

# BLACKROCK COLLEGE NEWSLETTER



## Halloween 2021

Dear Parents,

It has been a busy, upbeat and energetic start to the academic year with a welcome return to the classroom. It is uplifting to see so many boys on the fields and courts, in the pool, on the river and in the Sports Hall; to hear the music lessons, the ensembles and the rehearsals for 'Jesus Christ Superstar'; to attend the outstanding Rock-Ed, to meet in person our student and parent committee members, to witness boys sign up for Debating, Science, Green Schools, Chess, MUN, Public Speaking, Development Education, Art and Cookery clubs. It is great to be back!

The introduction of the one-hour periods, on a trial basis, and the 'Surface Go' devices in 2nd, 4th and 5th Year have certainly changed the tempo of our day. We recently surveyed both the teaching staff and the boys on how they have impacted teaching and learning. We will seek your view in December.

Preparation for our new Strategic Plan, 'Looking to the Future, 2022-27', is underway with the focus on the Environment, Ethos, Teaching and Learning and Wellbeing. As part of this, we will introduce a 5th imperative, **'Be Respectful'**. This is a call for respect for self as well as for others in all settings but particularly on social media where overindulgence can diminish empathy and lead to cyber-bullying.

Essential to self-respect is resilience, a capacity to keep going during tough times, to make the difficult call when peer pressure suggests otherwise. The message is that life isn't perfect and that we must learn to accept that things do not always go our way. The best way to teach our boys how to handle setback is to let them experience it. Sometimes, we may be overprotective and try to manage every situation for them.

Parenting is more complex today than it has ever been before. Your children are targeted as consumers at a very early age and these outside influences undermine your role. Teenage boys require authoritative parents that provide reasonable and flexible boundaries. Parents need the support of like-minded parents and a values led school.

At the Boarders' mass in September, Fr O'Brolchain talked about the importance of 'Robur' in the lives of our boys. He defined 'Robur' as strength of character; to act purposefully in favour of what is right. It is about dispensing with that passive role of the bystander and being a voice for good. This was the message on our Anti-Bullying Day as we urged our boys to 'Be There' for one another, to care for each other, to stand with someone who may be marginalised.

Consideration for others elevates what we do to a different level and is the essence of our Christian faith. Jesus does not leave us free to compromise on the essential matter of loving service to others. This is the difference between 'Routine and Rut'. It is the Blackrock way to routinely put others first, to reject selfish mediocrity, listless boredom and cynical detachment.

Our Christian community is forged by respect, the everyday please and thank you, the holding of a door, the taking of time to listen to each other, as we show we care. Our 'Fides' is the belief that how we treat each other is a priority. Our 'Robur' is our determination to do it again and again.

Our programme of Retreats, Week of Reconciliation, family masses and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament provided time for the boys to pause and reflect, to be grateful for who they are, to see themselves as sons of God, special and valued.

Finally, I am grateful for the prayers of our Spiritan community, the enterprise of my colleagues, the support of our College Union, the commitment of the Parents' Council and Year Committees, the understanding of our parent body and of course, the enthusiasm, energy, and interest of the boys.

Enjoy the break, with Fides et Robur.

God Bless,

**ALAN MacGINTY**  
Principal



Ritchie Patterson and his grandmother  
at the Second Year Family Mass



Conor O' Shaughnessy ( JCTV Roscrea)

# Message from the Deans



They say you never know what is around the corner but if you keep putting one foot in front of the other, one day you'll look back and you'll have climbed a mountain. Of course, we are not quite at the top of the mountain yet when it comes to Covid as it still permeates the day to day in school, to some extent, through the presence of masks, social distancing, sanitising and so on. However there has been a vibrancy, energy and positivity to life in Blackrock in this first half term that suggests that mountain top is moving ever closer.

Well done to the great numbers of **Second Years** who participated in the College **Sailing Regatta**.

The extra-curricular programme in the College has endured many restrictions and adaptations over the last nineteen months. Throughout this newsletter you will read of the many fantastic events which took place this half term. The Karl Ashe Memorial Trophy, an Inter-Year GAA tournament between TY – 6th Year, took place in the early weeks of term. Either side of the Karl Ashe final were the House 10's for 2nd – 6th Year where students turned up in great numbers on thankfully sun filled Saturdays. Indoor sports training recommenced on September 20th for the first time in over a year and a half. The Sailing Regatta took place in late September. In early October the Social Soccer Leagues started on Fridays after school with a huge number of students eager to be involved. We had our first Swimming Gala since 2019 and what a wonderful atmosphere there was amongst the year groups on the night. Uniquely September and October saw the JCT Cup Campaign take place which you will read about elsewhere in the newsletter. The above is just a snippet of a much wider extra-curricular programme on offer thanks to our Games Administrator Mr. Evan O'Brien and his team.

Eight **6th Year** squads (78 players) have entered the **Friday Social Soccer League** this term. We wish the groups well and thank Mr Evan O'Brien for setting up this wonderful Super League Tournament among the 3 senior year groups.

Rehearsals for the Senior Musical, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, began and continue in earnest. An undoubted highlight from the half term was Rock Ed where the hard work, dedication and talent was most evident in the quality of speakers – a thoroughly enjoyable night for all. The school community's ongoing commitment to our environment here locally and beyond was evident in a very successful Environmental Awareness Week organised by our Green Schools

I would encourage all **Transition Years** to continue to avail of the wide ranging extra-curricular opportunities on offer Monday – Friday in the school. There really is something for everyone across a wide variety of sports and the arts.

Committee. The theme of this year's Literacy Day was 'Be a Discerning Reader' and Our Anti-Bullying Day focused on being inclusive, being respectful of others in our thoughts, actions and language.

We have had two Progress Weeks and they along with the Weekly Application Cards continue to provide opportunities for positive reinforcement and naturally areas for discussion and improvement. All of this has happened of course in the context of the introduction of one-hour periods for all and student devices in 2nd, 4th and 5th Year. We thank the boys for their openness to, cooperation with and embracing of these changes in their school day. We cannot forget that this all happens alongside the daily Covid measures in school – the goodwill of the boys towards all that is asked of them is something that is deeply appreciated and never taken for granted. We thank all of the House Captains for their exceptional leadership in this regard throughout the term.

We are blessed that all of the above takes place in a beautifully maintained school and grounds, and we are deeply appreciative of the phenomenal work of the maintenance and household staff who do so much continually to ensure this is the case. In closing we would like to especially mention the class of 2020 who had their farewell mass with some members present in the Chapel and the remainder tuning in online. The class of 2020 have

**Fifth Year** students have been encouraged to set **SMART short-term goals** for academic progress and personal development. Reminded that a *goal without a plan is just a wish*, the daily use of the College Homework Diary and a consistent approach is essential in assisting students to maximise their potential.

# Message from the Deans Cont'd



**6th Year** students marked **Mental Health Awareness Day** by wearing Amber/Orange items of clothing into school. The Pieta Amber flag flies proudly over the front lawn recognising the efforts made by the whole school community to eradicate the stigmas associated with mental health issues.

It was great for the **Third Years** to get a chance to take stock and get some time for reflection and prayer in what has been a very busy half term. Judging by the positive feedback the year group seemed to have really enjoyed the **Days of Reflection**.



*Duff and McQuaid who contested the 3rd Year Inter House 10's final.*

The rugby season was truly up and running with the **Third Year Inter-house 10's Competition** held in September. Well done to Duff, captained by Ben O'Halloran who came out victorious, with Rory O'Donoghue of Leman named Player of the Tournament. Great numbers are training in Third Year and all are enjoying the return of competitive games. As a year we are particularly proud of Declan Cadden, Charlie Keogh and of course Michael Walsh who are members of the JCT '21 squad - we wish them well in the final.

In September we had a terrific morning for the **Second Year Rugby 10s**, the first of the **Inter-House Competitions** this year. Congratulations to captain **Oliver Woods** and his **McQuaid squad** on beating **Shanahan, captained by Jack O'Brien**, in the A final and also to captain **Louis Innes and De Valera** on winning the B final with **McQuaid, captained by Harry Donohoe**, runners-up! **Aidan Wehrley** (DeValera) was the player of the tournament in the B competition with **Conal Power** (Shanahan) adjudged so in the A.



*Captain Louis Innes and his De Valera squad, winners of the B League*

**Fifth Year** students were very welcoming of the opportunity to pause and reflect during the recent retreat sessions. The occasion was deemed by the students to be exceptionally worthwhile and rewarding and we thank Mr. Flor Madden for his coordination of the **retreats**.

Momentum continues to gather pace for **BCR 2021**. We hope you will tune in when we go live on Monday 15th – Friday 19th November. **Transition Year** Students have been doing huge work to date for the wide variety of shows we will air: from news and current affairs, a wide variety of sports, language shows, wellbeing, guest schools, amongst many others. Our broadcast frequency will be communicated after midterm, and you can also tune in on the College website. Each day's programming will be available to download on an app, the details of which will come after midterm.

71 players participated in the **6th Year Inter-House 10s Rugby Tournament**. Having survived a sudden death drop goal shootout in the semi-final, McQuaid captained by Kevin Jackson defeated Leman captained by Robert Fitzgerald by 4 tries to 3 in the final. Matthew O'Brien (Duff) was named Player of the Tournament.



# Message from the Deans Cont'd



shown a level of resilience, adaptability and courage that has been inspirational and certainly serves as a wonderful example for those that follow in their footsteps.

We hope you, your family and those closest to you have a happy, healthy and safe half-term and we look forward to reopening as we build towards the Christmas season.

Mr.T. Ryan ( 6th Year Dean ), Ms C. Dobbyn ( 5th Year Dean ), Mr P. O' Neill ( 4th Year Dean ), Mr O. Brennan ( 3rd Year Dean ), Ms R. Harlowe ( 2nd Year Dean )

It has been a very busy start on the **6th Year Career** front with Ms Natasha Drew co-ordinating our HPAT programme, the introduction to the CAO Process for LC students, the Third Level Higher Options Online Conference, and the early UCAS Application deadlines.

The **Second Year Family Mass** took place on Sunday 17th October in the College Chapel and was streamed into the Learning Centre, with large numbers also tuning in to participate remotely. Our **celebrant, Fr Cormac O Brolchain**, reminded us to give time to God and to be true to our College values.

**Third Year rowers** returned to the water in Limerick for the first competitive action of the season. In the J18 both Jason Marrow and Ben McElligott were involved as our J18x+ finished 1st and 2nd. Both also featured in J15 4x+ (C) and (B) alongside Lucas Perez, Ciaran Murphy, Patrick Cody and Louis Kelly and Elliott Tomkin Beddy who finished 3rd and 4th. A great return to water!

We wish **Fifth Year** students courage and determination as they fulfil their **Community Service Programme Auxilium** requirements over the coming weeks.



Fifth Year Students Celebrating the Launch of their Community Service Programme Auxilium

The term started off on a superb note with **Transition Year** students, for only the second time ever, winning the **Karl Ashe Memorial Trophy** against a very strong 6th Year side. My thanks to Mr. Grant for his expert coaching of the side. The unique presence of the JCT Cup Campaign in the first term gave a huge boost and energy to the year and what a thrilling campaign it was that you will read about elsewhere. The level of engagement of TY students has been phenomenal across **the extra-curricular programme** as evidenced by the wonderful turnout at House 10's, Swimming Gala and the newly formed Social Soccer League.



Damien Moynihn (TY) at social

A fantastic evening in the College as six speakers delivered talks at our annual **RockEd** 'to challenge, inspire and entertain.' **Third Year** was ably represented by Zack Egan Ruane who so professionally and confidently spoke about "The Matrix and Science of Simulation". I look forward to the recording being available to a wider audience.



Theo Claffey, Eoghan Walsh, Denis Kelleher, Sean Griffith and Harry Donnelly celebrate the Auxilium Launch in Fifth Year

# Message from the Deans Cont'd



There has been a fantastic uptake on **evening courses in Transition Year** ranging from Self-Defence, Cookery, Barista, Sound Engineering, Legal Studies and more. Drivers Education will begin after midterm. We hope to offer the same courses again in the New Year subject to demand. Chinese classes will continue right up to the Easter Holidays. Students should note that if they are unable to attend a particular class they contact Mr O'Neill or Mr Grant.



Diarmuid Byrne, TY. Transition Years have begun the mammoth task of construction a LEGO Colosseum. With 9036 pieces it is the largest set ever produced.

The **6th Year Retreat Programme** took place between Sunday 19th and Tuesday 21st of September at 9 different venues around Ireland. The retreats began on the Saturday evening when an attendance of 200 people spread over 3 venues joined in the celebration of a Mass for Families of Sixth Year students led by the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr Dermot Farrell. We thank Mr Flor Madden for his organisation of this extremely well received programme.

The elected **Fifth Year House Captains** have been superb in their leadership to date. We congratulate DeValera on their Rugby 10's victory with Maxim Ashenbrenner named as Player of the Tournament. Ebenrecht were victors at the Swimming Gala. Congratulations to Finn O'Neill on his victory in the Principal's Trophy adding to his building collection of trophies and accolades.



McQuaid House –  
Winners of the Inter-house 10's

Well done to all of our participants in the recent **Swimming Gala**. Congratulations go to **Junyu Shen** who achieved first place and to **Conor White** who came second in the **2nd Year 50m free style race**. We also commend Leman; the winning House on the evening.

52 members of the **Class of 2022** participated in the **College Swimming Gala** on October 12th. Patrick Curley won the 6th Year Open 50m race and was just pipped in 100m Principal's Cup. Ebenrecht were crowned winning 6th Year house at this event.

Much thanks to the Career Guidance Department and the Past Pupils' Union for organising **career talks for Fifth Years** providing a forum for students to hear about the daily activities in various career areas from industry professionals.

**Fifth Years** are encouraged to explore Qualifax.ie and CareersPortal.ie and submit a **Career Plan** to Mr. O'Nualláin by 6th November 2021.

The **Third Years** had their first experience of a **Blackrock College Swimming Gala** in October in what was a very enjoyable event. There was a fantastic atmosphere poolside as the students roared on their house mates. Cuan Fallon won a hotly contested Junior Championship race ahead of Oliver Lee. Ciaran Murphy won the 3rd Year 50m freestyle with Oliver Lee pushing him all the way in 2nd place. In the house competition Leman won out on the night.



Fifth Year Career Talks

# Message from the Deans Cont'd



**Second Years** were introduced to the Biodiversity nature walks on campus during their SPHE classes as part of Environment Awareness Week.

There has been a huge variety of other **activities** happening besides. In the first week back all **TY Students** completed their Careers Aptitude Test (CAT). Modules in RSE, Guidance and Mental Health, Cookery, Social Studies, Arts and Crafts, Drama, Film Studies, Mindfulness and Nutrition are ongoing. Students have signed up for Senior Musical (cast, crew and band), the Rathdown Musical, Willow Sharks TY Coaching, Past Pupils' Reunion Committee, House of the Oireachtas Work Experience, Peter McVerry Trust Programme, RCSI Mini-Med Programme, Walk in my shoes Mental Health Placement and much more.

To mark the Feast Day of Claude Poullart Des Places, Mr Flor Madden spoke to the **Class of 2022** about the meaning of **Spiritan Ethos** and how it can be lived in our daily lives. He has promised to return to the 6th Year motto of 'All Will Be Well', later in the academic year.

We congratulate **Sixth Years** James Carroll (MC) and speakers George Francis 'Difficulty' and Michael White 'The Little Things' on their outstanding contribution to a most successful **RockEd** event on Thursday 7th October.

Under the leadership of Cian Ryan, Sean Purcell and Jack Davy the **6th Year** Dayboy Team were narrowly defeated by the TY Team in a most exciting final of the **Karl Ashe GAA Tournament** on a score line of 2-9 to 3-5.

**Fifth Years are on the National and International Stage.** Finn O'Neill and Ronan Fahey are making tremendous waves in the world of swimming with outstanding results. Maxim Aschenbrenner has represented the Czech Republic in Rugby, Phillippe le Roux has represented Ireland in Cricket, Jake Foley continues to compete nationally in Golf Tournaments, while Luke Kritzing and Michael Colreavy and Oliver Coffey have been selected for the IRFU's School's Rugby team for the mid-term camp. We wish these students and all those with sporting commitments outside the College the very best with their endeavours.



*Fifth Year Philippe Le Roux at The U19 World Cup*



*Finn O'Neill Fifth Year Winning the Perpetual Trophy at The Battle of Carlingford Lough 7.5km Swim in July*

The **House Captains** for **Second Year**, chosen at the end of First Year, were commissioned in August during their leadership training. The captains are **Kian Toralde** and **Harry Weir** for De Valera House; **Nicholas Sheridan** and **Cillian Staunton** for Duff; **Mark Crowley** and **Ben Guerin** for Ebenrecht; **Ben Keane** and **Conor Sheehan** for Leman; **Freddie Bracken** and **Gavin Laing** for McQuaid; and **Sam Le Bolloch** and **Daniel McDermott** for Shanahan. These boys play a key leadership role in the College. We thank them for their excellent work so far this term and wish them well in the months ahead.

On the **academic front**, **6th Year** students have completed their LC Geography Field Trips this half term; are adding the final touches to their LC Home Economics Journals at present and are participating in the first set of practice orals with members of the Irish and Modern Language Departments.



# Message from the Deans Cont'd



In the second week of terms **TY Students** attended a workshop with Mr. Denis Hevey on **Leadership and Self-Motivation**. This workshop aims to help students develop resilience and stress management strategies. The feedback from the students was hugely positive and there will be a follow up course in the new year. There will be several guest speakers for TY students post October midterm.

The **6th Year Parents' Committee** for 2021/22 chaired by Cristina Mei is up and running. Having organised a very well received 6th Year Study Skills morning on October 9th this committee is hoping, Covid regulations permitting, to re-introduce the Machakos Trip to Kenya and the Graduation lunch next May.

The **study skills workshops** have been well attended by the **Third Years**. I have no doubt those in attendance found them beneficial and took something from the morning. The challenge now is to put what they have learnt into practise, particularly as we approach the Christmas exams.

On the pitches, on the courts, in the pool and on the lakes of Blessington, on the stages of MUN, RockEd, Public Speaking, Debating and the Musical, in Art Club, Chess Club and the CADLC and in the domains of Environmental Awareness, Wellbeing, Commerce and Economics the **involvement of Fifth Years in College life** is outstanding, welcomed and encouraged.

**Gaisce** is the President's Award that challenges students to develop new personal skills and to serve in their communities. This year all **200+ TY students** will participate in the programme to compete the Bronze Award. It has been phenomenal to see the number of fantastic activities the boys have engaged in, including Willow Park Yard Supervision, Seapoint Dragons' Rugby Coaching, Willow Coach, Tivoli Tigers' Special Olympics Gymnastics Club, and many more.

Congratulations to **6th Year rugby players** Hugh Cooney, Ethan Laing, Gus McCarthy, Patrick McCarthy, Liam Molony (UI9s); Inigo Cruise O'Brien and Ruben Moloney (UI8s) who won their respective interprovincial series with Leinster at the start of this academic term.

In September **Second Years** experienced a very well-received **Study Skills Seminar**, presented by **learning4learning** which focussed on how to learn using visualisation techniques.

**10 Transition Year** students along with 10 Transition Year students from St. Michael's have become **Spirasi ambassadors** and had a training morning just before midterm where plans were put in place for various initiatives to promote and support the cause of Spriasi who support victims of torture and asylum seekers.

We thank the 9 members of the **Class of 2022**, Andrew Harvey, Padraig Foley, Eoin O'Reilly, Matthew Harvey, Cian Ryan, Sean Purcell, Danny Clarke, Emmet Gulliver and Jack Rogan who completed training with Ms Crimmins and Mr Madden and will serve the College Community as Ministers of the Eucharist for the year ahead.



Ben Kieran-Glennon and Conor Casey



# Message from the Deans Cont'd



Hugo Kelly with his parents at the Sixth Year Family Mass



Medárd Teasdale, Jack Rogan and Daniel Clarke at the Sixth Year Family Mass



Devalera - Winning House of The Fifth Year Inter-House Rugby 10's Tournament



Fifth Year Inter-House Rugby 10's Tournament



Shanahan - Fifth Year Inter-House Rugby 10's Tournament



Ebenrecht - Fifth Year Inter-House Rugby 10's Tournament



Duff - Fifth Year Inter-House Rugby 10's Tournament



Leman - Fifth Year Inter-House Rugby 10's Tournament



The under 18's schools side won their interprovincial title yesterday with 6 starters (Michael Colreavy, Alex Mullan, Inigo Cruise-O'Brien, Ruben Moloney, Oliver Coffey, Luke Kritzing) and 1 sub (Thomas Brigg) from Blackrock involved. James O'Sullivan is in the extended squad.



Leman - Sixth Year Inter-House Rugby 10's Tournament



Jack O'Brien (Captain) and his Shanahan Squad, runners up in the House 10's League



House 10's Rugby



Olly Woods (Captain) and his McQuaid Squad, winners of the House 10's A League



U 14 15s 'Rock V Campbell College



# Pastoral Care Programme



"Lord, I will prepare missionaries for you and then You can put them to work", the words of Claude Poullart des Places of over 300 years ago. Today, these words are as relevant as when they were first written – this is at the very core of what Blackrock is about – this is our ethos – this is at the centre of everything we do in cooperation with all parents, the primary educators of the boys.



Following two years of disruption, it is wonderful to be back in 'Rock where we gather together in community and as community. The Spirit of Blackrock is joy filled – enkindled with the fire of the Love of the Holy Spirit.

This half term has been busy – so many great liturgical events have happened, beginning with the long awaited Farewell Mass for the Class of 2020 on the Feast of the Assumption of Mary on 15th August livestreamed from the College Chapel – this virtual event had families tuning in from all over the world ... Ireland, United Kingdom, United States, Spain, United Arab Emirates, Portugal, Italy, Germany, Poland and Canada – the College is fully committed to hosting a coming together in person for the Class of 2020 as soon as it is safe to do so and as soon as Government Guidelines permit.

Another wonderful event before the school year began was the Commissioning of 66 House Captains, each House Captain provides much more than leadership within their year group, they are ambassadors for the gifts of the Holy Spirit within the College and are a source of encouragement to all on our journey of living out our values, of being caring, being there, being truthful and being grateful.

The school year proper began with Reconciliation Services for every class grouping and all staff members – special thanks to Fr Paddy Dundon CSSp and Fr Tom Nash CSSp for their input and generosity of their time as they celebrated over 40 liturgies during Reconciliation Week. Confession is available every morning of term after Mass at 8.15am for whoever wishes to avail of the sacrament.



Colm Fagan and Matthew Kane, Cantors at The Sixth Year Family Mass

The Annual Pilgrimage to Lourdes for the Archdiocese of Dublin could not take place this year and the College was delighted to host an online liturgy for the 30 schools that normally take part in the pilgrimage.

The new school year is a great time for us all to stop and reflect on what we are doing, why we are doing it and where we are going. A Retreat for Parents, with a theme of "For Christ's sake, what are we doing" was oversubscribed. Retreats for 3rd Year, 5th Year and 6th Year also took place. The 6th Year Retreat is a three-day residential retreat and involved 8 groups travelling to the four corners of Ireland – a wonderful occasion and an opportunity for 6th Years to take some time out and to focus on what is really important in their lives and in life and living.



Ted Taylor with his parents at the Second Year Family Mass



Shane and Fergal O' Sullivan with their parents at the Sixth Year Family Mass

Family Masses are always a great occasion in Blackrock – a time of coming together as community to share in the Joy of the Gospels. Recently appointed Archbishop of Dublin, His Grace Dermot Farrell celebrated Mass for the 6th Years and their parents on the eve of their retreat – in his homily he spoke powerfully and challengingly about true discipleship and service. On Mission Sunday, Fr Cormac O'Brolcháin celebrated Mass for 2nd Year families and in his homily he encouraged all to be kind and to pray ... "R.O.C.K. M.E.N" – reaching out with caring and kindness and to pray in the morning, when you eat and at night.



Hugh O' Riordan with his parents at the Sixth Year Family Mass

Service is at the core in Blackrock – it can be an honour to serve – especially when it comes to being a Eucharistic Minister – nine 6th Year boys have been commissioned.



Conor McCourt with his Dad at the Second Year Family Mass



Benjamin McFadden with his mother at the Sixth Year Family Mass

Spending time in prayer and reflection is always encouraged. Each half term, we are afforded the opportunity of a morning of Eucharistic Adoration, when all of the Rock community, boys and their families, staff and community can visit the College Chapel voluntarily for silent prayer.

Faith is alive in Blackrock – the fruits of the Holy Spirit are all around us – there are examples every day...the reach of our community in Blackrock cannot be measured, but one figure is that there are now in excess of 300 joining online for Daily Mass from the College Chapel at 8.15am on every school morning.

...as Claude Poullart des Places said over 300 years ago ... "Lord, I will prepare missionaries for you and then You can put them to work", each of us are missionaries, let us try to allow ourselves to be put to God's work.

## Wellbeing



### Anti-Bullying Day

Day on Thursday 30th September. Students Compassionate Kindness which had a message of meeting everyone we meet with kindness, not just on Anti-Bullying Day but throughout our lives. In period 3 on that day, students looked at definitions of bullying, where bullying can occur and what to do if they see it happening. The presence of our Wellbeing Anonymous Tool was

The Student Wellbeing Committee held a very successful Anti-Bullying began the day with a meditation on



highlighted and is an invaluable resource for students worried about themselves or their friends. The day ended with a meditation on 'Beating the Bully', external and internal ones.

Mental Health Awareness Day is happening on Thursday October 21st and the Student Wellbeing Committee aim to have an activity in each period. 6th Years and staff will wear orange to visually reinforce our commitment to promoting positive mental health in the College. We are very proud that we continually achieve the Amber Flag and that it flies proudly on the College grounds throughout the year not just on Mental Health Awareness Day.



# Green Schools



The **Green Schools Committee** has worked hard on several projects during the first term of the 21/22 academic year. Early on this term we officially received our Special Travel Award for our EcoUNESCO competition entry last year. Following this we were delighted to discover that, following a busy two-year campaign, **we have been awarded our Travel Flag!** Our online ceremony took place last week and we raise our new flag in an official ceremony in the College this coming week. One of our final tasks to complete our Travel Flag submission last year was to install additional high quality, sheltered bike-racks for students. This is now complete, and the **new Bike Racks will be available to use after the midterm.**



New Bicycle Parking Facility

Our theme this year is **Biodiversity**. For our Biodiversity Flag submission, we have created a survey that will be sent out to the entire school recording data about the students' connections with biodiversity in the College. We also aim to create awareness of the existing biodiversity areas on campus and identify how we can adapt and improve these.



With all of this in mind we held the first of our biannual Environmental Awareness Weeks (EAW) during

September. We adopted a **cross-curricular approach** with varied resources designed by the Committee, shared on the Year Group Teams and on the TV screens in the College. Activities included **nature walks in 2nd Year SPHE classes,**

**A paper-free Literacy Day,** an Environmental theme for **Science Club, a walk or cycle on Wednesday** and a short film **distributed to all senior RE classes as well as Junior CSPE classes.** Our local TDs contributed to our short film highlighting Biodiversity, and our thanks to our contributors, Cormac Devlin, Jennifer Carroll-MacNeill, Neale Richmond, Josepha Madigan and Ossian Smyth. The Committee, chaired by Robert McNabb, 6th Year, meets each week in the Learning Centre. **All welcome.**



Eco UNESCO Award presented to Robert McNabb, Chairperson of the Green Schools Committee by National Director of EcoUNESCO, Elaine Nevin. (L to R) F. McGinn, M. O'Donnell, R. McNabb, R. Harlowe, E.Nevin (EcoUNESCO Director), D. O'Neill, E. Wilson.

# Campus Development Programme Update



The new configuration of the upper block of playing pitches is beginning to take shape. When this work is completed in late 2022, we will have a new vista on this part of the campus housing five pitches, four of those on the upper tier and one on the lower tier on the site of the Willow U13s pitch. A cricket pitch will be located on the upper tier.



Willow Avenue, the internal roadway linking the Willow Park side of the campus with Blackrock College, has been widened by approximately 1.5m allowing for a more efficient flow of traffic in both directions and providing more space for cyclists. Two new pedestrian crossings have also been added to supplement the existing pedestrian crossing that is located beside the Willow Park roundabout and a new pedestrian pathway is providing more space for pupils and parents to traverse the campus.



# New Superior General of the Spiritans



**FR ALAIN MAYAMA IS THE NEW SUPERIOR GENERAL OF THE SPIRITANS**

The General Chapter of the Spiritans, taking place in Bagamoyo, Tanzania since October 3, has elected, on October 18, 2021, as its new Superior General, Fr. Alain Mayama, a member of the province of Congo Brazzaville and presently General Assistant in Rome.

Alain Mayama was born in Congo Brazzaville in 1971. He made his Perpetual Religious Profession in 1999. He was ordained priest in 2000.

He began his missionary life in Cameroon as formator. Having studied in the USA, he has been responsible for the Chaplaincy of the Hospital in Port Huron, Detroit, from 2007 to 2008. He continued his Mission as a formator in Libreville, Gabon from 2008 to 2010. That same year he returned to Congo Brazzaville to

serve as Provincial Superior. At the General Chapter held here in Bagamoyo in 2012, he was elected General Assistant, a position he has held in Rome until now.

It was providential to be elected on this October 18th when the church celebrates the feast of St. Luke, the Evangelist of Mercy. His are the opening words of the Spiritan Rule of Life: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, for He has anointed me, to bring the good news to the afflicted. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives, sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord" (Lk 4:18-19).

Welcomed by the Chapter Assembly, Fr. Alain Mayama will have the mission of animating the more than 2500 Spiritan Missionaries working in more than 60 countries on five continents. He will also have to welcome and animate the thousands of lay people who share Spiritan Spirituality and Mission. He is the first African spiritan to be elected as Superior General.



# Snapshot of 1st Half Term 2021



Ronan Fahy (5th Year) Representing the College in swimming.



Louis Kelly (Third Year) at the Blackrock College Sailing Regatta



Louis Glavin (Third Year) at the Blackrock College Sailing Regatta



Gavin Laing with his Dad at the Second Year Family Mass



Jimmy Gilligan with his parents at the Sixth Year Family Mass



Frederico Mei with his parents at the Sixth Year Family Mass



Jake Foley, (Fifth Year) at the South of Ireland Amateur Open Championship in July 2021



David Healy (Second Year) At the Blackrock College Sailing Regatta



Medard Teasdale, Jack Rogan and Daniel Clarke at the Sixth Year Family Mass



JCT 2nds V Pres Cork



Social Soccer on Friday October 15th



# Snapshot of 1st Half Term 2021



David Byrne with his parents at the Second Year Family Mass



Rossa Clonan with his mother at the Second Year Family Mass



James Donohue and his grandmother at the Second Year Family Mass



JCT FINAL  
'Rock V Newbridge



Shaun Thomas ( TY ) Social Soccer



Social Soccer



Marcus Cullen and Tom Curtin ( Third Year ) JCTV Pres Cork



Louis Innes, Gavin Laing, Benjamin MacLand, Cillian Murphy , David Mannix ,Second Year House 10s



Alex Swan , Jack Murphy and Darragh Eyre ,  
Second Year House 10's



Second Year House 10's



Second Year House Tens



# Snapshot of 1st Half Term 2021



Niall Smyth and Jack Pollard (JCTV Roscrea)



JCT FINAL  
'Rock V Newbridge



Mark Walsh (TY) (JCTV Roscrea)



JCTV Roscrea



Finn Toolan's representation of the *Naumachiae* (TY  
*Ancient World 101 Module*)



Tim O'Neill's geometric design (TY)



Transition Years have begun the mammoth task of construction a LEGO Colosseum. With 9036 pieces it is the largest set ever produced. Keep an eye on the digital noticeboards if you would like to get involved in the construction.



Charlie Malony (TY) JCTV Roscrea



Cian Dennehy and Charlie Woodcock (TY) JCTV Roscrea



Conor O' Shaughnessy (TY) JCTV Terenure



Jack Pollard and Niall Smyth (TY) JCTV Terenure



Karle Ashe Final



# Snapshot of 1st Half Term 2021



TY and 6th Year Finalists in the Karle Ashe Trophy



Blackrock College has now been awarded all the primary flags (Litter & Waste, Energy, Water, Travel and Biodiversity) and the Global Citizenship flag (Marine Environment).



Daniel Bennet ( Fifth Year )  
Karle Ashe Semi final



Karle Ashe Semi Final



Ms Wyse , Ms Harlowe, Father O' Brolchain, Mr O'Connor, Mr Farrell and the Green Schools Committee at the blessing of the new bicycle racks.



Career Talks 5th Year



Career talks for Fifth Years in the CADLC



Blackrock College JCT V St Mary's in Donnybrook



Derry Maloney ( TY ) Blackrock College V St Mary's in Donnybrook



# Snapshot of 1st Half Term 2021



Rowing Competition in Blessington



Rowing Club in Blessington



Rowing Club in Blessington



Rowing Club in Blessington



Finn O' Neill ( 5th Year ) winner of the President's Trophy at Blackrock Swimming Gala



Paddy Curley (6th Year) winner of the 6th Year Open 50m race



'Take your marks....' Blackrock College Swimming Gala



Charlie Malony (TY) JCTV Roscrea



U 14s 15s against Campbell College Don Banks , Charley Collett ( Second Year )



Ruben Maloney and Ethan Laing SCTV Terenure



Paddy McCarthy , Cian O'Brien and Kevin Jackson SCTV Terenure



U 14s 15s against Campbell College. Ben Macken (2nd Year)





Seanan Mc McCluskey's Chalk Study (Fourth Year)



Adam Wright (Fifth Year)



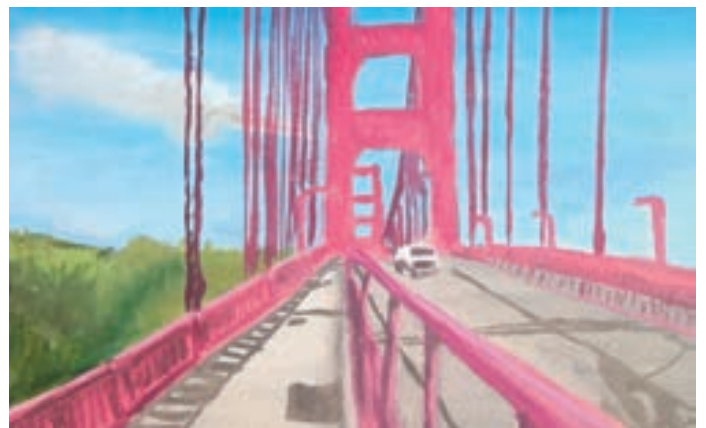
Max McGurk (Fifth Year )



Oliver Lee's Oil Painting ( Third Year )



Declan Cadden (Third Year) Lino Print



Sascha Gibney (Transition Year)



Darragh Kilbride (Transition Year )



David Schiekofer (Transition Year)



# The Arts Cont'd



Darragh Bowler (Transition Year)



## Junior Debating

Junior Debating is off to a great start this term on Tuesdays at lunch time. This term, four teams from Blackrock College are competing in the Leinster Junior Schools' Debating Competition organised by the Law and the Literary and Historical Society in UCD. Team A: Jamie Browne Lynch & Josh Murphy. Team B: Tom Hayden & Cillian Staunton. Team C: Ishaan Pandey & Darragh O'Neill. Team D: Shane Hamilton & Zack Egan-Ruane.

We also have four teams competing in the Spar Debates hosted by Holy Child Killiney in November: Team 1: Ishaan Pandey & Darragh O'Neill, Team 2: Brian Carroll & Josh Murphy. Team 3: Cillian Staunton & Jamie Browne Lynch, Team 4: Shane Hamilton & Zack Egan-Ruane.

Lastly, this term we are also competing against the Blackrock College Senior Debating Team on November 26th.



Cillian Staunton (2nd Year)



Jamie Browne Lynch (2nd Year)



Leo Allen (2nd Year)



Brian Carroll (2nd Year)



Zack Egan Ruane (3rd Year)



Ishaan Pandey (3rd Year)



Darragh O'Neill (3rd Year)

## Senior English Debating

The Senior English Debating Society has had a busy start to the year. In recent weeks, we have had two in-house MACE style debates. These debates provide a great opportunity to hone our critical thinking and presentation skills ahead of our participation in the inter-schools' competition.

The first of these debates took place on Tuesday, 28th September, with the motion that *This House Regrets the Rise of the Social Media Influencer*. There were very good arguments presented by both sides, but ultimately it was the proposition team, consisting of Ben Kieran-Glennon (5th Year) and James Carroll (6th Year) who carried the motion. Matthew O'Donnell (6th Year) was adjudged Best Speaker.

Our second MACE took place on Tuesday, 5th October, with the controversial motion that *This House Believes that Blood Sports are Legalised Barbarianism*. This was hotly contested by both sides, with the Proposition team, comprised of Colm Fagan and Matthew O'Donnell (both 6th Year) going on to carry the motion. Colm was also deemed Best Speaker.

We are now beginning preparations for the first qualifying round of the Leinster Schools' Debating Competition. This year we have entered three teams, and we are looking forward to our participation in those debates. The Transition Year members of the Society are getting ready to participate in the first round of the Concern Debates, which will take place after the Midterm Break. We also look forward to the Junior Vs Senior Debate which will take place in late November.

All in all, we have had a great start to the year, and we look forward with enthusiasm to the upcoming events and competitions.



## Model United Nations

The Model United Nations club got off to a strong start this year. There has been a highly encouraging increase in membership from the junior years due to a mix of good advertising and the very successful Clubs' Day on the 7th of October. Every Friday after school the unique style of debate that is MUN takes place with members debating everything from the disarmament of space to the financing of third world economies. With our new but enthusiastic members, MUN is sure to have a good year in the College.



The first event of the year would normally be TERMUN, the Model UN conference held in Terenure College. This year due to the COVID-19 pandemic this staple of the MUN calendar was sadly missed, but it gives us more time to prepare and hone our skills for the upcoming conferences in November. The senior members of MUN (led by James Carroll) have already started work on preparing for our very own conference (ROCKMUN) in January - an event which we hope to host to a very high standard.

## Music and Drama

We are delighted to be back rehearsing Music and Drama in the College and there is light at the end of the tunnel for the return of live performances in front of an actual audience! As this is being written, we eagerly await and pray for the next 'Covid Update' from government to bring us good news.



The Sixth Year Family Mass was celebrated on Saturday, September 18th and four Sixth Year cantors and musicians ably led the music for this; Colum Corless, Colm Fagan, Matthew Kane and Mark Phelan. Ten of our Second-Year members of the Corless Choir sang superbly at the Second Year Family Mass on Sunday, October 17th. We can't wait for the rest of the choir to be able to join in again.

Our choirs and ensembles continue to rehearse, and all are making great progress. We have so many different groups so please don't be shy about getting involved. These include the Libermann Choir, Corless Choir, String Ensemble, Wind Ensemble, Brass Ensemble, Guitar Ensemble, Jazz Band, Ceoltóirí Carraige, Rockapella, Boarders' Ensemble and very soon, the College Orchestra shall return! If you would like to get involved, get in touch with any of the music teachers and they will be delighted to point you in the right direction.

This year's Senior Musical is *Jesus Christ Superstar* and rehearsals are well underway. There are over 100 students



# The Arts Cont'd



from Blackrock and Mount Anville involved in the cast, crew and band and tickets will go on sale after the midterm break. We hope to see you at our return to the Jubilee Hall for what promises to be a spectacular show. Be There!

## CADLC

It has been another great start to the year for the Creative Arts and Digital Learning Centre, with plenty of activities taking place. Dungeons and Dragons are still going strong and there's now a new cinema and book club.

## Literacy Day

The theme for this year was *Be a Discerning Reader!* The following events took place around Literacy Day to promote reading and literacy in College



## Author Visits

One of the school's favourite Dave Rudden, author of *Knights of the Borrowed Dark* once again gave a very engaging talk to 2nd years via Microsoft Teams. Some watched on the big screen in the CADLC and others watched from the classroom.



Dave Rudden



Denise Deegan

Denise Deegan gave a screen writing talk to two Fifth Year classes in the CADLC. Denise spoke about the 3-act structure of a screen play, the turning point of a film and the importance of characterisation. Denise showed clips from *saving Private Ryan* and *Kramer vs Kramer* and referenced *My Cousin Vinny*.

## Dungeons and Dragons Competition

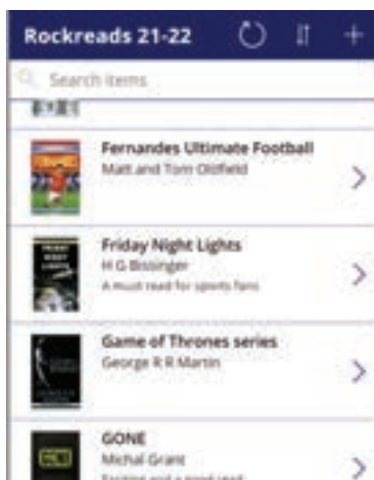
Literacy Day competition was an online Dungeons' and Dragons' quest, accessible via the CADLC website. Mr MacGinty was a warlock who gained power each time a student read a piece of false information. Students had to solve clues to retrieve 3 symbols that would allow them to gain access to the CADLC and the true fountain of knowledge. The 3 clues involved identifying misinformation, a chemical formula and solving a riddle. There were 212 entries and congratulations to Brian Carroll (2nd Year), Andrew Quinn (5th Year) and Ms Ní Choncheanainn who each won a One4All voucher.



Dungeons' and Dragons' Competition

## RockReads App 21-22.

100 books were added to the Rockreads App 21-22 with an excellent variety of recommendations that should suit all reading tastes including: biographies, sports books, historical fiction, murder mystery, non-fiction and more. The Rockreads App is available under the CADLC-Library section on [Whole School Teams](#) or can be accessed by downloading [Microsoft Power apps](#). Students can recommend a book any time by clicking the plus symbol on the App.



Rockreads App 21-22

## Reading Pledge

As part of Literacy Day, near to 70 students pledged to set some time a side each week to read. Reading for pleasure has many benefits: it can be relaxing and it can help with school work, creativity and vocabulary.

Students can take a reading pledge anytime by clicking on the Rockreads App.

## CADLC Committee

The CADLC Committee is doing great work to promote literacy and the use of the CADLC in the school. Thank you to chairperson Jamie Starr-Bourke (5th Year), Secretary, Frazer McGinn (5th Year) and student members: Conall Byrne (2nd Year), Cillian Staunton (2nd Year), Daniel Spencer (3rd Year), Fionn Whelan (3rd Year), Cian McAdam (4th Year), Sascha Gibney (4th Year) and Patrick Hayden (4th Year) for their contribution to the CADLC.

## Clubs Day

The Student Council organised a club day on 7th October on St Patrick's corridor, to encourage students to join the various clubs and committees in the school. An exhibition remained in the CADLC for the following 2 weeks for any student who may have missed club day. Students have the option to join Senior Debating, Dungeon's and Dragon's Club, Music and Drama, Green Schools, Student Wellbeing, Art Club, Chess Club, Model United Nations, Library Committee and Cinema and Book Club. Many of these clubs take place in the CADLC and students are welcome to ask Ms A. Dillon for details.



## Cinema and Book Club

A new cinema and book club has started in the CADLC. The club takes place every Monday morning from 8 to 8.30am. Students can enjoy toast as they watch clips from movies, see how things happen behind the scenes, talk about some books, and take part in various quizzes. So far students have engaged in themes like Claymation, Marvel and Dinosaurs.



Cinema and Book Club

## New Website

Ms A. Dillon created a new website for the Creative Arts and Digital Learning Centre. This can be accessed by going to <https://cadlc.blackrockcollege.com> or <https://library.blackrockcollege.com>. The website showcases the various aspects of the CADLC including arts and culture, educational resources, puzzles and reading promotion.

## Research Classes

Ms A Dillon gave research classes to 2nd Year history students for their CBAI, *The Past is my Place* and to TY students on how to access a family tree.

## Information and Media Literacy Module

Ms A. Dillon has introduced a one-week Information and Media Literacy Module that shows students how to identify the purpose of information, how to link an argument with evidence, different types of misinformation and conspiratorial thinking. This module will be offered on a weekly basis after midterm.



New Library Website.





## SciFest

Our Third Years students entered the TU Dublin Grangegorman fair. Students were asked to upload, to the SciFest website: (1) their project report book; (2) a short video (maximum 2 minutes); (3) any further supplementary material they wished to include. A panel of judges will judge

the projects based on the uploaded materials.

This year, we have four entrants representing Blackrock College. The following projects were entered;

*Effects of social media on Teenage Behaviour* - Ishaan Pandey

*Which hot beverage cools the fastest* - Conor McCarron

*The Colour of Memory* - Jason Marrow

*Testing the Effect of preservatives on Chips* – Hamid Azad and George Mc Gilton

All students were presented with a certificate of participation.

A special Congratulations to Conor McCarron, who was awarded The Institute of Physics Award for his project titled "Which Hot Beverage Cools the Fastest".

## Science Photography Competition

The theme for this year's Science Photography competition has been released, **"How Science helps us in our lives"**. All students and staff are encouraged to enter. Finalists' photographs will be displayed in the Digital Learning Centre window the week of Science Week, 8th to the 12th of November.

The winners will be announced on Friday 12th November.



Conor McCarron (Third Year) being presented with his award by Mr Alan MacGinty



Sixth year students, Cian Ryan, Max Simons and Conn O'Bryne completing their Quantitative analysis of plants within the school's grounds.



Andrew Jones and Cian O'Brien

## Kai Murtagh's Ecology project on The Effects of Humans on The Environment



## Ecology

A new device added to the Biology department this year was a night vision sensor camera. Sixth Year Biology classes set this up as part of their Ecology Field Studies. Caught on camera were a badger, foxes and squirrels. Badgers are the largest terrestrial carnivore in Ireland. It is a very good indicator species for the biodiversity in our campus. This would indicate that there must be a healthy food chain in place for them within the school grounds.



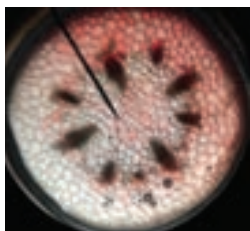
# Science Cont'd



## Fifth Year Microscopy

Images caught by Fifth-Year Biology students who prepared slides and examined them under the light microscope.

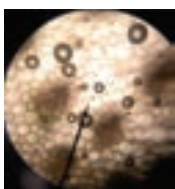
Transvers Section of a Dicot Stem. These images are of a Begonia.



Ciaran Patchell and Luke O'Regan



Cillian Rush and Conor Yaxley



Images caught by Richard McSweeney and Louis Dignam of a Monocot Stem. These images are of a Lily.

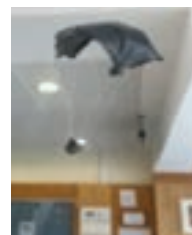
Picture of an onion stained with iodine by Finlay Makay.



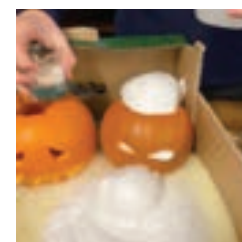
Daphnia - water flea picture taken by Sixth Years Daniel Hayes, Alex O'Meara and Conn O'Byrne

## Science Club

Science Club takes place in Junior Science 3 with Ms Katie Buckley and is open to all students. Mondays will be practical based and Wednesday will be geared towards the boys who want to compete in competitions such as a BT Young Scientist.



The Egg Drop Challenge



Foaming Pumpkins



Elephants' Toothpaste



Cian Hanley, Garreth Hughes and Mark Cox completing the 'Cleaning up Oil Spills' experiment

# Archives

After five years of devoting her energy, creativity, meticulous attention and resourcefulness to the college archives, Clare Foley departed in September. We wish her the very best of luck with her career and thank her for everything she has done during her time at Blackrock.



Blackrock College Teacup and Saucer with College Crest, c.1925

My name is Jessica Cunningham and I am delighted to take over the role of college archivist. Like many archivists, my route to the profession has been through History at university and, more recently, I qualified as an archivist with the University of Dundee. Being an archivist is essentially about managing a sub-set of the records produced by individuals, communities and organisations during their daily transactions and events. This sub-set of records is known as archives, and they are kept because they are evidence. Evidence takes numerous forms and functions, ranging from financial ledgers to documents of identity, from photographs to databases. Here in the archives at Blackrock College is has been a pleasure to discover the enormous volume of analogue and digital records that have been retained and which hold an incredibly comprehensive memory of this school since its foundation in 1860.

Despite the fire of 1984 which destroyed thousands of documents and photographs, the archive collection includes an array of ledgers, minute books, roll books, academic records, publications, diaries, letters,

photographs, albums, film footage, audio recordings, ephemeral material – invitations, programmes and tickets – and a multitude of artefacts ranging from rugby caps to teacups. The challenge for the archives in the coming years and decades is to continue to preserve this collection, provide access to it (including digital access) and to grow it as the digital output as the College continues to grow too. Like my archivist predecessors, Fr. Sean Farragher, Caroline Madden and Clare Foley, I welcome any requests to access this collection or any research queries. Please just drop me a line on [archives@blackrockcollege.com](mailto:archives@blackrockcollege.com).



A Collection of Programmes for the College's Annual Stage Musical, dating to 1934 – 1943.



Rock-Ed 'Talks to challenge, inspire and entertain'

On Thursday, 7th October, RockEd lived up to its tagline as six of our finest delivered talks with passion, poise and precision.

George Francis (6th Year) - "Difficulty: Why we do the things that don't seem worth it"

Gregory Quinn (4th Year) - "Social Media"

Conor Casey (5th Year) - "Sound"

Zach Egan Ruane (3rd Year) - "The Matrix and the Science of Simulation"

Ben Kiernan Glennon (5th Year) - "Searching for Irish"

Michael White (6th Year) - "The Little Things"

The standard quite simply was exceptional as each engaged with the appreciative audience as our MCs Senan McCloskey (TY) and James Carroll (6th Year) ensured that it ran seamlessly. Our guest speaker was David McWilliams (class of 1983) whose talk, "What James Joyce tells us about economics" was as informative as entertaining. The entrepreneur and the artist both live in the world of risk. In many ways, they share a nonconformist streak. Both step out of their comfort zone. He finished with a message for the boys that they were born with a voice, with something to say and urged them to have the confidence to



Our Masters of Ceremonies, Senan McCloskey (TY) and James Carroll (6th Year)



Past Pupil, David MacWilliams (Class of 1983)



Michael White, Sixth Year



Gregory Quinn, Fourth Year



George Francis, (Sixth Year)



Ben Kieran-Glennon and Conor Casey (Fifth Year)

say it. Rock-Ed is a celebration of that voice. It was a fantastic night, and we are deeply indebted to our committee of Ms Dee Kelly, Ms Maguire, Mr Maher, Mr Dermot Casey, Mr Rowan Manahan (class of 1982), Mr Tom Tracey (class of 1998) chaired by Ms Keara Hall.

## Reflection on RockEd.

"The opportunity given by RockEd to speak your mind on literally anything is an opportunity that most tend to underestimate. As I have learned over 3 years of RockEd, the only limits to the speeches are the time limit and your ability to make that speech interesting. With no other limitations, you can talk about anything from personal hobbies to an issue in the world that needs to be discussed or how cloning Nelson Mandela can bring back bionicles, there is no predicting what any talk will be about. This variety of topics and infinite possibilities is what kept bringing me back each year and it is something I will miss dearly, knowing a moment like this happening again may be a while away. This experience is unlike anything else and is absolutely worth the time and effort put in." George Francis (6th Year)

# Dungeons and Dragons Club



Based in the CADLC each Wednesday afternoon, D&D is a tabletop role playing game for those with active imaginations who enjoy collaborative storytelling. Players are under the guidance of a Dungeon Master (DM) who controls everything in the imaginary world and the events that happen within it. DM's assist the players in designing their characters (choosing their character's race, class and background, each with different skills and characteristics). They are responsible for the games' narrative flow, creating the scenarios and settings for the game.

In its second year, the club welcomed thirteen 2nd Years. This year the Club is focusing



on building friendships and students' confidence, encouraging teamwork and developing student imaginations. This year aspiring DM's are working alongside established DMs, Patrick Hayden (4th Yr), Daire Casey, Daniel Spencer and Fionn Whelan (3rd Yrs). In November we hope to welcome writers Dave Rudden and Graham Tugwell to host a training session on 'How to become a Dungeon Master' to educate members and help the club continue to expand.

Thanks to Ms Dillon in the CADLC for all her help and support.



Artwork by Dungeons & Dragons Cultural Ambassador Zach Egan Ruane (3rd Year)  
Sephiroth from Final Fantasy 7

# Guidance and Counselling

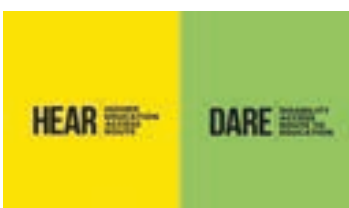


## CAO

This September we gave the 6th Years an online link to their Interest Assessment. The assessment is most helpful for boys who are unsure of the career area they are interested in. I encourage all the boys to complete the assessment. The assessment comprises of a specially designed questionnaire where the responses are analysed and matched with all the courses available, and the results compiled into a personalised workbook. The use of an interest test can significantly improve the quality of your son's decision-making and thus reduce the risk of selecting the wrong course. The CAO online application opens on November 5th. All 6th Years have received a CAO talk and a UCD college prospectus; all other prospectuses can be downloaded online from individual websites.

Students who register for the CAO between 5th November and 20th January will pay a reduced fee of €30. The regular fee of €45 applies to applications made between 20th of January and the 1st of February.

If any student has a learning disability or a medical condition it is important to tick the appropriate box on the CAO application form. The DARE tick box is for students with disabilities and the HEAR tick box is for students applying through disadvantage. Students can find out more regarding the DARE/HEAR scheme on [www.accesscollege.ie](http://www.accesscollege.ie). Students with Irish and Third Language exemptions must also take necessary action to notify the relevant Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) of their exemption(s) and to submit any supporting documentation the HEIs require. Please refer to the relevant individual HEI websites for further information.



Any student applying for a government grant must tick the SUSI Grant box. There is an "Eligibility Reckoner" on their website at [www.susi.ie](http://www.susi.ie), where you can check if you qualify for a full grant (Fees & Maintenance) or part grant (Fees only). It is worth checking, if you are entitled to Fees only, you will

not have to pay the registration fees. The SUSI tick box must be ticked if a

student is applying for a government grant next summer.

If you have any concerns relating to DARE please contact Ms. Emily Ryan or Ms. Natasha Drew.

Also on the CAO application is the Trinity Feasibility study for students who are considering History (TR003), Law (TR004) and Ancient and Medieval History and Culture (TR028). Trinity is looking to reward potential alongside academic ability, a key factor which is not always recognised in the current system. There is also a tick box for this option on the CAO. More information on this is available from the Trinity website.

Any student with a strong interest in TCD and taking Religion or Geography may be interested in the Biblical and/or the Geology exam organised by TCD at Easter. Exam results can be used for points' purposes in TCD.

## UCAS



A number of students are applying to UCAS this year to a variety of colleges including Cambridge and Oxford. These students will sit Cambridge entrance tests here at Blackrock where we have a registered centre, run by Ms. Drew. We also have a select few applying to Europe and the USA. Students

considering these areas need to begin their research early. There is a lot of preparation involved.

### CAO opens 5th November 2021

#### College Talks

Students were encouraged to attend the Higher Options online event in October.

November will bring the start of the College/University open days, TCD 6/11/21. UCD 13/11/21. TU Dublin 6/11/21.

Have a peaceful Midterm Break.



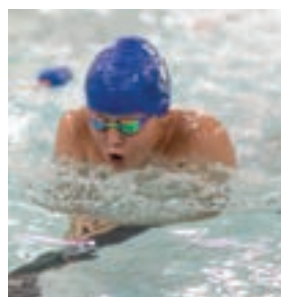
# Sport



## Rowing



Our Rowers on Blessington Lake



Blackrock College Swimming Gala



Blackrock Sailing Regatta



## Badminton

Badminton has made a massive comeback this year in popularity with over 35 students taking part. Every Tuesday and Wednesday students are showing a spectacular enthusiasm turning up to practice, both for the social side and to compete! Teams have been entered in both the UI6 and UI9 Dublin Badminton Schools' League. The players are very much looking forward to a very competitive season which will commence after the midterm. We welcome many new players, and we wish the boys every success in the badminton league.



Finn O'Neill (5th Year) placed 3rd overall at the Austria Worthersee Open Water Swim.

## SWIMMING

There have been no competitions in swimming in Ireland so far this year. One of our swimmers travelled to Austria in September to compete in the Austria Worthersee Open Water Swim. Finn O'Neill placed 3rd overall. The team has been training very hard and look forward to galas this season.

## CHESS

We welcome our new chess coach Hector Novak to Blackrock College Chess Club. Hector is an experienced coach with a wealth of knowledge. Each week is different! Between individual tasks, group tasks, worksheets, and demonstration boards there is something for everyone.

Hector recently competed in a club team championship in North Macedonia, and he shared some of his boards from the competition with the club on his demonstration board. This gave the members an opportunity to analyse the boards and to discuss different potential moves which they were very interested in. It is an innovative way to keep things interesting and fun.

Unfortunately, it is still unclear if Leinster School Chess Association will be running tournaments in the coming months, but we are looking forward to our annual Christmas Chess Tournament.

Chess Club is running every Tuesday and Thursday 4-5pm in Junior Science 2, new members are always welcome! Please email [cwyse@blackrockcollege.com](mailto:cwyse@blackrockcollege.com).

## GAA

### Karl Ashe Final

4th Year Day Boys...2-10 - 6th Year Day Boys...3-6

Congratulations to captain Mark Dempsey and the 4th Year team on winning the Karl Ashe Gaelic Football tournament. The 6th Years got off to a great start. However, the 4th Years continued to battle away throughout tapping over points to keep them in touch. The half time score was 2-3 to 0-6 to 6th years.

After numerous missed chances, the 4th Years finally got the goals they needed in the second half. This put them 5 ahead with four minutes to play. The 6th Years fought back, however it was too little too late and the 4th Years held on for a historic win. This is only the second time in the tournament the 4th Years have been triumphant in winning it.

I would like to thank Mr. O'Brien for organising the tournament and Deans Mr. Ryan and Mr O'Neill for organising the teams.



Mark Dempsey captain of the winning TY Team accepts the Karl Ashe Trophy from Mr MacGinty.



Karl Ashe Semi- final



Karl Ashe Semi- final



SCT V Terenure



JCT V Roscrea



U 14 15s 'Rock V Campbell College



## JCT

August was a busy period for the junior rugby squad as they trained and completed fixtures in preparation for the cup campaign. Tough wins over Castleknock 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. Mary's. In good conditions the JCT overcame a spirited and innovative Mary's team, with Blackrock running out eventual winners (32-19.) The win against Mary's was followed a week later with a quarter final Cup victory against Roscrea (57-14) in Donnybrook. After getting off to an excellent start, Roscrea 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. The JCT'S won the semi-final defeating a well-coached Terenure College (43 - 17). We salute the character and whole hearted endeavour that Jack Angulo and his Junior Cup Rugby Squad showed in the JCT Final. They gave their all, as they have done throughout the year. Great team spirit, courage, determination and tenacity were in evidence in all facets of the game and although the result did not go our way with Newbridge running out winners (19-15) this Blackrock junior team lived up to the finest traditions of the College.



Blackrock College JCT 2021

Back Row L-to-R: Patrick Moore, Conor Moloney, Donie Grehan, Daniel Begley, Harry Dixon & Mark Walsh

Middle Row L-to-R: Luke Hayes, Derry Moloney, Shane Van Zuydam, Aongus Curran, Sam Kilroy, Andrew Gillett, Tom Grant, Daniel Callaghan, Cian Dennehy Vazquez, Ethan Tracey, Maccara Cosgrave, Conor O'Shaughnessy, Seb Shortt, Niall Smyth, Brian O'Flaherty, Marcus O'Sullivan, Michael Walsh, James Clancy

Front Row L-to-R: Ernest O'Brien, Charlie Molony, Lochlann Maher, Charlie Woodcock, Jack Angulo, Thomas Butler, Donnacha McGuire, Hubie McCarthy, Jack Pollard, Johnny Gossan, Damian Moynihan, Thomas Carroll & Robert O'Reilly.

## SCT

The busy first term of senior rugby has been a welcome one after all the disturbance of the past eighteen months. Training sessions, trials, tens and then, finally, matches have all taken place over the past two months.

Training began back at the start of August for an extended squad of players, whilst separately a large collection of the playing group represented the College with distinction, winning the U18 and U19 interprovincial titles with Leinster. Congratulations to them.

# Sport Cont'd



The summer group played two early-season games against Gonzaga and Castleknock which were invaluable experiences and good contests. We came out on the wrong side of both results, but the commitment to the cause and to each other was clear to see.

Mid-September saw a reduction in the squad and two further opponents - Campbell College, Belfast and Terenure (firsts and seconds). Solid performances and victories, along with a lot of hard work behind the scenes from the group, puts us in a positive place leading into our two back-to-back games in the final week now, prior to a well-deserved midterm break.

It's great to be back out there.

## ATHLETICS

Having missed out on the chance to compete in the cross-country season in the last academic year, our runners were eager to get back into competition. In Deerpark, Mount Anville organised a race for 1st and 2nd year runners on Wednesday 13th October. The Blackrock College sent its 2nd year cross country team of 7 boys. The team consisted of; Callum Dee, Callum Downes, Cillian Staunton, Hugh Barry, Jamie Browne Lynch, Lorcan Lawless, and Tom Hayden. All boys performed well with several boys finishing in the top 10 of the field. Callum Downes was first home in 3rd, with Tom Hayden closely following in 5th. While this competition was among local schools, the strong performance by our cross-country team bodes well for future competition during the winter. If these results are anything to go by, our 2nd year cross country team should perform well among wider competitions in East Leinster and further races.



JCT FINAL  
'Rock V Newbridge



JCT FINAL  
'Rock V Newbridge

## Athletics - Throwing

The Blackrock College Athletics programme will kick off in April 2022, but this has not stopped many boys within the college throwing themselves into winter training for the year ahead. The downside to last year was missing out on the entire school's season but thankfully the sport was given a lift when it was revealed that the Tailteann Games interprovincial was to take place in September of this year.

Two of our athletes, Sami Bishti and Brian Walsh qualified to trial for the Leinster School's team in the Hammer Throw. As third years they would be competing against a number of fourth and fifth year students. In their first competition for Blackrock College, Sami took second place while Brian took third place in what was both personal best throws. This meant the boys qualified to compete for Leinster at the Tailteann Games the following week.

The Tailteann Games is a competition where the top three athletes for each province compete in each event across track and field. It is one of the oldest sporting events in Irish history where the best of Ireland's athletes under the age of 17 battle it out for a coveted Tailteann medal and a place on the Irish Schools team. Sami and Brian took great pride in competing for Leinster and exceeded expectations with two big personal best throws. Sami placed fourth with a throw of 46 meters while Brian took fifth with a throw of 41 meters. The boys have another two years to earn a spot on the Irish Schools team and their experience this year has really motivated them to improve over the coming months.

The attention for some of our athletes now turns to the Cross Country and Multi Events over the coming months.



Back row L to R: Tom Hayden, Hugh Barry, Callum Dee, Jamie Browne-Lynch  
Front row L to R: Lorcan Lawless, Cillian Staunton, Callum Downes

## The Blackrock Bees



### Update on the Bees

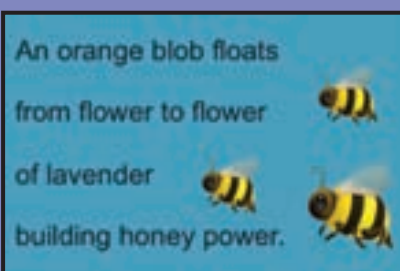
On Saturday September 4th 2021 Mr Niall Toolan, Mr Alan MacGinty and a selection of boarders decanted the honey from our second harvest into approximately 150 jars. The honey will be sold at Christmas and the proceeds will go to St Vincent De Paul. Niall Ringrose has installed feeder boxes for the hives to see them through the winter. This project has been a huge success due in no small way to the generosity of Niall Ringrose in giving of his time and expertise and the commitment of Niall Toolan who has embraced the project with infectious enthusiasm.



Liquid Gold!



**This poem , entitled 'B' was written by Tom Tracy ( Class of 1998 )**



### Reflection

As part of our new Strategic Plan , *Looking to the Future* ,2022-2027 , we will introduce a new imperative , " Be respectful" . The Bible succinctly tells all we need to know about respect.

So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.  
Matthew 7:12

