



# *Blackrock College Bulletin*

*2024 – 2025 Bulletin No. 13*

## **Deans' Report**

**T**o say this has been a busy, action-packed term would be an understatement!

The **Easter Exams** have come and gone, and in many ways so much of the learning happens in that vital time period post exams. We urge students across all the year groups to look beyond the number in terms of the result they receive in any given subject. Identify the strengths and what represents affirmation of a job well done. Equally identify the areas for improvement and seek guidance from your subject teacher where required.

Our **U-14's Rugby season** has drawn to the close and we congratulate all teams on an excellent season. Over the space of two days in Donnybrook there was a fantastic sense of community as our **Junior 4ths, 3rds, 2nds and House 4ths and 3rds** all contested finals. You will read about it elsewhere in the bulletin, but we are very proud of how all teams represented the college.

Our Junior Cycle Art Projects have been submitted and Music Practicals have taken place. Our 6<sup>th</sup> Year Music and Art students have completed their Leaving Cert Practical, there has been coursework submissions in Computer Science, Applied Maths, Construction Studies and Exam PE with of course the state orals coming up in the first week of the Easter break. We wish our 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Year students well with their ongoing preparations for the state exams in June.

Rock Run 2025 organised by our TY students was superb and, along with the **Sunrise Walk**, were two wonderful gatherings of our school community. The **Junior Musical 'Room to Improve'** was fantastic entertainment. We had our **TY trip to Philadelphia** and our ongoing exchange with Holy Ghost Prep. The school has never been more colourful than it was during **Seachtain na Gaeilge!** The **Easter Egg drive** in 5<sup>th</sup> Year was hugely successful and congratulations to all of 5<sup>th</sup> Year. The arrival of the sunshine was suitably matched by the start of our summer extra-curricular programme, and we would encourage all to get involved as we move into the third term.

Finally, we wish all in the Blackrock College community a happy, peaceful and restful Easter and we look forward to welcoming all students back after the break.



## Kenyan Ambassador's Visit

**B**lackrock College was delighted to welcome Madame Ambassador Tabu Irina on Wednesday April 10<sup>th</sup>. The event, organised by Ms Dara Byrne, began with beautiful renditions of *Anthem* by Chess and *Can it be?* performed by the 5<sup>th</sup> Year choir and a magnificent solo *Grace* sung by Gavin Patick McGrath. Thank you Mr Grumley Traynor.

Ms Markey (Principal), Madame Ambassador Tabu Irina and Aidan Corless (Class of 1979) spoke at a reception held in the CADLC. Daniel Patterson (Fifth Year) and Alex Doorly (Sixth Year) spoke about the long-lasting impact of their TY trips to Kenya. The occasion was enriching for all in attendance and a further solidification of our strong ties and bond with Kenya.





## Student Digital Leaders Drop in Clinic



**I**n a new initiative 2<sup>nd</sup> Yr Student Digital Leaders Eli Cassidy, Timo Prendergast and Sam Hearty ran a drop-in clinic in the Rec Area at lunchtime.

Dealing with any queries that their peers had with their devices they were ably assisted by 6<sup>th</sup> Yrs Darragh O'Neill and Ben McElligott.

Well done to all on supporting their peers and raising the profile of our Student Digital Leaders.

## Digital Technology Support at Kilmacud Parish Centre



**W**eekly, a number of TY students visit Kilmacud Parish Centre to support parishioners with developing their digital technologies e.g. using WhatsApp, video-calling, emails, booking tickets online, processing documents.

Well done to each of the students for participating in this initiative and supporting the local community. Parishioners have thoroughly enjoyed engaging with the students on a weekly basis.





## Junior Debating

Four of our junior debaters qualified to compete in the **semi-finals of the UCD 'Junior Schools Debating Competition.'** Tate Tomkin Beddy, Ross Murphy, Daniel Goss and Dan Hayden debated the motion: *'This House, as a pop star, would release music that addresses social justice issues'* in UCD on March 26<sup>th</sup>.

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, Dan Hayden opposed the motion *'This House would livestream criminal trials of high public interest'* and secured a place in the

final round on Wednesday April 9<sup>th</sup>. He proposed the motion *'This House opposes the use of Irish as a political tool in Ireland and Northern Ireland.'* Dan was awarded runner-up best individual best speaker in the final.

Lastly, we congratulate the following debaters who qualified to compete in the **National MACE** on April 5<sup>th</sup>: Tate Tomkin Beddy, Ross Murphy, Dan Hayden, Daire Moran, Daniel Goss, Paddy English and Arlo Liddy.

Of over 200 students who competed in this competition, 64 made it to the final on April 5<sup>th</sup> (seven of whom were from Blackrock College). Tate Tomkin Beddy was awarded 9th best speaker and Daniel Goss 6th best speaker of the finals day.

Daniel Goss also qualified to speak in today's final and was runner up best speaker.





## Transition Year Trip to Belfast

**B**lackrock College TY students travelled to **The Northern Ireland War Memorial Museum** on April 1<sup>st</sup>.

We had a guided tour of the museum and a walking tour of the bombed sites around the city. We learned about the sheer devastation that the city endured having been bombed four times in 1941.

We are grateful to the Department of Foreign Affairs Reconciliation Fund for granting funds to make this trip possible.



# Student Enterprise Programme

**D**ragons' Den finalists, Uniform Exchange (Ben Ryan and Hugo Bourke) and Aquaponics (Paddy Shanahan) showcased their entrepreneurial talents in the annual Student Enterprise Programme recently. This initiative, supported by the Local Enterprise Office, encourages secondary school students to develop and manage their own small businesses.

Throughout the competition, students engaged in market research, product development, and sales strategies, gaining real-world business experience. The event culminated in a final showcase where finalists presented their enterprises to a panel of judges. Paddy Shanahan, a TY student was awarded the **Most Innovative Award** for his groundbreaking idea 'Aquaponics', which impressed judges with its originality and potential impact. Winning projects were selected based on innovation, sustainability, and commercial potential.

The programme not only nurtures future entrepreneurs but also equips students with valuable skills in teamwork, financial planning, and presentation. Overall, the competition highlighted the talent and ambition of young business minds. Well done to Ben, Hugo and Paddy.





## Economics and Commerce Society's 'Chase for Charity'



The winning team, Alex Ashenbrenner; Colm Heylin; Harry Harvey and Conor White with lead organisers, Hugh Murphy, John O' Callaghan and Don Banks (All 5<sup>th</sup> Year).

**T**he Economics and Commerce Society transformed the school library into a buzzing arena as students participated in a charity event inspired by the TV show *'The Chase'*.

Over 70 students competed in two preliminary rounds, showcasing their knowledge and quick thinking. 'Team Fred' emerged victorious and faced the chaser, Mr. Murphy. Both sides were tied at the end, leading to several play-off rounds. 'Team Fred', consisting of Conor White, Harry Harvey, Colm Heylin, and Alex Aschenbrenner, ultimately triumphed.

The event drew an audience of 110 students and raised €350 for **Aidlink**, combining fun, competition, and charity to create a memorable experience. Aidlink is an Irish charity supporting communities in Kenya, Uganda, and Ghana.

The society would like to thank our event sponsors: Lockton & Adrian Dunne Pharmacy.

## Sunrise Walk



**R**epresentatives from the entire Blackrock College Community – staff, students and parents, (past & present), our Past Pupils Union, Blackrock College Rugby Club and Blackrock College AFC took the opportunity to come together for a Sunrise Walk from the College to Seapoint and back, at 5.30 am on March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

Many thanks to all who turned up (the car park was full at 5.30 am !!) to make this unique and most welcome Blackrock occasion a memorable one.



## 5<sup>th</sup> Year Updates

The Class of 2026 recently voted to **adopt a penguin at Dublin Zoo**. The adoption papers came through shortly before the Easter Exams began. Our baby Humbolt Penguin, Pablo, will be a memory for the boys to remember as they enter the last term of Fifth Year and look towards their final year at Blackrock. Furthermore, the adoption programme is an important means of supporting various animal welfare and conservation projects run by Dublin Zoo.



5th Year House Captains with a toy replica of Pablo. (L-R front row: Jack Deegan McGovern, Ted Taylor, Geoff Wall, Donnacha Barry. Back row: Conor Sheehan, Charlie O'Connor, Ben Guerin, Gavin Laing).

In other news, we teamed up with 2nd Year to run an interhouse **Easter Egg Drive**. The Eggs will go to children who are living as refugees in Mosney Village, County Meath, where *Spirasi* is involved in supporting those living in Direct Provision. We look forward to seeing which House can donate the most Eggs!

## Fourth Year Soccer



The TY Soccer Team had their **FAI Schools Leinster Cup Quarter Final** v Coláiste Craobh Abhainn, Kilcoole just after exams finished. In windy conditions, we went 1-0 down against the run of play. The team responded excellently and a lovely finish from Tom O'Donovan saw us equalise 3 minutes later and go in 1-1 at half time. A second goal from Tom O'Donovan and another from Conor O'Neill (Captain) saw us take a 3-1 lead midway through the second half. A deflected shot with 2 minutes to go brought the game back to 3-2 and rattled the nerves slightly but an excellent finish from Eoghan Flood saw us immediately respond and go through to the semi-finals on a 4-2 scoreline. Next up is St.Benldus is the semi-final.



## Swimming



The Blackrock Swim Team put up a good fight at the **National Schools Relay Competition** in the National Aquatic Centre this month – Teams from all over the country who had qualified at provincial level were called up to compete for the top medals.

The junior team of Sam Ramke, Josh O'Rourke, Jack McNamara, and Aidan Whittaker showed their strength, pulling in back-to-back silver medals in the freestyle and junior relays – a last moment sprint from anchor leg Jack pulled the

team from 4th to 2nd in the final 5 metres!

The intermediate teams played to their strengths in the medley, reorganising since Leinster's to push for a stronger combination of James Kelly on freestyle and Garry Kingston on butterfly, with Daire Hannan sticking on backcrawl, and Nate LaMont on breaststroke. Finn O'Reilly stepped in for a good performance in the freestyle relay, and the team finished 5th in a stacked field in the medley relay – a good finish for a young team!

There was some unfortunate timing for our 6th Year swimmers as the competition fell on the weekend of the mocks, but our reserve 5th year swimmers stepped up, and Will Collins, Ted Taylor, Gerard Egan, James Cahill, and Charley Collenette put in admirable efforts to round out the national season.



## Junior Thirds and Fourths



**J**unior Thirds, captained by Harry Lavin, lost in their final 21-5 against St. Michael's.

Junior Fourths, captained by Ryan Cunningham, lost 19-15 in their final against St. Paul's Monasterevin.

Thanks to Mr. Jemphrey, Mr. Creighton, Mr. O'Brien, Rob Kenny, John Vinson, Conall Hodges and Conor O'Shaughnessy for their help with the boys all year!

## Cross Country



**B**lackrock College 2nd Years came home with 4 medals from the **Pre-Season Track and Field** in Santry on April 1<sup>st</sup>. Congratulations to all the 2nd Year students who represented the school. Apart from the medals in the sprinting, Adam Nutley got an impressive 4th in the Shot Putt, and Jacob Butler came home 7th in his 800m. These

promising results bode well for the East Leinster Track and Field on April 29th and May 6th.

Event	Result
<b>100m</b>	Arya Golchin (1st), Tim Daly (3rd)
<b>4 x 100m</b>	Team 1: Tim Daly, Arya Golchin, Julian Brown, and Niall Farren (1st) Team 2: Sean Coburn, Brian Farrell, Felix Burke, Jack Moloney (3rd)
<b>Shot Putt</b>	Adam Nutley (4th)
<b>800m</b>	Jacob Butler 2nd Year (7th)

Well done to the Junior 4x100m relay teams on April 1<sup>st</sup> who won gold and bronze medals representing the school.

## Library Committee Outing to the Great Reads Awards Ceremony DCU



**B**lackrock College and Willow Park Senior School Library Committees joined together to attend the **Great Reads Award (GRA)** ceremony in Dublin City University. The GRA, an initiative of the School Library Group of the Library Association of Ireland, is a book award for debut Irish authors, where school librarians short list the books and students vote for them. The room was packed with primary and secondary school students from all over Ireland. Author Dave Rudden did a

fantastic job at being MC and all nominated authors spoke a little about their books. Big congratulations to author Jen Wallace and Illustrator Alan O'Rourke who won the junior category for their book, Dinosaur Pie and to author Méabh McDonnell who won the senior category for her book Into the Witchwood.



## Rowing

The 5th & 6th of April marked the start of the regatta season for the Rowing Club, with a packed weekend featuring 12 events across two competitions: **Neptune Regatta** on Saturday and **Commercial Regatta** on Sunday.

The action kicked off early on Saturday morning with the J18 1x time trial with all 3 singles putting great times on the board. Later in the day, the J16 4x+ crew, stroked by James O’Rielly (3rd Year), raced in what was the first competitive outing for many in the boat.

The highlight of the day came from the J16 8+, stroked by Andrew Clancy (4th Year), who stormed through the heats, beating Enniskillen by a boat length. This win earned them a direct place in the final, where they went on to defeat Coláiste Iognáid by clear water, bringing home the first medals of the season.

Sunday brought great weather and fresh challenges. We had more new crews on the water with the J16 4x+, stroked by Harry Masterson (3rd Year), battling against a Commercial crew. Meanwhile, the J18 4x-, stroked by Ian Duane (5th Year), faced an intense semi-final battle, just pipped on the line by Neptune at the line by a bow ball.

The day ended with the J18 8+ Final—yet another showdown between Blackrock and Neptune. Blackrock launched off the start and gained a length's lead going into Neptune’s corner. As they came around the bend, Neptune pushed ahead, and the final 500 meters turned into a thrilling back-and-forth sprint. In the end, Neptune emerged victorious by the narrowest of margins.

Overall, it was a hugely successful weekend, coming away with J16 medals and a renewed determination to challenge the J18s in the regattas to come.

Additionally, the Rowing Club have embarked on a collective challenge, **Row to LA**, on Tuesday, 18th March. The goal is to cover the full 8,305km distance from Dublin to Los Angeles, with every rower's contribution tracked during gym sessions. All members are fully engaged in the effort, which will culminate in an exciting finale on Sports Day, Sunday 11th May at 2pm. The team are also seeking sponsorship from friends, family, and neighbours to support their journey!





At the London **Head of the River Rowing Race** on Saturday 22nd March Jack Tuite (5th Year), with the J18 8+ crew from Neptune Rowing Club, won the Medium Club Pennant in this prestigious international rowing competition.

A great achievement for a junior overseas team.

## The Future of Sports Journalism at the College

**This year, Transition Year students participated in our inaugural TY Sports Journalism Competition.** Students prepared portfolios from September to February, attending matches, honing their journalistic skills, and producing match reports, player profiles, longform interviews and more. In the end, Tom O'Donovan won with an outstanding portfolio of articles featuring reports, interviews and opinion pieces, largely focused on Blackrock soccer.

As winner, Tom received the unforgettable experience of attending the Ireland vs. Bulgaria soccer match on the 23rd of March at the AVIVA stadium, watching the action from the press box.

Additionally, Tom got the chance to attend both the pre-match press conference and the squad announcement at FAI headquarters. We look forward to reading more from Tom and all the talented students who took part.





## Career News

This term saw a great turnout for the **mock interviews**. Many thanks to Maurice Tunney and the **Rock Union** for their time, expertise, and generous feedback — the buzz around the College that evening was fantastic.

Congratulations to Fionn Whelan, who placed third in the **National Career Skills Competition**.

This exciting competition promotes the importance of career skills and encourages the value of career research. It allows students to reflect on the skills they developed during their work experience and explain how those skills can help them in their future career. We look forward to the prize-giving ceremony at the Department of Education on May 7.

A reminder that the **CAO Change of Mind facility opens on May 6** and closes on July 1 at 5 p.m.

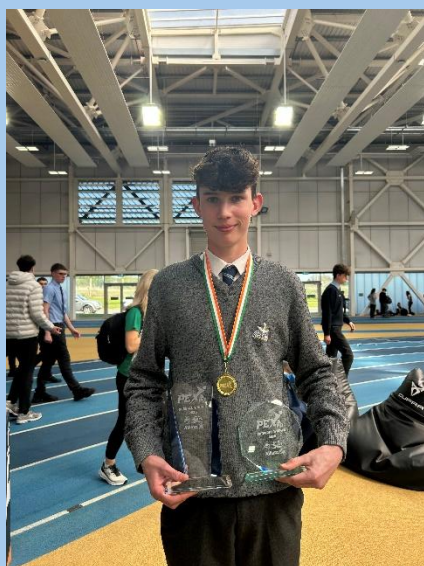
## Tate Tomkin Beddy – PeXpo Success!

Congratulations to **Tate Tomkin Beddy**, who explored the question: "*How does the loft of a golf club affect a golf ball?*" in his recent project. Tate entered the **PeXpo** competition — a platform that celebrates student innovation and research across various categories.

Tate's project investigated how different golf club lofts influence the distance, height, and behaviour of a golf ball when struck, combining elements of **physics, physiology, and tactile demand**. His exceptional research and presentation saw him **win the category of Physical, Physiological and Tactile Demand**.

But that's not all — Tate also achieved the remarkable honour of being named the **Overall Junior Winner** of the entire PeXpo competition!

A massive congratulations to Tate for all his hard work, dedication, and scientific curiosity. An outstanding achievement!





## Snapshot of the TY Trip to Philadelphia





**Don't Forget – Mark Your Calendars!**



**April 14<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>, Monday to Friday**

Easter Break

