

# BLACKROCK COLLEGE NEWSLETTER



## February 2023

Dear Parents,

The Leman Concert, back in the National Concert Hall after a three-year absence, was an extraordinary showcase of the talent within the College. It provided a wonderfully uplifting experience for audience and performers alike which, in the words of our producers Mr Grumley-Traynor and Ms O'Kane, *"demonstrated the power of music to unite and bring everyone together. It transcends what can be put into words alone and creates a mood, an atmosphere, a feeling."*

**"A Mood, an Atmosphere, a Feeling"** encapsulates the Blackrock spirit, a milieu that encourages each boy to flourish. Our Feature Weeks underpin the fellowship and friendship essential to this. Catholic Schools Week, **"walking together in Faith and love"**, culminated in the 5th Year Family Mass, at which three questions were posed: What can I do to help others? What can others do to help me? How can I help myself?

'Helping others – seeking Help – Helping self' was the theme of our Wellbeing Week as the boys were encouraged to **Take Notice, to Connect, to Give, to Keep Learning, to Be Active**. Amongst the many highlights were the CPR 4 Schools programme, the daily gratitude journal, a House colours day, Karaoke, an Activity Pyramid, Chair Aerobics and a 30-day mindfulness challenge. **Ask you son about his Wellbeing Booklet. Its usefulness and value-added go way beyond one week and can benefit the whole family.**

Teenagers flourish if they are curious, interested and connected, be it to Dungeons and Dragons; the Chess, Art and Science clubs; Public Speaking, Debating and Book clubs; Board games in the CADLC, lunch in the refectory, table-tennis in the recreation area, and to our Academic, Games and Pastoral programmes.

It is important also to connect beyond the school gate. An extraordinary 260 delegates from 22 schools attended Rock MUN. Eight Transition Year boys participated in St. Joseph of Cluny's musical, 'School of Rock', which was outstanding. We connected with our sister school in Machakos with the Libermann Day mass via Zoom (2nd February) and through the immersion trip to Kenya by 34 TY boys and four staff. A further 12 boys travelled with Willow Wheelers. We connect with Holy Ghost Prep, Philadelphia who will visit after mid-term. We take notice of the global issue of climate change and sustainability. We connect with our College Union through the Past v Present Debate, Career Talks, Mock Interviews and the welcome presence of the President of the Union John O' Doherty (class of 1986) and his wife Nicola at College events.

**"Looking to the Future 2022-27"** lays emphasis on active citizenship, whereby our boys will confidently espouse Christian values, have the integrity, the inspiration and ingenuity to be an influence for good and to inconvenience themselves for others, i.e., to give of self without the expectation of return.

Finally, life is tough, and at different times tougher for some more than others. We must take notice. We must help one another. I am grateful to the many that tirelessly do so; to our teachers and support staff who set the standards; to our Parents on Committees who advise us; to our students who energise us; to our Community who pray for us and to our Board of Management who steer us. All contribute to the Mood, the Atmosphere, the Feeling.

May our boys, your sons continue to flourish and believe that they can make a difference in Blackrock and beyond, now and in the future.

In the words of poet Amanda Gorman:

"There is always light, if only we're brave enough to see it, brave enough to be it."

May they be the light.  
God Bless,

*Alan McCarty*



Franz Ezquerro (TY) who received a standing ovation for his magnificent rendition of Chopin's Fantasia-Impromptu at the Leman Concert in the National Concert Hall

# Message from the Deans



Term two is marked by the arrival of Spring and as the days brighten and the green shoots emerge, we encourage all students to maintain their momentum in relation to academic progress. As reinforced for many by the Parent-Teacher Meetings, the value of the weekly Application Cards and monthly Progress Cards cannot be underestimated. They provide clear indicators of the levels of overall effort and academic progress. Students are continually urged to be both proud and accountable and to share and discuss their cards at home. Setting short term academic goals that are realistic and attainable in a workspace that is setup to minimize distractions, highlights the relevance of the daily routine, feeds confidence and subsequent success.

Catholic Schools Week started on many a high note this year with the return of the Leman Festival Concert to the National Concert Hall. A wonderfully uplifting evening of variety and pop displayed just some of the immense talent that exists amongst the students and staff of the College. As always, we are thrilled that the pitches, courts, pool, and corridors are a hive of activity, participation, and competition on a daily basis; an ongoing display of the camaraderie and *esprit de corps* that defines and supports our College Ethos in so many ways. We support all students pursuing extra-curricular activities, the benefits of which are infinite.

Promoting personal wellbeing and the wellbeing of the whole College community was the focus of our recent Wellbeing Week, coordinated by the Student Wellbeing Committee. This fulfilling week offered an opportunity for all to build resilience by taking notice of surroundings, connecting, and giving to others in the simplest of ways whilst being open to learning something new and staying active. Many availed of the opportunity to learn the skill of CPR while all took time to log a daily Gratitude Journal and enjoy the vibrancy of lunch-time karaoke!

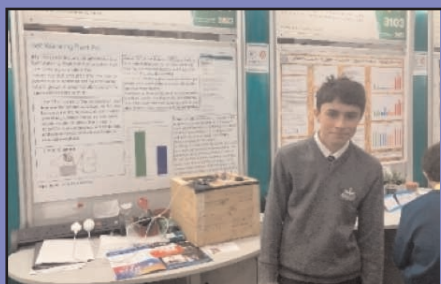
Once again, the highlight of Libermann Day (2nd February) this year was undoubtedly the online mass celebrated by Fr. John Wambu who, with the students from Holy Ghost School, Sultan Hamud in Kenya, joined us live online to celebrate our strong and rich connection. It was a powerful reinforcement of the strength of our shared Spiritan values and ethos. We wish the students and family members travelling to Kenya over the coming weeks with the Willow Wheelers the very best.

We are thankful this half-term, as always, for the support and appreciation of the parent body represented so conscientiously and adeptly by the various Year Group Parents' Committees whose commitment behind the scenes organising coffee mornings, social evenings, and the recent cake sale in aid of Machakos is much lauded. We are also thankful for the enthusiasm and positive engagement of the students this half-term and we look forward to the next half-term, encouraging all to stay connected and committed to all aspects of school life remembering as Einstein said *life is like riding a bicycle, to keep your balance you must keep moving*.

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 )

Friday 27th January marked the start of the **2023 RockMUN** conference when over 300 delegates from 22 schools across Dublin and Wicklow attended. We thank, in particular, the work of **6th Year** members of the organising Committee, Jamie Starr Bourke, Aaron Murtagh, Gavin Bowen O'Connor and Frazer McGinn in ensuring the success of this event.

Part 2 of the **TY** leadership course took place at the start of January with Mr. Denis Hevey. We have had two other sets of incredible **guest speakers** this term - John O'Shea gave a powerful talk on his work and the impact of Social Entrepreneurship. Collette and Niamh from St. Joseph's Shankill gave a hugely insightful talk into their work with those living with dementia.



Lochlan Gulliver with his self-watering plant pot project at the BTYS Exhibition

In January all our **Second Years** attended the **BT Young Scientist Exhibition** in the RDS where they had the opportunity to view many fantastic projects and one in particular by their peer in 2nd Year, **Lochlan Gulliver**: "Automatic Self Watering Plant Pot". Huge congratulations to Lochlan who won 2nd place in the individual project category for Ecological Sciences. A fantastic achievement!

# Message from the Deans Cont'd



## The 37th Leman Festival Concert

was held on Monday 23rd January in the National Concert Hall. 46 of the **Class of 2023** were involved in this wonderful celebration of musical talent in the College. In particular, we note the performances of soloists Ethan Leon-Ryan, Joseph Gibney, Sean Treacy and Finn O'Hara; the Boarder's Choir, Rockapella and the 6th Year Bands and our MCs Max Mullen and Eoghan Walsh.

The business end of the **rugby season** is now underway for **Third Years**, with the J4s, J3s and J2s leagues up and running and the JCT preparing for the opening round. It has been a great start for the teams. The J4s captained by Aidan Wehrley got off to a great start with a hard-fought win over St Mary's in the opening round, however next up away to St Wilson's Hospital JCT was always going to be tough, but they gave a valiant effort. Next up for J4s will be Clongowes. The J3s captained by Conor Barrett again put in an exceptional performance in their opening game against Welsey and although they suffered an agonising defeat away to Michael's, losing by 1 point. However, they were able to dust themselves down and responding well in victory St Gerard's. David Byrne and the J2s remain unbeaten in their league following a convincing win against Belvedere and a disciplined win over St Michael's. We wish Aidan, Conor and David all the best in their remaining fixtures and look forward to seeing Matthew Wyse and the J squad running out in Donnybrook against Kilkenny in the opening round of the JCT.

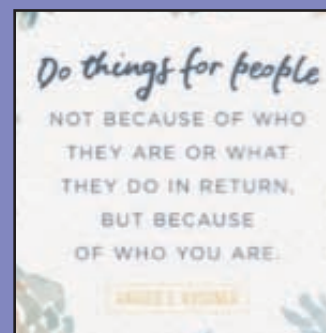
A theatre trip for English, a National Art Gallery Trip for Art, a Workshop for Chemistry and a French breakfast morning are just some of this half-term's highlights that prove a school is so much more than what happens exclusively in the classroom. Well done and thank you to all **Fifth-Year** students involved in these activities for representing yourselves, your families and the College so well.

Our **Wellbeing** Committee did outstanding work in preparation for our recent **Wellbeing Day**. Well done to our **Second Year** Wellbeing Committee members, **James Hall** and **Andrew Clancy**.

We commend and thank the **Fifth Years** members of the **Student Wellbeing Committee** for the success of Wellbeing Week. Thoughtful, meaningful, and practical, the week's activities armed students with the essential tools and guidance to take care and be aware of their own well-being and that of others. Gratitude journals, House Colours, lunch time karaoke and CPR training were just some of the highlights of this reflective week.

## Auxilium

A significant highlight of this term in Second Year was the launch of our Auxilium Programme. The Programme invites all Second Year boys to reach out to others, to help at home and in their wider communities, to make a positive difference in the world. This year the boys received an Auxilium Booklet to help them with their reflection and to provide some inspiration. We look forward to hearing about their service in action!



The **TY Evening Courses** have continued this term. Barista and Cookery classes are as popular as ever. Legal Studies and First Aid have continued as well. For the first time a group did their Coding Module during the school day. My thanks to Mr. O'Connell for facilitating the module.

As part of Wellbeing week, **Karaoke** was introduced by Ms Dillon to the CADLC for Tuesday Tunes and we thank **Tom Cherico (6th Year)** for his contribution to this very well-received event.

We thank our senior cheerleader **Jamie Rogan (6th Year)** and his wonderfully creative team for organising the **Whole School Assembly** in the Sports Hall on Thursday 26th January to mark the start of the SCT & JCT Cup campaigns. We also thank our guest Gus McCarthy (Class of 2022) and the 6th Year band 'The Definite Article' for their wonderful contribution to this occasion.



# Message from the Deans Cont'd



Congratulations to our **U16 badminton team** of Callum Dee, Callum Downes, Darragh McCarthy and Jamie O'Nualláin (**Third Year**) who won their division beating Mount Temple in the final held in the Leinster Badminton Centre. A fantastic result to complete for the team who now progress to the Leinster finals.



*TY's busily preparing for the Corporate Duck Race!*

Our annual TY Corporate Duck Race took place on Friday 3rd February. This year's event was in aid of Solèy Haiti ([www.soleyhaiti.org](http://www.soleyhaiti.org)) with 100% of the proceeds, €7,000, going towards the payment of the salaries of the staff of Bigue Community School in Northern Haiti for an entire academic year. The team did a fantastic job of putting together the promotional material and letters for the companies. Our sincere thanks to our kind and generous sponsors: QRE Real Estate Advisers, Corebuild, Willow Park 1st Year, Willow Park Junior School, UChoose Vending, Nolan Coaches, Living Language, The Old Punchbowl, EMS Copiers, Kukri, Tony Doyle Coaches, Rock Photography, Sodexo, Dublin Barista School, MV O'Halloran Ltd, Layden Group, Alchelyst, Money Jar, Paceprint, TJ O'Connor, Sports Care Medical, Gleesons and Johnston Print.

Congratulations to **Oliver Coffey (6th Year)** and the **SCT** squad on their encouraging victory in Donnybrook against Presentation College Bray on Monday 30th January in front of a huge attendance from the school. We wish the squad well as they prepare for the quarter-final of the competition after mid-term.

Our **Senior Soccer** team under the captaincy of **Daniel Bennett (6th Year)** have continued to make progress in the FAIS Leinster Cup. An exciting 4-3 home win against Castleknock Community College was followed up with a 2-1 away win against a fancied Naas CBS in the quarter-final. We wish the squad well for their semi-final encounter.

Well done to the boys who worked on the wide array of placements during **TY work experience week**, which no doubt will be hugely beneficial. On behalf of the boys, I am hugely grateful to all who have facilitated our students.

The **Leman Concert** was again a wonderful display of musical talent amongst the boys. Congratulations to the many **Second Year** boys who performed so well in the orchestra, the Leman Choir, the Corless Choir, Ceoltoiri Carraige and the Jazz Band. Superb participation!



*Andrew Kearney and Matthew Leamy at the Leman Concert*

Cheerleaders, chants, bunting, the blue and white and a strong Fifth Year representation - the Cup Season is up and running! We congratulate all **Fifth Years** involved in the **Senior Cup Campaign** on their first-round victory and good luck to all participants in all leagues across all sports, wishing you the very best of enjoyment and fulfilment.

On the weekend of 6th and 7th January, 14 members of the **Class of 2023** travelled with the **Commerce & Economics Society** to London. Visits to Financial Institutions and an FA Cup tie in Crystal Palace were highlights of a most enjoyable trip. Many thanks to Ms Reilly, Ms Ball and Mr Fitzsimons for organising this event.

On Tuesday 31st January Jonathan Hoffmann, Frazer McGinn and Ben Kieran-Glennon of the **Class of 2023** were members of the **Present Pupils Debating Team** who successfully proposed the motion that 'Cancel Culture is Toxic'. Ben was named best speaker on the night, and we thank the **Past Pupils Team** for the generous giving of their time to this event.



# Message from the Deans Cont'd



On 25th, 26th and 27th January 8 **Transition Year** students took part in an outstanding production of **School of Rock The Musical** in St. Joseph of Cluny. This show had absolutely everything and was top class. A huge thank you to Cluny for inviting us to be part of this and a very special thank you to Claudia O'Dwyer who went above and beyond in making sure students got the most out of the experience. Congratulations to our 8 TY boys Edward Wilson, Conor Blackburn, Mike Brady, Mark Sheerin, Shane Hamilton, Zack Egan-Ruane, Ben McElligott and Harrison Carr.



*The cast of 'School of Rock'*

## Dates for the Diary

Holy Ghost Prep Visit – 19th – 25th February  
Monday 20th Feb – Class Suspended  
Transition Year Tours – Tuesday 28th February  
TY Class Week – 27th Feb – 3rd March  
Environmental Awareness Activities - 27th Feb – 3rd March  
5k Rock Run – 4th March  
Easter Exams – 14th – 24th March

Jamie Browne Lynch and Josh Murphy (**Third Year**) have qualified to compete in the **International Competition for Young Debaters** to be held in Cambridge University in April. They progressed following success in the All-Ireland MACE held in January. A terrific achievement!

On Wednesday 8th February the annual **Machakos Cake Sale** took place on Saint Patrick's Corridor. Many thanks to Jane Horkan, Cliona Sherwin and the **6th Year Parents' Committee** who organised such a wide array of baked goodies that were thoroughly enjoyed by all members of the school community.

**RockMUN** which hosted almost 300 people from 22 schools, was a resounding success due in no small part to the leadership of Aran O'Flaherty and the **Fifth-Year** team. Congratulations to these and all the MUN students for coordinating such a tremendous event.

It is great to see so many **Second Years** committed to activities for Green Schools and we commend them on their high levels of participation at the recent **Day of Climate Action**.



*M Hooper, J. Ding, P. Matthews, A. Kearney, S. Maxwell, T. Murray and C O'Flannagain outside Leinster House during the Day of Climate Action*

**In other TY news**, Daniel Spencer certainly did us proud as his project made it to the main exhibition at the BT Young Scientist Exhibition in early January. Conor McFarland will soon travel to the NASA Space Academy in Alabama, USA after he was chosen from hundreds of applicants nationwide. Well done to all the TY boys involved with the SCT squad and their win in the first-round v Pres Bray. TY continues to be very well represented in the Senior Soccer Squad and we wish all involved well with the Leinster Cup Semi Final after midterm. Congratulations to Charlie Harty also on making the Dublin Minor Football squad, an outstanding achievement. A large number of TY Students will be appearing in the Rathdown School production of 'High School Musical' on March 22nd and 23rd. Auditions and rehearsals for our own Junior Musical will begin after midterm. The number of TY students involved in the Wednesday Soup Run, run by the Legion of Mary continues to grow and there can be little doubt of the impact this has had on the boys. Well done also to all TY students involved in the fantastic work of the Global Citizenship Committee, Green Schools Committee and Wellbeing Committee who do so much to strengthen who we are as a community.

# Message from the Deans Cont'd



Ahead of the **inter house chess competition** coming up after midterm, chess boards have been available to **Third Years** in the rec at lunch time. Already proving very popular with games gathering large groups of spectators, it is wonderful to see!

On Thursday 12th January, our first **6th Year** in-person **Parent-Teacher Meeting** was held since Covid restrictions were introduced. A very large crowd was in attendance with all present noting the value of 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.



Alex Savage in 1st Place at the Dublin Indoor Athletic Championships, Abbottstown

## Athletics

Huge congratulations to **Alex Savage (Second Year)** who had an outstanding outcome in three events at the Dublin Indoor Athletics Championships at Abbottstown, representing Cabinteely AC recently. He achieved gold in the Long Jump, silver in the Shot Putt and gold in the 60m. We wish Alex all the best in the forthcoming Nationals in Athlone Watering Plant Pot". Huge congratulations to Lochlan who won 2nd place in the individual project category for Ecological Sciences. A fantastic achievement!

**The Class of 2024** is supporting the many worthwhile conservation projects in Dublin Zoo by adopting a **RHINOCEROS**, classified as near threatened with rapidly depleting numbers. We are proud to welcome Jamal as honorary member of the Class of 2024.

Congratulations to our **Senior GAA** team under the captaincy of **Conor Ryan (6th Year)** who defeated Coláiste Choilm, Swords in the quarter final of their league. We wish them well against Chanel College in the semi-final.

We are so proud of the musical talent in **3rd Year** that was on display at the recent **Leman concert**. The orchestra featured Conn Andrews on saxophone, Jamie Brown Lynch on guitar, Tom Hayden on violin and Michael Wilson on trumpet. Our soloists Vincent Barrett, Jack Deegan McGovern, James Donohoe, Gavin McGrath and Kian Toralde did a fantastic rendition of A-Ha's Take on me. And of course, Rossa Clonan, Mark Connolly, Lorcan Golden, Finn Hamilton, David Healy, David Hopkins, Chien Kelleher, Ajay Mullany, Jack Murphy, Gearóid Nutley, Lúca Ó hAonghusa, Jack O'Connell and Alex Swan of the Corless choir. What talent and what an evening of entertainment!

A record number of **34 TY students** are about to take off to visit our sister school in **Machakos in Kenya**. Equally important to the trip itself has been the many preparatory workshops so kindly facilitated by our charity partner for the Rock Run, 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 boys' return which is an important part of the overall experience. We wish them along with all Willow Wheelers heading to Kenya a wonderful and enriching experience.

Our **Senior Basketball** squad marked the conclusion of this season with a wonderful 39 to 36 victory against a Past-Pupil team spanning the years 2017 to 2022. The winning basket came in over-time, courtesy of a three pointer from **Maitiu Heckmann (6th Year)**. Congratulations to all on a most competitive season spent in the Senior A division.

# Message from the Deans Cont'd



To mark the 2023 6th Nations Rugby Championship, each House has entered the **Class of 2023 fantasy league competition**. Many thanks to Harry Whelan for setting this event up, our 5th Inter-House event of the year.

By the time you will read this the third series of our **Transition Year Podcast, 'Rockcast'** will have released a number of fantastic, interesting episodes and after midterm episodes will continue on a weekly basis and are available to listen to by going to Spotify.com and searching 'Rockcast 2023'. The students have been superb in taking the skills gained through BCR and applying them in this new and exciting format. We have had varied topics in the episodes so far; 'Entertainment Retrospective' – looking at new and old cinema, 'The Lightning Colt' – an interview with Irish Under 20's captain and Colts coach Gus McCarthy, 'Wellbeing at Blackrock College' – a student discussion on the work of the committee and much more besides.



Mark Goss-Keogh, James Heenan, Edward Wilson, Leo Fowler, Henry Brown, Darragh O'Neill and Fionn Whelan (Fourth Years) working on Rockcast

The celebration of this year's Catholic Schools Week culminated with the **Fifth Year Family Mass**. It was wonderful to welcome Fifth Year families to the Chapel where the choir were in full voice as this joyful occasion was celebrated by Fr. Cormac O'Brolchain who encouraged all to take time for each other and to Never Give Up trying to do the right things in life.



Harry Brady and Jack Angulo at the Fifth Year Family Mass

A superb effort by our **Third Year intermediate cross country team** of Hugh Barry, Jamie Brown Lynch, Callum Downes, Tom Hayden, Adam Kennedy, Lorcan Lawless, Cillian Staunton, Jack Spain and Charlie White who finished first overall at the East Leinster and continue to train ahead of the Leinster Finals. Well done lads!

This year's **TY Rock Run** will take place in the grounds of the College on Saturday 4th March at 11am. The Sports Hall will be open from 10.15am to register for the race. It is €10 per student, €20 for an adult and a family (2 adults, 2 children) will be €40. **Please bring cash on the day to pay for your registration.** This year's event is in aid of Aidlink, whose connection with the College runs all the way back to its foundation here in the College in 1982. Aidlink do phenomenal work with some of the most vulnerable groups in Africa and you can read more about their work on [www.aidlink.ie](http://www.aidlink.ie).

## Second Year Dates for your Diary

Monday 20 February: Junior Cycle Cluster Day (Class suspended)  
Friday 10 March: Auxilium Programme Completion Date  
14 March – 24 March: House (Easter) Exams  
31 March: End of Second Term.



Max Raingill ( Second Year ) in the Leman Concert



# Message from the Deans Cont'd



T. Murray, J. Ding and C. O Flannagain ( Second Year )  
at the Urban Farm in Belvedere College



S Cox, T. Hughes, F. Horne, A. Crowley, B. Hughes and R Purcell ( Second Year ) and  
the BTYS Exhibition



ST. Murray, L. Gulliver and F. O'Brien (Second Year)  
at the BTYS Exhibition



John O'Shea addressing the TY students



Ernie O'Brien with his parents Tony and Suzanne  
at the Fifth Year Family Mass



Mark Walsh and his mom Catherine at the Fifth Year  
Family Mass



Greg Murphy and Aindriú Oates at the Fifth Year  
Family Mass



Edward Wilson TY singing 'Sway'  
Wellbeing Week Karaoke



Daniel Francis (5th Year) singing  
'Never going to give you up'.  
Wellbeing Week Karaoke



Mr Toolan singing 'Minnie the Moocher'



Patrick Hayden (5th Year) MCing for the Karaoke



## BT Young Scientist

From the 11th to the 14th of January the BT Young Scientist Exhibition took place in the RDS. Lochlan Gulliver (2nd Year) and Daniel Spencer (4th Year) were selected from thousands of other students to attend the exhibition. Daniel's project was titled 'Should We Have a No Shoe Rule in the Bedroom?' and Lochlan's project was titled 'Automatic Self Watering Plant Pot'. We were lucky enough that BT Young Scientist was held in person again this year which allowed all 2nd Year and 4th Year to go down on Thursday 12th January to show support and to experience the exhibition. The day was fantastic and started with a presentation from Mark Langtry, aka 'The Science Guy' who delivered a very interactive show which focused on sports science and the physics behind spin of a football. He was really engaging, and the students really enjoyed it. The exhibition itself was incredible. There was such talent on display with over five hundred projects. It was also a great opportunity for inspiration for 2nd Years for their upcoming SciFest projects and CBA's.

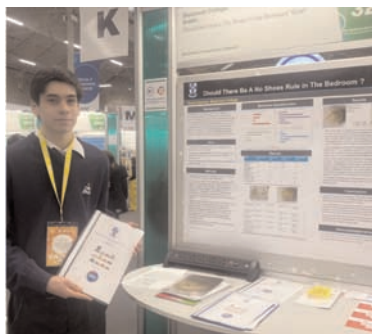
Congratulations to both Lochlan and Daniel for representing the school, and special congratulations to Lochlan, who got an award for 2nd place for individual project in the category of ecological science. An amazing achievement.



Lochlan's project which demonstrates a self-watering plant



Lochlan with his project after receiving his prize in the RDS



Daniel with his project in the RDS



Some of our students on stage with Mark Langtry in the RDS

## 2nd Year Science – Respiration

2nd Year students are currently studying respiration. Mrs. Shevlin's students started with a brief recap of our respiratory system and made their own lungs using balloons, plastic bottles and gloves. This model demonstrates how our lungs work when we exhale and inhale. It really highlights how our lungs increase and decrease in pressure.



Students in 28C Science making DIY lungs

Some students also got the opportunity to see lambs' lungs be inflated. This is a great learning opportunity for students to see first-hand the size and shape that real lungs take

## 3rd Year Electricity- Fuse boards

3rd Year Science are currently studying electricity and have now moved on to looking at electricity in the home. Ms. Wyse's Science class located their own fuse boards at home. The students were studying how fuse boards and fuses act as safety elements. Students also wired a plug and learned about the live, neutral and earth wire and the colours of each.



## 5th Year Chemistry – CCI workshop

On Wednesday 1st February 5th Year Chemistry students took part in a 'Current Chemistry Investigators' workshop. Here the students worked to solve a CSI type investigation by looking at concentration of electrolyte solutions (quantitative analysis) and then by focusing to see if there was a contaminant present in their sample (qualitative analysis). There was also a discussion at the end around careers in Chemistry which really gave students an insight to possible career pathways.



5th Year Chemistry students taking part in the Workshop



# Science Cont'd



## Science Club

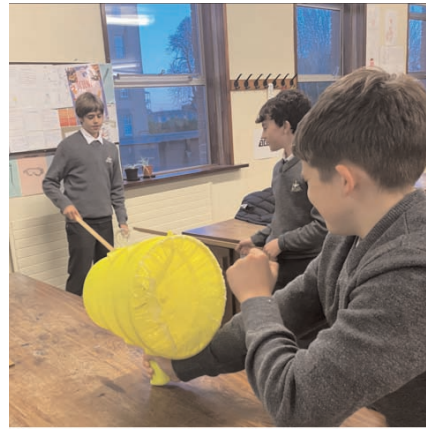
Science club have been doing a variety of activities over the past few weeks including using an air cannon to blow out candles, the rainbow flame test and investigating water convection currents.



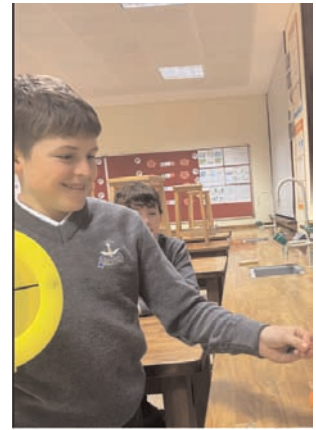
James O'Brien and Sean Mullane demonstrating convection currents



James O'Brien and Dan Moran demonstrating flame tests



Ryan Duffy, Marc Hooper and Dan Moran demonstrating the air cannon.



Ryan Duffy demonstrating flame tests

# Pastoral Care Programme



Returning to school on Thursday 5th of January, we prepared to celebrate the **Feast of the Epiphany** (the 12th Day of Christmas) on the Friday. It was a day filled with gratitude that we continue our academic year in person. Fr Paddy Dundon CSSp celebrated Mass in the College Chapel with all students and staff welcome to attend.



Gavin McNabb and his mom Aoife at the Fifth Year Family Mass

The last week in January was **Catholic Schools Week** with a different theme each day as we "walk together" (i) in Faith (Monday) with a display of student work in the CADLC; (ii) in Love (Tuesday) with a guided tour of the Blackrock Camino, a prayer walk around the grounds; (iii) to transform our world (Wednesday) with a focus on our Soup Run and support for the homeless; (iv) in Hope (Thursday) with a school-wide prayer moment via Teams; (v) in Adoration (Friday) with the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament; (vi) in Celebration (Saturday) as we finish with the 5th Year Family Mass celebrated by Fr Cormac O'Brolcháin CSSp. At the start of the **5th Year Mass**, Aran O'Flaherty posed 3 questions: What can I do to help others? What can others do to help me? How can I help myself? Fr O'Brolchain reminded us that we are a caring, giving, hopeful people. In the reading, St Paul to the Corinthians, we were told that there are three things that last: Faith, hope and love. And the greatest of these is love.



Cathal Geraghty and his parents at the Fifth Year Family Mass

February 2nd is a special day for the worldwide Spiritan Congregation when we celebrate **Venerable Francis Libermann**, the co-founder of the Spiritans. We remind ourselves that Blackrock is one part of the large Spiritan jigsaw and on this day we join with our sister school in Machakos in Kenya when, although thousands of miles apart, we come together to celebrate a Mass. Fr John Wambu was Chief Celebrant in Machakos and Mr MacGinty delivered an excellent uplifting homily reminding us that God is with us. The congregation in Blackrock was made up of some of the Transition Year Students.



Remembering  
Venerable  
Francis  
Libermann

## MORNING MASS

Join us for Morning Mass in the College Chapel any school day morning at 8.15am.

You are welcome either in person or online. 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.

## Blackrock College Prayer eBook

Download from Google, search ... "Blackrock College Prayer eBook"

<https://www.blackrockcollege.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Blackrock-College-Prayer-Book.pdf>

## Sacrament of Confirmation

For students wishing to be Confirmed in the Third Term, please register before the end of February with [fmadden@blackrockcollege.com](mailto:fmadden@blackrockcollege.com)



# Snapshot 1st Half Term 2023



Liam Norton and Jack Luff (TY)  
Senior Soccer V Past Pupils



U 14As V Gonzaga



J2nds V St Michael's



J2nds V Pres Cork



J2nds V Pres Cork



Hugo Burke (Second Year) and Charlie  
O'Connor (Third year) J2nds V Pres Cork



JCT V CBC Cork



Cormac Sheehan (TY)  
Senior Soccer V Temple Carrig



Jack Gormley (Fifth Year) and Cormac Sheehan (TY)  
Senior Soccer V Temple Carrig



Louis Dignam (Sixth Year) S2nds v Belvedere



Paddy Clancy (TY) and Derry Maloney (Fifth Year)  
S2nds v Belvedere



Jack James Kelly (Third Year)  
J3rds v St Gerards



# Snapshot 1st Half Term 2023



Max Sheridan (Third Year) J3rds v St Gerards



Blackrock J4ths V St Mary's



Blackrock J4ths V St Mary's



JCT V CBC Cork



Adam Ahern O'Connell (Third Year)  
Blackrock J4ths V St Mary's



Dominic Doyle (Third Year)  
Blackrock J4ths V St Mary's



Blackrock House 4ths v The High School.



Eamon Power BL (Class of 2011) at the Past V  
Present Pupils' Debate



Patrick Hayden ( 5th Year ) at the Past V Present Pupils' Debate



Frazer McGinn ( Sixth Year ) at the Past V Present  
Pupils' Debate



Jonathan Hoffman ( Sixth Year )  
at the Past V Present Pupils' Debate



Michael White (Valedictorian Class of 2022) at  
the Past V Present Pupils' Debate



# Snapshot 1st Half Term 2023



Eoin Martin BL (Class of 2005 ) at the Past V Present Pupils' Debate .



Conal O'Doherty (Class of 2009) at the Past V Present Pupils' Debate



Conor Tonge (6th Year), Donnacha McGuire ( 5th Year) and Michael Colreavy ( 6th Year )  
SCTV Pres Bray



Mark Walsh ( Fifth Year) ,Charlie Maloney, Conor Tonge and Oliver Coffey ( Sixth Year ) SCTV Pres Bray



JCTV Pres Cork



JCTV Pres Cork



JCTV Pres Cork



Charlie Moloney and his mom Gillian at the Fifth Year Family Mass.



Ronan O'Brien and his parents at the Fifth Year Family Mass.



Alex Kenny and his parents at the Fifth Year Family Mass.



Ben Ciaran- Glennon ( Sixth Year ) winner of the Best Speaker award at the Past V Present Pupils' Debate



JCTV Kilkenny



JCTV Kilkenny



JCTV Kilkenny



JCTV Kilkenny



# Snapshot 1st Half Term 2023



JCTV Kilkenny



JCTV Kilkenny



JCTV Kilkenny



JCTV CBC Cork



JCTV Kilkenny



JCTV Kilkenny

# Snapshot of the Leman Concert



The Adult Choir at the Leman Concert  
in the National Concert Hall



Rockapella at the Leman Concert in the National Concert Hall



The Jazz Band at the Leman Concert in the National Concert Hall



The Choir at the National Concert Hall



# Snapshot of the Leman Concert



Ceoltóirí Carraige at the Leman Concert in the National Concert Hall



Eoghan Walsh ( Sixth Year ) MC at the Leman Concert in the National Concert Hall



The Boarders' Choir at the Leman Concert in the National Concert Hall



Ethan Leon Ryan performing at the Leman Concert in the National Concert Hall



Patrick Cody( TY ) at the Leman Concert in the National Concert Hall



Senan McCloskey ( Sixth Year ) performing at the Leman Concert in the National Concert Hall



Joseph Gibney ( Sixth Year ) performing at the Leman Concert in the National Concert Hall



Finn O' Hara and Sean Tracey (soloists) , the Choirs and the Orchestra at the Leman Concert in the National Concert Hall



Violinists at the Leman Concert in the National Concert Hall



# Guidance and Counselling



CAO

**CAO** - 6th Year students have now made their CAO applications which were submitted by February 1st. 22 students submitted UCAS applications for UK Universities. Some students have already received conditional offers from the UK. A large selection of students are also applying to the USA and Europe this year.



HPAT  
IRELAND

**HPAT** – The exam is being held February this year. Our students had the opportunity to participate in HPAT preparation classes run by the school since last October. They have also taken a number of practice tests and good progress has been made. I would like to thank Robert Gallagher for all of his work facilitating these classes on Saturday mornings.



PLC  
COURSES  
IRELAND

**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 and more recently they are available to view on CAO. Applications for these courses are on a first come first served basis. Please apply online ASAP if you are considering this option.



CAREER  
FAIR

Blackrock College Career Fair was held on the 24th of January 2023. It was great to see all the colleges represented on the night and a selection of talks were also held on courses and options. The boys found it most useful and were very grateful for the number of recent past pupils, currently in college, who came to offer advice. This resource is extremely helpful to current 6th Years and we hope to continue this wonderful in-house resource for future career evenings.

**CVs & Interviews** – This year we held an online CV workshop in advance of the Mock interviews for 6th Years. Mr. Peter Cosgrove from Futurewise.ie - presented the workshop online and it was open to all 6th Years. The students found it highly engaging, informative with plenty of questions being asked from the students.

**The Mock Interviews** will be held on Wednesday 8th February. Each student must submit a Curriculum Vitae prior to their interview. It is a great night, with great energy. Each student will be given great encouragement and positive written feedback. This event, organised with the assistance of the Past Pupils Union & Mr. Maurice Tunney, has proved to be a very valuable learning experience in the past and we are hopeful for its continued success in the future.

Course search:  
[www.careersportal.ie](http://www.careersportal.ie)  
[www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie)  
[www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie)  
[www.accesscollege.ie](http://www.accesscollege.ie)

## Diary Dates

- DARE Section A: In the CAO account - Answer yes to question 1 and complete questions and personal statement and submit - 1st March 2023
- DARE Section B (school section) & Section C (Disability Report) submit by registered post to CAO before 15th March 2023
- DARE Section D - Filled in by school for Dyslexia without a Psych report.

• NUI exemptions – Ensure your CAO number is on your NUI forms. Submit documentation to, NUI, 49 Merrion Square, D2. (Forms available online from NUI)

*If you submitted the NUI before you registered your CAO, please contact NUI, Merrion Sq. to add your CAO number to it.*

- TCD Language waiver form – Submit documentation to TCD. (Form available online)
- HPAT Test February 17-25th, 2023.
- CAO Statement of application in May – ensure course codes are correct and that you meet matriculation for each course. *NUI Exemptions should also be visible on this statement.*

NONE OF THE ABOVE IS LINKED TO THE SCHOOL. WE DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO YOUR DARE, WAIVER FORMS OR CAO. THIS IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.

## Formula One



### Orbit Racing

Since Christmas we have made great strides in the competition. Communication with our wider community is of major importance to us, we have published our Christmas Newsletter on our website [www.orbitracing.ie](http://www.orbitracing.ie).

Our team was founded on the key principle "We each have our own strengths". Each member of our team brings their own qualities to the table. Together create an unstoppable force.

After more than 55 classes over the space of 2 months, we finally completed our FI in Schools Primary STEM Project. After pitching the idea to school management, we were invited to work with 108 students in 3rd Class spread over 4 classes,

On Friday the 9th of December we finally had our "Race Day". During this day the students got the chance to present their final presentations to our

Enterprise team while our Engineering Team was up in the school gym sending their cars down the 20m track. We are extremely proud that we introduced a younger generation to the FI in Schools challenge and maybe even ignited a love for STEM.



We held the race in the school gym. Conor and Jack acted as our Race Officials with Oliver acting as our MC for the day. Each team raced within their class with the winners and runners up continuing to a quarter and subsequently semi then grand final. During the races Darragh and Fiachra judged each team's presentation.

To keep up with our team please follow our socials,

Instagram: [racing\\_orbit](https://www.instagram.com/racing_orbit)

Twitter: [racing\\_orbit](https://twitter.com/racing_orbit)

Email: [info@orbitracing.ie](mailto:info@orbitracing.ie)

Website: [www.orbitracing.ie](http://www.orbitracing.ie)

Newsletter: [www.orbitracing.ie/newsletter](http://www.orbitracing.ie/newsletter)



Art Students on a visit to the National Art Gallery



Eamon Bradley (Fifth Year)



James Clancy (Fifth Year)



Oscar Egan (Fifth Year)



Fionn O' Donoghue (Fifth Year)



Tom Walsh (Sixth Year)

## Junior Debating

Blackrock College Junior Debaters competed against 150 students in the All-Ireland MACE on Saturday January 28th in UCD. Hosted by the Literary and Historical Society, this is Ireland's premier junior debating competition and the only national event for those students in their Junior Cycle of secondary school. It is the qualifying event for the **International Competition for Young Debaters** which will be held in **Cambridge University** in April 2023.

Team A: Josh Murphy & Jamie Browne Lynch (both 3rd Year)

Team B: Daniel Burns & John McCallig (both 2nd Year)

Team C: Thomas Murray & Matthew Leamy (both 2nd Year)

Round 1: This House Would Lower the Voting Age To 16.

Round 2: This House Believes That International Sporting Organisations (FIFA, Olympics etc) should not host events in countries that do not recognize LGBTQI+ Rights.

Round 3: This House Would Make It a Criminal Offence To Record Anyone Without Their Consent.

Team A: Josh Murphy and Jamie Browne Lynch (both 3rd Year) qualified to compete in the International Competition for Young Debaters in Cambridge University on April 30th, 2023.

Blackrock College also have 3 teams who have broken to compete in the Octo-Finals in February in UCD at the Junior Schools Debating Competition, hosted by the UCD Law Society and the UCD Literary and Historical Society: Josh Murphy & Jamie Browne Lynch (both 3rd Year), Thomas Murray & Daniel Burns (both 2nd Year) and Tom Hayden & Brian Carroll (both 3rd Year). There were over 300 debaters competing in this competition this year.



Josh Murphy & Jamie Browne Lynch (3rd Year) have both qualified to compete in ICYD, Cambridge



Junior Debaters competing at the All-Ireland MACE, January 28th Matthew Leamy, Thomas Murray, John McCallig, Daniel Burns (all 2nd Year), Jamie Browne Lynch and Josh Murphy (both 2nd Year)



Junior Debaters who have qualified to compete in the Octo-Finals in UCD - Tom Hayden (3rd Year), Thomas Murray, Daniel Burns (both 2nd Year), Josh Murphy, Jamie Browne Lynch and Brian Carroll (all 3rd Year)

## Senior English Debating

This term saw the staging of the Past Versus Present Pupils' Debate which took place on Tuesday, 31st January in the Creative Arts and Digital Learning Centre. This annual event is a highlight in the calendar of the Senior Debating Society.

This year, the Present Pupils were represented by Jonathan Hoffman, Frazer McGinn, Ben Kieran-Glennon (all 6th Year) and Patrick Hayden (5th Year). Michael White (Valedictorian, Class of 2022), Eamon Power BL (Class of 2011), Conal O'Doherty (Class of 2009) and Eoin Martin BL (Class of 2005) spoke on behalf of the Past Pupils. This year's motion focused on the ever-contentious issue of cancel culture, and whether or not it is toxic force within society today. Both sides of the house presented speeches that were informative and entertaining to listen to. Congratulations to the Present Pupils who were successful in defending the motion, and to Ben Kieran-Glennon who was awarded Best Speaker. We are glad to retain the shield for another year!

Many thanks to the Past Pupils, convened by Joshua Kieran-Glennon (Class of 2015), who gave willingly of their time and provided the Present Pupils with an excellent



# The Arts Cont'd



Mr John O'Doherty, President of the PPU (Class of 1986), Patrick Hayden (5th Year), Ben Kieran-Glennon, Frazer McGinn, Jonathan Hoffman, (all 6th Year) Winners of the Past V Present Pupils' Debate and Mr A. MacGinty (Principal)

opportunity to put their debating skills to the test. Thanks also to Mr Sheil, Ms Kelleher and Ms Pierce for adjudicating; Pearse Woods (Class of 2021) for chairing; and to Mr John O'Doherty (Class of 1986) President of Past Pupils' Union for representing the union on the night.



Pierce Woods (Class of 2021) who chaired the Past V Present Pupils' Debate



## Blackrock College

Creative Arts and Digital Learning Centre

### Mock Election

Mr Halpin's 2nd Year classes took part in a mock election in the library during two CSPE classes. Well-known authors were the election candidates and each group had to canvass for their authors by creating election posters, PowerPoint slides and/or videos. Students cast their votes using the proportional representation system and student election candidates counted them. This exercise was a fun way of learning about the election process, while learning about authors and their books.

### Library Classes

Mr A. Dillon continues to give classes to students to assist them with their CBAs in Latin, Geography, Business and Religion. Students learned a number of research skills including: what's the difference between Wikipedia and Britannica, how to identify good articles on Wikipedia, and understanding the difference in credibility between accessing named and anonymous resources. 6th year computer science students were taught what it means if an article is peer reviewed, how to use google operators and the importance of referencing their work.

### Wellbeing Display

In collaboration with the CADLC and Wellbeing committees a display is available to view in the glass boxes of St. Patrick's corridor. This display shows tips and activities

students can take part in to help their wellbeing, include some they can do in the library such as playing chess and reading.

### Reading Pledge

For day 1 of the 30 day mindfulness challenge, students were encouraged to take a reading pledge. Reading for pleasure has many advantages including doing better at school, relaxing and being able to sleep better.

### Lunch time Karaoke

As part of wellbeing week, the first Lunchtime Karaoke was held in the library and was a rip-roaring success. Over 100 students attended. Well done to the following students for their wonderful singing and entertainment:

Peter O'Connor, Patrick Cody, Darragh O'Neill (TY) - Careless Whisper, George Michael.

Edward Wilson (TY) - Mamma Mia, Abba; Sway, Michael Bublé and Count on Me, Bruno Mars

Daniel Francis (5th Year) - Never Going to Give you up, Rick Astley

Tom Cherico (6th Year) - Halo, Beyonce  
Hugh Foley and Conor Mahony (2nd Year) - Someone like you, Adele  
Zach Egan-Ruane (TY) - Enter Sandman, Metallica

and to Mr Toolan who stole the show with Minnie the Moocher, Cab Calloway



Tom Cherico (6th Year) singing at the Karaoke



Hugh Foley and Conor Mahony (2nd Year) singing at the Karaoke



Mr Toolan singing at the Karaoke



## BLACKROCK COLLEGE C.S.Sp.

### MUSIC & DRAMA

The Blackrock College Music and Drama Department, in its first year free from the limitations of Covid, is back in full swing and coming into the new year with a bang. From the success of the Senior Musical *Sweeney Todd* to the first Leman Concert since 2020, it's safe to say that things are back to the way they were. The work put in by students, parents, and faculty alike to all the events is immeasurable; with constant weekday and weekend rehearsals, these events are no mean feat. The Cluny TY Musical, *School of Rock*, was a resounding success for Transition Years - congrats to all involved. The Fifth Year Choir and instrumentalists performed wonderfully at the Fifth Year Family Mass. Even with the fantastic events of 2022, there are more on the horizon with the highly anticipated Junior Musical on the Jubilee Hall stage this May, with auditions coming soon. The Rathdown Transition Year musical of *High School Musical* is already in rehearsals and takes place in March. For those who were not able to attend, the following is the production programme note from the Leman Festival Concert:

*January blues and 'Rock back in the Concert Hall, celebrating the highlight of the season we have fondly coined 'Lemanuary'. 2020 was the last time we'd the pleasure of warbling and wailing, strumming and strutting our way across this fine venue. It's great to be back - absence makes the heart grow fonder and all that. In 2021 the Leman was live-streamed into people's homes - a technical triumph and a heart-warming antidote to the pox that was swirling around at the time. And last year, who could forget how, on a particularly miserable May evening, the rain clouds suddenly dispersed over the Quadrangle in the College just as parents, staff and students let rip on 'Beautiful Day'.*

*The last two Leman concerts have not only highlighted some of the stunning musical talent*

# The Arts Cont'd



in the College, they have also reflected the spirit of a Blackrock education – where resourcefulness, teamwork, and a 'can-do' attitude have been to the fore. From the wizardry of a filmed concert to the outdoor festival feel of a gig in the Quad, the Leman has taken the challenges of the last couple of years and remarkably moulded them into glorious opportunities for the students.

As we are here, present together in the Concert Hall on a Monday evening in January, it demonstrates the power of music to unite and bring everyone together. It transcends what can be put into words alone and creates a mood, an atmosphere, a feeling.

The Leman concert is always an uplifting experience, and we hope this year's 'Pop' theme will be just as inspirational. Two of our performers, Ethan Leon-Ryan and Finn O'Hara, are about to add their names to the popular canon this evening. Between choirs, orchestra, ensembles, bands, soloists and crew there are over two hundred and fifty people involved in this year's concert, but these two young men will be performing their own original compositions. It is our privilege to be able to offer them a platform to premiere their work.



John McCallig (Second Year) at the Leman Concert



Finn O'Hara (Sixth Year) at the Leman Concert



David Doyle (Sixth Year) at the Leman Concert



Harry Fitzpatrick (Sixth Year) at the Leman Concert



David Doyle (Sixth Year) at the Leman Concert

## Green Schools



It has been a fantastic few weeks for the Green Schools' Committee (GSC) and all of its members. Through various projects we are increasing awareness of environmental issues within the student body. This awareness develops into action on an individual and school wide level.

We had our second Climate Café of the year on Thursday 19th January. We encouraged students to bring along their own reusable, sustainable keep cup where they would be served hot chocolate and could sit down to a Green Schools' presentation. This Climate Café's theme was 'High Impact, Low Impact'. Edward Wilson (Chairman) and Darragh O'Neill (Secretary) gave a presentation on what actions students could take on a daily basis and which actions have the biggest impact and are the most sustainable. (For example, Cycling to School – High Impact, Public Transport – Lower Impact). Attendance and student engagement increased from the first Climate Café and we look forward to our next one during Environmental Awareness Week (Week commencing Monday 27th February).



Our second Climate Café

As part of our Global Citizenship Litter and Waste Flag the Green Schools' Committee along with senior management, maintenance and facilities are installing a new litter and waste management system across the school and campus. This is a big step towards reducing waste, increasing recycling, composting and responsible consumption across the school. The plan is for this new litter and waste management system to be up and running after Easter Break.

On the 13th of January, 11 students represented Blackrock College at a Climate Action Day in collaboration with Belvedere College. Students participated in 4 events over the course of the day;

1. A climate action gathering at the Dáil at lunchtime along with other regular activists who gather there every Friday.
2. A tour of Belvedere College Urban Farm in the afternoon which featured solar panels, vegetables and an observation beehive.
3. A screening of the film *The Letter*. "The Letter," is a film by Laudato Si' Movement that told the story of several leaders, committed to ecological and social causes who travel to Rome to discuss the encyclical letter *Laudato Si'* with Pope Francis.
4. A panel discussion after the film with Eamon Ryan TD, Minister for Transport, Environment, Climate and Communications plus Lorna Gold who is featured in the film and other young climate activists.

We thoroughly enjoyed the event and we're extremely happy with the vertical links

created between the students in Transition Year and our new committee members in Second Year.



A few pictures from the Climate Action Day at Belvedere College

We would like to thank Mr O'Reilly for accompanying us during the day and to Padraig Swan, Director of Faith and Service Programme of Belvedere College for inviting us over.

Our next Environmental Awareness Week is commencing on Monday 27th February. The Committee are beginning to work on planning individual daily themes and activities. EAW is a big chance for the Committee to increase their presence and recruit new members.

As part of this year's Auxilium Programme, 2nd Years can now also take sustainable action to earn merit. This is an idea pushed and promoted by the GSC. We believe that from their first year in Blackrock College students should be encouraged to have a responsible, conscious attitude towards our shared environment.





## BLACKROCK COLLEGE WELL BEING

*Wellbeing for the Body, Soul and Mind*

**Wellbeing Week**  
**January 30th – February 3rd**

The Student Wellbeing Committee have been very busy this term with Wellbeing Week creating a buzz in the College. The booklets, distributed to all at check-in at the start of the week helped us to practise gratitude journaling, to learn about the languages spoken in the College, to engage in some mindful colouring and to embrace the art of Chair-obics. Undoubtedly, one of the highlights of the week was Karaoke, held in the CADLC at lunchtime on Tuesday. Staff and students thoroughly embraced the challenge of connecting us all through music. The practical life-saving skill of administering CPR was taught to all over the week and it is wonderful to know that so many in the College know how to perform CPR as well as knowing where the defibrillators are in the school. We learn the skill in the hope that we will never have to use it. A huge thanks to our teacher facilitators Ms. Shevlin, Mr. Grumley-Traynor, Mr. Grant, Mr. O'Brien, Ms. Ryan, Ms. Gutierrez-Rodriguez, Mr. Smyth, Mr. O'Reilly, Mr. Keena and Mr. Orrock. And to all in the College, staff and students, without whom Wellbeing Week wouldn't happen.



## RockMUN



ROCKMUN 2023 began on Friday the 27th of January, when Blackrock College opened our doors to over 300 people from 22 schools across Dublin and Wicklow, 14 guest chairs and 38 Blackrock students over the period of 2 days. We were delighted to have former Irish diplomat, Mary Whelan, and Deputy Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Yaron Oppenheimer, deliver speeches on key topics relating to life as a diplomat.

We would like to thank all in maintenance & facilities, catering, finance, housekeeping and our own staff and head chairs for their incredible work both in the lead up to, and on the days of, the conference.

We also recognise the outstanding work of the organising committee made up of Aran O'Flaherty (Fifth Year), Jamie Starr Bourke, Aaron Murtagh, Gavin Bowen-O'Connor (all Sixth Year) which was led by Frazer McGinn (Sixth Year).

Most importantly, we thank Ms. Fitzsimons, our MUN Director, for the resounding support she has provided MUN in Blackrock College especially in providing exceptional guidance to the students and we hope it will long continue.

We're looking forward to seeing what ROCKMUN 2024 will bring us, and we hope we can build on the success of this conference.





# RockMUN Cont'd





## Soccer

The Senior Soccer team have had a busy period since our return from the Christmas break. A last 16 home fixture against Castleknock CC started a run of games that has seen the team qualify for the semi-finals of the FAI Schools, Dr. Tony O'Neill, Leinster Cup. In between the last 16 game and the final against Naas CBS, the team played a friendly against Blackrock College AFC 2nds, a run-out that primed the team for an excellent win down in Naas. The team are now preparing for their final against Coláiste na hInse, Bettystown, which takes place on February 21st.



David Mac Hugh (6th Year) celebrates scoring the winning goal against Naas CBS



Daniel Bennet (Sixth Year) Senior Soccer V Temple Carrig

## Basketball

### UNDER 16

#### BLACKROCK COLLEGE 31 ADAMSTOWN CC 65

The Second-Year league began at home for Blackrock against a competitive Coláiste Eanna. Despite working hard against their opponents, 'Rock still had a first game loss of 24-37. The next round in the pool stage saw Adamstown CC come to Blackrock. A very physical Adamstown side played a tough defence against 'Rock, while on offence they were quick to win over rebounds.

'Rock had a challenging start to the game with the first quarter ending in a score of 7-14 to Adamstown. The 'Rock side tried to create momentum on offence, while defensively they attempted to shut down their opponent's drives to the basket. However, the challenge proved very difficult as 'Rock went into the final quarter with a score of 18-49. Despite the wide score gap, the team still put in every effort to keep the pressure on, scoring their highest number of baskets in the fourth quarter. Even after a tough game, the 'Rock players can be proud of their drive in continuing to play as competitively as possible.

Leading the offensive charge were Captain Peter Lee (25 points) and Vice-Captain Santiago Franza (4 points). Defensively, the team worked to keep pressure on a well-organised Adamstown side. Despite a difficult game, the team showed improvement in working together and creating options on offence. Up next is the final pool stage game at home against Templeogue College.

### UNDER 19s

#### PAST V PRESENT SENIOR BASKETBALL MATCH

##### PRESENT 39 PAST 36

We had an incredibly exciting Past v Present match this past week in the Sports Hall. The 'Present' team looked like a team that were naturally well used to playing with each other and that team chemistry allowed them to take control in the early stages and they deservedly led 26-14 as we reached the halfway point. The experience of the 'Past' team began to tell as they came back to win the third quarter by 8 to trail by just 4 coming into the final quarter. This match certainly did not lack any competitive spirit as a tense final quarter was played out. With just seconds left a three point shot from 'Past' levelled the scores and we went to overtime. In overtime the sides swapped baskets before an incredible 3 point shot from Maitiu Heckmann saw the present run out winners in a superb match played in a wonderful spirit.

My sincere thanks to the past team of Tom Dowdall (Class of 2017), Barry O'Sullivan (Class of 2018), Roberto Brusasca and Duran Osan (Class of 2019), Jimmy Gilligan, Murray Baker, Paddy Morris and Ronin O'Halloran (Class of 2022) for their contribution to a fantastic occasion.



## Athletics

### Blackrock College East-Leinster Race

Starting off the cross-country season for the new year, Blackrock College entered the east Leinster races, on the 25th of January in Phoenix Park.

These races consisted of three categories junior boys (2500 meters), intermediate boys (4000 meters), and lastly senior boys (5000 meters). Each race had about 100-120 athletes taking part, from schools across Dublin.

The day began with light showers for the Junior Boys, who had to run 2500m. In this event, the following students were positioned: Matthew O'Donnell (1st Year), Cameron Fallon (2nd Year, 14th), Casey Graham (2nd Year), Peter Lee (2nd Year), Harry Malone (1st Year), Andrew Clancy (2nd Year), Eoin Fitzpatrick (2nd Year), Jose Carlos de la Cuesta (2nd Year), Conor Murphy (1st Year), James Kelly (1st Year), William Hegarty (1st Year), Theo Burke-Kennedy (2nd Year) and Calum Burke (2nd Year). Athletes from both Blackrock 2nd Year and Willow Park 1st Year competed in this event.

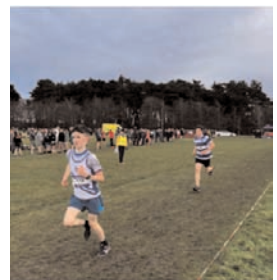


Juniors (L-R) Andrew Clancy, Matthew O'Donnell and Calum Burke running strongly in their 2500m race.

Blackrock's intermediate team placed 1st overall in their race, with a very strong performances from individuals such as Charlie White (3rd Year), Jack Spain (3rd year), Callum Downes (3rd year), and James Foot (2nd Year) followed by James Neary (4th Year), Cillian Staunton (2nd year), Padraig Matthews (2nd Year), Adam Kennedy (3rd Year), Tom Hayden (3rd Year), Hugh Barry, (3rd Year), Jamie Brown-lynn (3rd Year) and Lorcan Lawless (3rd Year).



(Intermediate team (L-R back)- Jamie Brown-Lynch, Adam Kennedy, Tom Hayden, Charlie White, Callum Downes, Jack Spain, James Neary, (L-R front) Hugh Barry, Lorcan Lawless, and Cillian Staunton.



Callum Downes and Jack Spain running very strongly over 4000m.

The Senior Boys, who had just one representative from Blackrock, ran 5000 meters, the longest race of the day. Jack McGlone (6th Year) - Captain of athletics and cross country- finished in 11th place. An excellent result considering he is an 800m specialist and this event was longer than he is used to. The competition had an impressive set of results with individuals qualifying from all age groups, and teams qualifying from Junior and Intermediate. 17 Blackrock athletes will compete in the Leinster Finals on February 8th.



Jack McGlone finishing the 5000 meters senior race in 11th place

## SCT

The return after the Christmas break is always an exciting time for the cup teams. Having played and trained right up to Christmas, the 28th December is an early return for the players, but very much worth it and necessary.

Good wins against CBC Cork (18-15) and Methody (39-3) on the road, were followed by a final friendly fixture win against Kilkenny (48-5) down in Tullow on a cold, blustery day. Another pre-season complete and Pres Bray awaiting.

This is a very talented Pres Bray side with no fewer than three Ireland underage internationals. A team that had beaten the 6th year group when u13As back in Willow. They had the squad's utmost respect and we trained and prepared exactly as required. It translated well on the day. With an excellent crowd behind the senior team they showed tremendous power and finishing ability in scoring seven tries. Pres Bray scored a well-deserved try of their own near the end of the first half and it was the very least their qualities deserved. They could have got more at different stages of the game, but Blackrock snuffed out opportunities that Pres forged in the wide



channels with excellent jackal work. Anyone who watched the game would have recognised the skill and style with which they played the game and the resilience they showed as the scoreboard cruelly moved away from them in 7's, with captain Oliver Coffey and then vice captain Harry Whelan converting all the kicks that followed each try. Scoreboards can be very unforgiving in rugby and don't always tell the whole story.

For the Blackrock senior team there is much to improve and time to do it. But in the meantime, a huge well done must be afforded to the young men who performed so well in the cauldron of Leinster Schools cup rugby, with this being the first experience of such an occasion for many of them. Congratulations gentlemen!



Oliver Coffey (Sixth Year) Captain  
SCTV Pres Bray



Tom Briggs and XXXX  
SCTV Pres Bray



Blackrock J4ths V St Mary's



Colts V Clongowes



House Fiftys V St Gerard's



Blackrock House 4ths v The High  
School



Blackrock UI4B v Temple Carrig.



Blackrock S2nds V Belvedere

## JCT

The Junior squad continued to work hard over the Christmas period, with plenty of training and challenging matches keeping them grounded. Tough wins over CBC Cork, Methody and Pres Cork have 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 Kilkenny College. Congratulations to Matthew Wyse and the JCT on their victory over a resilient Kilkenny College: Blackrock 22 – Kilkenny 5.

## Chess

It has been a quiet term for Chess Club. Our students are busy practicing with our coach Hector, and we have had some new members join from 2nd Year. We hope to

play High School, St. Benildus College and Gonzaga after the mid-term break. Chess club is every Tuesday and Thursday JS2.

## Rowing

Blackrock College Rowing Club members have been training with great enthusiasm over the past few weeks in preparation for the upcoming Regatta season. Training has included high intensity erg sessions to support with qualifying for the National Indoor Championships and strength endurance weight training. Training has also included on the water sessions each weekend which take place on Saturday and Sunday mornings on the river Liffey.

Blackrock College Committee members are currently working on a proposal for an International Rowing Training Camp for over the Easter period.

## Dates for your Diary:

4th February 2023 National Indoor Rowing Championships

11th March 2023 Dublin Head of the River, River Liffey, Dublin

1st April 2023 Neptune Regatta, Islandbridge, Dublin



The recent annual Irish Indoor Rowing Championships in Limerick was a showcase of the sport's talent and passion, attracting hundreds of rowers from across Ireland. Our school was represented by 5 of its strongest rowers: Harry Pierce, Matthew Neary, Daniel Courtney, Jon-Luc Elias and Charlie Schmitt, a group of determined rowers who were eager to showcase their skills and compete against the best in Ireland.

Despite tough competition, our rowers gave it their all and displayed great camaraderie, cheering each other on throughout the event. They pushed themselves to the limit and demonstrated the dedication and discipline required to succeed in rowing. Although they did not come away with any medals, we are extremely proud of their efforts and the progress they made during the competition.

J18

Harry Pierce - 5th

J16

Matthew Neary - 8th

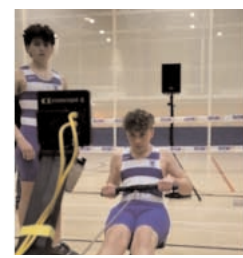
Daniel Courtney - 23rd

J15

James Barron - 4th

Jon-Luc Elias - 11th

Charlie Schmitt - 15th

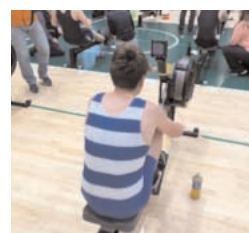


Charlie Schmitt competing  
in J15, 1km

J14

Jon-Luc Elias - 5th

Charlie Schmitt - 16th



Matthew Neary competing  
in J16, 2km

The Indoor Rowing Championships was a great opportunity for our rowers to gain valuable experience. The support and encouragement from the school was appreciated, and we would like to thank their Rowing coach Alex Brophy and everyone who made the trip to Limerick to support them.



## Badminton

Congratulations to Captain Callum Downes and his teammates Jamie Ó Nualláin, Callum Dee and Darragh McCarthy (all Third Year ) on an excellent clean sweep win over Mount Temple B in the Leinster Badminton Centre, Terenure on Thursday last. Blackrock led from the start with a convincing win with Callum Downes 30-20 in the opening singles game. Followed on, with a fine display of skills by Jamie Ó Nualláin who played his best game of the tournament. Despite Jamie tailing his opponent 7-2 after five minutes, he remained calm and stayed focused throughout his game and deservingly came out on top with a win of 30-26. Furthermore, Callum Dee stepped up to the mark with a convincing win of 30-17. Lastly, Darragh McCarthy brought home the fourth win 30-20. At this stage the boys had won 4-0 in the singles. Blackrock did not take their foot off the pedal; they kept their focus with the aim of bringing home the trophy. This encouraged the boys to win in both of their double games. Callum Downes and Jamie Ó Nualláin, Callum Dee and Darragh McCarthy all worked well in unity, clearly enjoying their play and winning both of their double games ending in a final score of 6-0 to Blackrock College. An excellent display of talent by all players in this final. This extends their undefeated run in the competition.

The boys will now go on and compete in the Leinster Competition on March 2nd . We wish them every success in these games which will be held in Baldoyle Badminton Centre, Co Dublin.

Well done lads!



Ms Ní Shíocháin, Darragh McCarthy, Jamie Ó Nualláin, Callum Dee and Lynnn McCrave DBS Chairperson



Darragh McCarthy playing in his single badminton game.

## U14 SEMI-FINAL

Well done to our U14 badminton team who have reached the Dublin School badminton Semi-Final. They will play away in Baldoyle Badminton Centre on Thursday next. We wish the team of Adrian Ho, Aidan Ho, Cian Manning, Mark Sukhodolov and Carlos Bellon Gonzalez (sub)(All Second Years) the very best of luck in this game.



Team and Badminton supporters. Back row, Left to Right: Ms Ní Shíocháin, Scott Downes, Oscar Deally, Darragh McCarthy, Jamie Ó Nualláin, Callum Downes, Callum Dee, David Hopkins. Front row, Left to Right: Nico Perez Rodrigues, James Donohoe, Mark Connolly, Jack Casey and Chenlei Wang.



Darragh McCarthy and Callum Dee in their double pairing game. (3rd Year)

# Reflection

“The most profound question I believe we must ask when walking through a storm, which we all do, whether we are president or a street sweeper, is: ‘What have you come to teach me? What is this situation pushing me to change in my life?’ Pause around that, take that information, be with it in the silence. The answer will come.”

—SUSAN L. TAYLOR, American journalist

