



United Nations
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UNESCO Chair in
Children, Youth and
Civic Engagement



National University of Ireland, Galway
Ollscoil na bÉireann, Gaillimh

UNESCO Chair Newsletter

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This is the first issue of the UNESCO Chair's newsletter. We hope it will make a significant contribution to enhancing 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.

Launch of the UNESCO Chair in Children, Youth and Civic Engagement

The President of Ireland, Mary McAleese, officially launched the UNESCO Chair on Children, Youth and Civic Engagement on Wednesday 4th March 2009. President McAleese described it as a 'fitting endorsement by peers worldwide of the important work that is being done at NUI Galway to help solve the real problems experienced by young people and families in our communities'.



Pictured at the launch (front row from left): Mr Nicholas Burnett, Assistant Director-General for Education in UNESCO; Professor Pat Dolan, UNESCO Chair; President of Ireland, Mary McAleese; President James Browne. (Back row from left): Dr Martin McAleese; Professor Chris Curtin; Lorraine McIllrath, CKI; Seán Campbell, CEO, Foróige; and Professor Kevin Barry.

The launch was marked with an inaugural lecture by the Chairholder Professor Pat Dolan. Professor Pat Dolan said that supporting children who experience adversity and disadvantage through encouraging civic participation had crucial benefits in terms of improved self-esteem, self-efficacy and wellbeing. He said: "I have come to the conclusion, that civically engaging children and youth produces benefits for all children. Particularly in the case of children who are experiencing severe difficulties, their civic engagement can lead to significant improvement and help rebuild key relationships in their lives."

The inaugural lecture commemorative booklet is available to download at:
<http://www.childandfamilyresearch.ie/Launch.php>



New Arrivals

The Child and Family Research Centre would like to welcome the new members of staff, which have been recruited to assist in the delivery of the UNESCO Chair's programme of work. Ms. Iwona Jakubczyk has been appointed as UNESCO Chair Administrator and Ms. Danielle Kennan has been appointed as Research Assistant to the UNESCO Chair. In addition, there has been an intake of two

Doctoral Fellows. The Child and Family Research Centre would like to welcome Ms. Sheila McArdle, who has commenced a comparative exploration of the perceptions of young women of what it means to be civically engaged and Ms. Tereza Brumovská, who has commenced an international comparative study on youth mentoring.

Circulation of Discussion Document in preparation for drafting the Chair's Strategic Plan

In preparation for drafting the UNESCO Chair's Strategic Plan, the Chair has circulated a Discussion Document intended to outline the initial course of the UNESCO Programme over the coming years. The Discussion Document is a working document stating current goals, expected deliverables and potential developments (subject to funding). It has been widely circulated among partners, including

potential funders, to stimulate a discussion on the UNESCO Chair's three year Strategic Plan.

The UNESCO Chair welcomes comments and submissions on the Discussion Document from any interested party before May 29th 2009. For further details, please contact: danielle.kennan@nuigalway.ie

UNESCO Policy Briefs on Youth Participation and Civic Engagement

Professor Pat Dolan and Professor Alan Smith, as UNESCO Chairs, have been requested to collect Policy Briefs for inclusion in UNESCO's MOST Policy Research Tool. The MOST (Management of Social Transformation) programme focuses on building bridges between relevant social science

research, policy and practice, to distil messages for policy makers. The overall theme of the Policy Briefs is 'Youth Participation and Civic Engagement' and it is expected that the briefs will be available on the MOST Policy Research Tool towards the end of the summer.

Conferences

Professor Alan Smith, UNESCO Chair in Education for Pluralism, Human Rights and Democracy, University of Ulster, is among the confirmed speakers at the Child and Family Research Centre's Conference, **Family Support Now: Reflecting on Contemporary Challenges**. The Conference, to be held on June 18th and 19th, will explore how policymaking and service delivery of Family Support Programmes have evolved in the past decade.

Professor Pat Dolan and Professor Alan Smith are keynote speakers at the 2009 **Campus Engage International Conference** to be held on June 4th and 5th. The Conference will provide participants from community and higher education with an opportunity to discuss the potential for change offered by civic engagement partnerships in areas such as service learning / community-based learning, research, civic education and volunteering.

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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