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UNESCO Chair in
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NUI Galway
OÉ Gaillimh

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This is the second issue of the UNESCO Chair's newsletter. Its circulation is intended to significantly enhance communication among our university colleagues, our national and international partners and all other interested parties. Circulation will be entirely in electronic format to ensure its wide distribution. Please feel free to send us any material or news you would like included in the next newsletter.

World Conference on Higher Education, UNESCO Paris, July 2009



Professor Pat Dolan took part in the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education at UNESCO Headquarters from July 5-8. Over 1,000 participants were in attendance from around 150 countries. The main debates of the Conference included: the impact of globalization on higher education; social responsibility, including promoting active citizenship within higher education institutions; academic freedom; research; and financing. Prof. Pat Dolan was Rapporteur for the Conference session that examined

the role of research networks for the promotion of rights and values in education. It was an opportunity for Prof. Dolan and other UNESCO Chairs to exchange their knowledge and experience, while being enriched with many ideas and plans to create a better future in terms of higher education around the world. The outcome communiqué from the conference is available at:

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001832/183277e.pdf>

Progress on drafting the Chair's Strategic Plan

In preparation for drafting the UNESCO Chair's Strategic Plan, the Chair circulated a Discussion Document in May intended to outline the initial course of the UNESCO Programme over the coming years. Over the summer period the Chair has been considering the extensive feedback it received and developing its Strategic Plan in collaboration

with UNESCO staff at Headquarters in Paris. The Chair's Strategic Plan will be closely informed by UNESCO's Global Strategy on Youth, which is currently being developed. The Chair's Strategic Plan and UNESCO's Global Strategy are due to be finalised by November 2009.



Foróige's Best Practice Unit

The UNESCO Chair's national partner Foróige has set up a new best practice unit to develop evidence-based, outcomes focused programmes for youth work in Ireland. The Best Practice Unit will work closely with the UNESCO Chair in Children, Youth and Civic Engagement in the area of programme development and evaluation. The initial brief of the Best Practice Unit includes: the development of outcomes focused training for Foróige staff and volunteers; the manualisation of two internal programmes, Active Citizenship and Relationships and Sexuality; and the roll out of three international programmes to be tailored to an Irish setting in the areas of Youth

Leadership, Youth Crime Reduction and Youth Entrepreneurship. The Best Practice Unit intends to pilot the programmes as they are developed and evaluate them to explore their ability to lead to greater outcomes for young people. According to Foróige, it is an exciting time in Youth Work, moving into an era of greater accountability and evidence base for the outcomes they aspire to achieve.

If you wish to receive any further information in relation to the Foróige's Best Practice Unit, please contact Best Practice Unit Manager, Ms Sue Redmond at: sue.redmond@foroige.ie



“Connecting Communities” - Educational Action Research Project

The UNESCO Chair in Children, Youth and Civic Engagement is interested in mechanisms and processes that facilitate young people to become civically engaged. One such initiative that recently came to our attention, and has been undertaken by the Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO), is called “Connecting Communities” to recognise and celebrate examples of community-based programmes and projects, which have had a positive effect on young people lives, their families and communities. One of the projects to receive an OCO award on Thursday, 25th June 2009 was the Educational Action Research (EAR) Project, based at Athlone Community

Taskforce Ltd, Westmeath. The EAR Project utilised a youth-centred approach underpinned by resilience theory to facilitate young people to conduct their own research regarding the transition from primary to post-primary school. From this youth-centred information a three year strategic plan was developed to provide collaborative services to respond to the needs of young people during this important transition. The EAR Project was evaluated by the Child and Family Research Centre (CFRC). Congratulations to the OCO and the EAR Project on their success. A copy of the evaluation is available on our website: www.nuigalway.ie/childandfamilyresearch

Conference Presentations

Professor Pat Dolan and Professor Alan Smith, UNESCO Chair in Education for Pluralism, Human Rights and Democracy, University of Ulster, were keynote speakers at the 2009 **Campus Engage** International Conference held on June 4th and 5th. The Conference participants from the community and higher education sector discussed the potential for change offered by civic engagement partnerships in areas such as service learning / community-based learning, research, civic education and volunteering. The conference presentations are available at: <http://www.conference.campusengage.ie>

The CFRC held its biennial Conference in June, **Family Support Now: Reflecting on Contemporary Challenges**. The conference papers are available to download at: <http://www.childandfamilyresearch.ie/2009Conference.php>

If you wish to receive any further information in relation to the UNESCO Chair, please do not hesitate to contact us at the Child and Family Research Centre.

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The authors are responsible for the choice and presentation of views contained in this newsletter and for opinions expressed therein, which are not necessarily those of UNESCO and do not commit the Organization

