the boys on return which will give them an opportunity to reflect on what will be an incredible experience. We wish them well.

Other News

The Barista Course has proven to be hugely popular with the boys with another 46 boys signed up across two different groups. Conversational French has begun on a Tuesday night with Chinese classes continuing on a Thursday evening. Auditions for the Junior Musical have also begun. We also have a number of students overseas at the moment from Dubai to South Africa to France and we wish all of the boys well and look forward to welcoming them back on return. A noteworthy mention; congratulations to Kyle Donnelly on securing silver at the European Jiu-Jitsu Championships in Lisbon earlier in January. A wonderful achievement.



Kyle Donnelly won silver at the European Jiu-Jitsu Championships

Family Mass

On Sunday 4th February we had our Transition Year Family mass in the College chapel with a special invitation extended to the grandparents of the TY students. It was a wonderful community occasion and it was great to welcome the families in such numbers. It is one of the highlights of the TY calendar.



Mark Kenny with his family at the 4th Year Family Mass

David Fennessy, president of the Blackrock College conference of St. Vincent De Paul spoke of the incredible amount of money raised as part of the Christmas appeal and the difference it has made to so many in need. A huge thank you to Ms. McGlynn and Mr. O'Reilly for their work in organising such a special occasion, to Mr. Grumley-Traynor and Ms. O'Kane for their work with the boys involved in the musical side of the mass and a special word of thanks to Fr. Gerry Kane, our celebrant for a lovely ceremony.

Dates for your Diary

Transition Year Work Experience – 19th -23rd February
Addiction Awareness Day – Thursday 1st March
Lenten Reconciliation Services – 5th – 9th March
Easter Exams – 14th – 23rd March
Corporate/Family Duck Race - Friday 20th April 1pm
5k4Kenya – 22nd April

Fifth Year



As term two continues, we encourage all 5th Year students to maintain their momentum in relation to academic progress. The value of the weekly Application Cards and monthly Progress Cards cannot be underestimated as was reinforced for many at the well-attended Parent Teacher meeting on 01 February. They provide clear indicators of the levels of overall effort and academic progress. Students are continually encouraged to be proud and accountable and to show their cards at home.

Career Seminars (January 13th and 27th)

We are grateful to Head of the Career Guidance Department Ms Natasha Drew, together with Mr Declan O'Sullivan (Class of 1985) and the Past-Pupils' Union for organising a number of worthwhile and engaging career seminars for over two Saturdays in January. A high number of students turned out on both days to listen to speakers share their experiences in a number of career areas including Medicine, Accounting, Finance, Law and Marketing. The seminars were very insightful for all the students present. Students are encouraged to complete and submit Career Plans to Mr O'Nualláin and to consult websites such as qualifax.ie and careersportal.ie to explore the many third level course options available.



Max Ryan (5th Year) and Gary Brown (Class of 1999) at the Career Talks



Niall Woods (Class of 1989) and Gary Brown (Class of 1999) presenting at Career Talks on sport

Lourdes Pilgrimage

Students have been invited to volunteer for the Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes in September 2018. Interviews will be held in the coming weeks and we congratulate and wish all those applying well.

Bullying Awareness Day

On the second Bullying Awareness Day of the year, students were addressed by Mr Liam Challenor of the National Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre in DCU. The damages of all bullying were discussed with the message Tell, Tell, Tell reiterated throughout. The students were encouraged to protect themselves from potential harm online, to not stand by as others are being bullied and advised on how to and where to report such activity. The Debating Society and Thursday Tunes were active during the week promoting a zero tolerance approach to both bullying and by standing.

Leadership Congress

A large number of Fifth Year students represented the year group at the Cycle against Suicide Student Leaders' Congress in the 3Arena in January. The day long congress promoted positive mental health and instilled the message that *it's ok not to be ok; and it's absolutely ok to ask for help*. It is hoped that the students will use this experience to help plan further mental health initiatives in the school.

Leman Festival

On Sunday 21st January the Fifth Year presence in the Leman Concert was outstanding. Their contribution and enthusiasm in the Leman and Libermann choirs as well as the orchestra was tremendous. Solo performances from Harry Redmond, Thomas McCormack were most entertaining as was the



Rob Jordan, Oisín Reid, Tadhg Egan and Ben Rigney at the Leman Concert

polished performance of 5th Year band Bluehill. These together with the lively performances of the Fifth Year Jazz and Trad. Band members added greatly to the overall variety. We congratulate all those involved including those in the boarders' choir and all backstage.

Training, leagues, tournaments and competitions are in full swing across all extra-curricular activities. Students are encouraged to get involved and stay involved not only as part of a healthy body-health mind drive but also to build much needed interpersonal, teamwork and time management skills. Some of the most recent Fifth Year activities are detailed here.

Green Schools and Eco Rock

On 22nd of January, the Green Schools Committee attended the 9th annual Dún Laoghaire Rathdown Eco Conference. The day consisted of activities to raise awareness of both our Social and Physical Environment and highlighted the concerns that surround the subject. Speakers from An Taisce and Eco UNESCO presented on the dangers and consequences of climate change and warned against a lack of action. EcoRock was founded by Fifth Year



Andrew Ryan, Adam O'Sullivan and Drummond McGinn at the DLR Greenschools' Conference



Ruairi Moore (Youth Climate Ambassador) with Eamon Ryan

student Ruairi Moore in September 2017 and works to reinforce the belief that halting climate change will hugely serve humanity. Since the New Year they are focussed on changing mind-sets and habits in the College and are targeting the reduction of the amount of single use plastic that the Blackrock College community uses. Their Plastic Pile campaign is almost ready to launch and we congratulate all members for their passion and determination. Ruairi is also an active Youth Climate Ambassador working with An Taisce. This programme aims to enable students to lead others in having a positive impact on Climate Change. The group meet and train regularly.

Model United Nations and Debating

Congratulations to the Fifth Year members of the MUN society for organising the College MUN Conference, which hosted over two hundred and fifty delegates from various schools.

Meanwhile, outside participation in the College based debates, Michael Ryan has progressed to the Final of the UCD Leinster Senior Schools Debating Competition and we wish him well. Well done to Max McKenna who has qualified for the next round of the Irish World Schools Debating Competition. We wish all the debaters well and encourage all students to try out this challenging sport to help develop their critical and analytical skills.

Rugby

We congratulate the Fifth Years and all members of the SCT squad who have enjoyed success over Castleknock so far and are hopeful for the rest of the campaign. We wish the Fifth Year students who were selected as cheerleaders well as they lead the support for this year's cup campaigns with a passion and energy that is second to none! Their relentless vigour and drive at the recent Year and Whole School Assemblies was remarkable. As the competitive stage of the rugby season has begun we wish all involved in House Rugby well in their participation in Leinster Branch Rugby Leagues.

Senior Soccer

The soccer season of highs and lows is revelling on a high as the Senior Team are enjoying being the newly crowned South Dublin Metropolitan League title holders. The presence of Fifth Years on the Senior Soccer Squad is notable and we commend their determination and wish them all the best as

Fifth Year Cont'd



their training for the upcoming Dublin League semi-final continues.

Golf

We congratulate the Senior Golf team, including Fifth Year students Robert O'Callaghan and Cathal French who were successful in their first round of the Leinster Schools. Best wishes for continued success.



Ben Horkan and Andy Lyons (in action Rock V Coláiste Éanna)

Basketball

Disappointment in the All Ireland playoffs was followed by great anticipation for the South Dublin League semi-final against St Columba's. Such a great season for all involved who are already looking forward to next year.

Table Tennis and Tennis

Well done to Romain Gaspar who played in the Munster Table Tennis Open and won the Men's singles and Junior Boys' singles titles. Students are reminded of the upcoming Leinster Boys' Schools Tennis Competition and all those interested are invited to get involved. Tennis training takes place on Wednesdays, weather permitting, on the fabulously refurbished courts.

Cross Country

Through rainy days and freezing temperatures the Cross Country teams can be seen lapping the pitches. We congratulate Edward McKenna and his team on their victory in the DCU Cross Country Invitational and again to

Edward and Max McKenna for their Senior Team win at the East Leinster competition. May your success continue as you proceed to the Leinster Championships in February.

Cricket

JJ Garth has represented Ireland in the U19s Cricket World Cup in New Zealand in January. This has been a dream come true for JJ. Ireland won 3 out of 6 matches beating Afghanistan, Papua New Guinea and Namibia. JJ was thrilled to earn **Man of the Match** title in the game against Papua New Guinea. Congratulations and well done to JJ as we welcome him back.



JJ Garth representing Ireland in the Cricket World Cup. He was named man of the match in the game against Papua New Guinea.

5th Year Family Mass

The 5th Year Family Mass will be celebrated in the College Chapel on Sunday 11 March. It is hoped that as many parents and sons as possible will be in attendance.

Dates for your Diary

Addiction Awareness Day	Thursday 01 March
5th Year Family Mass	Sunday 11 March

The Arts



New Year Art Exhibition at the CADLC

A selection of work by Fifth and Sixth Year artists was on show in the CADLC during January. The work reflected a variety of individual starting points and styles from figurative and representational to abstract. The exhibition contained examples of still life in oils, acrylic seascapes, illustration and graphic design. This display starts the 2018 visual art initiative at the CADLC with further shows planned for later in the year.



Thomas McCormack (5th Year)



David Kealy (5th Year)



Tony Smurfit (6th Year)



Rob Jordan (5th Year)



Mark Fitzgibbon (5th Year)

The Arts Cont'd



Luke Lee (5th Year)



Eunan Linders (6th Year)

Music & Drama

As ever, the first half of the spring term has been action-packed in the Department of Music and Drama. January brought with it meticulous preparations for the greatly anticipated Leman Concert XXXII, which this year featured the momentous theme of *Carnival du Monde Naturel*. As the night of the concert drew closer, it became apparent that this year's show promised to delight and enthrall the audience in an exuberant celebration of the wonder inspired by the world around us. Without doubt, the show delivered above and beyond these expectations, and the night was a huge success. The musical talents of soloists, instrumentalists, bands and choirs from across the year groups were showcased with tremendous charisma and the night was greatly enhanced with the running commentary of the MC, James Lunt (6th Year).



The Adult and Leman Choir at the Leman Concert



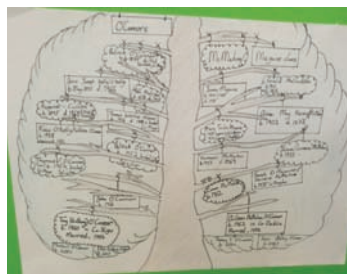
The Orchestra under the baton of Mr A. Kavanagh at the Leman Concert

Fuelled by the success of *Lemanuary*, the department has now turned its focus to the upcoming Wesley Music Festival and Feis Ceoil. Both competitions, which take place in March, will feature both solo and choral entries from the College, and rehearsals are well underway. In other news, the Transition Year Family Mass took place on Sunday 4th February, the celebration of the Liturgy was uplifted with music provided by the Fourth-Year Choir and Cantors. Elsewhere in the College, preparations for the Junior Show are now in their preliminary stages; we look forward to seeing this come to fruition in the coming months. It is hoped that the rest of the term will continue to be rewarding for all involved.

Creative Arts & Digital Learning Centre

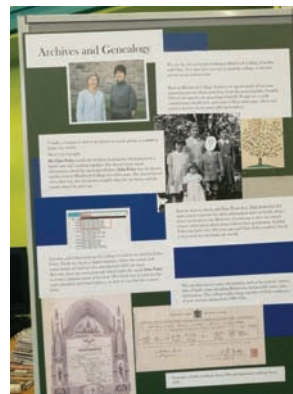
Art Exhibition

We had a bright start to 2018 with a New Year Art Exhibition of art work by some of our 5th and 6th Year students. We hope to bring more of these exhibitions to the Learning Centre over the course of the academic year to give our talented students a space in which to showcase their art.



Family Tree Exhibition

As part of Catholic Schools' Week, and under the theme of family, we



hosted a small exhibition of Blackrock College Family Trees. This includes information from our archives on the types of information held within the school, as well as creative displays of family trees from both staff & students from all years.

Book Clubs

Our Staff Book Club is currently reading Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake* and will meet on 19th February. Our Parents' Book Club is meeting on 1st March at 7.30pm in the Learning Centre and will be discussing Ian McEwan's *On Chesil Beach*. New members are always welcome.

Digital Resources

We now have a subscription to multidisciplinary online database JSTOR (jstor.org). Students can contact the Learning Centre for a username and password that allows them access both on and off-campus. Students can also avail of access to full text articles on the Financial Times website, as well access to the Irish Times archive. Contact Lorraine or Barbara in the Learning Centre for login details.

Senior Debating

Congratulations to Oisín Ryan (6th Year) and Michael Ryan (5th Year) for reaching the final of the Leinster Senior Schools' Debating Competition. We wish them luck. Max McKenna (5th Year) and Tom Dooley (4th Year) also gave impressive performances in the competition.

Max McKenna has been selected to compete in the finals of the National Team Ireland competition.

Thanks to our very active 5th Years for organising a number of in-house events. A special word of gratitude to Shore Oluborode and Dylan Hutchinson for making the lunchtime events happen.

Our senior pupils are preparing to do battle with distinguished past pupils in the annual Past/Present Pupils Debate. This is always an enjoyable event in the school calendar.

ROCKMUN

Building on the success of last year's conference, ROCKMUN 2018 provided a valuable experience to MUN newcomers and veterans alike. The conference struck a balance between a high level of debate, as well as being extremely enjoyable for those taking part.

A huge debt of gratitude is owed to ROCKMUN's advisor Mr Smyth, for his unerring support, both in the lead up and during the conference. Many thanks also to ROCKMUN Secretary General Christopher O'Flaherty (6th Year) who organised and oversaw every facet of the administration of this year's conference. The success of this year's conference is a testament to his hard work and dedication to ROCKMUN, as well as that of many others. Also deserving special mention are, Simon Huggard (6th Year), President of the General Assembly, Ben Heapes (6th Year), Head of Media, and Stephen Ryan (6th Year), Head of Security. ROCKMUN 2019 will have a lot to live up to.

Snapshot of 1st Half Term 2018



The Rowing Club are delighted with their new Fillippi F42 coxed 8,



Aran Horgan (6th Year) Blackrock V Coláiste Eanna



Supporters enjoy the first game of the SCT Cup Campaign



Jude O'Reilly, Sean Dempsey and Thomas Quinn (Third Year) JCT V Michael's



Jamie McMahon, Sam Loscher, Aaron Lysaght Walsh, Niall Brophy and Oisín Carroll (Third Year) J2nds V St Pats



Conor Fitzpatrick, Joey Nelson, Christopher O'Flaherty, Conor Lacey, Jonathan Landers and Conor Little (6th Year) at Career Interviews



Ethan Murray, Mikel Aizpura, Leon Bruns and David Kealy (4th Year) Colts V Temple Carraig



The SCT at Donnybrook (Blackrock V Castleknock)



Past Pupils who gave so generously of their time to give Career Talks with Ms N Drew (Head of Guidance and Counselling)



Rory Luff (2nd Year) with Michéal Martin and Mary Hanafin at the BT Young Scientist Exhibition



Karl O'Riordan, Paul Burke-Burke and Alex Hatt (6th Year) Colts V Temple Carraig

Snapshot of 1st Half Term 2018



Louis Crowe (4th Year) Sean Hannon (5th Year) rowing in Seville



JCT (Blackrock V St Michael's)



The Choir at the Leman Concert in the National Concert Hall



Loghann Dougan, Thomas Clarke, Liam McMahon and Nathan Mullan singing in the Boarders' Choir at the Leman Concert



James Lunt (6th Year) M. C. at the Leman Concert



Cian Hasson (6th Year) singing at the Leman Concert



Sam Loscher (3rd Year) playing the drums at the Leman Concert



Oscar O' Brien, Jamie McMahon, Matthew MacCarthy, Conor Bleakley, Michael Nealon and Alex Dinn (3rd Year) J 2nds V St Pat's



Hugh o' Leary, Stephen Ryan, Cian Boland, Conor Fitzpatrick and Eoin Beecham (6th Year) at practise interviews organised by the PPU



Nathan Dinn with his family at the Fourth Year Family Mass

News from the Past



A hundred years ago

Returning to school on 14 January 2018 staff and students were faced with all the results of more than three years of war with no end in sight.

December 1917 had been a low point in the College's history – exemplified by the sad and almost unbelievable entry in the Community journal "No crib this year". Losses of past students in the war and the fear of losing those boys still in their care, financial worries, political uncertainty at home and the shocking news that Christmas had been banned in post-revolutionary Russia made for low-key festivities. The following notice must have seemed as if the recent Irish rebellion had taken an unexpected and chilling turn.

RUSSIAN REPUBLIC RECEPTION.

MASS MEETING

Round Room, Mansion House,
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4th,
AT 8 P.M. 1918

To Congratulate the Russian People on the triumph they
have won for Democratic Principles.

SPEAKERS :

Mr. Wm. O'Brien	Mr. Cathal O'Shannon
Mr. L. Glanell	Mrs. Connerly
Madame Markievicz	Mr. P. Coates
Mr. Thomas Foran	Mr. J. J. Hughes
Madame Gonne-McBride	And Russian Bolsheviks

RUSSIA RECOGNISES IRELAND.

IRELAND! RESPOND TO RUSSIA!

The old bursar's ledgers help to bring to life those far-off days. Itemised bills were sent to parents or guardians of boarders listing essentials paid for by the College during term-time, the cost being added to the fees. Trousers needed braces. Belts were worn with "football knickers" (later known as "knicks")

**Football Jerseys,
Shirts, Knickers,
Boots, etc.
Running Outfits,
etc.**

DICKERING'S

Blanco

For whitening all articles of Buff or Buckskin
Leather, such as Military Equipments, White
Helmets, Cricket Pads and Shoes, and a multi-
tude of similar articles.
Removes stains and discolourations, and
restores evenness of colour, and a soft, silky sur-
face of glossy satin-like appearance.
Much better and more economical than Powder, as there is
no trouble of preparation, and it is much cheaper in the end.
BLANCO is put up in cup-shaped tins, registered design,
and with specially made non-corrosive steel boxes. It will be
found the sanest article for the purposes named.
Sold at Grocers, also by Druggists, Saddlers,
Brushmakers, etc.

Manufacturers: **JOSEPH DICKERING & SONS, SHEFFIELD.**
Branch Office: St. George's House, Eastcheap, London, E.C.3.

Collars and studs were needed, shirts being collarless (nowadays we call them "grandfather shirts"). Socks were held up with garters and trousers with braces. "Breakages in the refectory" featured in many bills sent home. Boys wore heavy boots that were mended by the College shoemaker and repairs to clothes were done by the College tailor. There were charges for these. Blanco was needed to whiten tennis and cricket shoes.

After several doctor's visits to their sons who were boarding, parents often ordered extra items for mealtimes such as porridge, milk, eggs, rashers or chops for their son to build him up. In the earlier days of the French College, wine would have been the norm but was discontinued in 1900 so proprietary medicines were prescribed.



The parents of sixteen-year-old Patrick Quinlivan of Tulla, Co. Clare, were billed for doctor's and nurse's fees and Maltine, a type of tonic containing "coca wine" (cocaine-based).



Bernard Sullivan of Greenwich, London (later Fr Bernard) received Fellows' Compound Syrup of Hypophosphites (containing strychnine...).

It would seem that perhaps the small glass of wine given by the French priests in the nineteenth century would have been safer.

Fifty years ago

Some familiar features of College life fifty years ago have now vanished – the Blackrock College Scout Troops, the Legion of Mary Praesidia, the Pioneer Total Abstinence Association, the Corpus Christi procession, Junior Red Cross, the Galaxy, the Historical Society, the Librarians, the Philatelic Society, the Camera Club and two College magazines *Voice* and *107 Years After*.

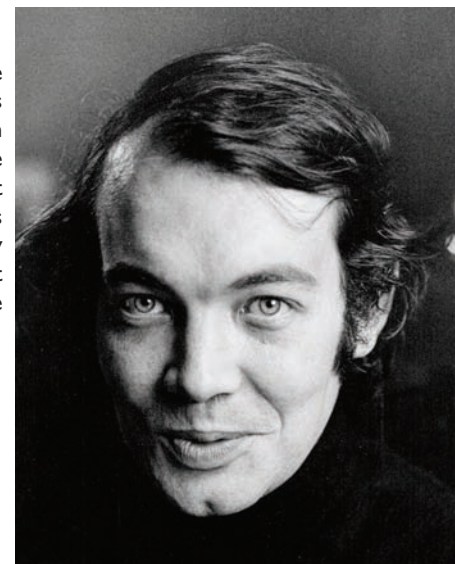
The February issue of *Voice* provides some interesting indications towards the future of some contributors.

A detailed historical article by Peter Raftery about the Emperor Franz Josef includes 'Through all these tragedies he never once questioned the Will of God but bowed his head humbly to the law of the Almighty'. Peter joined the Spiritans and was praised as a meticulous Provincial Archivist before his death in 2013.



Peter Raftery in checked jacket in centre.

A wonderful and articulate piece on past student Myles na gCopaleen was written by Bill Graham who became an author, a rock journalist and was one of the founders of *Hot Press*, described by Bono as "one of the best writers in the world". He died aged only 44.



Sixth Year



Parent-Teacher Meeting (Jan 11th)

There was a very large attendance at the 6th Year Parent-Teacher Meeting on Thursday January 11th. The feedback from this evening was extremely positive and all present felt it was most beneficial to have this meeting immediately on our return to school when feedback from Christmas examinations could be shared and plans of work for terms 2 and 3 outlined.

Student Leaders Congress (Jan 18th)

Sixth Year members of the Student Council were among the 7000 students from around the country who attend this Congress in the 3 Arena. Under the theme 'Always Empower your Voice and be Brave in Pursuit of your Dreams', speakers addressed the students on the themes of living with disability, addiction and mental illness.

DCG Projects (Jan 19th)

Friday 19th January saw the first of the project submissions for Leaving Certificate 2018. Many thanks to Mr Boyle for the time given to students that ensured that all DCG projects based on the design of a Computer Mouse were submitted on time. Leaving Certificate examination numbers have also been posted on notice boards for all students.

Leman Concert (Jan 21st)

The 32nd Leman Festival Concert was held on Sunday 21st January in the National Concert Hall. 39 of the Class of 2018 were involved in this wonderful celebration of musical talent in the College. The standard of performance on the night was outstanding and congratulations to all involved. In particular, it is worth noting the contribution of MC James Lunt; Soloists Stephen Ryan, Harry Kearns, Cian Hasson, Conor Williams and Jack Spain; Rockapella and the 6th Year bands *Actual Size* and *Govinda*.



Hugh Kelly, Stephen Ryan, Neil Holohon and Adam McGovern at the Leman Concert



Conor Williams at the Leman Concert



Harry Kearns at the Leman Concert

Bullying Awareness Day (Jan 22nd)

On January 22nd, as part of Bullying Awareness Day, Mr Liam Challenor of the National Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre in DCU spoke to the students about the career and legal risks taken by people who post unsuitable content online. The growing practice of prospective employers requesting access to personal social media sites was noted in particular.

Career Interviews (Jan 24th)

66 final year students availed of the Career Mock Interviews organised by the Careers Department in association with the Past Pupils' Union on Wednesday 24th January. 28 past students provided formal interviews across a broad spectrum of 21 disciplines including Law, Business, Engineering, Medicine, IT, Science, Psychology, Defence Forces, Sports Management, Education and Media. Many thanks in particular to Ms Natasha Drew (Careers) and Mr Declan O'Sullivan (PPU) for their co-ordination of the evening.

Extra-curricular Programme

Sixth Year students have continued to participate in a wide variety of College activities this half-term...

Firstly we congratulate Liam Turner and the rest of the SCT squad who enjoyed success over Castleknock College in the first round of this year's Senior Cup. We wish the team continued success as they prepare for their quarter-final after mid-term. We congratulate also the Cheerleading Team under the leadership of Charlie Byrne, Matthew Curran, Liam Dunphy, Alex Houlihan and James Lunt for both the excellent Whole School Assembly in the Sports Hall on January 24th and their wonderful support of the Cup Teams in Donnybrook.



Ollie Bruton at Career Interview

As the rugby season enters its competitive stage, we offer our ongoing best wishes to the Castle Rugby teams competing in Leinster Branch Rugby Leagues. It is hoped that the many 6th Year students participating will enjoy these final weeks of involvement in competitive rugby at schools level.



Sean Maloney (Blackrock V Castleknock)

Congratulations to Aran Horgan and the Senior Soccer squad who overcame Colaiste Eanna (2-0) in the final of the South Dublin Metropolitan League final at a wet and windy Kilternan on Wednesday 23rd January. Sean McCann was among the goal scorers and we wish the squad continued success in the next stage of the Metropolitan League, and also for the Joe McGrath Cup and the annual visit of St. Bede's from Manchester in March.



Sean McCann (Blackrock V Coláiste Éanna)

Conor Halpin (2nd), Patrick Fahy (5th) and Harry Kearns (8th) were members of the Senior Cross-Country team that won the DCU Cross Country Invitational on 17th January. This victory was followed by success in the East-Leinster Championship at Avondale in Wicklow on January 25th with Conor (2nd) and Harry (5th). We thank Fionn O'Connor who joined the squad at very short notice to cover for Patrick on this day.

While our Senior **Golf** team led by Robert Abernethy enjoyed a 5up victory over St Michael's in the GUI Leinster School's Matchplay opening

Sixth Year Cont'd



round, our U19 Badminton squad featuring Callum Ryan, Conor Fitzpatrick and Alex Houlihan were defeated by Sandford Park in the Division 2 semi-final. Unfortunately, after defeating Marist College Dundalk, our Senior Basketball squad also experienced defeat in the All-Ireland playoffs at the hands of St. Paul's Monasterevin (40-62). We wish Barry O'Sullivan and Karl Conroy well for the South Dublin League Play-Offs.

Both our French **Debating** and Maths Quiz teams were involved in competitive action this half-term and while both groups exited their respective competitions, we thank all students who had the courage to participate and Ms Corcoran (French) and Mr McKimm (Maths) for their organisation and preparation of these teams.

Many thanks to Conor Barry, Ben Heapes, Simon Huggard and Christopher O'Flaherty for giving of their time in helping co-ordinate the very successful MUN Conference held in the College on February 2nd and 3rd. We thank also Quincy Murray and Stephen Ryan who assisted on both days.

Finally, we congratulate Oisin Ryan who with Michael Ryan (5th Year) has qualified for the Leinster Schools' Senior Debating Final. We wish Oisin, Michael and their team mates Stephen Ryan (6th) and Max McKenna (5th) well in the annual Past versus Present Debate which will take place on

Thursday 8th February. The motion will examine the opportunities and risks associated with Social Media – a very topical subject at the moment.

Finally

The 6th Year Parents' Committee and House Representatives' work on behalf of the Class of 2018 is ongoing with sub-committees planning all aspects of both the Graduation in May and the Summer Project in Machakos, Kenya next July. We wish them continued success with this work.

Important Date for your 2018 Diary

Monday 19th Feb:	6th Year Mock Orals
Tuesday 27th Feb:	Irish Easter Aural Tests
Thursday 1st Mar:	Modern Language Easter Aural Tests
Wednesday 7th Mar:	Anticipated Easter Exams Commence (TBC)
Tuesday 13th Mar:	Full Easter Exams Commence (TBC)
Friday 23rd Mar:	End of Term

Science

Congratulations to Conor Slattery (3rd Year) and Rory Luff (2nd Year) who proudly represented Blackrock College in the BT Young Scientist Competition in the RDS in January. Conor won a display award. All the 2nd and 4th Year students visited the exhibition and provided tremendous support to the two participants.

On Tuesday 20th of February, Blackrock College will host its own Scifest competition. Sheila Porter, CEO of Scifest will help judge the projects. Winners will be announced at the 2nd Year Assembly on Wed the 21st of February and we encourage all 2nd Year parents to view the projects, which will be on display in the Senior Science Corridor, during the parent teacher meeting on Thursday the 22nd of February.



Conor Slattery (3rd Year) with his project.
'The Prevention of Sodium Chloride build up on Glass Windows'



Rory Luff (2nd Year) with his project
'How would a weakening of the Earth's Magnetic field affect the Aurora Borealis?'

Green Schools

Green Schools Committee – Eco Conference

On Monday 22nd January, five 5th Year students attended the 9th Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Eco Conference organised by the DLR Environmental Awareness Officer, Mr. Dean Eaton. He is assisted each year by the event management students of Stillorgan College of Further Education. Dylan Hutchinson, Adam O'Sullivan, Michael McDonald, Michael Ryan, Drummond McGinn and Andrew Ryan represented Blackrock College for the second year running. A delegation of TY students; Tom O'Connor, Mark Landers, Tom Dooley, Ciaran Drohan, John Huggard and Oliver Bosworth also attended the conference on Tuesday 23rd January

The day consisted of activities to raise awareness of both our Social and Physical Environment and highlighted the concerns that surround the subject. Several guest speakers addressed student delegations from Loreto Foxrock, St. Raphaela's and Blackrock College. These included Grainne Ryan from An Taisce and Ji Hyun Kim from ECO UNESCO. Jane Hackett from An Taisce spoke about preserving Ireland's natural heritage. After the very fun world trading game which represented the air miles involved in global trade each school spoke about



Blackrock College students work as Youth Climate Ambassadors for An Taisce.

their environmental ambitions. The evaluation was very positive and we can all say that in Blackrock we are striving towards improving our environment. It was a unanimous decision amongst those on the Green Schools Committee that the conference was thoroughly worthwhile and enjoyable. We would like to thank DLR and Mr. Copeland for facilitating the opportunity to attend this conference.

Holocaust Memorial Day

The Holocaust Memorial Day commemoration is firmly established in the national calendar and takes place in Dublin every year on the Sunday nearest to 27 January, the date of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau. The event cherishes the memory of those who perished in the Holocaust and recalls the millions of innocent Jewish men, women and children and others, who were persecuted and murdered by the Nazis because of their ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, political affiliations or their religious beliefs. This year a group of Blackrock College 2nd, 4th and 5th Year students led by Ms Caroline Pierce attended the event in the Mansion House on Sunday 28th Jan.



Ruairi Moore, Andrew Ryan, Adam O'Sullivan, Michael McDonald, Dylan Hutchinson, Elliott McNamara, Tom Dooley, Eoin McGrath and Harry McLaughlin attending Holocaust Memorial Day Commemorations.

Guidance and Counselling



CAO - 6th Year students have now made their CAO applications which were submitted by February 1st. A number of students also submitted UCAS applications for the January 15th deadline and some students have already received offers from the UK.



HPAT - Several students will sit the HPAT-Ireland test on February 24th in various venues. These students have had the opportunity to participate in a HPAT preparation course that has been available in

the school on Saturday mornings. They have also taken a number of practice tests and good progress has been made.

PLC - Open days have commenced for Post Leaving Certificate courses and a number of students have begun submitting applications for these courses. Further information is available from the career counsellors in the College, on the careers noticeboard and from the websites of the PLC colleges themselves. Applications for these courses are on a first come first served basis. Please apply online now if you are considering this option.

Career Talks - Saturday morning Career Talks took place throughout January for 5th and 6th Year students. Many different career disciplines and their numerous career paths were presented by past students and associated professionals. The career disciplines included Engineering, Accounting/Marketing, Law, Computing, Agricultural Science, Medicine, Communications/Media and Entrepreneurship. The talks were well attended with students finding them very informative and inspiring. The college is very grateful to the Past Pupils' Union who assisted with the arrangement of these talks.

Interviews - Career coaching interviews for 6th Years took place on Wednesday 24th January. This event was organised with the assistance of the Past Pupils' Union. The interviewers on the night, all past pupils, approached the evening in a very professional manner while sharing their own wealth of experiences with the Sixth Year students. Students who participated in the programme submitted a Letter of Application and Curriculum Vitae prior to their interview. Again this year a particular emphasis was placed on coaching the students. Consequently on the evening, immediately following the formal interview each candidate was given useful feedback and coaching about his preparation for and performance at the interview. This proved to be a very valuable learning experience. Interviewers were very impressed by the students who participated.



Xxxxxx Shane Mc Donagh

48 Students from the College attend the Cycle against Suicide Student Leaders' Congress on Thursday 18th January. **The Student Leaders' Congress** is organised and run by Cycle Against Suicide, the charity organisation that aims to foster an environment of positive mental health through the promotion of its core message that 'It's OK not to feel OK; and it's absolutely OK to ask for help'. For details on this year's cycle or information on how to volunteer, log on to www.cycleagainsuicide.com. The students brought back lots of ideas from the Congress that will continue to help promote positive mental health and help-seeking behaviour in the college and they look forward to being involved in setting up the Amber Flag in the College. The event, which started as a gathering of 40 students in 2012, is now the largest young people's mental health conference in Europe.



The Cycle against Suicide Student Leaders' Congress

Anti-Bullying - Our second Bullying Awareness Day took place on Monday 22nd January. Each year group attended a talk on Cyberbullying and Internet Safety. Liam Challenor from DCU's National Anti-bullying Research and Resource Centre spoke to several year groups and Graham Mulhern from Be Secure Online spoke to the Second Years. It was most informative for students and teachers to learn safety in this digital world.

Posters have been put up around the schools showing students how to use the bullying report tool, please encourage your sons to use this tool if necessary. It is our hope in the College that everyone will help to tackle the issue of bullying by standing up and speaking out against it. If you have any concerns about the welfare of any student please to contact Ms. Drew, ndrew@blackrockcollege.com where it will be dealt with in confidence.

Online Content

You can have your online content removed by contacting www.hotline.ie/. Hotline.ie exists to combat the distribution and proliferation of illegal content, like child sexual abuse content, in conjunction with police and Internet Industry.



Dates for your Diary

CAO- 1st February

DARE Registration: Answer 'yes' to question 1, complete and submit - 1st February

DARE online supplementary information (school section) - March 1st
DARE Supporting Documentation - 1st April 2018

NUI exemptions - Tick box on CAO by February 1st 2018 and submit documentation to NUI, 49 Merrion Square, D2. Must be posted (NUI Cert, Birth Cert and form available from Ms Drew or Ms Ryan)

HPAT Test - 24th February

New Boat Arrives on Campus



The Rowing Club took receipt of the fantastic new boat, Libermann, recently and held a special blessing ceremony on 31st January in St Patrick's Corridor. Fr Nash kindly blessed the boat, a Fillippi F42 coxed 8, and led the attendees in a short prayer ceremony. Mr MacGinty spoke of the great strides being made by the Rowing Club under the direction of Laura Gannon and complimented the wonderful work of the Rowing Committee in creating the environment for our committed and dedicated rowers to train and compete under the Blackrock College banner. He paid particular tribute to Michael Power, the Managing Director of MJ Flood, who very generously sponsored the purchase of the boat. Mr MacGinty noted that such acts of commitment and generosity have greatly helped in growing the Rowing Club so steadily in recent times.

Niall O'Grady, Chairman of the Rowing Club committee, thanked the rowers, their parents and the College management for their dedication in ensuring that rowing continues to prosper with new rowers joining the club each year.



Conal Regan (5th YR), Jack Tiernan (4th YR), Peter o' Grady (4th YR), Mr N. O' Grady (Chairman of The Rowing Committee), Mr M Power (MD of MJ Flood), MJ Power (4th YR) and Louis Crowe (4th YR)

Pastoral Care Programme



Happy New Year 2018 to each and everyone connected to Blackrock College from all in the Chaplaincy and Pastoral Departments.

As we closed the door on 2017, we remembered our colleague and teacher, **Mr Dunne and also Fr. Malachy Kilbride C.S.Sp.**, member of the Spiritan Community and member of the Blackrock School Community also. We remembered them in a special way at the start of the New School Year and also on the occasion of their months mind masses. *May they both rest in Peace.*



As we opened a new door to 2018, the year started with as much pace as the old one had ended. **Third Year Students** retreated to the Disciples of the Divine Masters in Newtownpark Avenue for Days of Reflection. Over the course of three days all the pupils in the year escaped the business of school and "retreat" for the day. The retreat was led by Gerry Keegan. It comprised of a relaxed day of prayer, reflection and music. The material is presented in a stimulating and enjoyable way, so that the experience is enriching and informative. It introduces the boys to a wider learning and human perspective and helps them to achieve it. "It helped me to forget about the stress/pressure from schoolwork and enter a new atmosphere" and "the retreat made me look at life from a new perspective and become more aware of the decisions I make"

Matthew 25 Programme



Matthew 25 Pastoral Placement Programme

The Matthew 25 Pastoral Placement Programme continued into 2018 and another 2 groups of **Transition Students** went to the various centres throughout South County Dublin and as far as Bray to **Befriend the Clients** in the various centers and to **Support the Staff** there. They spend 1 week in class the week previous to going out to prepare for their placement and then they spend 2 weeks in the centres aiding and helping out in many different ways. Some of the pupils would have had little or no previous interaction with people of disability/older people and when they come back their lives have been changed and their perception of others is noticeably changed. Many of the pupils spoke highly of the experiences they had and the people they met. They realised that they have learnt so much about themselves and grown in confidence and awareness of the world around them.



Catholic Schools Week 2018

Catholic Schools Week in Blackrock College started with a quiz in the Staffroom where the **Religion Department** took on the rest of the staff to quiz them about particular elements of the Catholic faith. This event was a fun way to start the week. The theme of

Catholic Schools Week this year 2018 was "**Catholic Schools: Called to be a Family of Families**" in preparation for the World Meeting of Families which is happening in Dublin this Summer. We highlighted this theme in a varied manner throughout the school. In the **Digital Learning Centre** there was a display of **Family Trees** of Students' families and some staff members contributed also to the display. This highlighted the importance of family and how our families play a huge role in our lives and our upbringing.



Feast Day of Venerable Francis Libermann

We celebrated the **Feast Day of Venerable Francis Libermann** in the College Chapel with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament for the students to attend if they wished to leave class and spend some "Quiet, Personal Prayer Time". This event was well

attended and well respected by all the students who attended the Chapel. Along St. Patrick's Corridor there were many photos and displays of family events that have happened in the life of Blackrock College and also a picture of Pope Francis' immediate family together.

100 Years of the Irish in Kenya

During this week, we were also gifted a display from the Kenyan Embassy, of "**100 Years of the Irish in Kenya**". This comprised of 15 posters which highlighted the work of all of the Irish who left Irish shores to work in Kenya and whose impressions were still visible there today. This exhibition remained on the corridor for a total of two weeks and students got the chance to witness the good work of people like the Spiritans, of organisations like Trócaire and all the many missionaries and lay people who gave of their time to educate and spread the message of Christianity to the people of Kenya.



Transition Year Family Mass

We concluded our **Catholic Schools Week**

with the **Transition Year Family Mass** on Sunday 4th of February. The mass was prepared and led by the students of Transition Year and they planned and executed the many parts of the mass with reverence and joy. The mass was celebrated by Father Gerry Kane, of Booterstown Parish, a native of Castleknock. He led with the message that we are called to be of service to others and this value and message is so much part of the Blackrock Ethos core of the school community. The mass paid tribute to grandparents who play a vital part in families and pass their faith and values to their children and grandchildren. The students were all given a bookmark from the Catholic Grandparents' Association, "Creating awareness for the Great Vocation of Grandparents" with the Grandparents' Prayer of the Pope on it and an image of the Holy Family, in this the year of the family.



NOTE

An tSraith Shóisearach do Mhúinteoirí
JuniorCYCLE
for teachers



Blackrock College will close on Monday 26th February for a whole staff planning and in-service day. This is a requirement by the Department as specified in DES Circular 0015/2017 as part of the continued implementation of the new Junior Cycle. There will be no classes for students on this day, however, night study will go ahead for 3rd, 5th and 6th years.

Sport



Badminton Under 19

The U19 team have had a busy schedule, Conor Fitzpatrick led his team of Callum Ryan, Alex Houlihan (6th Year) and Luke O'Brien (TY) to the U19s Division Two semi-final. After some impressive form leading up to the semi-final the team lost out on the day 5-1. We congratulate the squad for what has been a rewarding year having moved up a division from last year.

Under 16

The U16A team comprising Darragh Dempsey, Stephen O'Nuallain, Liam Prior, and Darragh Harrison started back after Christmas with a commanding win over Ard Scoil Ris. Following that win Terenure were next in their sights. The team settled into their games very quickly in both the singles and doubles with Blackrock running out winners 5-1 and securing their place in the final. In the final against Belvedere the majority of the games were close until the end. However Belvedere proved too strong and despite some fantastic performances Belvedere won 4-2. Overall a pleasing season with the team moving up a division from last year and going through the league season unbeaten was a great achievement.

The under 16 B team captained by Robert Byrne led his team into the semi-finals at Whitehall Road against an experienced De La Salle team. The team consisting of Robert Byrne, Sean Probert, John Dennison and Colm Kelly, put up a titanic display with games going down to the wire. The end result was a tie, 3 games apiece with De La Salle going through by way of points countback. We congratulate the team on a successful year and wish De La Salle the best of luck in the final.

Joey Haughton led our U16 C Team into the semi-finals at Whitehall Road, Terenure. Joey alongside Tom King, Sean Harty and Andrew Ryan came up against a strong experienced Lycée Français side. After some tight games Blackrock lost out by a score of 2-4.



Joey Haughton, Andrew Ryan (Third Year)
Tom King and Sean Harty (Second Year)

Under 14

The U14s team have had a busy month after the Christmas break. The team recorded a well-deserved win vs. St Benildus before losing encounters to impressive Gonzaga and Templeogue sides. We wish the under 14 squad consisting of Michael Paran, Matthew Kane, Max Mooney, David Duffy and Conor Reidy the very best in their upcoming fixtures.

Basketball

Under 19 Basketball

On Sunday 21st January the Senior Basketball team travelled to Marist College, Dundalk to compete in the All-Ireland playoffs. We won one and lost one and this unfortunately fell short of qualifying for an All-Ireland semi-final in our first year competing at this level. It was a fantastic achievement for the team. The results were a 51-28 win over Marist College, and a 40-62 loss to St. Paul's Monasterevin. Bouncing back from that disappointment, Blackrock in the South Dublin League semi-final came up against St. Columba's College and after trailing by 3 points with just over a minute to go came back to win an exciting game and move onto play St Andrew's College in the final after the midterm break.

Under 16 Basketball

The Blackrock under 16 team reached the All Ireland League playoffs at this level for the first time. This was a superb achievement considering that this was their first season playing in this division and secondly considering the panel is mostly comprised of Second Years. The playoffs took place, Sunday 14th January in St. Oliver's CC in Drogheda. Unfortunately Blackrock lost all three games. The team competed admirably throughout and showed great heart to give eventual winners St. Oliver's their toughest test. Three games in one day is a huge ask on all of the teams and unfortunately the greater physicality and strength of the other teams who were mainly comprised of Transition Years was a step too far for the squad. Feargal Keane (Captain –

3rd Year) and his squad still have a South Dublin League semi-final to look forward to and we wish them the best in those upcoming finals.

Under 14 Basketball

The season has kicked off in earnest after a number of months training since the start of the year. Blackrock began their season with an excellent but tight 27-22 victory away to St. Michael's College. Following on from this Blackrock lost narrowly 37-30 to an outstanding Coláiste Eoin side but performed very well and this will give the boys great encouragement for the rest of the season.

Cycling

Congratulations to Archie Ryan (TY) who has been selected on the Irish Team for the UCI Cyclocross World Championship (Junior Men's) in Valkenburg, Netherlands from 3rd - 4th February 2018. The team will participate in the World Cup in Hoogerhiede Netherlands the week before in preparation for the World Championships. Archie will then move to Spain until the end of August where he will ride for Sociedad Ciclista Duranguesa on their junior team.

Cross Country

Blackrock fared exceptionally well at this year's DCU Cross Country Invitational race. With over 200 in some races, and schools from every province the standard was particularly high. Individual highlights include Oscar Lubliner (2nd Year) coming in 3rd place in the Junior, Liam Blackburn (TY) coming in 10th place in the Intermediate and Conor Halpin (6th Year) finishing in 2nd place in the senior. However it is our teams that showed particular resilience and strength in the icy and windy conditions, with our Junior Team finishing in 2nd place. Our Inter team finishing in 4th and our Senior Team coming in 1st place.

Just a week later, we had a great day at the East Leinsters on Thursday January 25th in Avondale Co. Wicklow. Against strong competition our Junior Team narrowly missed out on qualification however three members were within the top 15 qualifying them for the Leinster Championships. Our Intermediate Team came second and our Senior Team won, both therefore qualifying for the Leinster Championships in February. Well done to all those who participated, and we greatly look forward to following the progress of all 16 athletes who qualified for The Leinster Championships. I'd like to thank Eddie MacDonagh, and Ms Whyte for the guidance and expertise in the preparation of the squad.

Golf

Our Senior Golf Team of Captain Robert Abernethy (6th Year) Robert Callaghan, Cathal French (both 5th Year) and Rory Reid (TY) were back in action on Monday 22nd January at Woodbrook Golf Club in the first round of the Leinster Schools' Matchplay. The result was a convincing win to Blackrock. We thank Ted Collins (class of 2014) and Conor Hart (class of 2015) and, of course golf manager Ms Fitzgerald for their preparation and organisation of the team.

Rowing

Blackrock Rowing kicked off the New Year with the College Rowing Club taking to the water in sunny Seville, Spain in January 2018. Twenty-four athletes travelled over for a five-day training camp commencing on the 2nd of January. Following the team's arrival, they wasted no time and got on the water straight away. The Rowing Centre and accommodation are located on a fabulous 6km stretch of water, perfect for rowing. The team was blessed with brilliant weather throughout the week with temperatures reaching as high as 22°.

Training alongside the likes of Durham, NUIG and Rowing Ireland the training plan encompassed up to three sessions a day covering between 30 and 40km. Each session had a different focus, long distance endurance sessions, technical sessions and then practice racing session. There was a great competition between all the rowers vying for their position in the top boat. There was some brilliant racing between all crews throughout the camp.

Sport Cont'd



The Irish Indoor Rowing Championships were the next priority for the rowing squad, the Indoor Championships held in the University of Limerick on the 20th of January saw some great performances. Oisín FitzGerald (3rd Year) came in 8th place (of 38) in the U15 category and Peter Spellman placed 19th (of 90) in the U16 category.



Rowing squad in action on the water in Seville (Spain)

The next event for our Rowers is in St. Michael's Head of the River on the 24th of February in Limerick.

Rugby Senior

As always the Christmas holiday brings an extensive training and match schedule for the cup teams. The Senior Team played matches against St Munchin's, Nottingham RFC Academy (U.K.) and CBC Cork all before returning to school for the new term. A tight defeat away to Nottingham was sandwiched by two excellent victories against St Munchin's and CBC and as we travelled north to Methody for our final pre-season friendly, preparations were well underway for our first cup match which was to follow.

A win in Methody was followed a fortnight later with the all-important first round Cup victory against Castleknock (48-20) in Donnybrook. After

getting off to an excellent start, Castleknock showed their qualities to force their way back into the contest, but good composure under pressure and skill meant that we pulled away in the final quarter to win comfortably in the end. With League winners, St Gerard's to follow in round two, focus returns to improvements on the training field.



Liam Turner (6th Year, Captain) and Gavin Jones (5th Year) Blackrock V Castleknock

Rugby Junior

Since the Christmas period the Junior Team has played three fixtures. Tough wins over Ballymena, CBC Cork, and Gonzaga put them in a good position for the physical encounter that awaited them in the first round of the Junior Cup in the form of St. Michael's College. Congratulations to James Culhane and his team on their win against St Michael's (36-12). We wish them well for the remainder of the campaign.

Soccer

The Senior Soccer Team have had a successful return since the Christmas break. St. Benildus were the opposition in the semi-final of the south Dublin Metropolitan league. Benildus were very hard to break down. They defended with great shape from the start of the game. It took until the 77th minute for Mikey O'Keane (6th Year) to get the all-important goal to qualify the soccer team to the regional final. Coláiste Éanna were the opposition in the final. In absolutely horrendous weather up in Wayside Celtic the Soccer Team put a poor first half performance behind them to play some excellent football facing into a gale force wind. Seán Mc Cann (6th Year) and Camilo Fernandez (5th Year) scored the two goals that ensured the victory. After mid-term the Soccer Team have plenty of competition to play – The Dublin Metropolitan semi-final, Leinster Champions League quarter final, the Joe Mc Grath Cup and the visit of St. Bede's on March 10th.

Squash Under 15

Four Blackrock College students took part in the Dublin School Boys Squash Tournament on Wednesday 24th January. Nine teams took part in the tournament in total including teams from Willow Park, St. Fintan's, Portmarnock and De La Salle Churchtown. The Blackrock team consisted of Matthew Lorusso (2nd Year), Alex Byrne, Fred Hamilton and Ned Fitter (all

3rd Year). The Blackrock team placed 3rd place, with St. Fintan's placing 1st and 2nd on the day.

Under 17 and 19

Blackrock College competed in the U17 and U19 Squash School League in Sutton on Wednesday 31 January. Blackrock's U17 team consisted of Matthew Lorusso (2nd Year) Eoin Whooley, Maxie Cosgrave, Alex Byrne, Ed Bourke Kennedy (3rd Year) and Cian Dunne (5th Year). They played against teams from St. Fintan's, Belvedere and De La Salle, Churchtown. The team came in 2nd place, losing out only to St Fintan's.



The Senior Soccer Squad

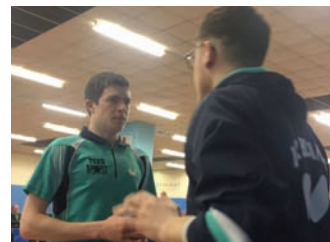
Blackrock's U19 teams consisted of Liam Fitter, Cathal Ryan, Sam O'Carroll, Daniel Cullen, Sean Carney and Edward Mc Kenna. They played against teams from St Fintan's and Belvedere and came in third place on the day. Well done to all those competing and Ms Keenan and Ronan Peyton (coach) for their preparation of the teams.

Table Tennis

The Table Tennis Teams remain on course for another successful season, with all teams still in contention in different competitions. Senior A, Junior B, Junior C and Minor A are all safely through to the Leinster Cup Quarter Finals.

Senior A, Junior A and Minor A are yet to start their league campaigns, however Junior B, Junior 2A and Junior 2B remain unbeaten in their leagues, with wins over Coláiste Éanna, Ballymakenny College and St. Tiernan's.

In individual competition, Joey Nelson (6th Year) is ranked #1 in Leinster at Junior and Senior level, and has been selected to represent Ireland at the Czech Junior Open in Prague during the Mid Term break.



Joey Nelson takes coaching between sets at the Home Countries Championships in Guernsey

Finally, international table tennis comes to Blackrock, with the Irish Senior Men's team due to take on San Marino in a European League match on 27 February in the main Sports Hall.

Admission will be free, everyone is welcome, and we would especially encourage team members and their parents to come along on the night and see some of the best Irish players in action.

Photos courtesy Rock Photography
www.rockphotography.ie

REFLECTION

From Maya Angelou's poem

When Great Trees Fall

"And when great souls die,
after a period peace blooms,
slowly and always
irregularly. Spaces fill
with a kind of
soothing electric vibration.
Our senses, restored, never
to be the same, whisper to us.
They existed. They existed.
We can be. Be and be
better. For they existed."

