

# BLACKROCK COLLEGE NEWSLETTER



## February 2019

The New Year is a time of resolution as we challenge ourselves to live differently, to disturb our routine. For most, including myself, these intentions rarely survive January, the reason being that it is very hard for us to persevere on our own. A regular visit to the gym is far easier as part of a group of like-minded people who spur us on, whose encouragement and advice we welcome.

Rearing teenagers is not easy. Parents of all generations, at different times, have felt worn down by the demands of their teenage sons and daughters. Parents often say to me that their son feels inordinate peer pressure in the social arena. It is particularly difficult to counter the 'logic' presented by the articulate worldly-wise who push out the boundaries.

There is a strong contemporary impulse for a 'freedom' which promotes rights over responsibility, wants over needs, self-expression over consideration, instant self-gratification over patient evaluation. Our sons experience this immense pressure. It is difficult for parents to impress upon the boys the importance of depth, character and commitment as they are offered a virtual reality which seems to be more appealing than real time relationship. Yet the latter is what they hunger for. A new impetus is needed, for family and community to take responsibility in encouraging our boys to embrace a more reliable, albeit more challenging, freedom that emanates from a life based on values. Still, today the Gospel offers this life. Let us look here again for the help we all need to deal with a growing array of complex moral quandaries.

The Parents' Council is working on a Parents' Charter, a declaration of how parents can support each other in raising our boys. We welcome this and hope that the charter helps parents establish a practical framework and a network of support. I commend the Parents' Council for undertaking this difficult task. The step is innovative. It is a statement of **care**, of **being there** for one another. It is a statement of **truth**, that there are challenges in raising teenagers and of **gratitude** for the fact that we are not alone.

Our first Wellbeing Day, on 21st January, led by our excellent Student Wellbeing Committee is a welcome addition to our calendar. We shared with every boy that he is intrinsically of value and urged him to see others in a positive light. Each one of us can make a difference knowing that we are worth more than any online culture, a culture that welcomes self-indulgence, superficial likes and dislikes.

Catholic Schools' Week focussed on relationships - relationships with God, with family, with peers. Blackrock education encourages a close relationship with God who helps us to become more comfortable with uncertainty and complexity. Prayer and personal reflection helps us to see God in the people we meet, in the challenges we face. It underpins and strengthens our community.

Pope Francis says – **“it is in prayer that our hearts find the strength not to be cold and insecure in the face of injustice”**. We pray not that God may hear us but that we may hear Him. This guides us to humility, service and love.

So many have given service with humility and love this half term. The visit of students from our sister school in Philadelphia, the Leman Concert, Wellbeing Day and Catholic Schools' Week, 3rd Year Retreats, the corporate Duck Race and Past V Present Debate are all examples of Blackrock at its finest. Our boys make a difference in so many ways; in sports, the arts, pastoral, academic, spiritual and social domains. This doesn't just happen.

Blackrock flourishes because of the encouragement and engagement of our Spiritan Community, my colleagues, the Parent and Student Councils and Year Committees, the College Union, you the parents and, our course, the boys.

May we continue to 'Be Caring, Be There, Be Truthful, Be Grateful'.

Yours sincerely

**ALAN MacGINTY**  
Principal

Photos from L to R :

- a) Sam Small (5th Year) (SCT V Pres Bray)
- b) Mark Landers (5th Year) performs at the Leman Concert
- c) Robert Byrne, Matthew Keeley and Mark Murphy (Fourth Year) at the Duck Race



# Second Year



## Application Cards

The Class of 2023 continues to make its mark on the College. One way of judging this is to examine the record of achievement on the weekly Application Cards, with more than half of the boys in the year group achieving the Principal's List each week. A boy is included on the Principal's List when he achieves seven or more top marks for that week. This regime reinforces good learning and organisational habits amongst the boys and also provides a great opportunity for parents to praise their son's level of commitment to their learning. A boy who regularly achieves the Principal's List also puts himself in the running for an Honours Award at the College's Prize Giving Ceremony which takes place in May.

The **House Competitions** in Second Year continue and the Table Tennis B League concluded with an exciting final between Ebenrecht House and Duff House. We congratulate Tom Cherico, the winner for Ebenrecht, and runner up Theo Claffey of Duff.

All of our Second Years attended the **BT Young Scientist Exhibition** in January where they had the opportunity to view the fantastic projects on display by their peers, Eric Brandt, Ethan Leon-Ryan and Max Mullen. Congratulations to all three and especially well done to Ethan and Max who were awarded Highly Commended in their category.

The Second Years have begun their **Auxilium** Programme. Already they are participating with enthusiasm and commitment in their service. We encourage each boy to consider how he can make a positive impact on his community and his environment and to assist with this our Second Year House Captains attended the DLR **Eco Conference** in Dun Laoghaire. They shared some excellent ideas at a recent Assembly and, with their help, we plan to implement a Power of 1 Pledge Wall in 2nd Year. Well done on this great initiative.

Our **Wellbeing** Committee did outstanding work in preparation for **Wellbeing Day** in January and the College was adorned with encouraging messages for everyone. Prayer cards were distributed and we were all reminded of the benefits of time out to breathe and simply be. Well done to our Second Year Wellbeing Committee members.

This year the theme of **Catholic Schools' Week** was 'celebrating the work of our own Catholic school'. Activities were organized for each year group, including a Treasure Hunt for junior students which the boys thoroughly enjoyed. The week concluded with a well-attended opportunity for Eucharistic Adoration with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on the Friday.



Jackson Murphy, Conn Lucey, Rory Kelly, Callum Dunne, Patrick O'Donnell, Tom Cosgrove, Freddy O'Connell & Harry Casey with Angela Kelly from Blackrock Tidy Town's Committee involved in a clean-up in Blackrock.

## Extra-Curricular Activities

A great many Second Year boys have achieved in the area of extra-curricular involvement. Our **Table Tennis** squad continue their record of impressive wins. We congratulate all the members of the **Cross Country** squad who participated in the 2nd year Leinster schools indoor event. Well done to Eddie Crosthwaite who won the 200 metre individual race and to the team comprising David Doyle, Eddie Crosthwaite, Daniel Bennett and Jack McGlone who came first overall. A terrific achievement!



(Back row, L to R, Liam Norton, Finn Tyrrell, Samuel Finnegan, Hugo Spellman, Finn O'Neill, Oliver Coffey, Liam Madden-Santos, Killian McKenna. Front row, L to R, David Doyle, Daniel Bennett, Eddie Crosthwaite, Jack McGlone)



Maxime Le Bail (2nd Year) and Gus McCarthy (3rd Year) (JCT V Belvedere)



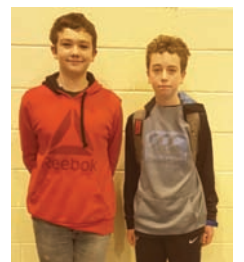
Gregg Barron (JCT V Gonzaga)

Well done to our Second Years Liam Norton and Conor Hughes, members of the **Junior Chess Team**, who had an excellent win in their opening league match. Well done to Greg Barron, Tom Brigg, Maxime Le Bail, Sean McKechnie and James O'Sullivan, Second Year members of the **JCT squad** who have made a very impressive start to the Cup campaign.



Tom Brigg (JCT V Belvedere)

In **Debating**, congratulations must go to Alec Linklater and Ben Kieran-Glennon who qualified to represent Ireland in Cambridge University at the International Competition for Young Debaters (ICYD) in April. Well done also to Daniel Keeley, Frazer McGinn, Conor Hughes and Tom Walsh for their participation and achievement this term.



Alec Linklater and Ben Kieran-Glennon

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 Leman Choir, the Corless Choir, Ceoltóirí Carraige and the Jazz Band. Well done boys!



Some Second Year Members of the Orchestra including Ruairi Stephens, Harry Fitzpatrick and David Doyle



Tom Cherico in the Orchestra at the Leman Concert



Second Years performing in the Choir at the Leman Concert.

## Dates for your Diary

14 February – 2nd Year Parent-Teacher Meeting  
12 – 22 March – House Examinations  
1 April – start of Lenten Reconciliation Services  
1, 2, 8 & 9 April - 2nd Year Days of Reflection  
9 - 12 April - 2nd & 4th Year Musical



# Third Year



It was a very positive start to the New Year and new term as students attended their days of reflection in the second week in January. The feedback from students was excellent as they were provided with an opportunity to take stock and reflect on the year thus far and the busy months that lie ahead. I hope that the Christmas reports and recent progress cards have focused the minds of the year group and affirmed their work to date and highlighted areas that may need more focus. We remain positive as the numbers making Principal's List continue to be strong.

## Leman Concert

Those who attended the Leman Concert on the 3rd of February were treated to an incredible display of the musical talent in Blackrock College. It was great to have so many Third Years involved on the night. We had representation in the orchestra, jazz band, Ceoltóirí Carriage and 18 students in the choir. Clearly, I am biased, but of particular highlight were State of Mind's cover of *Danger Zone* and the choir and Third Year soloists singing *Writing's on the Wall*. A truly inspirational evening it was great to see students perform with such confidence – well done lads!



Mark Phelan, Tim Jordan, Sam Cahill, Stephen Wong and Josh FitzPatrick perform at the Leman Concert

## Wellbeing Day

On the 21st of January Third Years attended a talk by past pupil Conn Sheehan who spoke to the year group about mental health. Conn spoke about his own struggles when he was younger and highlighted the importance of looking after your mental health. Conn spoke about how he uses mindfulness and talk to the boys about the benefits. The lads found him to be a very engaging speaker and the talk was very well received by all.

## Extracurricular

Congratulations to Conor Gorman and Hugh O' Connor who were part of the College sailing team who finished second in the Inter Schools' Sailing Competition held in the INSS on the 16th of January. In debating James Carroll and Michael White participated in a competition held in Castleknock College and performed very well. James and Michael are members of the Junior Debating team which have now qualified for the Leinster Final on March 2nd.

Again, in Castleknock College our Junior Chess Team including Matthew Collins, Patrick Curley and Andrew McCarthy won their opening league match 3-2. A great start to the campaign.

Well done to captain Jimmy Gilligan and the U16 basketball squad who finished the season with All Ireland Medals – a fantastic achievement considering it is only the teams second year playing at this level – the future is bright!



James Carroll was voted 9th best speaker (out of 144) at the Castleknock Community College MACE on January 26th.

In rugby our JCT captained by Gus McCarthy overcame a very talented and determined Belvedere side in the opening round of Leinster Schools' Junior Cup. They await Terenure in the next round. Our junior seconds secured a draw away to a very strong Terenure side in their opening league match. Up next is St Michael's for Captain Charlie O' Brien and his team. It has been a fantastic start for the junior 3rd, 4th and 5th teams who are all still competing in their respective leagues. There have been some great performances to date with our thirds digging deep to beat an excellent Terenure side, our fourths winning away to Clongowes and the fifths beating St Conleth's in their opening game. This is a very talented squad which is improving with every game. I commend their commitment and attitude.



Ruben Moloney (JCT V Belvedere)



Cian Ryan (JCT V Gonzaga)



Oscar Landers, Adam O' Neill and Michael English (House 3rds V Gonzaga)



Ethan Laing (JCT V Belvedere)

## Dates for your Diary

Third Year trip to *Romeo and Juliet* – Monday 4th March  
Irish Aural for Easter Exams – Tuesday 5th March  
Modern Languages Aural – Thursday 7th March  
Easter Exams – 12th – 22nd March

# Transition Year



## Holy Ghost Prep School Visit

Immediately following the completion of our Christmas break we were delighted to welcome staff and students from our fellow Spiritan School, Holy Ghost Prep (HGP), Philadelphia to Blackrock. Having arrived on Thursday 3rd of January and spent a number of days in the Boarding School, the 11 students met their 11 Blackrock students and hosts families at a beautiful mass in the College Chapel on the feast of the Epiphany, Sunday January 6th. Fr Cormac led a wonderful service and we thank him as always for his support and encouragement.

It was a week packed with activities which allowed not just our American visitors but indeed our own Blackrock boys to explore Irish culture and heritage in many different ways that they perhaps hadn't before. The tours included Croke Park Skyline Tour, The GPO Tour, The Irish Aid Development Education Workshop, The Robin Hood Panto, The Vaults Live Interactive experience, amongst others.



Ronan Barry, SET, at the Spiritan Schools Ethos Workshop

However the overarching core purpose of the trip was for our two schools to explore our collective Spiritan identity; for the boys to identify what it means to be a Spiritan school and how they can take ownership of the preservation and promotion of school ethos now and into the future. One of the highlights of the week was on Wednesday 9th January when Ronan Barry from the Spiritan Education Trust (SET) facilitated a wonderful workshop about the exploration of identity and challenging the students to reimagine a future Spiritan school and what would it include. It was wonderful also to welcome students from St.Michael's, St.Mary's and Templogue College to the workshop.



Students from each of the Spiritan Schools engaged in a workshop activity

A fantastic week all round and I would like to thank Mr Smyth and Ms Groves for putting so much into making it a trip full of highlights for our visitors. We look forward to the return trip during the Easter Break!

## Leadership Programme

On return after the Christmas break the students attended the second part of the Self Leadership Programme given by Mr Denis Hevey. It is a hugely intensive lead up to the Christmas break between BCR, the Soccer Marathon, and the Christmas Hampers amongst other activities. The Leadership Programme offers the



Paul Sheahan, Dell, at the TY Workshop

perfect opportunity for the boys to take some time to reflect on their TY experience to date, identify the lessons learned and begin the term with a renewed motivation for the rest of TY. 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 course was extremely well received as always and we thank Mr.Hevey for his fantastic work with the boys.

## Lecture Series

The Transition Year Lecture Series continued with the students attending two talks. On the 29th of January we had the inspirational Fr.Peter McVerry in to speak to the boys. Fr.McVerry's humanity shone through in a superb talk when he spoke to the boys about the preconceptions around those who are homeless, the homeless problem facing Irish society, the effects of homelessness on the individual and what kinds of actions the boys can take to impact positively on the problem. The person not the problem was at the core of the message delivered to the boys and the boys could not help but be moved by the words of Fr.McVerry.

The focus of the annual Dell workshop given to the boys was on the variety of career paths within an IT company. The boys were reminded that a career with Microsoft/Dell is not solely the domain of those who are particularly au fait with technology. After midterm we will have Luke Fitzgerald in to speak to the boys as part of the AIB Build a Bank Team programme. On the 8th March the boys will be collecting on behalf of the Alzheimer's Society of Ireland specifically for the funding of Blackrock Social Club. Three TY students, Robbie Gallagher, Freddie Noonan and Alex O'Keefe are regular visitors there on a Wednesday afternoon. On

Saturday 9th March the students will be collecting on behalf of Oesophageal Cancer Fund (OCF) as part of Lollipop Day and we will have a speaker in advance to speak to the boys about the work that they do.

## Pastoral Programme

Since Christmas two more groups have gone out on pastoral placement with the Matthew 25 programme. We thank Mr Madden for his endless dedication to the preparation of the boys for the programme, the support of the boys during the placement itself and of course the debrief on their return. It is a hugely impactful programme at the core of the TY experience. Our Faith Friends' Group (a religion class helping with preparation for the Willow confirmation) had their first session down in Willow on Tuesday 5th February with more upcoming after the February midterm. We thank Mr O'Reilly for his work with the group.

## AIB Build a Bank

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. The theme of the bank is student wellbeing and they are currently working on organising a guest speaker around this theme as well as preparing their submission for the competition itself. It is a part of the **Build a Bank Challenge** which schools all over Ireland compete in. The boys' aim is to open as many bank accounts as possible in the next few weeks before the national finals in March. If your son would like to open a bank account, please encourage him to come up to the boys during lunch on Thursdays and Fridays, and to bring a copy of his passport. This is a wonderful opportunity for your son to begin the important life skill of saving.



Mr P O'Neill (Dean of Fourth Year) and a representative from Surfdock Ltd with TY students at the Duck Race

## Corporate Duck Race

The Corporate Duck Race took place on Friday 8th February in the Grand Canal Basin. It is taking place in aid of Aidlink and Solèy Haiti. The Duck Race Sale team has been busy emailing and making calls trying to get sales made which, along with the Build a Bank Team, has made the BCR studio a hive of activity! The total raised is to be finalised but I look forward to reporting on it post February midterm.



Hugh Cunnam and Mark O'Brien at the Duck Race

## 5k Rock Run

**SAVE THE DATE – SUNDAY 7TH APRIL!** The annual 5k Rock Run will be taking place in the grounds of the College starting at 11am with onsite registration from 9.30am and will be in aid of Goal and Machakos. The year has been divided into groups for the event; Sales, PR/Media and Promotion, Prizes and Logistics and has already been busy getting each event up and running! Promotion of the event will begin in earnest post February midterm with a formal launch taking place in March at a date to be confirmed.

## Leman Concert

The musical talent on display at the Leman Concert never ceases to amaze me! It was great to see so many students involved in the orchestra, the choir, backstage, in Ceoltóirí Carriage, in the Jazz Band amongst other performances. Special mention must go to 'Paradox' as well for a superb show. A huge well done to the many talented TY students involved!



TY Students perform in Ceoltóirí na Carraige at the Leman Concert.



Sean Probert and Sam Loscher perform at the Leman Concert



Sean Probert and Sam Loscher perform at the Leman Concert



# Transition Year Cont'd



## Trips abroad

Over the course of January the Tropical Medical Bureau has been in to administer vaccinations to both the 27 students travelling to Kenya and the 39 which will be travelling to China. As you read this there are 27 students visiting our sister school in Machakos and another group travelling with the Willow Wheelers in Brazil. Equally important to the trip itself have been the many preparatory workshops so 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 on the boy's return which is an important part of the overall experience.

## Other News

The Barista Course has proven to be hugely popular with the boys with two more groups taking the course post new year. Conversational French is on Tuesday nights with Chinese classes continuing on Thursday evenings. Auditions for the Junior Musical have also taken place. We have a number of boys abroad in France and Spain at the moment so we look forward to welcoming back our many (hopefully!) fluent speakers on their return! We have had a number of students working busily down in Willow on the set design painting for the upcoming



Scott Barron (SCTV Bray)

5th Form musical *Toy Story*. On Wednesday 30th and Thursday 31st January eleven Transition Year students performed in the Rathdown School production of 'Sister Act – The Musical'. It was a superb show which had fantastic singing, dancing, acting and was very funny throughout. No pressure Mr.Savage!

## But Sir there's nothing to do after the Easter exams!

I'd like to hopefully debunk that myth and let students and parents know that the time period post Easter exams until the end of the academic year will contain the 5k Rock Run, The 2nd Year & TY Musical, Dragons' Den Launch, Dragons' Den preparation workshops and final, Cloughjordan Cookery school trip, Masterchef heats and finals, Music Art and Drama (MAD) Week, Guest Speakers, TY Days of Reflection, TY Work Experience II, TY Portfolio Assessment and Interviews – and they are just some of the major events. There will be lots more happening day to day and week to week besides. I encourage all students to continue to 'opt-in'!

### Dates for your Diary

Transition Year Tours – Tuesday 5th March  
Addiction awareness day – Thursday 7th March  
Easter Exams – 12th – 22nd March  
Lenten Reconciliation Services – 1st – 5th April  
5k Rock Run – 7th April  
2nd/4th Year Musical – 9th – 12th April



# Fifth Year

As the term continues and we move from the winter into the spring, we encourage all 5th Year students to maintain their momentum and diligence in relation to academic progress and involvement in all aspects of school life. The Easter exams are just around the corner and the value of weekly application cards and monthly progress cards cannot be underestimated. Students are encouraged to be proud and accountable and to show their cards at home.

It is an extremely busy time of the year not just in academics but in all facets of student life for 5th Years with the very well attended Careers Days kicking off the new year, followed by Catholic Schools' Week, the 5th Year Parent Teacher Meeting, the Leman Concert, and the Model United Nations just around the corner. February is competition time in a number of sports including Cup season for the SCT and JCT, League season for the House squads, and cross country, rowing, soccer, table tennis, badminton, squash, swimming, chess and basketball all drawing close to their season completion.

## BT Young Scientist

Wednesday 9th January saw the opening day of BT Young Scientist Competition. This opportunity was made possible through the BT Young Scientist which took place in the RDS from the 9th-12th of January. The four days allowed students to learn about many theories, hypothesis and models created by young Irish minds; we congratulate John Huggard for his interesting project in this prestigious event.

## Wellbeing Day

This year, our first ever Wellbeing Day was held on the 21st of January, and organised by the Wellbeing Committee. The two 5th Years on the committee are Tom Dooley, President of the Committee, and Mark McGrane, Secretary of the Committee. This year, the committee made distinct efforts to distinguish the event from Mental Health Day, by promoting often-overlooked areas of concern, such as physical health and meditation.

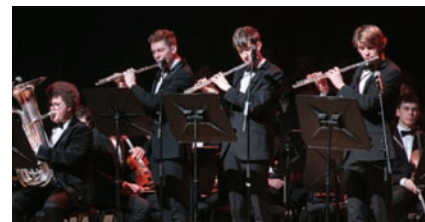
There were colourful post-its on display around the school along with fruit provided by the year representatives at lunchtime check-in. A meditation video was sent out to different classrooms to allow teachers to set up a classroom-based meditation for period 2. There were positive messages designed for the day on the TV displays around the school, a notice board at the main entrance, alongside people handing out business cards with a prayer and breathing exercises.

## Leman Concert

On the 3rd of February, the 33rd annual Leman Concert was held in the National Concert Hall. The Leman Choir, Adult Choir, the Orchestra and a series of soloists came together to perform "A Night at the Movies" Whilst all those involved were excellent, the 5th Year members of the choir and orchestra are to be commended for their remarkable leadership and performance. 5th Year was also very well represented with two 5th Year bands performing in the concert, the "Strong



John Huggard performing at the Leman Concert



Oliver Bosworth, Peter O' Grady, Max Potter and Michael Gadaloff performing at the Leman Concert

Independent Woodwinds" performing "Rey's Theme" from Star Wars, and with "Panda Propaganda" performing "Hooked on a Feeling" from Guardians of The Galaxy. The overall performance from everyone was excellent and we commend all those involved.

## Careers Day

Over the course of two Saturdays after class recommenced in the New Year, Fifth Year students were offered the opportunity to attend a variety of talks presented by past pupils about their respective professions. These talks covered a range of careers including medicine, engineering, law, IT and the Defence Forces. There was excellent feedback from all those who attended, and we thank each of the past pupils for taking the time to give these presentations. It was an enjoyable and insightful event for all.

## Model United Nations (MUN)

Since September this year, the entire Blackrock College Model United Nations society have been working tirelessly to ensure that this year's conference is the school's best yet. Amongst other years, the Fifth Years have been integral to its running. The Fifth Years are Tom Dooley, John Huggard, Mark McGrane, Mark Kenny, Aaron Ryan, Lorcan Patchell, David Ennis, and more. The Fifth Years' roles include Administration, Photography, Media, Security, Delegate and Chairperson.

The Model UN Society hope to continue in their success in their various conferences. Unfortunately, this year's ROCKMUN has been postponed but we look forward to the event when it is rescheduled.



Callum Byrne performing at the Leman Concert

# Fifth Year Cont'd



## Lourdes Pilgrimage

We congratulate Guy Acton, Gerald Boylan, Robert Manning, Tom O'Connor and Eoin O'Farrell who have been selected to take part in Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes in September of 2019.

## Sports Badminton

The U19 team captained by Luke O'Brien had a great season, and held their own in Division Two. The team played brilliantly in the cup and reached the semi-final before losing to Ard Scoil Rís. Training will continue up until the Easter exams and is open to all students.

## Cross Country

Congratulations to the Senior Cross-Country team for placing 1st in the team event at the East Leinster Championship. Liam Blackburn finished in 3rd position with Adam Harvey finishing closely behind in 8th.

## Golf

The Senior Golf team had an amazing season winning the Leinster finals of the Irish Schools' Match Play Championship. Captain Ronan Cowhey, Robert Galligan and the rest of the team now prepare for the All-Ireland finals in April.

## Rowing

The Fifth Year rowers have completed their winter training comprising of weight and erg training and are preparing to enter the racing season. The Fifth Year squad of Peter O'Grady MJ Power and Jack Tiernan has yet to perform competitively this year due to the cancellation of the Dambuster and Lagan Head of the River event.

## Rugby Senior

Congratulations to 5th Year members of the senior cup team; Aaron Rowan, Mark Morrissey, Matthew Cullen, Sam Small, Patrick O'Connor, Jeff Kenny, Hugo O'Malley and Tom Gavigan. After a hard fought win against Presentation Bray the seniors now face St. Michael's College in a rescheduled 2nd round match on Monday 25th February.



Mark Morrissey (SCTV Pres Bray)

## Rugby House

Unfortunately the House 3rds were knocked out of the league but the House 4ths and 5ths are going strong and are still competing in their leagues.

## Sailing

Congratulations to Charles Cullen who captained the sailing team to a 2nd place finish in the Inter-Schools' Sailing Regatta.

## Senior Soccer

Congratulations to the following players who represented the senior soccer team ; Dan Kyrychenko, Joseph Tierney, Robbie Manning, Eoin O'Farrell, Cian Colville, Michael Levy, Tom McNulty, Jamie Dowling, Ronan Cowhey and Nicolas Brusasca. After close defeats on penalties in the Joe McGrath and Leinster Cup the squad still has plenty of football ahead of them.

## Table Tennis

We congratulate Conor Hughes and Lorcan Patchell for their inclusion in the Leinster and Leinster development squads.

## Commerce and Economics Society

Mr Morris organised two insightful talks during the term as part of the Commerce and Economics Society's core value to encourage students to engage with the business world outside of the classroom.



Dr David Doyle and Guy Acton

Mr Henry Goddard, the incoming CEO of 'Deloitte', told students about the unique value of the family and advancing through a life of work. Dr David Doyle, a Past Pupil and current EU Policy Advisor, spoke about Brexit and the importance of being 'financially literate'. Thank you to both speakers and to Mr Morris.

## Catholic Schools' Week

Ms McGlynn's stunning wall of posters on St. Patrick's Corridor reeled in Catholic Schools' Week 2019 that ran from the 27th of January to the 2nd of February. The week encouraged celebration of the work of local Catholic Schools. The Pastoral Department focused on our motto 'Fides et Robur' and the essential point that it is not only on our jumpers but more importantly in ourselves. Fifth Years expressed great enthusiasm throughout the week by partaking in Treasure Hunts and Eucharistic Adoration during Religion classes.

## Dates for your Diary

5th Year Family Mass 11am Sunday 10th March- All Welcome

5th Year Parents' Dinner Friday 8th March – Fitzpatrick's Castle Hotel. Still looking for a ticket? Contact Rachel at [rachelmaccgab@gmail.com](mailto:rachelmaccgab@gmail.com)

# The Arts



Congratulations to Henry Igbinomwanhia (2nd Year), Michael White (3rd Year), Hugh Cunniam (4th Year), Lorcan Patchell (5th Year) and Patrick Doherty (6th Year) winners of the Poetry Competition organised as part of our Literacy initiative for 2018-2019. The standard was very high and a big thank you to all who entered the competition.



## ART

From the 7th to the 31st of January an Art Exhibition entitled *NEW YEAR NEW WORK* ran in the Creative Arts and Digital Learning Centre. The exhibition, which featured paintings and drawings from a number of year groups, was curated by members of the Art Club. A blast of colour and composition to start the New Year.

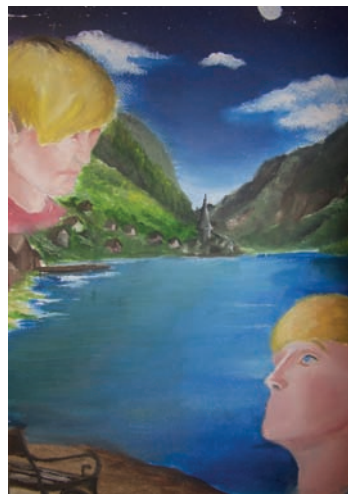
## ART CLUB PRESENTS



NEW YEAR NEW ART  
DLC- 9th -31st JAN



Harry McLaughlin (Third Year)  
shortlisted photo



Fergus Woods (6th Year)



Sculpture by Cameron Carton (6th Yr)



# The Arts Cont'd



Thomas McCormack (6th Year)

Transition Year artists made full use of the Art Room to design and decorate the set for *Toy Story the Willow Park Junior Musical*. The students have been commended for their effort in continuing this cross campus link in art and design with Willow.

Harry McLaughlin (Third Year) has been shortlisted as a finalist in Mental Health Ireland's Art and Photography award for his photo entry. Harry will attend the awards evening in **St Patrick's Cathedral** in Dublin on **Thursday 28th March**. All the shortlisted entries will be on display in the Cathedral from the 25th – 28th March and be open for the visiting public to view.

## Senior Debating

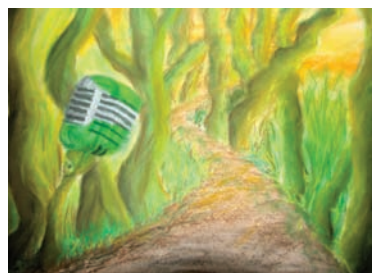
This term the focus of our senior debaters has been on the Leinster Senior Debating competition held in Trinity and U.C.D.

So far we have been very successful with the following boys advancing into the 3rd round of the competition; Dylan Hutchinson, Michael Ryan, Drummond McGinn, Max McKenna, Niall Meagher, Mark McGrane, (6th Year) and Tom Dooley, John Huggard (5th Year). On the 7th February the eagerly awaited Past/Present Students' Debate was held in the Lecture Hall. Excellently chaired by Eoin Martin (class of 2005) the past pupils fielded a strong team comprising of speakers, some of whom had left just a year ago to one, who has thirty years of post-Rock experience behind him.

The pupils' team – Michael Ryan, Max McKenna, Dylan Hutchinson and Shore Oloburdore – opposed the motion *"This house believes that nationalism poses a threat to democratic stability."* The Past Pupils were represented by Stephen Ryan (2018), Joshua Kieran-Glennon (2015), Rossa Fanning (1993), Barry O'Donnell (1989). The debate was adjudicated by Cathy Kelleher, Oisín Ryan (2018) and John Sheil. Our congratulations go to Rossa Fanning who was adjudged to be the evening's best speaker. The Past Pupils won back the trophy having presented a strong case for the proposition. Thanks to all of those who participated for giving us yet another memorable evening, especially the past pupils who always make this a great night in the school calendar.



Members of Art Club organising the exhibition



Fionn McArdle (Fifth Year)



Conor Flannery, James Ryan and Joey McEntee (Fourth Year)



Eoin Martin (class of 2005) chaired the Past v Present Pupils' Debate

## Junior Debating

Michael White (3rd Year), James Carroll (3rd Year), Alec Linklater (2nd Year), Ben Kieran-Glennon (2nd Year), Daniel Keeley (2nd Year), Frazer McGinn (2nd Year), Conor Hughes (2nd Year) and Tom Walsh (2nd Year) participated in a MACE event on Saturday January 26th in Castleknock Community College. As it was their first time participating they could not qualify for the finals.

There were 144 speakers on the day. Ben Kieran-Glennon was voted 3rd best speaker of the day. James Carroll was voted 9th best speaker of the day. Ben Kieran-Glennon and Alec Linklater qualified for the final along with Belvedere College, Castleknock Community College and Coláiste na hInse. Deputy Ruth Coppinger chaired the debate with Belvedere College emerging as the winners on the day.

Blackrock College (Ben Kieran-Glennon and Alec Linklater) and 2 students from Coláiste na hInse were the overall winners to qualify to represent Ireland in Cambridge University at the International Competition for Young Debaters (ICYD). This event will take place at the end of April.

Out of over 300 speakers in this year's MACE competition all six students: Ben, Alec, James, Michael, Frazer and Daniel have qualified to represent Blackrock College in the Leinster Final on March 2nd.

We have a MACE on March 30th in Alexandra College.

## Music & Drama

*"Music is the movement of sound to reach the soul for the education of its virtue."*  
Plato

As Lemanuary has drawn to a close, the Music and Drama Department has had an exciting start to 2019. The 33rd Annual Leman Festival Concert was a resounding success showcasing the immense talent permeating our school community. This year's theme, *"A Night at the Movies"*, incorporated everything from *James Bond* to *Armageddon*, *Treasure Island* to *Top Gun*, *The Mission* to *The Incredibles*... With over twenty acts in the programme and over two hundred performers on the stage, everyone performed to the highest standard and spirits soared.

Many hours of work go into the production of this annual event and it is a fantastic opportunity for our boys to perform on the National Concert Hall stage. This concert is made possible by the collaboration of students, staff and past pupil – *"the whole is greater than the sum of its parts"*. As wellbeing continues to play a pivotal role in our school, we hope that both audience and performers benefited from the power of music to quite literally reach the soul.

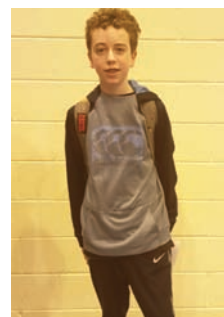


Mark O Donoghue (6th Year) performing at the Leman



Conor Hughes (2nd Yr.) Nicholas Kelly (3rd Yr.) Edward Spain (2nd Yr.) Colum Corless (3rd Yr.) and Christian Buckley (2nd Yr.) at the Leman Concert

As we progress, we look forward to the Wesley Interschools' Music Festival taking place on March 1st and 2nd. We wish all our ensembles, choirs and soloists the very best in the preparations for this event. Rehearsals for the Junior Musical are well underway and we look forward with great anticipation to the show, taking place April 9th – 12th.



Ben Kieran- Glennon voted 3rd best speaker at the Castleknock Community College MACE out of 144 speakers.



# Snapshot of 1st Half Term 2019



Oscar Landers, Adam O' Neill and Michael English (House 3rds V Gonzaga)



Tom Dwan (6th Year) contributes from the floor at the Past V Present Pupils' Debate.



Cian O' Brien, Paddy McCarthy and Zach Quirke (JCTV Gonzaga)



SCTV Pres Bray



Past and Present Pupils in the Orchestra at the Leman Concert



Mr John Sheil, Chairperson of the Adjudicators at the Past V Present Pupils' Debate



Hugh Cooney, Gus McCarthy (Captain), Third Years (JCTV Belvedere)



JCTV Gonzaga



Shore Oloburdore, Dylan Hutchinson, Max McKenna and Michael Ryan, - opposed the motion "This house believes that nationalism poses a threat to democratic stability." at the Past V Present Debate. The Past Pupils were represented by Barry O'Donnell (1989), Rossa Fanning (1993), Joshua Kieran-Glenon (2015) and Stephen Ryan (2018),



# Snapshot of 1st Half Term 2019



Patrick McCarthy, Jamie McLoughlin, Liam Molony and Hugh Cooney (JCTV Belvedere)



Conor Hughes, Daniel Keeley, Alec Linklater (2nd Year) James Carroll (3rd Year) Ben Kieran-Glennon, Tom Walsh, Frazer McGinn (2nd Year) and Michael White (3rd Year) at The Castleknock Community College MACE on 26th January



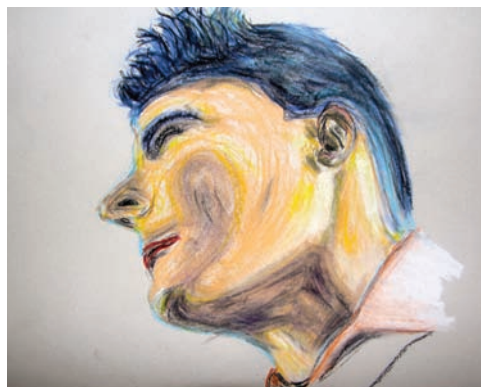
The Choirs and Orchestra under the baton of Mr André Cavanagh at the Leman Concert



Art Work of Joseph Tierney (5th Year)



Art Work of Jody Abernethy (Fifth Year)



Art Work of Matthew Cullen (5th Year)



Chris Byrne (5th Year), Peter O' Grady (5th Year) , Matthew Kane ( 3rd Year) and Michael Gadaloff ( 5th Year) perform at the Leman Concert



House 3rdsV Gonzaga



Fourth Years at the Duck Race



# Archive Update



On November 11th 2018, the world remembered all those lost during the First World War. Many Blackrock students fought, and 59 lost their lives abroad from 1914-1918.

Past archivist Caroline Mullan put together an extensive list previously of those who had fought during the war. Our own school records were researched as well as military records and other archive resources.

In November I made several posters with the names of each past 'rock man printed, with details about his life and service. In some cases we had a photo or news cutting about them. Included with the posters was some information about armistice and a quote:

*"Both sides, victors and vanquished, were ruined. All the Emperors or their successors were slain and deposed... All were defeated; all were stricken; everything they had given was in vain. Nothing was gained by any... Those that survived, the veterans of countless battle-days, returned, whether with the laurels of victory or the tidings of disaster, to homes engulfed already in catastrophe."*

- Winston Churchill, The Unknown War (1931)



Reading the names, seeing the faces and hearing the stories of these men puts us in the shoes of those who fought. Some had only just left Blackrock College.



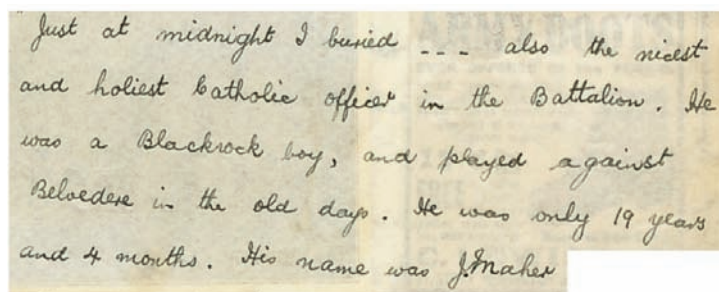
John K Boyle, of 80 Pembroke Rd, Dublin. Died of pneumonia while a prisoner of war 1918, aged 21. A portrait of him and a news cutting listing his death were alongside his name.

Francis Joseph Leo Kenny, Fernmount, Granard, Co Longford. Killed in action aged 23 in battle 9 Aug 1916. He left his name scratched into a brick wall on the College grounds.



During a presentation to 4th Years in the archive, I read out a letter regarding a particular student, John Charles Maher, of Charleville, Dalkey, Co Dublin. Lieutenant, killed in battle May 19 1918.

The letter was from a Jesuit priest, W. F. Browne. *"Just at midnight I buried ... also the nicest and holiest catholic officer in the Battalion. He was a Blackrock boy, and played against Belvedere in the old days. He was only 19 years and 4 months. His name was J. Maher, but we called him 'Danny'."*



These details about Maher connected the current students with those of 1918. The 4th year boys could see how, in another life, this could have been them.

The loss felt in the College during those years from 1914-1918 must have been immense, as news of the fate of friends trickled home to the staff and students.

I would like to thank the Union Office for putting up the list of those who died, on the Union website. Through this online presence, as well as some posts to the archive Twitter account, a number of researchers and family historians stepped forward to inform the archive of other men who fell, who we did not have a record of. Four more men have been added to the list since it was initially put up.

Flor Madden also mentioned those who had died as part of the 3rd Year Family Mass, and the names were mentioned at the remembrance mass on 28th of November.

If you have any additional information about 'Rock men during the First World War, please contact [archives@blackrockcollege.com](mailto:archives@blackrockcollege.com). Our twitter account can be found on Twitter at Blackrock College Archives (or @BC\_archives).

**Clare Foley**  
**Archive Office**



## Parent-Teacher Meeting

There was a very large attendance at the 6th Year Parent-Teacher Meeting on Thursday January 10th. The feedback from this afternoon / 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.

## Leaving Certificate Projects

Friday 18th January saw the first of the practical project submissions for Leaving Certificate 2019. Many thanks to Mr Dunne for the time given to students that ensured that all DCG projects based on the design of an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle commonly known as a 'Drone' were submitted on time. Leaving Certificate examination numbers have also been posted on notice boards for all students.

## Leman Concert

The 33rd Leman Festival Concert was held on Sunday 3rd February in the National Concert Hall. 33 members of the Class of 2019 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 soloists Harry Redmond, Tom Dwan, Thomas McCormack, Mark O'Donohue, Oisín Reid and Harry Keyes; Rockapella, the 6th Year bands *Twice* and *Bluehill* and our MCs for the night, Drummond McGinn and Shore Oluborode.



Our MCs for the Leman Concert Shore Oluborode and Drummond McGinn.

## Career Interviews

To assist preparation for the Career Interviews programme, Robert Connolly of Amicus Recruitment spoke to the year group on how to prepare an attractive and impactful CV. In response, over 60 final year students signed up to avail of the Career Mock Interviews organised by the Careers Department in association with the Past Pupils Union on Wednesday 13th February. Past students came to the College to provide formal interviews across a broad spectrum of disciplines including Law, Business & Finance, Accounting, Engineering, Medicine, IT, Science, Psychology, Defence Forces, Sports, Education, Media and Foreign Affairs. Many thanks in particular to Ms Natasha Drew (Careers) and Mr Declan O'Sullivan (PPU) for their co-ordination of this most valuable evening.

## Extra-Curricular Programme

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

Firstly we congratulate Sean O'Brien and the rest of the SCT squad who enjoyed success over Presentation College Bray in the first round of this year's Senior Cup. We wish the team continued success as they prepare for their quarter-final against St. Michael's College. We congratulate also the Cheerleading Team under the leadership of Ross O'Reilly, David Gallagher, Scott Henderson, Evan McCool and Donal McKeon for both the excellent Whole School Assembly in the Sports Hall on January 24th and their wonderful support of both Cup Teams in Donnybrook.

As the rugby season enters its competitive stage, we offer our ongoing best wishes to the Senior 2nds and Castle Rugby teams competing in Leinster Branch Rugby Leagues. Opening successes against Terenure, Belvedere and King's Hospital provided much encouragement



Matthew Cullen and Chris Rowland (SCTV Bray)

and it is hoped that the many 6th Year students participating will enjoy these final weeks of involvement in competitive rugby at schools level.

Unfortunately Peter Quinlan and the Senior Soccer squad once again lost out to Coláiste Éanna on penalties after a 2-2 draw, this time in the final of the South Dublin Metropolitan League Final. However, the squad responded quickly from this setback and goals by Billy Griffin, Scott Cullinane and Ross O'Reilly ensured a 3-1 victory over Castleknock College in the opening fixture in the Joe McGrath Cup.

On the academic front, Ms O'Kane accompanied the LC Music students to a Tchaikovsky performance in the National Concert Hall on Monday 21st January. Patrick Doherty was named the winner of the 6th Year Poetry Competition which formed part of our Literacy Initiative for



Niall Meagher contributes from the floor at the Past v Present Pupils' Debate

2018-2019 and Fergus Woods, Rob Jordan, Thomas McCormack, Cameron Carton, Theo Stephen Kehoe, Ruairi Moore, Mark Fitzgibbon, Ethan L. Murray and Harry Spain were contributors to the Art Club's very well received New Year Exhibition in the C.A.D.L during the month of January. During Catholic Schools Week, the RE department organised a treasure hunt around the College and the winner of this event tracing the religious history of the College in 6th Year was Sean Carney. We thank and congratulate all who participated in these initiatives.

We congratulate our 6th Year debaters; Michael Ryan, Max McKenna, Dylan Hutchinson, Shore Oluborode and Drummond McGinn, all of whom have qualified for the Leinster Schools' Senior Debating Quarter Finals. However on Thursday 7th February Michael, Dylan, Shore and Max came up against a very strong PPU Team in the annual Past versus Present Debate and were unsuccessful in their attempt to convince the adjudicators that Nationalism poses no threat to Democracy. We thank all participating students and past pupils for the generous giving of their time and talent.

## Finally

The 6th Year Parents' Committee and House Representatives' work on behalf of the Class of 2019 is ongoing with sub-committees planning all aspects of the end of year DVD, the Graduation in May and the Summer Project in Machakos, Kenya next summer. We wish them continued success with this work.

# Sixth Year Cont'd



## Please Note

There will be mid-term supervised study available for all 6th Year students from 9.30am and 12.30pm & 1.30pm and 4.30pm between Wednesday 20th and Friday 22nd of February. There is no charge for this facility.



Michael Ryan, Shore Oluborode Max McKenna, Dylan Hutchinson at the Past V Present Pupils' Debate

## Dates for your Diary

Monday 25th February:	6th Year Mock Orals
Monday 4th March:	Irish Easter Aural Tests
Tuesday 5th March:	Modern language Easter Aural Tests
Thursday 7th March:	Anticipated Easter Exams Commence
Monday 11th March:	Full Easter Exams Commence
Monday 25th March:	Modern Language Leaving Cert Orals
Monday 1st April:	Irish Leaving Certificate Orals
Friday 12th April:	Completion of LC Construction Studies Project & End of Term

## Science



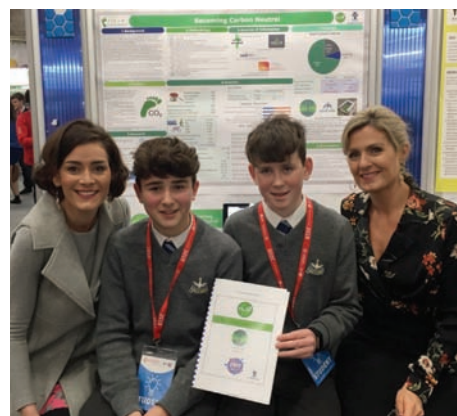
Congratulations to Ethan Leon-Ryan and Max Mullins (2nd Year), Eric Brandt (2nd Year), and John Huggard (5th Year) who proudly represented Blackrock College at the BT Young Scientist Competition in the RDS in January. Ethan and Max were awarded 'Highly Commended' for their project – "Becoming Carbon Neutral." All the participating students thoroughly enjoyed the experience and we encourage students from every year group to enter the competition next year.

All the 2nd and 4th Year students visited the exhibition and provided tremendous support to Rock's three entrants. Thank you to the students Science teachers for their help and support and to Ms Emer O'Reilly for her input, encouragement and mentoring of the boys.

At the moment, all the 2nd Year students are completing their CBA 1 – the students must propose and test a hypothesis and use the Scientific Method to complete their investigation. They will then be awarded one of four descriptors - exceptional, above expectations, in line with expectations or yet to meet expectations. The 3rd Years have almost completed their CBA 2 – a research project – and like the 2nd Year students they will be awarded

one of the four descriptors which will be on their profile of achievements in September.

The regional final of Scifest will take place in April and we wish all the participants the very best of luck as they prepare for the competition. We will update you with the names and details of the participants who qualify for the competition in our next newsletter.



Ethan and Max with their project – Becoming Carbon Neutral  
Also in the photo are Kate O'Connell TD and Maria Bailey TD.

## Development Office Update



### Installation of all-weather pitch

Earlier this month we completed work on the first project of Phase 5 of the Campus Development Programme. An all-weather playing and training pitch, on the site of the 'House' pitch, will provide an additional sports and education outlet for all boys across the campus, from Junior Infants to Final



The floodlit all-weather pitch, recently installed on the site of the House pitch

Year students. Between training sessions, matches and PE classes the new pitch will see regular usage throughout the academic year.

### Past Parents' Association

The inaugural committee of the Blackrock College Past Parents' Association (PPA), open to all parents of past pupils, has been selected. The committee comprises:

Ursula Grogan (Chair)  
Dermot Horan (Vice-Chair)  
Bernie Lloyd  
Helen Gardiner  
Mary Sugrue  
Michael Lennon  
Vivienne MacGinty  
Brigid O'Byrne (Secretary)



# Guidance and Counselling



**CAO** – 6th Year students have now made their CAO applications which were submitted by February 1st. 8 students submitted UCAS applications for the January 15th deadline. Some students have already received conditional offers from the UK. We also have a high number of students applying to the USA and Europe this year.



**HPAT** - Several students will sit the HPAT-Ireland test on the 23rd February 2019. These students have had the opportunity to participate in a HPAT preparation course that has been available in the school on Saturday mornings and have also taken a number of practice tests.



**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. The numbers of students attending has grown from last year which is great to see.

**CVs & Interviews** – This year we held a CV workshop in advance of the mock interviews for 6th years. Mr Robert Connolly from AMICUS Search and Recruitment presented the workshop and it was open to all 6th Years. The students found it highly informative. The Mock interviews will be held on the evening of the 13th February. This event is organised with the assistance of the Past Pupils' Union & Mr Declan O Sullivan. The interviewers on the night, all past pupils will approach the evening in a very professional manner while sharing their own wealth of experiences with the Sixth Year students. Students who participate in the programme will submit a Curriculum Vitae prior to their interview. Immediately following the formal interview each candidate will be given useful feedback and coaching about his preparation for and performance at the interview. This has proved to be a very valuable learning experience in the past and we are hopeful for its continued success in the future.



**Courses** – I use [www.careersportal.ie](http://www.careersportal.ie) to compile a list of courses and I use [www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie) to get specific details on a course.

## Dates for your Diary

CAO – 1st February

DARE Section in the CAO – Answer yes to question 1, complete questions and personal statements and submit by March 1st 2019

DARE Section B (School Section) & Section C (Disability Report) submit by registered post to CAO before 1st April 2019

NUI Exemptions – Tick box on CAO by 1st February 2019 and submit documentation to NUI, 49 Merrion Square, D2. (Forms available on line from NUI)

# Wellbeing



The AMBER FLAG initiative aims to encourage Schools/Colleges/Clubs/Societies/Organisations to promote and actively bring about a culture change in the promotion of positive mental health within the educational system and other organisations.

Our first Wellbeing Day was a great success. The post-its in the corridors and in the staff room lifted everyone's spirits. A lot of hours went into making the post-it stamps. Thanks to 2nd Years. A lot of hours went into printing of the stamps. Thanks to 4th Year. House Reps from 6th Year and Student Wellbeing Committee members, offered a wellbeing card to every student who entered the school in the morning. Con Sheehan spoke to 3rd Years about his journey coping with mental health issues. Ms Crimmins hosted a meditation in the Chapel for 6th Years. Each year had the benefit of a 5 minute meditation piece played during RE class. T.V Screen messages

and posters were designed by students in 2nd Year and SHPE groups. Wellbeing members from 4th Year brought in fruit to be shared among their year group. The Debating Committee will host a wellbeing debate on Friday. The motion for the debate is: "For the wellbeing of the school, this house would ban homework"



Monday 21st was 'Blue Day', allegedly the most depressing day of the year. Certainly not at Blackrock. Well done to all involved! We now look ahead to our Addiction Awareness Day on the 7th of March 2019.



# Pastoral Care Programme



**3rd Year Days of Reflection** – The start of the new calendar year is also the time when our Third Year students participate in their days of reflection. This is the first time that students in the College travel to an 'off campus' retreat and once again the venue was the facilities provided by the Sisters, Disciples of the Divine Master, at the top of Newtownpark Avenue. The Retreat Leader was Mr. Gerry Keegan.

The following comments by the 3rd Year House Representatives highlight what the young men take from this day of retreat...

*"It gave us a chance to see the connection we have with God" ... "Gerry's life story can be summed up as be not afraid so neither should we" ... "I enjoyed the day of reflection as it gave me time to slow down from the fast-pace of school life – it gave me time for me" ... "I got home and told my parents I love them – I have been afraid to do that for years."*



Many thanks to Sr. M. Louise O'Rourke for organising the facilities, Mr Garry Sullivan & Ms Lorraine Crimmins for accompanying the students, the House Reps for their leadership on each day and to Mr Owen Brennan for his ongoing support of this most important Third Year event.



**Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament** – On Friday 1st February, we had Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament after morning mass [8.15am until 11.45am] in the College Chapel. Every boy in the College was invited to come and pray in silence in the College Chapel for a few minutes during the morning. Hundreds of students

paid a visit as did many parents, all availing of time of silent prayer. It is hoped to have Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament monthly during the next academic year.

**Matthew 25 Programme 5 & 6** – The Matthew 25 Programme has continued this term. Two more Religion class groups, have spent two weeks on pastoral placement, befriending clients and supporting the amazing work undertaken by the staff in each of the thirteen venues that we attend.

The following comments taken from Matthew 25 Journals give some insight into the broad learning that is taking place... "I have learnt to treat others with the utmost of respect because you don't know their situation or how they might be feeling. I have learnt to be more generous and more patient – I also recognise how so many people are so generous in their support of me" ... "I have a completely different view of those with autism and of autism itself" ... "I think this pastoral placement has enhanced my empathy towards people and has shown me how lucky we are in Blackrock and how we have so much to be grateful for. I think it has also given me a different attitude towards school in general and made my drive for learning far stronger".

**DATE FOR YOUR DIARY: 5th Year Family Mass – 11.00am – Sunday 10th March – All Welcome**

**Join us for Morning Mass in the College Chapel any Mon - Fri at 8.15am. If you have any special intention or anniversary you would like remembered, please email [fmadden@blackrockcollege.com](mailto:fmadden@blackrockcollege.com) or phone 01 275 2125. All are welcome to attend this Morning Mass.**

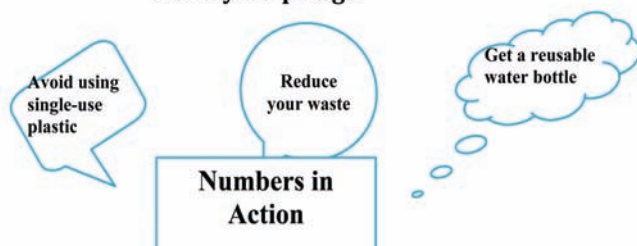
## Green Schools



### POWER OF ONE PLEDGE (P1P)

**You have the power to protect our planet. Take the pledge to do one action a day to help protect our beautiful but fragile world.**

**Blackrock College 2nd Year are supporting this Green Schools campaign. Make your pledge!**



**204 pupils in 2nd Year**  
**1,428 actions a week**  
**74,256 actions a year**  
**371,280 by the time we leave Blackrock**



*"How the little choices we make in life affect the environment"*

On Tuesday the 29th of January the Second Year House Captains went to Dun Laoghaire Town Hall for a conference on the environment. As well as Blackrock, Loreto Foxrock, CBC Monkstown and Newpark attended. We took part in many activities and played games. Firstly, we were mixed together and split into four groups. The games we played definitely highlighted how the little choices we make in life affect the environment. We also went into the Councilors' Chambers where Newpark gave a presentation on an eco-project they did with their school.

By the end of the day everybody had really enjoyed themselves and learnt about some ideas to bring back to the school.



## Badminton

Congratulations to the under 16A team who won the Dublin Schools' Division Two title, beating Templeogue College 5-1 in the final. The score line doesn't reflect the competitiveness of the match with four of the games being won by less than 5 points. The team of Darragh Harrison (Captain), Colm Kelly, Darragh Dempsey and Stephen O'Nuallain (all TY) now progress onto the Leinster finals to be held on March 7th. The under 16B and 16C both qualified out of their groups however were unlucky in their quarter finals, losing narrowly to St Benildus College and De La Salle Churchtown respectively.



Dublin Schools U16 Division 2 Winners: Colm Kelly, Stephen O'Nuallain, Darragh Dempsey and Darragh Harrison (C) (Fourth Year)

The U19A team, captained by Luke O'Brien, had a great season and held their own in Division two. Having finished level on points with Ardscoil Rís in the group, the team was eliminated on countback and ultimately lost out on a semi-final place by 9 points.

Badminton will continue until the Easter exams and is open to all students to attend if they so wish. Wednesdays 1pm-2pm. Thursdays 4pm-5pm.

## Basketball

### Under 16 All-Ireland Cup Semi-final:

**Colaiste Mhuire, Crosshaven 52 Blackrock College 42**

UL Arena hosted the All-Ireland Semi-finals and unfortunately Blackrock came up short against a very strong, cohesive and balanced Colaiste Mhuire side. Ronin O'Halloran (3rd Year) was superb on offence with twenty points ably assisted by Jimmy Gilligan (3rd Year – Captain) and Feargal Keane (4th Year – Captain) who scored ten points each. While the defeat was hugely disappointing, very few teams in the country can call themselves All-Ireland medallists and Jimmy Gilligan and his squad can do so in only their second year at this level. The potential of this group is clear and the future is bright for basketball in the school.

### All-Ireland League Playoffs

Through their performance in reaching the regional quarter finals before Christmas the U16s qualified for the All-Ireland Playoffs in St. Patrick's, Navan. St. Patrick's, All-Ireland winners in the cup and winners of this group in the league, is a very strong side and ran out deserved winners on a score line of 69-25. The score line doesn't accurately reflect the effort Blackrock put into the game as the final quarter got away from the team and inflated the gap. Blackrock gave their very best and even won the third quarter however St. Patrick's just had too much in the end. Ronin O'Halloran (3rd Year) with 8 points kept the scoreboard ticking over. Blackrock responded excellently in their next game against St. Patrick's, Armagh. Blackrock started very well and held around an eight point lead for most of the game. In an exciting finish Blackrock secured a steal and Todd Blacklaw (4th Year) held his nerve for the winning basket with 5 seconds left. With the group having been won by St. Patrick's, Navan, the last game of the season was played without any pressure and the entire squad got significant game time in what was a very enjoyable game played in superb spirit by both sides. Jimmy Gilligan (Captain – 3rd Year) shot three 3 pointers in the final quarter in a brilliant display of long range shooting.

## 2nd Year Basketball

**Blackrock College 39**

**St. Andrew's College 23**

The first competitive game of the 2nd Year basketball season saw Blackrock secure a strong win against our neighbours St. Andrew's. For a lot of the boys it was their first experience of competitive basketball so while there is much to learn, a score of 39 points at this point is an excellent return. Eric Brandt was excellent with 16 points and Tom Cherico ran the offence superbly from point guard.

**Blackrock College 31**

**St. Conleth's College 17**

The day after the St. Andrew's game saw Blackrock record a second win of the week against a strong St. Conleth's side. A strong defensive effort from Blackrock saw them establish a lead in the game that we managed to maintain throughout. Jack Dempsey Salley showed much promise with his passing and

movement on offence, along with Jamie Ahern O'Connor whose ability to transition on offence at high speed is excellent. Next up is St. Benildus away where victory would secure an East-Leinster quarterfinal spot.

## Chess

The Blackrock College Junior A team consisted of Sean O'Connor, Conor Hughes, Liam Norton (both 2nd Years) Matthew Collins, Patrick Curley and sub Andrew McCarthy (Third Years). In what was a very even contest with the overall lead changing hands throughout Blackrock ran out eventual winners 3-2.

Castleknock do not have a second junior team but they brought their minor team for a friendly against our Junior B team. This team consisted of Mark McCabe, Jamie Blackburn, John Duffy, (3rd Year) Charlie Parsons and Andrew Welch (both 2nd Years). The Junior B team won 5-0.

## Cross Country

The Cross Country team had a successful day at the East Leinster's in Avondale House in Wicklow on the 22nd of January, winning the overall award for best school at the event.

Our juniors won silver medals coming second in the team event. Jack McGlone won the gold medal in the individual category after another fantastic run. In the Intermediate race Eoin Kelly and Eoin Dunne finished 7th and 8th respectively, and the team won bronze medals for 3rd place. The seniors won gold in the team event, retaining the east Leinster senior boys shield. Liam Blackburn won bronze for a 3rd place finish as an individual.

The top 3 teams in each age group qualify for the Leinster Championships in Santry on the 13th of February, and given that the Willow Park minor team finished second, all 4 of our teams have qualified for the Leinster finals and look well on their way to reaching the all-Ireland championships.

## Golf

After some impressive performances before Christmas the Senior Golf team comprising Captain Ronan Cowhey (5th Year), Cathal French (6th Year), Robert Galligan (5th Year), Alex Bolger (4th Year) and Matthew O'Brien (3rd Year) won the Leinster finals of the Irish Schools' Matchplay Championship played in December. They now prepare for the All-Ireland finals to be held in Portstewart Golf Club on the 23rd and 24th of April.



Blackrock College Senior Golf Squad- Back Row: Cathal French, Ronan Cowhey, Mathew O'Brien, Front Row: Robert Galligan, Alex Bolger, Rory Reid, Thomas Harte with the President of Golfing Union of Ireland, Andrea Fitzgerald and Jimmy Somers (Captain of Lucan GC)

The 2nd and 4th Years can look forward to the Father Fullen Cup which will be held in the Castle Golf Club in Rathfarnham on Monday 25th March, timesheet available on the 11th March. Plenty of golf to look forward to!

## Rowing

Following the Christmas break everyone was quick to get back to training, with lots of work being put in both in the gym and on the water. Unfortunately after much preparation and excitement the Dam Buster, a time trial event, which was due to take place on the 26th January in Blessington, was cancelled due to high wind speeds.



Members of the Rowing squad in training on Blessington Lake

Having settled in properly to our new home in Blessington Sailing Club, it's become apparent how important it is to make the effort to get out on the water as much as possible. There have been days where the surface of the lake

looks like a sheet of glass and others when there are waves breaking over the boat on every stroke. Over the last few weeks we have had some stunning days with flat water and picturesque views, and we have been doing our best to make the most of it, going against freezing temperatures and patches of ice to get as much distance rowing as we can.

The 31st January marked one year from the day we received our brand new Filippi Eight from our sponsor MJ Flood. This boat is a fantastic piece of equipment and we are as grateful to have it now as we were the day it arrived.

We have been getting great use out of our new boats which were purchased from Trinity Boat Club. Some of these are ideal for beginner rowers as they are much easier to handle than top end racing boats such as our Filippi Eight. Along with these there are two racing singles, and two double/pairs. By expanding the fleet we are now able to enter in a wider variety of events at regattas, which is great for the club as a whole and for the individual rowers.

We are now looking ahead to Lagan Head of the River, another time trial event, this time taking place in Belfast on Saturday 9th February. The boys as well as the coaches have been working hard to put themselves in the best possible position for this competition, braving the icy conditions of Blessington every week to get the mileage in. This will be the first competition for our Second Year rowers, who will get a taste of what racing is all about.

## Rugby Junior

The junior squad continued to work hard over the Christmas period, with plenty of training and challenging matches keeping them grounded. Tough wins over St Munchin's, CBC Cork, and Gonzaga had 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 Belvedere. In good conditions the JCT overcame a spirited and innovative Belvedere team, with Blackrock running out eventual winners (38-5).



Alex Yarr, Gregg Barron (2nd Year) Cian Ryan, Liam Molony and Jamie McLoughlin (3rd Year) JCTV Gonzaga



Jamie McLoughlin and Patrick McCarthy (JCTV Belvedere)

We wish Gus McCarthy and the team well for the remainder of the campaign.

## Senior

The senior squad had an unusually quiet Christmas period in terms of fixtures, but very productive in terms of training. A training camp down in Cork just after the New Year included a fixture for both the first and second teams against Christian Brothers College, Cork. Two tight victories in excellent contests, 25-22 and 36-24 respectively, were very valuable experiences for the squad as a whole.

The return to school just after saw our final friendly game of the year against



David Fitzgibbon, Ed Brennan and Sean O'Brien (SCTV Pres Bray)



Luke Mion, Joseph McCarthy (6th Yr.) and Aaron Rowan (5th Yr.) (SCTV Pres Bray)

Methody. Perennial winners in Ulster over the years, we knew we would get the fitting contest that the start of our cup campaign soon after would require, and so it proved to be with a narrow defeat this time around (8-7). At the same time, our senior seconds' team put in a wonderful display to beat Wallace H.S (23-22) to end their friendly fixtures for the year also.

The first round of the cup brought the familiar challenge of an excellent Pres Bray side who had beaten this group three years ago in a friendly and whom we had struggled to put away in the junior cup later that season - we knew the threat they would pose. Even though the squad prepared with tremendous application, and started very well, our opponents showed their quality and resilience right to the end in an enthralling contest and we had to be grateful for a good first round victory, 25-19.

The second round brings another intriguing tie with St Michael's the opponent. This is a match up of the 2016 Junior Cup Final and will no doubt be an epic contest of two excellent sides. We wish Sean O'Brien's squad the best of luck.

## Sailing

On Wednesday 16th January the Inter-schools' Sailing Regatta was held at the INSS. Congratulations to Captain Charles Cullen (5th Year), Hugh O'Connor, Conor Hogan (3rd Year) and Nathan Van Steenberge and Ben Hogan (4th Year) on their 2nd place finish

## Soccer

The senior soccer team lost out on penalties to Coláiste Éanna in the Dublin South final. Reaching the final qualifies the team for a 1/4 final match V. Coláiste Choilm, Swords. In the Joe McGrath Cup we started with a 3-1 win over Castleknock College. There is plenty of football to be played after mid-term.

## Cricket

Cricket sessions run on Saturday mornings in the Sports Hall. The sessions are run by Leinster coach Albert Van de Merwe and are from 9.30-11.00. They will continue all year and all are welcome.



Senior Soccer Squad before their match vs. Coláiste Eanna

Photos courtesy Rock Photography  
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## REFLECTION

