

NORTHERN Regional College

Media Review June 2020

from 31/05/2020 to 29/06/2020



age 10

Ballymena Rotary Club plan for year ahead

BALLYMENA Rotarians gathered on Zoom for a Club Assembly meeting to discuss plans for the next 12 months.

Meeting also included a 'virtual' handing over of the chains from current President Jim Briggs to new President Lynda Bell who takes over in July.

President Jim Briggs began the meeting by providing an overview of the achievements of the Club and went on to say that the key things that stood out throughout the year were as follows:-

- Wine tasting event which took place in October last year - this attracted fantastic support and resulting in raising almost £5000 for Alzheimers and The Koshish Mental Health Project in Nepal.
- Castle Tower winning the Technology Challenge which took place in March this year
- The success of the now commonplace Zoom meetings in order to continue to keep in contact and continue to plan ahead.

President Jim went on to say "I would like to thank everyone for their support throughout the year. This has been a challenging one for a number of reasons but it has been great to see everyone coming together, without which none of the above would have happened. The new President will take over from the start of July and I look forward to continuing to work with everyone in the future".

In Ballymena Rotary Club there are a number of sub groups including membership, youth, foundation, community/communication, International, systems and roles of Treasurer and Secretary/Fundraiser. Due to the current Covid conditions it has been more difficult to plan ahead and all plans may have to be adapted to suit. Key points from these reports are as follows:-

Technology Challenge - it will be hoped to work with **NRC** next year on this project which works with local schools and encourage pupils to keep on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects. This involves lots of fun activities on



Ballymena Rotarians who gathered on Zoom for a Club Assembly meeting to discuss plans for the next 12 months.

the themes mentioned.

Christmas Memories Tree project - having done this, very successfully, for two years running, Rotary will hope to continue with this project albeit in a different format.

Rotary will continue to work with the local community groups and the four main Ballymena Cluster groups to help encourage smaller community groups as well as help to raise awareness of Rotary.

Just One Life Young Driver Awareness Project - Rotary are considering a project working with young people in schools in partnership with other organisations such as PSNI to raise awareness before young people take to the roads.

Youth Leadership Programme - this long running project which helps to encourage young leaders in schools will hope to continue later this year although due to current conditions will be reviewed at a later date.

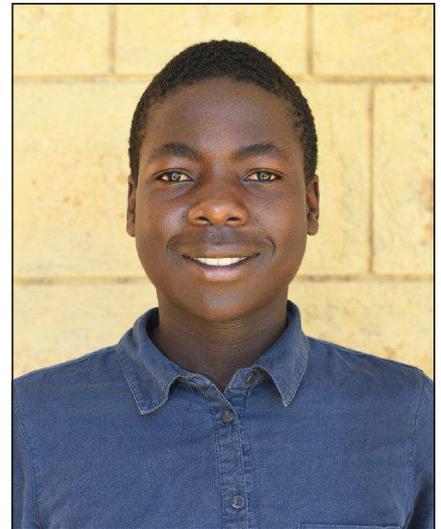
Membership - Rotary will continue to raise its profile within the community through a

number of ways including social media, website and projects, which in turn will hopefully attract new potential members.

Fundraising - with our changed climate it will prove a challenge moving forward to organise and plan fundraising activities, which typically have been in the form of an event involving large gatherings. Current ideas are to hold 'virtual' challenges until such times that gatherings can take place.

International - Rotary continue to sponsor a young man called Emmanuel who is aged 15 from Kenya. We receive regular reports of his progress and it has been fantastic to be part of his journey so far and look forward to seeing what the future holds for Emmanuel.

This is just a snapshot of plans and ideas moving forward for the Rotarians of Ballymena Rotary Club and if you might be interested in hearing more about how you can help, please don't hesitate to get in touch with Jim on 07592500379 or Joanne on 07866408092



Rotary continue to sponsor 15-year-old Emmanuel, who is from Kenya.



Newly installed President, Lynda Bell.

Media Source Press Page 3
Circulation 5,960



BALLYMONEY STUDENT TURNS HOBBY INTO BUSINESS

'It's my way of sharing a smile' says Savannah

BY COMMUNITY REPORTER
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A Ballymoney student's passion for arts and crafts has developed into a thriving social media business during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Savannah Corbett, who studies ICT at Northern Regional College's Coleraine campus, has been keeping herself busy during lockdown by creating rainbow-themed bows and other hair accessories to show her support for NHS staff.

Having always had a keen interest in arts and crafts, she explained how a hobby has now turned into a small busi-

ness venture.

"I have always loved making bows and other accessories for myself, but when I started getting more and more requests to make them for other people, I realised that this could be a viable business idea," said Savannah.

"I started selling at local markets and car boot sales but then moved to selling them online on Instagram under the name Buddy's Boutique. I wanted to create something that would suit both adults and children alike and allow them to show support for frontline workers in their own way. There are also plenty of people who wouldn't wear a bow, so I diversified into making NHS themed keyrings.



One of Savannah's designs

"It's just my little way of sharing a smile. I hope they continue to bring people a sense of happiness and hope, and demonstrate the huge amount of appreciation that

everyone has for NHS and other frontline workers," she said. Having completed her Level 3 course at the College, Savannah now plans to take a degree at Ulster University.



Savannah Corbett



northernirelandchamber.com | 29/06/2020

Media Source Online Visits 19,955
Also published in BUSINESSFIRST

Northern Regional College offers a helping hand with free virtual learning courses.

...develop the skills, attributes and behaviours required to enter and succeed in the world of work. The **Essential Skills** courses on offer include Level 1 and Level 2 certificates in ICT which are designed to help...

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Student Art and Design showcase to be broadcast online

With lockdown restrictions in place, Art, Design and Media Practice students at **Northern Regional College** have been unable to host their traditional end of year show. However, a digital alternative has...

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Antrim Guardian | 25/06/2020

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End of the road for former Tech?



...was left a skeletal ruin, ravaged by vandals, the bones picked over by enterprising thieves. The Northern Regional College had lost control of the property. The seclusion may have made for quiet classrooms,...

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Ballymena Daily | 25/06/2020

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Also published in Ballymena Daily [+ 3 more]

Northern Regional College offers a helping hand with free virtual learning courses

Northern Regional College is offering a range of free fully accredited short online courses for people who want to upskill or retrain. The courses will focus on improving digital skills, essential skills...

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syncni.com | 25/06/2020

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Northern Regional College is running free online upskilling courses

Jun 25, 2020 Posted by Niamh Campbell Northern Regional College (NRC) is offering a range of free, fully accredited short online courses for people who want to upskill or retrain. The courses will...

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Also published in Ballymena Daily [+ 1 more]

Student Art and Design showcase to be broadcast online

Image: 'Emma Watson' by Vicki Turton, Art, Design and Media Practice student at **Northern Regional College** With lockdown restrictions in place, Art, Design and Media Practice students at **Northern Regional**...

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Strabane Chronicle | 23/06/2020

Media Source Online Visits 5,000

McSorley is looking to the future despite Covid concerns

...into coaching, there's things you get a wee bit frustrated with, and it's no-one's fault," added the **Northern Regional College** sports lecturer. "We never had proper governance, we've never had a proper oval..."

[CONTINUE READING](#)

Media Source Press Page 2
Circulation 13,725
Also published in Radius Housing

'Rail barrier damage put lives at risk'
A rail barrier on the Ballymena railway line has been damaged by a car, putting lives at risk. The barrier, which is used to protect the railway from road traffic, was hit by a car on Monday night. The car was damaged and the driver was injured. The railway line is used by passenger trains and freight trains. The damage to the barrier could cause a collision between a train and a car. The railway company has closed the line for repairs. The car driver is recovering from his injuries in hospital.

Shots fired towards house
A house in Ballymena was targeted by a gunman on Monday night. The gunman fired several shots towards the house, but no one was injured. The police are investigating the incident and have a suspect in custody. The suspect is a 30-year-old man from Ballymena. He is charged with attempted murder and possession of a firearm with intent to kill. The police are looking for witnesses who saw anything on Monday night.

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Police say device could have had 'devastating consequences'
A police officer has said that a device used in an attack on a house in Ballymena could have had devastating consequences. The device was a pipe bomb, which was used to blow up the house. The police officer said that the device was very powerful and could have caused a lot of damage. The police are investigating the attack and have a suspect in custody. The suspect is a 30-year-old man from Ballymena. He is charged with attempted murder and possession of a pipe bomb. The police are looking for witnesses who saw anything on Monday night.

Police search the area after the attack

Public views sought on major housing plan at old barracks

Radius Housing is preparing to commence a consultation process for the creation of a new social and affordable housing development at the former St. Patrick's Barracks site in Ballymena.

Radius is proposing the creation of approximately 140 new homes on the site; along with associated roads infrastructure, landscaping, children's play park and other ancillary works.

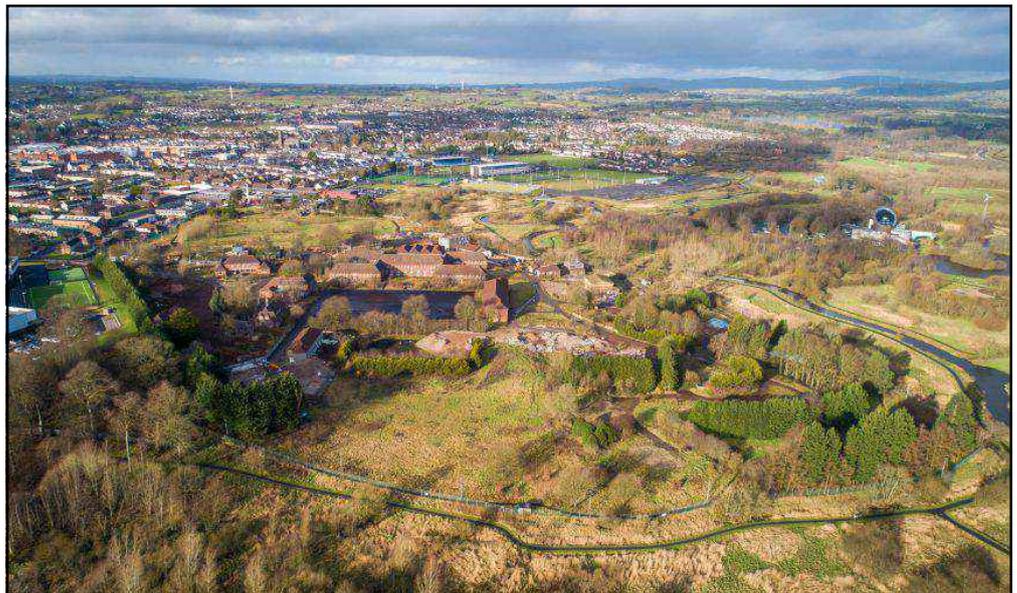
The housing led regeneration of the former St Patrick's Barracks site is being taken forward by the Department for Communities, with Radius Housing leading with the housing element which forms a key part of the wider St Patrick's Barracks masterplan.

The scheme is part of the NI Executive's draft Programme for Government Shared Housing Programme 'Housing for All'.

The housing phase of the regeneration marks an investment of approximately £20million, 50% of which is funded by the Department for Communities and 50% through private finance raised by Radius.

Speaking about the project, Anita Conway, Director of Development at Radius Housing, said "Radius Housing is delighted to be involved in this large housing led strategic project which we believe will positively benefit the Ballymena community and beyond.

"We are pleased that recently introduced regulations will allow major planning applications to be progressed and determined during the COVID-19 pandemic and are embracing a new online digital consultation process for our exciting rejuvenation proposals."



The former St. Patrick's Barracks site in Ballymena

Communities Minister Carál Ni Chulín said: "We are aiming with the regeneration of the former St Patrick's Barracks site in Ballymena to create a place which is truly people-orientated and can generate economic and social benefits for the wider area.

"The creation of new social and affordable homes is a significant and key part of our plans. I would encourage everyone to give their views on the proposed plans.

"By creating homes where people are able to thrive we will breathe new life into the area for the benefit of

everyone."

The on-line consultation will be launched in the coming weeks via a dedicated website, details of this will be made available to the public through the local press and leaflet distribution.

Following the completion of the consultation process Radius hope to submit a full planning application in late summer 2020.

This is the latest development project for Radius Housing, a leading housing association which manages more than 13,000 homes in Northern Ireland and aims to construct more than 400 new social and affordable

homes every year.

Radius recently secured a private finance investment of £105m, which will support these ambitious plans to deliver new homes and communities across Northern Ireland.

On the overall masterplan for the regeneration of the former St Patrick's Barrack's site, the Department for Communities and Radius Housing are collaboratively working across many parties including the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Northern Regional College, Department for Infrastructure, PSNI and Mid and East Antrim Borough Council.

Media Source Press Page 1
Circulation 13,725

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End of the road for former Tech?

IT is now almost a decade since a once respected college descended into a playground for anti-social vandals, but it appears that the end may finally be in sight for the former Antrim Tech complex.

A 12-week consultation process is now underway that could see the derelict site transformed into a luxury housing development.

The developer has unveiled plans to invest £10 million building approximately 56 dwellings - a mix of two, three and four bedroom houses, apartments and bungalows scattered around a landscaped green.

It is understood that 50 jobs could be created during the construction phase of what has been dubbed 'Hamley Hall'.

Many locals will undoubtedly welcome the site being put to productive use again, after years of serious and sustained vandalism.

The educational dream came finally came to an end finally in the summer of 2011 despite a spirited campaign to keep it open.

The once gleaming new campus was left a skeletal ruin, ravaged by vandals, the bones picked over by

enterprising thieves. The **Northern Regional College** had lost control of the property.

The seclusion may have made for quiet classrooms, but after the shutters came down chaos reigned - and from the road passers-by could hardly tell.

Within months of the closure the vultures were circling over the carcass. First to strike were the



An artist's impression of Hamley Hall.

thieves who stripped the lead flashing from the property.

In April 2012 a dumper truck was used to 'attack' the building, damaging the fencing, the garage and the rear doors.

Then it was open season, with intruders systematically destroying anything to hand in the classrooms. More than 40 windows were smashed in a single evening.

The criminal gangs soon returned, gaining entrance to the buildings and stripping metal wiring. Shielding to the boiler house and its doors were also removed.

In January 2014 a blaze tore through parts of the complex. It was eventually brought under control and the main building was saved. But for what?

Since then there have been a string of serious fires and more break-ins. After one particularly destructive incursion, **NRC** reported widespread evidence of vandalism. And they found pots of petrol in the hallway.

It was clear that the Tech's days were numbered.

*** To take part in the consultation visit the Antrim Guardian website.**



‘It’s never too late for a career change’

AMID the current uncertainty over the impact on COVID-19 will have on the jobs market, a Randalstown man has stressed that ‘it’s never too late for career change’.

Indeed Liam McCarthy, who has just completed the first year of his four-year Electrical Installation programme at Northern Regional College in Ballymena, is living proof of that.

Liam is in his late thirties, married with a young daughter and has degree in Business Management from the Open University.

Originally from Durham, by the time he moved to Northern Ireland to live in his wife’s hometown of Randalstown, he had travelled the world and was ready to settle down.

Work was hard to come by so when his father-in-law, a local electrical contractor, offered him work with Cotton Electrical Controls Ltd, Liam jumped at the opportunity.

In September 2019, having worked with the family business for two years, he decided train as an electrician as an ‘adult returner’ to education.

“I really enjoy my work and it’s very different from anything I’ve done before,” he explained.

“Although I have good business knowledge and experience, I felt I needed to improve my practical skills and specialist knowledge for this line of work.

“I researched what was available and decided that the Electrotechnical programme at Northern Regional College’s Farm Lodge campus was my best option.”

As a part time student, Liam works four days a week in the family business and - until the start of the lockdown at least - one day in college working towards becoming a qualified electrician.

“The course has been very beneficial and although it is early days, I now have a much better understanding of the theory and Health and Safety regulations and other legislation which has really helped build my confidence.”

Like students everywhere, Liam has had to adapt to online learning as a result of the lockdown but although this presented challenges, he says ‘every cloud has a silver lining’.

“My daughter just thinks ‘daddy’s

home’ and wants to play,” said Liam.

“She doesn’t understand that I need to study but, on the other hand, it’s nice to be able to spend more time with my wife and daughter.”

Ian Thomson, Liam’s lecturer at the College, said that Liam was ‘an exemplary student’.

“His dedication and commitment were inspirational, and this had a positive influence on his class,” he said.

“Attending College as an adult returner can be challenging but Liam has fitted in really well.

“He has had a positive influence on the class and the other students are all benefiting from his mature and conscientious approach to his work,” added Ian.

Northern Regional College offers a range of work-based learning programmes across all six campuses covering vocational areas including: Barbering; Beauty Therapy; Brickwork; Carpentry & Joinery; Catering and Professional Chefs; Civil Engineering; Electrical Installation; Engineering; Food and Beverage Service; Hairdressing; Motor Vehicle; and Plumbing. HLAs include Accountancy, Computing, Construction and Engineering.



Liam McCarthy: ‘a positive influence on his class’

Media Source Press Page 26
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 Also published in Tyrone Courier

Ministers welcome success of medicine delivery service
 Colleges show support for industry



Local Further Education Colleges combine talents & skills in support of pandemic fight

In recent weeks, thousands of students and staff from Northern Ireland's Further Education (FE) colleges - including three in Dungannon, Cookstown and Magherafelt - have combined their time, talents and skills gained through their college courses to support frontline efforts to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.

More than 61,000 students are currently studying further and higher education courses at South West College, with campuses in Dungannon and Cookstown and Magherafelt's Northern Regional College, Belfast Metropolitan College, North West Regional College, Southern Regional College and South East Regional College.

Speaking on behalf of the heads of the six Colleges, Professor Terri Scott, Principal and Chief Executive at Northern Regional College explained: "As a network of six regional FE colleges, we are at the heart of every community in



South West College on song during the pandemic lockdown.



Northern Regional College's 3D masks. SC202012

Northern Ireland and this is reflected in the outward-looking culture and strong sense of community spirit that underpins every one of our campuses.

by the tremendous demonstrations of solidarity and support from thousands of our students and staff in proactively giving their skill, talent and time to support others during these unprecedented times. "Alongside their efforts to

study and teach remotely from home, we have seen them really pull together to make what is, collectively, a very tangible and even lifesaving contribution to the frontline efforts to fight Coronavirus in Northern Ireland."

All six colleges have been involved in the production of PPE equipment - hand sewing hundreds of pairs of scrubs and face masks. South West College Community Lecturer Nicola Birnie has created craft kits for students, which they are

using to make face masks and ear savers for staff in local hospitals and care homes. Hundreds of current and former students and staff from across the six colleges' Health and Social Care courses are working as

frontline healthcare workers and domiciliary assistants in hospitals, care homes and in communities across Northern Ireland.

Northern Regional College lecturer Jacqui McAllister is volunteering as a healthcare assistant on the COVID-19 wards at Antrim Area Hospital during her weekends off, choosing to donate her pay for this work to Ulster University's COVID-19 testing fundraising appeal.

Others are turning to music as a source of support and encouragement. South West College Media lecturer Larry Lowe is encouraging people to listen to messages of hope in his song, 'Not Forever' and donate what they can to Omagh Foodbank and Support 2gether.

Music students at North West Regional College, meanwhile, produced two recorded online performances as a special tribute to the NHS, receiving unprecedented levels of social media reach and engagement.

Media Source Press Page 26
Circulation 12,381
Also published in Tyrone Courier



efforts to Ireland.

for students, which they are courses are working as

Colleges show support for industry

Further and higher education colleges across Northern Ireland are urging local businesses to avail of the wealth of resources and new approaches to accredited training and upskilling opportunities quickly adapted by the colleges to meet current circumstances.

The online provision, mentoring and bespoke offerings will be essential to meeting the needs of the business community, learners in employment and those returning to employment in the drive to revive the economy.

The six colleges of further and higher education - including the South West College in Dungannon and Cookstown and the Northern Regional College in Magherafelt - continue to offer a range of facilitated programmes designed to upskill individuals and work teams in a range of industry sectors including business, leadership and management, construction, healthcare and hospitality along with digital transformation skills. The colleges have helped many small businesses move to an online presence so they can continue their business



Neil McCauley, who is employed by Northern Ireland-based McQuillan Environmental. SC202137

remotely during lockdown. Colleges can also create bespoke courses to meet the needs of individual businesses and work with individuals to upskill. Neil McCauley, turned his career experience into Professional Recognition achieving the equivalent to a vocational masters with a Level 7 City & Guilds Professional Recognition Engineering Management through support from a college of

further education. Neil worked in various roles early in his career including in a bank, in construction and ended up securing a post with Almac which propelled him into the high-tech industry of chemical processing. His role there led to supervising and management of staff. He worked there for 7 years before progressing to McQuillan Environmental, a Northern Ireland based family run business which incorporates a

diverse range of activities including civil engineering, demolition, quarrying, hazardous and non-hazardous waste management, outdoor cleaning services and analytical chemistry. He told the Courier, "I have learnt many things about the industry and picked up skills and experience over the years which has allowed me to progress in my career to Technical Manager. Essentially, I took a different route by

learning and progressing on the job. I became aware of turning my skills and experience into a professional recognised qualification and achieved City & Guilds Level 7 Professional Recognition qualification which recognises the knowledge, experience, and strategic role I have accumulated working in the industry.

He added, "I would encourage anyone working in industry, who maybe didn't take the traditional degree route, but who have been working their way up their company to gather the evidence they need to achieve professional recognition with support from their local college."

Skills Focus programmes, which are fully funded by the Department for the Economy (DfE) and usually delivered in the workplace or college facilities, have been adapted for online delivery. This means that employees who are currently working remotely can join programmes, available now, to upskill whilst they are furloughed or continue to work from home.



FORMER ST JOSEPH'S COLLEGE PREMISES TO BE USED

NRC campus move on schedule

BY COMMUNITY REPORTER
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Northern Regional College has confirmed that the relocation of its Coleraine campus to Beresford Avenue in the town later this year remains on schedule.

The college is to move to the former St Joseph's College premises while its new Union Street campus is built.

The move is part of an £84 million capital investment programme, funded by the Department for the Economy, to develop new campuses on its current sites in Union Street, Coleraine and Farm Lodge, Ballymena.

Following an enforced six-week layoff because of COVID-19, the contractor is back on site, operating safely and is committed to completing the work within the planned

timescale. The college's Estates Team and the contractor have agreed a handover schedule, with 85% of the classrooms and IT suites ready for furniture and IT installations in mid-July.

The phased opening of the remainder of the building will allow access for enrolments in mid-August and ensure that Beresford Avenue is ready to accommodate staff and students for the start of the new academic year.

The new purpose-built Coleraine campus with state-of-the-art facilities will be on an extended site which includes the former Church of Ireland buildings on Brook Street. The existing college buildings at Union Street will be demolished.

Professor Terri Scott, Principal and Chief Executive of Northern Regional College said: "I am delighted that, despite challenges posed by the ongoing pandemic, our plans

to relocate to Beresford Avenue remain very much on track.

"This temporary relocation marks an important milestone in what is a tremendously exciting project that will significantly benefit the local economy and open up exciting new career opportunities for students of all ages

in our new Coleraine campus.

"Our college Estates Team will be working closely over the summer months with the appointed contractor to ensure that necessary arrangements are in place for our students to return to class-based learning when it is safe to do so, in line with government guidance."



Professor Terri Scott; Left: NRC's Coleraine campus

Media Source Press Page 6,7,8,9
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Also published in Northwest Telegraph

DADDY COOL Some well-known NI faces on that very special bond

'After dad's accident it's been his family and business that's kept him going' Miss Northern Ireland Lauren Leckey is a self-confessed daddy's girl and says she's been close to her dad Trevor all her life. With Father's Day coming up, the 21-year-old plans to make her dad a trifle for the big day. Me and my dad are really close. Right from when I was a child I've been a real daddy's girl. My dad had an accident when I was eight, and in P5, which meant he was paralysed from the waist down.

"When we were small we used to go every Sunday to the races, and we loved as a family. The whole family was into motorbikes and it was a really good day out for all of us.

"Even when he had an accident that day and was taken to hospital, we didn't know just how serious it was. He'd had accidents before, with things like a broken leg, so I remember me and my older sister Kori, who's 23 now, just chatting in the car on the way home.

"He ended up in a coma for a few weeks, and obviously then it became clearer as time went on that the accident had been very serious.

"But my dad's a very strong person. I think it's really us, our family, and the business that keeps him going and getting up and out to work every single day.

"My dad runs his own business, Stoneyford Concrete, and I work with him. He's the MD, and throughout the lockdown it's basically been just me and him in the office working flat out. I'm living at home too in fact we all are. We're all real homebirds, which has meant throughout lockdown all seven of us have been together.

"There's my mum Lisa and my dad, me, Kori and my brothers Jamie (20), Zak (19) and 15-year-old Lance. So it's a full house, but it means we're all kept busy.

"We live right beside the business in Stonefyord, outside Lisburn, and I think the fact the construction industry has carried on has given us some routine," she adds.

"Both my parents were brilliant when it came to Miss Northern Ireland. I'd said for a long time I wanted to do it, and I think they maybe didn't think too much of it. But when I entered and the first heat was at a restaurant in Templepatrick, my dad drove me there and about 17 members of my family turned up to support me. I'm not sure that did much to help my nerves!

"When I won Miss NI, my dad was over the moon.

"It was an incredible experience, and even though I might not have put myself forward for modelling shoots and things like that before I did it, now that I've done it and I'm working with ACA Models, I really want to keep on doing it.

"Miss NI opened a lot of doors for me and my dad actually went with me to pick up my final dress, so along with my mum, he was a big support through it all.

"And even though he's not a particularly sentimental person, at Christmas there he gave me a lovely present which was a photo album packed with all the newspaper cuttings he'd gathered up from me winning the competition.

"I really wasn't expecting something as nice as that, so it was amazing. Mind you, the other half of the present was some car washing stuff, so it was a pretty strong combination!

"For Father's Day, we'll all be together this year because everyone's at home, and I'll be making my dad a trifle.

"That's something he's always got, and always will get otherwise he'd be asking me where it was."

"Our obsessions are sport and news, and while it's been tough with no live sport, we've had a lot of news to keep us busy. My dad is John Simpson.

MHe's not the economist, although everyone always thinks he is. He used to work in insurance but the big joke among my mates was that no-one knew how he could have a job because he was at practically every single sporting thing I ever did.

"He'd be there for every rugby game, football match or cricket game I played right from when I was five years old. If it was a Wednesday afternoon and I'd be playing for the under-13s, or a Tuesday afternoon, he'd be there on the touchline.

"I think he invented flexible working back then in the early Eighties. It was great for me because it meant he was always there. It was a huge encouragement. "I wasn't a particularly good sportsman, but I was keen and I played a lot of sport and I think my dad was like me, a bit of journeyman. He played a bit of rugby and football and he still plays golf. And, like me, he likes nothing better than watching sport.

"That's the thing about us, we share the same interests. Our two obsessions in life are sport and the news, and while it's been tough the last few months with no live sport to watch, I suppose we've had a lot of news to keep us busy.

"Growing up, we always had three papers a day in the house. Two morning papers, and the Belfast Telegraph was delivered every night.

"My dad wasn't a journalist, there were no journalists in the family, but having the papers in the house as such a constant meant I really hooked on to the news.

"I went on to work for all three of the local papers at different times before I moved to the BBC.

"My dad wasn't strict when I was growing up. He'd let me stay up until 11pm every Wednesday night to watch Sportsnight, which was great.

"And he did what any sports-mad youngster would want back then he took me to Windsor Park where I was able to see George Best.

"And while my dad was big into the news, I remember back in 2012 when I was covering a lot of stuff for the centenary of the sinking of the Titanic, another journalist in Belfast mentioned to me this remarkable story."

Mark continues: "He said he hadn't realised that a relative of mine, a man named Dr John Edward Simpson, had died on the Titanic.

"Well I said, 'Sorry, that sounds very interesting, but I'm afraid you've got your facts wrong, if one of our relatives had died on Titanic my dad would have told me'. Well, of course, I phoned my dad up straight away and said to him, 'Is this true, that one of our relatives died on the Titanic?' And he said 'Yes, it is true'. Well, I couldn't believe it.

"There's me growing up surrounded by papers, talking constantly about politics and the news, covering stories flat out about the Titanic at the time the Titanic Centre was being built, and no one ever mentioned it.

"I said, 'You never told me this?' And he said, 'You never asked'. I suppose he was right," he adds.

"Unfortunately, it doesn't look like we'll get to see my dad for Father's Day this year. Our family is shielding at the minute because my wife Catherine has lupus and rheumatoid arthritis, so it's really important that we don't go too far.

"I've haven't seen dad or my mum, Barbara, but we talk a lot on the phone.

"We have all our girls at home in Holywood at the minute Grace, who's 23; Holly, who's 21; and 15-year-old Joy.

"We have a bit of a tradition that on my birthday and Father's Day, I get them to come along for a sea swim with me, although we'll probably just all jump in the paddling pool in the garden this year. It'll be just as cold, I imagine.

"And while we'll probably not get to see my dad on Father's Day, he's 80 later this year so we're hoping by that time things will be different and we'll be able to have proper celebration."

Continued on page 8 'He's a lovely grandfather, very loving and caring, and he always has a joke to tell whether it's appropriate is a different thing' Continued from page 7 Peter Corry, himself a dad of three, says his father Norman, who turned 90 earlier this year, helped encourage him into the world of music. Preparing for the Titanic Drive-in Concerts in Belfast from July 3-5, the singer says lockdown hasn't been easy but, like everyone else, his family is getting through it My dad turned 90 in April, and he's doing really well. He

lives in east Belfast with my mum, and we've been up to visit quite a lot over the last two or three months to check they're both okay and that they have everything they need.

"We're doing the same as everyone else, really, dropping stuff off at the gate and talking over the garden fence. It's just a very surreal time.

"But this week we actually ventured a bit closer and sat in the garden for a while. That's progress. My dad is musical, too, and I had that all around me growing up.

"He worked in different jobs, he was in Shorts for a while and he sold cars. But he was big into brass bands, right up until recently.

"He played in a brass band that my brother conducts, and while he played loads of instruments, the one he played there and until recently was the cornet.

"He was very encouraging when it came to music," Peter adds.

"I remember the first time I really saw the power of music was when my dad was up playing a solo in church and I saw a woman beside me crying. That's when I realised just how emotionally powerful music could be, and that had a big effect on me.

"My mum sang in the church choir, and while my dad didn't sing a lot, I had a concert in the Opera House five years ago and he came up with me and sang a duet.

"We sang Edelweiss together, and that was a lovely moment. My dad was 85 at the time.

"He's a lovely grandfather, too. He has eight grandkids altogether, as well as eight great-grandchildren. He's very loving and caring, and he always has a joke to tell whether it's an appropriate joke, that's a different thing.

"I think he's quite proud of me and the work I've done, but he's equally proud of my brother who conducts the brass band, and of my sister as well," Peter says.

"Growing up, Mother's Day was always more of a thing, it always seemed that more was made of it, but Father's Day has come to the fore much more, which is a great thing. Us dads need our recognition, too!

"The last couple of Father's Days, we've been away, and myself and my wife Fleur got married on the weekend of Father's Day two years ago, so it was out in Italy

that we were able to give our dads their cards.

"This year, I've not been able to see my kids for most of the lockdown, but this week I got to see my daughter for the first time, and we're hopeful that if there's nice weather on Sunday we'll be able to sit outside and eat together in the garden.

"My sons aren't here, but one out of three isn't bad. It's a strange time for everyone, but we're getting through it."

"I think it'll be a card in the garden and a new home brewing kit. You've always got to think of these things when you're giving a present' NI weatherman Barra Best says he's taken up home brewing during lockdown, a hobby his dad Aidan started a few years ago Me and my dad are quite pally. He lives just around the corner from me in north Belfast so we're usually able to see quite a lot of each other. In normal times, if I haven't been doing much, I'll pop over on a Sunday and I usually manage to coincidentally time it for when they're having their lunch. That usually works out quite well for me.

"For the last few years my dad has been getting better and better at doing his own home brews, and I've started giving it a go myself during the lockdown.

"I've brewed some lagers, and most recently I did some Irish red ale.

"My lagers went down a treat, but the red ale was either more of an acquired taste, I did it wrong.

"My dad's a dab hand at the beers and he's just started making his own ciders. haven't had any yet, which I think means he likes it so much he hasn't been willing to share it with me.

It's a great hobby actually, and you can get about 40 pints made for £10, so it's worth a go.

"My dad's a social worker, and he's still working away. I'm not sure if he's planning his retirement any time soon and even if he was I'm not sure my step-mum would be up for that. I think he'll carry on for a while yet.

"Lockdown has been strange for us, like it has been for everyone. At the beginning I would see him if I was taking the dog out for a walk, and he'd stand out at the door to say hello. But that was it for ages," Barra adds.

"Gradually as things have eased a bit, and with six people able to meet outside, I've

been able to get around a bit more. He's got a big back garden and you don't have to go through the house to get there, you just go around the side.

"At first it was weird, with me on one side of the garden and him on the other, but it's the same experience everyone has had to get used to. It's better than it was, though, and hopefully things will carry on moving in this direction.

"We've been able to have a couple of beers together, too, but it was funny because I brought my own glass around to the garden, and my own home brews, too, and he had his own glass from the house and his own beers. There wasn't any sharing.

"My dad's always been good craic. I was kept in my place when I needed to be, but there wasn't too much strict discipline and we always had something to do.

"I remember when I was a kid, we went fishing quite a bit to the coast and if it was raining he'd happily just cut out a hole for the head and two arm holes from a bin bag for our waterproofs. That was obviously the fashion back then!

"We had lots of good times, like family holidays, and I have great memories of going over to Blackpool. But when I was a kid I don't remember doing all that much for Father's Day. I'd get him a card, and maybe my mum would buy a few beers for me to give him, but I think it's become more of a thing for families to celebrate in recent years.

"I wouldn't say I'm much of a cook, unless it's something for the microwave, so me offering to make him lunch wouldn't be that great. We'd normally go out in town to celebrate.

"But this year, obviously that won't be possible. I think it'll be a card in the garden and maybe a new home brewing kit. You've always got to think of these things when you're giving someone a present that he'll make it all up and in the end I'll hopefully get half."

'My dad loves chocolate so I'll whip up something like a mousse. It'll be a nice way to mark the day in strange times' Chef and broadcaster Paula McIntyre (above) will be delivering a special meal for her parents, David and Rae, tomorrow as a way to mark Father's Day grew up in Aghado-

wey, outside Coleraine and Ballymoney, and my dad was the headmaster at Magherafelt High School.

"I think he'd have been quite strict at school, but he wasn't like that at home. I think like most daughters you figure out a way to wrap them round your wee finger," she says.

"I started working in restaurants when I was a teenager and I always wanted to go down that route into cooking, but back in those days it wasn't considered a serious profession in the way it is now, particularly in the kitchens which were still a very male place to be.

"My parents both wanted me to go down the academic route, with my mum working as a teacher, too, and I totally saw the value in it.

"I got a scholarship then to go to America, so I got a lot out of my studying and I ended up teaching catering myself for 20 years, mostly at the Northern Regional College, alongside all my other work. It must be in the blood.

"Growing up, there was lots of laughter in our house. They'd be serious when they had to be, but my dad has always been good craic with a great sense of humour," she says.

"I stopped teaching in June 2019 as given all my other work it gradually had wound down to one day a week, and when I ended up making my way into the public eye a bit more with my cooking, my parents have been very proud, of course.

They're very proud as a family, but there wouldn't be much over-praising going on.

"My brother, who's also called David, has always taken the mick out of me. It started from when he was born and it's been non-stop since. It's great in that there's no way that anybody would let you get above your station.

"I know my parents are proud, though, and when I got my MBE a couple of years ago that was a big deal.

"They came to London with me and it was a great day although I think if you'd asked them when I was younger would something like that happen, they wouldn't have predicted it, not with the way I behaved.

"Let's just say I'd have been quite bold. I was quite the wee rebel back then so I sup-

pose they had their work cut out with a feisty, spirited teenager," Paula says.

"Normally for Father's Day, between me and my brother, we'd either go out or someone would cook, but this year everything's different, like it is for everyone.

"But there's a Chinese restaurant in Coleraine that my dad loves, and he really enjoys one of their duck dishes, so I think I'll try to do him something similar and drop it off at the house.

"Throughout the lockdown I've gone down a couple of times a week from where I live in Portstewart, staying out in the garden, and I've made them Sunday lunches and dropped them round.

"This week it'll be a bit special with a duck salad and some sort of beef for their main.

"My dad loves chocolate, too, so I'll do something like a chocolate whiskey mousse for them. Hopefully it'll be a nice way to mark the day, even in such strange times."

We're hoping when he turns 80 this year we'll have a proper celebration

I was quite the wee rebel so I suppose they had their work cut out

BEAUTY QUEEN: Miss Northern Ireland Lauren Leckey

THEN AND NOW: Lauren Leckey as a little girl with her dad Trevor and, right, Lauren after she was crowned Miss NI last year

PROUD DAD: Lauren Leckey with her dad Trevor

Dad-of-three Mark Simpson, one of BBC NI's most familiar faces (above), shares a serious passion for sport and the news with his dad John, who turns 80 later this year

SPECIAL TIMES: Mark Simpson with his dad John and (below) with wife Catherine and daughters Grace, Holly and Joy

BIG PALS: BBC NI weatherman Barra Best and dad Aidan take a selfie at a game and (left) at home

THEN AND NOW: Peter with dad Norman and mum Audrey and (right) as a young boy with his dad and (inset) with his wife Fleur Natacha Mellor

HAPPY FAMILY: Paula McIntyre, as a baby with her dad and grandmother and (below) cooking in her kitchen at home

CONTINUE READING



Antrim and Newtownabbey Council gives green light for 90 new homes project

...Park. In a further development for Antrim, a proposal for 56 dwellings on the site of the former **Northern Regional College** at Fountain Street has been received by the borough council. Michelle Weir, Local...

[CONTINUE READING](#)

**AUSSIE RULES FOOTBALL
SPECIAL FEATURE**



AFL Ireland president, Kevin McSorley, right, in action.

McSorley is looking to the future despite Covid concerns

Last November, Kevin McSorley was driven by the desire to further the sport of Australian Rules Football on this island after being appointed AFL Ireland president.

Fast forward seven months and his hopes for progress have been replaced with a drive to ensure the sport's survival in this country as Covid-19 and the subsequent restrictions impacting upon sport, particularly those that involve physical contact, take their toll.

Because Aussie Rules isn't a major game in Ireland, with a relatively small number of participants, many of whom are forced to balance their rugby and/or Gaelic Football commitments, the absence of any league action and even training so far this year means there are concerns that participation levels may fall to an unsustainable level.

At the beginning of his tenure as president of AFL Ireland, McSorley had set out his plans for the future in an ambitious and eye-catching strategic plan.

The Cookstown man was keen to address participation levels by introducing regional competitions, rather relying on just the All-Ireland League; he wanted to develop and bring a greater level of professionalism to the administrative side of the game, while also improving coaching and umpiring; he aimed to gain access to funding streams by gaining governance with Sport NI and Sport Ireland; he hoped to improve Ireland's international standing in the game, to bring it back to the level it

Cookstown man keen to see Australia's national sport grow in popularity at home writes Chris Caldwell



had been previously and finally he aimed to protect and grow the sport through professional promotion.

"One of the things I wanted to do was to develop accountability by giving people specific roles with jobs that needed done by a certain time and setting up teams of people who are accountable," explained the Newtownstewart native.

"It's about organising a structure and doing what every other sport is doing because it's never going to go anywhere, it's never going to go anywhere if it doesn't get organised.

"One of the big things was governance and I've had a fair few meetings with Sport NI and Sport Ireland and we've climbed a good bit up the ladder there. But until we get governance from either or both we don't qualify for grants from either."

It's the lack of financial support that is particularly frustrating for McSorley, who knows that without additional monetary support, his hopes of even getting access to an oval on which to play the sport properly will do nothing but hamper the development of Australian Rules Football on this island.

"As a player, having played for 15

or 16 years and then getting into coaching, there's things you get a wee bit frustrated with, and it's no-one's fault," added the Northern Regional College sports lecturer.

"We never had proper governance, we've never had a proper oval and when you get to go to Australia, which a couple of us have been fortunate enough to have done, and you play on ovals, you play at the MCG, we've played on the Kew Oval in London, when you get to experience that and then you have to come back and play 12-a-side on a rugby or GAA pitch, it's just not the same game.

"The first time we got to go to London, we played on the Surrey oval and I was like 'this is a different game! It's com-

pletely different!' You can actually play the game right and in Australia you have ovals dotted all around like parks here.

"And the other thing that is spurring me on is that GB have overtaken Ireland in the rankings and at tournaments over the last few years. There are a few reasons for that - they have a lot of Australian ex-pats there, they have a really strong league with three or four divisions, but they also have ovals everywhere. They are playing proper football so when it comes to the World or European tournaments, which are played on proper sized ovals, we get found out because our version is a

GAA version of Aussie Rules, it's very narrow, while they are using the wings and playing it properly because they are used to it."

The drive to develop a more professional organisation, which in turn will ensure and improvement of on-field facilities to encourage participation levels to increase is what is spurring McSorley (pictured) on, but he is fearful of the damage Covid-19 and lockdown is doing to his aspira-



tions for the sport.

"We put out a poll among our players [at the Belfast Redbacks, All-Ireland champions for the last two seasons] and only 12 were keen for the league to go ahead this season because some of the lads had just had kids and some are expecting, so understandably they are a bit concerned," he explained.

"[Lockdown] has had a big impact because this is the first year we've had a strategic plan in place and we're left kind of sitting on it at the moment and if the league doesn't run this year, which will result in a break in insurance which we're finding difficult to get at the minute, so it will be very hard and unless we get funding it's going to be hard because at the minute we are exclusively funded by the clubs.

"And on the pitch, in years gone by we had some exceptional players who couldn't go to international tournaments because they couldn't afford it. If we could get a grant to support them, then it would make a big difference.

"We're always there or thereabouts but when I first started we held everything, the World, 9-a-side, European's but bit by bit that was eroded and we don't hold any of them and we've gone from rank two, just behind Australia, to about third or fourth.

"There's lots to do but I'm very optimistic because there are some very good people on the committee, there's lots of energy. It's all up in the air but it's the same with every sport at the minute."

AUSSIE RULES FOOTBALL
SPECIAL FEATURE



AFL Ireland president, Kevin McSorley, right, in action.

McSorley is looking to the future despite Covid concerns

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Tyrone man keen to see Australia's national sport grow in popularity at home writes Chris Caldwell



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'It's about organising a structure and doing what every other sport is doing because it's never going to go anywhere, it's never going to go anywhere if it doesn't get organised.
'One of the big things was governance and I've had a fair few meetings with Sport NI and Sport Ireland and we've climbed a good bit up the ladder there. But until we get governance from either or both we don't qualify for grants from either.
It's the lack of financial support that is particularly frustrating for McSorley, who knows that without additional monetary support, his hopes of even getting access to an oval on which to play the sport properly will do nothing but hamper the development of Australian Rules Football on this island.
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his aspirations for the sport.
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'We're always there or thereabouts but when I first started we held everything, the World, 9-a-side, European's but bit by bit that was eroded and we don't hold any of them and we've gone from rank two, just behind Australia, to about third or fourth.
'There's lots to do but I'm very optimistic because there are some very good people on the committee, there's lots of energy. It's all up in the air but it's the same with every sport at the minute.'



College relocation 'on schedule' despite pandemic challenges

NORTHERN Regional College has confirmed that the relocation of its Coleraine campus to Beresford Avenue later this year remains "on schedule".

The College is to move to the former St Joseph's College premises while its new Union Street campus is built.

The move is part of an £84m capital investment programme, funded by the Department for the Economy, to develop new campuses on its current sites in Union Street, Coleraine and Farm Lodge, Ballymena.

Following an enforced six-week layoff because of COVID-19, the contractor is back on site, operating safely and is committed to completing the work within the planned timescale.

The College's Estates Team and the contractor have agreed a handover schedule, with 85% of the classrooms and IT suites ready for furniture and IT installations in mid-July.

The phased opening of the remainder of the building will allow access for enrolments in mid-August and ensure that Beresford Avenue is ready to accommodate staff and students for the start of the new academic year.

The new purpose-built Coleraine campus with state-of-the-art facilities will be on an extended site which includes the former Church of Ireland buildings on Brook Street. The existing College buildings at Union Street will be demolished.

Professor Terri Scott, Principal and Chief Executive of Northern Regional College said: "I am delighted that, despite challenges posed by the ongoing pandemic, our plans to relocate to Beresford Avenue remain very much on track.

"This temporary relocation marks an important milestone in what is a tremendously exciting project that will significantly benefit the local economy and open up exciting new career opportunities for students of all

ages in our new Coleraine campus.

"Our College Estates Team will be working closely over the summer months with the appointed contractor to ensure that necessary arrangements are in place for our students to return to class-based learning when it is safe to do so, in line with government guidance."



Professor Terri Scott, Principal and Chief Executive of Northern Regional College.



NRC's new campus in Union Street.

Media Source Press Page 8
Circulation 13,725
Also published in Ballycastle Chronicle

CORONAVIRUS CRISIS
£1 Million Investment in Rathlin Island Water Improvement Project Complete



Art competition now open for entries



The new water treatment facility at Rathlin Island.

Student turns passion into Instagram business

A Ballymoney student's passion for arts and crafts has developed into a thriving social media business during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Savannah Corbett, who studies ICT at Northern Regional College's Coleraine campus, has been keeping herself busy during lockdown by creating rainbow-themed bows and other hair accessories to show her support for NHS staff.

Having always had a keen interest in arts and crafts, the former Loreto College pupil explained how what started out as a hobby has now turned into a small business venture.

"I have always loved making bows and other accessories for myself, but when I started getting more and more requests to make them for other people, I realised that this could be a viable business idea," said Savannah.

"I started selling at local markets and car boot sales but then moved to selling them online on Instagram under the name Buddy's Boutique.

"I wanted to create something that would suit both adults and children alike and allow them to

show support for frontline workers in their own way. There are also plenty of people who wouldn't wear a bow, so I diversified into making NHS themed keyrings.

"It's just my little way of sharing a smile. I hope they continue to bring people a sense of happiness and hope, and demonstrate the huge amount of appreciation that everyone has for NHS and other frontline workers," she said.

Having completed her Level 3 course at the College, Savannah now plans to continue developing her creative skills by undertaking a degree in Interactive Media or Art and Design at Ulster University.

"My ICT course at the College has given me a fantastic platform for further study. What I've learned has been of great help and benefit, at both an educational and personal level, giving me with the skills and confidence to pursue further study at university. I'm looking forward to taking the next steps in my career," she said.

Applications are now open for all courses at Northern Regional College. For more information, go to www.nrc.ac.uk



A selection of Savannah Corbett's rainbow-themed accessories.



The Coleraine Chronicle | 16/06/2020

Media Source Online Visits 5,000

College relocation 'on schedule' despite pandemic challenges

NRC's new campus in Union Street. Tuesday 16 June 2020 10:31 NORTHERN Regional College has confirmed that the relocation of its Coleraine campus to Beresford Avenue later this year remains "on schedule"....

[CONTINUE READING](#)



Coleraine Times | 15/06/2020

Media Source Online Visits 17,190

Savannah: "It's my way of sharing a smile"

Savannah Corbett, who studies ICT at Northern Regional College's Coleraine campus, has been keeping herself busy during lockdown by creating rainbow-themed bows and other hair accessories to show her support...

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Ballymoney Moyle Times | 15/06/2020

Media Source Online Visits 30,095

Savannah: "It's my way of sharing a smile"



Savannah Corbett, who studies ICT at **Northern Regional College**'s Coleraine campus, has been keeping herself busy during lockdown by creating rainbow-themed bows and other hair accessories to show her support...

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Department for the Economy NI | 10/06/2020

Media Source	Online	Visits	25,960
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Department for the Economy public appointment extensions

...John McGrillen, have been further extended for nine months from 1 May 2020 to 31 January 2021. **Northern Regional College** The tenure of one GB member, David Lennox, has been further extended for two months...

[CONTINUE READING](#)



Causeway Chamber of Commerce | 09/06/2020

Media Source	Online	Visits	5,000
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Also published in Causeway Coast Community [+ 1 more]

College move to Beresford Avenue remains "on schedule"

Northern Regional College has confirmed that the relocation of its Coleraine campus to Beresford Avenue in the town later this year remains "on schedule". The College is to move to the former St Joseph's...

[CONTINUE READING](#)



Causeway Chamber of Commerce | 09/06/2020

Media Source Online Visits 5,000
Also published in Ballymena Guardian

"Hospitality is part of the heart and soul of Northern Ireland," says local chef

Two local chefs are partnering with **Northern Regional College** to promote hospitality as an attractive and rewarding career choice in Northern Ireland. Michael Caulfield is a part-time lecturer in Professional...

[CONTINUE READING](#)



Coleraine Times | 09/06/2020

Media Source Online Visits 17,190
Also published in Ballymoney Moyle Times

NRC campus move on schedule

...summer months with the appointed contractor to ensure that necessary arrangements are in place for our students to return to class-based learning when it is safe to do so, in line with government guidance."

[CONTINUE READING](#)



southantrimvox.co.uk | 09/06/2020

Media Source Online

Visits 11,467

Coleraine college campus move on schedule

Northern Regional College's Coleraine campus is to relocate to the former St Joseph's College premises while its new Union Street campus is built. The Beresford Avenue move later this year remains 'on...

[CONTINUE READING](#)



page 20

THE CHRONICLE, 11th June 2020

LOCAL FURTHER EDUCATION COLLEGES COPING WITH CORONAVIRUS

Top marks for college staff's charity challenge

STAFF across Northern Regional College's six campuses have clocked up hundreds of miles and raised thousands of pounds for a range of charities in Northern Ireland.

With fundraising activities and services of most charities severely disrupted by COVID-19 pandemic, staff came out in force to support the College's first ever dedicated Volunteer Day on Thursday, May 7 and over the Bank Holiday weekend.

The initiative saw employees across the Ballymena, Ballymoney, Coleraine, Magherafelt and Newtownabbey campuses channel their energy, enthusiasm and athleticism into a wide range of fitness activities, including sponsored walks, runs, cycles and even Portrush's first ever alternative Ironman challenge.

To date, thousands of pounds have been raised for Extern's Coronavirus Hardship Appeal via JustGiving and donations have also gone to several other charities, including Cancer research, Cardiomyopathy, Foyle Hospice, Cystic Fibrosis and COVID-19 research.

One of the major events was co-ordinated by Health & Social Care and Access lecturer Kate Pegram who invited colleagues to form virtual teams to walk, run or cycle a combined total of 79 miles – the distance between the College's campuses – as part of their daily exercise routine.

Kate said: "Throughout the lockdown period people have relished the opportunity to get out and about for their daily dose of exercise and fresh air, so we decided to capitalise on this and do some fundraising at the same time by organising the 'Around the Campuses' Challenge."

"We were blown away by the level of interest in this challenge, with over 140 staff participating and between them they covered a combined total of 1,115 miles."

IRONMAN

The College's Head of Science and Service Industries embarked upon his own 'Hell Freezes Over Tour (For a Good Cause)' Challenge, developing and completing an alternative Ironman Challenge in his garage in Portrush.

Aaron Ballantyne took just 10 hours and 28 minutes to complete a 12,000m indoor row, 112-mile-cycle and a 26.2-mile run with his bike

and treadmill linked to the Zwift platform.

"In the spirit of social distancing and limited outside exercise time, I decided to complete an indoor challenge at home in Portrush – opting to substitute the swim element with indoor rowing, rather than swimming thousands of lengths of the bath," Aaron explained.

"I received a huge amount of support and encouragement from colleagues and students at the College, as well as friends and family, which really spurred me on and helped me to complete the Ironman faster than I expected."

Other College staff remained grounded and reached out to help local communities by doing litter collections, DIY and gardening chores for neighbours and delivering food parcels.

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TUTORIALS

Cheryl provided the 30-minute tutorials – dubbed 'The Seated Sessions' – to 15 individual and care home groups in the Newtownabbey area, enabling residents to engage in some gentle movement in their communal areas during the lockdown period, when their usual activity providers are unable to enter care homes.

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Northern Regional College Head of Science and Service Industries, Aaron Ballantyne, who took part in an alternative Ironman challenge in his Portrush garage, pictured with his two children.

and/or talents to support the initiative and this is testament to the strong sense of community spirit that underpins Northern Regional College.

"Fundraising was important component of this initiative and, with many charities now facing serious financial hardship as a result of the pandemic, I know that all donations received will be most welcome. We are looking at ways to build on the success of our inaugural Volunteer Day so we can plan to help address community needs in the longer term."

So far, over £3,000 has been raised for Extern – a charity offering a unique continuum of specialist and dedicated services for families with new-born children right through to older people, covering a wide range of areas including: young people and families; housing and homelessness; mental health and suicide; alcohol and drugs; minority communities; justice services and skills/employability.

Grace O'Neill, Corporate and Community Relationship Officer at Extern said: "Extern wants to thank everyone from Northern Regional College involved in the tremendous fundraising activities that have raised over £3,000.00 for our Hardship Appeal."

"The Coronavirus crisis is our greatest public health emergency in living memory and means the families and individuals supported by Extern need our help now more than ever. Your support will ensure Extern can reach many more vulnerable members of the community who may need our help. Thank you for caring!"

Donations can still be made via JustGiving: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/around-the-campuses>



Cheryl McNeill, Business Engagement Officer at Newtownabbey campus.



THE CHRONICLE, 11th June 2020

Page 21

LOCAL FURTHER EDUCATION COLLEGES COPING WITH CORONAVIRUS

Colleges playing their part on front line of Covid-19 battle

THOUSANDS of students and staff from Northern Ireland's Further Education colleges have combined their time, talents and skills gained through their college courses to support frontline efforts to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.

More than 61,000 students are currently studying further and higher education courses at Belfast Metropolitan College, Northern Regional College, North West Regional College, Southern Regional College, South East Regional College and South West College.

Speaking on behalf of the heads of the six Colleges, Professor Terri Scott, Principal and Chief Executive at Northern Regional College explained: "As a network of six regional FE colleges, we are at the heart of every community in Northern Ireland and this is reflected in the outward-looking culture and strong sense of community spirit that underpins every one of our campuses."

"As College Principals, we have been greatly inspired by the tremendous demonstrations of solidarity and support from thousands of our students and staff in proactively giving their skill, talent and time to support others during these unprecedented times."

"Alongside their efforts to study and teach remotely from home, we have seen them really pull together to make what is, collectively, a very tangible and even lifesaving contribution to the frontline efforts to fight Coronavirus in Northern Ireland."

PPE

All six colleges have been involved in the production of PPE equipment, with North West Regional College and Southern Regional College arranging the production and delivery of hundreds of PPE face shields for frontline workers in hospitals and care homes across local health trusts.

Engineering staff at Northern Regional College have also used 3D printers to produce over 250 face shields, with Belfast Met supporting local medical firm Axial 3D in its production of hundreds of face shields by loaning the firm eight 3D printers.

Other students and staff have used more traditional methods to support the cry for PPE equipment, hand sewing hundreds of pairs of

scrubs and face masks.

South West College Community Lecturer Nicola Birnie has created craft kits for students, which they are using to make face masks and ear savers for staff in local hospitals and care homes.

Belfast Met Level 3 City and Guilds Textiles student Maria O'Prey has also sewn dozens of cotton face masks for local care homes, as well as for colleagues in her part-time job at Tesco.

At South East Regional College, Level 3 Foundation Diploma in Art & Design student Tetiana Nestorenko and Science lecturer Linda Lytle have also handsewn dozens of masks for staff at Ards Community Hospital.

HOSPITAL FIT OUTS

Students from a range of courses across the colleges have also been involved in the fit out of COVID-19 facilities at a number of hospitals.

Stanley Chapman, a Level 3 Electrical Apprentice from South East Regional College, has been working 12-hour shifts as part of the team installing the lighting system in a new part of the Ulster Hospital, working around the clock to get it ready for wards that will be required in the coming weeks.

Hundreds of current and former students and staff from across the six colleges' Health and Social Care courses are working as frontline healthcare workers and domiciliary assistants in hospitals,

care homes and in communities across Northern Ireland.

Northern Regional College lecturer Jacqui McAllister is volunteering as a healthcare assistant on the COVID-19 wards at Antrim Area Hospital during her weekends off, choosing to donate her pay for this work to Ulster University's COVID-19 testing fundraising appeal.

Former Southern Regional College Access and Health and Social Care student Louise Graham is now a nurse working on the COVID-19 ward in Craigavon Area Hospital, with former student Emma Hamilton also covering nursing shifts across Craigavon, Daisy Hill and the Royal Victoria Hospitals.

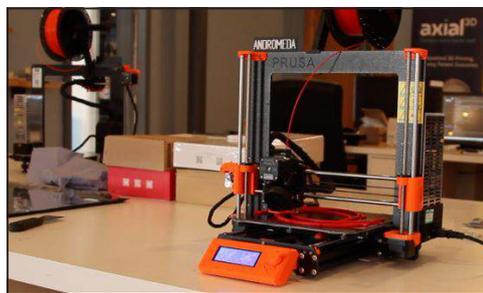
Thousands of students are also considered key workers at this time, serving in a range of roles in local supermarkets, community pharmacies and agri-food factories and production lines.

Others are turning to music as a source of support and encouragement. South West College Media lecturer Larry Lowe is encouraging people to listen to messages of hope in his song, 'Not Forever' and donate what they can to Omagh Foodbank and Support 2gether.

Music students at North West Regional College, meanwhile, produced two recorded online performances as a special tribute to the NHS, receiving unprecedented levels of social media reach and engagement.



Students at North West Regional College produced two recorded online performances as a special tribute to the NHS.



An example of a 3D printer used by the Colleges to produce PPE face shields.



Northern Regional College - PPE face shields 3D printed by NRC

Media Source Press Page 18
 Circulation 13,725
 Also published in Ballycastle Chronicle [+ 1 more]



Student support services continue despite college closures

STAFF and students across further and higher education colleges in Northern Ireland have been exploring new ways to ensure that teaching and student support services continue remotely while under lockdown regulations caused by the Coronavirus pandemic.

Across the six colleges of further and higher education - Belfast Metropolitan College, North West Regional College, Northern Regional College, South Eastern Regional College, South West College and Southern Regional College - staff have



Caitriona Cullen, a learning mentor at a further and higher education college, is continuing to offer virtual, one-to-one support to students while under lockdown regulations caused by the Coronavirus pandemic.

developed new ways to support their students and have adapted to technology to help maintain quality education standards.

A fundamental part of a fulfilling college life for many students is the delivery of support services, including pastoral care, counselling, health and well-being and learning support.

MENTAL HEALTH

As such, student support, particularly with regards to mental health and well-being throughout this challenging time, has been paramount in all actions taken by further and higher education colleges.

The colleges have moved quickly to implement alternative support arrangements for all students, whose day-to-day lives have been drastically changed by the pandemic.

Learning and support services are continuing online through a series of workshops, and there has been constant promotion of external support services. The counselling provision across all colleges, available through Inspire, has also been open for business.

A Level 3 BTEC IT Practitioner student with dyslexia, shared his experience of receiving continued virtual, one-to-one support, from a learning mentor who specialises in assisting with literacy, processing information and planning assignments.

The student said: "I didn't get off to a flying start with online learning. At the beginning I was finding it hard to take part in the classes through the online learning platform and I was quickly falling behind.

"Thankfully my tutors and learning mentor got in touch with me. Through a Teams Meeting we talked about the steps we could take to start learning from home. We agreed that I would receive the class notes beforehand to help me prepare for the lesson and to get more from it.

MENTOR

"My learning support mentor has also been able to continue providing virtual support through e-portfolios and discussion boards, to help with literacy, terminology and work plans, as we would have done in the college before the lockdown. This support has really boosted my confidence to take part in the online lessons and I'm back up to speed with my assignments."

Sharon Pritchard,

Student Services Manager at a college of further and higher education said: "Students are facing an incredibly challenging time - some students and their families may contract the Coronavirus, some have caring responsibilities, some students may struggle to study from home due to lack of equipment or internet access and others may be contributing to the frontline effort.

"Whatever the case may be, colleges have dedicated staff who are working immensely hard to ensure that students have the support and resources they need to keep up with their studies and also to keep a healthy frame of mind in these uncertain times."

Contact your local college of further and higher education for details.

Media Source Press Page 19
 Circulation 13,725
 Also published in Ballycastle Chronicle [+ 2 more]



Colleges continue support for industry

FURTHER and higher education colleges across Northern Ireland are urging local businesses to avail of the wealth of resources and new approaches to accredited training and upskilling opportunities quickly adapted by the colleges to meet current pandemic circumstances.

The online provision, mentoring and bespoke offerings will be essential to meeting the needs of the business community, learners in employment and those returning to employment in the drive to revive the economy.

The six colleges of further and higher education - South Eastern Regional College, South West College, Southern



Neil McCauley, who is employed by Northern Ireland based McQuillan Environmental, turned his career experience into Professional Recognition achieving the equivalent to a vocational masters with a Level 7 City & Guilds Professional Recognition Engineering Management at a college of further education.

Regional College, North West Regional College, Northern Regional College and Belfast Metropolitan College - continue to offer a range of facilitated programmes designed to upskill individuals and work teams in a range of industry sectors

including business, leadership management, construction, healthcare and hospitality along with

digital transformation skills. The colleges have helped many small businesses move to an online presence so they can continue their business remotely during lockdown. Colleges can also create bespoke courses to meet the needs of individual businesses and work with individuals to upskill.

Neil McCauley, turned his career experience into Professional Recognition achieving the equivalent to a vocational masters with a Level 7 City & Guilds Professional Recognition Engineering Management through support from a college of further education.

Neil worked in various roles early in his career including in a bank, in construction and ended up securing a post with Almac which propelled him into the high-tech industry of chemical

processing. His role there led to supervising and management of staff.

He worked there for seven years before progressing to McQuillan Environmental, a Northern Ireland based family run business which incorporates a diverse range of activities including civil engineering, demolition, quarrying, hazardous and non-hazardous waste management, outdoor cleaning services and analytical chemistry.

He said, "I have learnt many things about the industry and picked up skills and experience over the years which has allowed me to progress in my career to Technical Manager."

"Essentially, I took a different route by learning and progressing on the job. I became aware of turning my skills and experience into a

professional recognised qualification and achieved City & Guilds Level 7 Professional Recognition which recognises the knowledge, experience, and strategic role I have accumulated working in the industry."

He added, "I would encourage anyone working in industry, who maybe didn't take the traditional degree route, but who have been working their way up their company to gather the evidence they need to achieve professional recognition with support from their local college."

Skills Focus programmes, which are fully funded by the Department for the Economy (DfE) and usually delivered in the workplace or college facilities, have been adapted for online delivery. This means that employees

who are currently working remotely can join programmes, available now, to upskill whilst they are furloughed or continue to work from home.

In addition, the InnovateUs programme, which is offered across Northern Ireland through the six further and higher education colleges, is a fully funded skills development programme from DfE which provides small business with less than 50 employees with the capacity to innovate across a range of business development activities, providing up to 60 hours of fully funded mentoring in a number of key areas including engineering, product design and development and digital transformation.

Contact your local college of further and higher education for details.

Media Source Press Page 18
 Circulation 13,725
 Also published in Ballycastle Chronicle [+ 1 more]



LOCAL FURTHER EDUCATION COLLEGES COPING WITH CORONAVIRUS

Top marks for college staff's charity challenge

STAFF across Northern Regional College's six campuses have clocked up hundreds of miles and raised thousands of pounds for a range of charities in Northern Ireland.

With fundraising activities and services of most charities severely disrupted by COVID-19 pandemic, staff came out in force to support the College's first ever dedicated Volunteer Day on Thursday, May 7 and over the Bank Holiday weekend.

The initiative saw employees across the Ballymena, Ballymoney, Coleraine, Magherafelt and Newtownabbey campuses channel their energy, enthusiasm and athleticism into a wide range of fitness activities, including sponsored walks, runs, cycles and even Portrush's first ever alternative Ironman challenge.

To date, thousands of pounds have been raised for Extern's Coronavirus Hardship Appeal via JustGiving and donations have also gone to several other charities, including Cancer research, Cardiomyopathy, Foyle Hospice, Cystic Fibrosis and COVID-19 research.

One of the major events was co-ordinated by Health & Social Care and Access lecturer Kate Pegram who invited colleagues to form virtual teams to walk, run or cycle a combined total of 79 miles – the distance between the College's campuses – as part of their daily exercise routine.

Kate said: "Throughout the lockdown period people have relished the opportunity to get out and about for their daily dose of exercise and fresh air, so we decided to capitalise on this and do some fundraising at the same time by organising the 'Around the Campuses' Challenge."

"We were blown away by the level of interest in this challenge, with over 140 staff participating and between them they covered a combined total of 1,115 miles."

IRONMAN

The College's Head of Science and Service Industries embarked upon his own 'Hell Freezes Over Tour (For a Good Cause)' Challenge, developing and completing an alternative Ironman Challenge in his garage in Portrush.

Aaron Ballantyne took just 10 hours and 28 minutes to complete a 12,000m indoor row, 112-mile-cycle and a 26.2-mile run with his bike

and treadmill linked to the Zwift platform. "In the spirit of social distancing and limited outside exercise time, I decided to complete an indoor challenge at home in Portrush – opting to substitute the swim element with indoor rowing, rather than swimming thousands of lengths of the bath," Aaron explained.

"I received a huge amount of support and encouragement from colleagues and students at the College, as well as friends and family, which really spurred me on and helped me to complete the Ironman faster than I expected."

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Cheryl McNeill, Business Engagement Officer at Newtownabbey campus.



Belfast Telegraph | 08/06/2020

Media Source Online Visits 1,213,791

Welcoming a new dawn of learning

...colleges have also been involved in the fit out of the new facilities at a number of hospitals. **Northern Regional College** is one of those to embrace a wide range of technology and digital platforms to deliver...

[CONTINUE READING](#)



Ballymena Daily | 04/06/2020

Media Source Online Visits 11,919

Also published in Causeway Coast Community [+ 2 more]

'Hospitality is part of the heart and soul of Northern Ireland,' says chef

...**Ballymoney**. These include entry level programmes to Level 3 - the equivalent of A Level standard - which can form a progression route to employment or university. For further information, visit www.nrc.ac.uk.

[CONTINUE READING](#)



Randex | 04/06/2020

Media Source Online Visits 115,827

We Are Randex | How James Davidson became a Mechanical Design Engineer at Randex



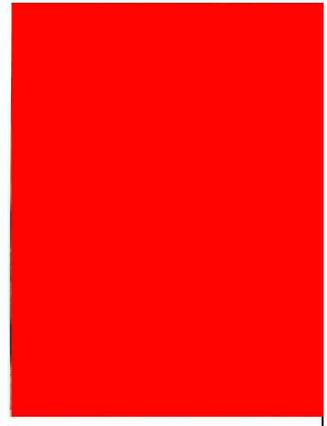
...to go to university as I had planned. I subsequently went along to an information evening at the Northern Regional College in Ballymena where I found out about the Higher National Diploma in Manufacturing...

CONTINUE READING

Media Source Press
Circulation 6,337

Page 56,57,58

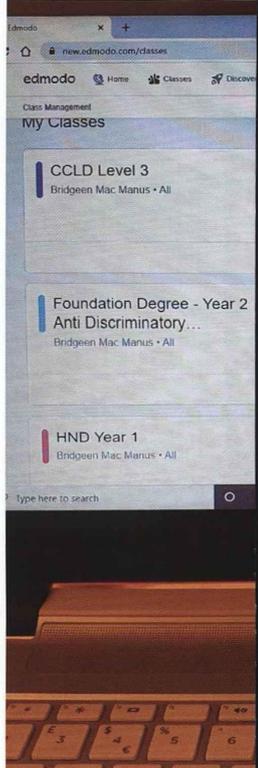
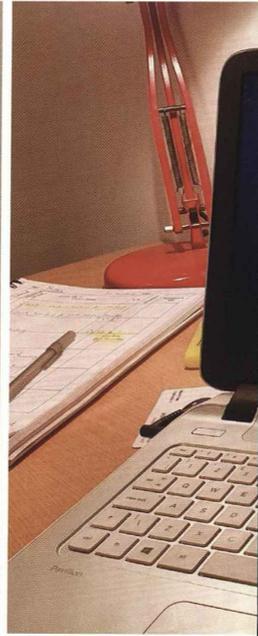
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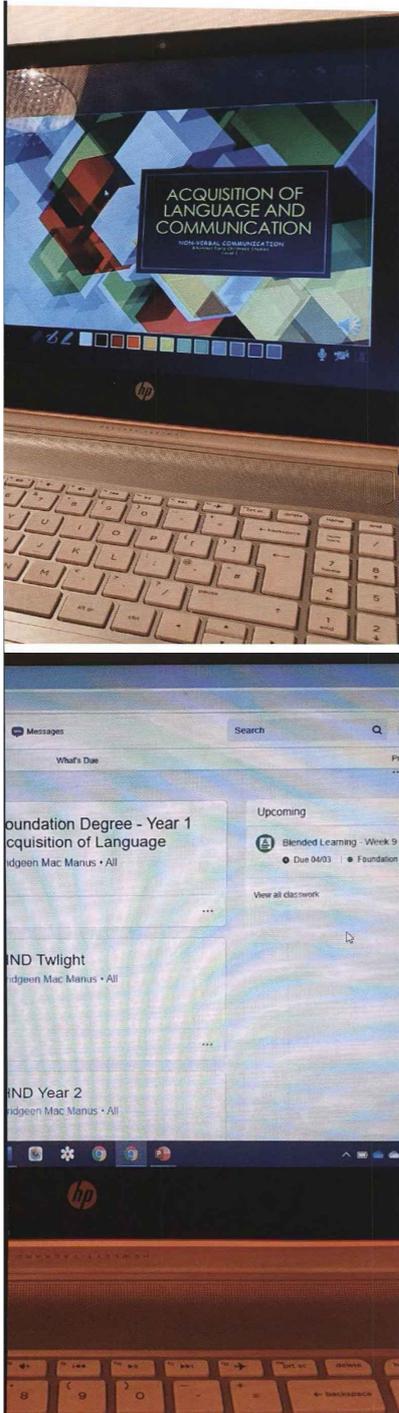
Welcoming a new dawn of learning



As Zoom, Microsoft Teams and other apps become the new (temporary) norm for many, companies, colleges, schools and universities across Northern Ireland are turning their attention to teaching online, with remote learning – in some cases using their own technologies to help other countries train staff. **Ulster Business** looks at learning in a new environment



Bridgeen McManus from North West Regional College



All of Northern Ireland's further education colleges are now continuing study for around three-quarters of students through the prism of virtual learning.

It's something which has come out of necessity, rather than choice. And while we're all yearning for the days when we can return to a social, educational or working environment, we're having to deal with the problem that's now in front of us.

"There have been around 50,000 online engagements with students, and learning continues in subject areas as diverse as software development, engineering, hair and beauty, plumbing and languages," Economy Minister Diane Dodds said.

"Our further education colleges play a crucial and significant role in the success of Northern Ireland. Their response to the pandemic, ensuring that learners can continue their studies and providing crucial support networks to make that possible, demonstrates their commitment to the people who study with them. I commend and thank all the staff for their efforts in adapting to the challenges posed by Covid-19."

In one particular case towards the start of UK and Ireland-wide lockdown, a Belfast college began to help train students in Croatia within the construction sector through after offering up access to its online portal as nations make the switch to remote learning.

Belfast Metropolitan College's BIMcert digital

construction learning platform is now being used by a Croatian vocational school for its online training, as schools in country are having to shut to help curb the spread of coronavirus.

The Croatian Agency for Vocational Education and Training appealed for help in securing additional specific online training.

The pan-European action to help offer up the schemes is being taken by the Belfast Met-led project, along with the full support of the BIMcert programme manager, Mr Paul McCormack.

"We want our training offering to benefit the European construction industry but we are also conscious of delivering real societal benefit to countries at this time of need," he said.

"Due to the ongoing global crisis we are all dealing with currently we are all now looking at the way we live and indeed the way we work."

Our universities have also branched out and flexed their digital muscles amid the crisis. Queen's University has just launched a free online part-time postgraduate certificate in software development, to upskill and retrain individuals in programming, testing and computing foundations.

The Department for the Economy will be funding 100 places on the course, offering upskilling for those who have either been furloughed or lost their job due to the pandemic. >



Economy Minister Diane Dodds with Brian Doran, principal, during her visit to Southern Regional College in Lurgan to meet staff making PPE for frontline workers



Meanwhile, in recent weeks, thousands of students and staff from Northern Ireland's further education colleges have combined their time, talents and skills gained through their college courses to support frontline efforts to fight coronavirus.

All six colleges have been involved in the production of PPE equipment, while students from a range of courses across the colleges have also been involved in the fit out of the new facilities at a number of hospitals.

Northern Regional College is one of those to embrace a wide range of technology and digital platforms to deliver online learning to its students. Thanks to the power of technology, around 4,000 of the college's students who normally attend classes at its campuses in Newtownabbey, Magherafelt, Ballymena, Ballymoney and Coleraine are now learning from home.

Figures released by the college show that during the past few weeks its Canvas e-learning platform, currently being used by students at home, has received around 700,000 views, while students have logged into the college's learning assistant platform almost 13,000 times, uploading 5,775 pieces of work, and have viewed 1,912 videos, through LinkedIn Learning.

The college says "lecturing staff have also embraced technology and are staying in touch with their students by email and phone

using Zoom and Skype to carry out online assessments to ensure that students can complete their studies".

And South Eastern Regional College has launched a comprehensive programme of online support designed to upskill individuals and work teams in a range of industry sectors.

For those of a younger age, a Belfast educational technology company has also seen a fourfold increase in global demand for its maths learning tools as parents look for resources to help their children keep learning during the coronavirus lockdown.

Komodo Learning is a maths learning system for children aged five to 11 which is designed to supplement primary school maths at home. It provides animated video guidance and short practice exercises that can be accessed on smartphones, tablets and computers, with learning individually tailored to each child's needs by a maths teacher.

Founder Gerard McBreen said the lockdown in many countries has resulted in increased interest from parents looking for resources they can trust. "Komodo has been helping parents to support their children's maths learning for years but since schools have closed, we've been called upon by even more parents who have had to become their children's sole educators. It is not how we expected to grow the business but we are responding to the rise in demand."

But for our best and brightest already through the system, the final step has been irreparably damaged due to the crisis.

The rite of passage of all university students saw many forgoing the traditional grand graduation ceremony for something with a few more ones and zeros.

Among them was Dr Abbie Harte (24), who studied for six years to achieve her medicine degree, which she was awarded on her laptop screen in a virtual celebration last amid the Covid-19 lockdown restrictions.

The university has committed to holding further celebrations in the future to allow graduates to reflect on their achievements with family and friends.

"Although a traditional ceremony would be nice to mark the end of our medical degree and a lovely way to celebrate with close family and friends, I think that we are all extremely understanding of the current situation and why we weren't able to have a traditional ceremony," she told the Belfast Telegraph.

"It wasn't the celebration we were all hoping to have, but it was a lovely day and I was able to celebrate with my close family to acknowledge the end of a challenging six years. It's definitely a small sacrifice to make, especially when you see how hard all key workers are working at the moment." ■

Media Source Press
Circulation 12,381

Page 3



remember how everyone said how much it had their class.

and still missing them," added Sharon.

Magherafelt College staff clocking up miles to support charities in COVID fight

Staff across Northern Regional College's six campuses, including Magherafelt, have clocked up hundreds of miles and raised thousands of pounds for a range of charities in Northern Ireland.

With fundraising activities and services of most charities severely disrupted by COVID-19 pandemic, staff came out in force to support the College's first ever dedicated Volunteer Day on Thursday 07 May and over the Bank Holiday weekend.

The initiative saw employees across the Ballymena, Ballymoney, Coleraine, Magherafelt and Newtownabbey campuses channel their energy, enthusiasm and athleticism into a wide range of fitness activities, including sponsored walks, runs, cycles and even Portrush's first ever alternative Ironman challenge.

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So far, over £3,000 has been raised for Extern – a charity offering a unique continuum of specialist and dedicated services for families with new-born children right through to older people, covering a wide range of areas including: young people and families; housing and homelessness; mental health and suicide; alcohol and drugs; minority communities; justice services and skills/employability.

Grace O'Neill, Corporate and Community Relationship Officer at Extern said: "Extern wants to thank everyone from Northern Regional College involved in the tremendous fundraising activities that have raised over £3,000.00 for our Hardship Appeal. The Coronavirus crisis is our greatest public health emergency in living memory and means the families and individuals supported by Extern need our help now more than ever. Your support will ensure Extern can reach many more vulnerable members of the community who may need our help. Thank you for caring!"

Donations can still be made via JustGiving:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/around-the-campuses>



northernirelandchamber.com | 29/06/2020

Media Source Online Visits 19,955
Also published in BUSINESSFIRST

Northern Regional College offers a helping hand with free virtual learning courses.

...develop the skills, attributes and behaviours required to enter and succeed in the world of work. The **Essential Skills** courses on offer include Level 1 and Level 2 certificates in ICT which are designed to help...

[CONTINUE READING](#)



BUSINESSFIRST | 28/06/2020

Media Source Online Visits 130,644

Student Art and Design showcase to be broadcast online

With lockdown restrictions in place, Art, Design and Media Practice students at **Northern Regional College** have been unable to host their traditional end of year show. However, a digital alternative has...

[CONTINUE READING](#)



Ballymena Daily | 25/06/2020

Media Source Online Visits 11,919
Also published in Ballymena Daily [+ 3 more]



Northern Regional College offers a helping hand with free virtual learning courses

Northern Regional College is offering a range of free fully accredited short online courses for people who want to upskill or retrain. The courses will focus on improving digital skills, essential skills...

[CONTINUE READING](#)



syncni.com | 25/06/2020

Media Source	Online	Visits	92,900
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Jun 25, 2020 Posted by Niamh Campbell Northern Regional College (NRC) is offering a range of free, fully accredited short online courses for people who want to upskill or retrain. The courses will...

[CONTINUE READING](#)



northernirelandchamber.com | 23/06/2020

Media Source	Online	Visits	19,955
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Also published in Ballymena Daily [+ 1 more]

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Image: 'Emma Watson' by Vicki Turton, Art, Design and Media Practice student at **Northern Regional College** With lockdown restrictions in place, Art, Design and Media Practice students at **Northern Regional**...

CONTINUE READING

Media Source Press Page 26
 Circulation 12,381
 Also published in Tyrone Courier



Ministers welcome success of medicine delivery service
 Colleges show support for industry

Local Further Education Colleges combine talents & skills in support of pandemic fight

In recent weeks, thousands of students and staff from Northern Ireland's Further Education (FE) colleges - including three in Dungannon, Cookstown and Magherafelt - have combined their time, talents and skills gained through their college courses to support frontline efforts to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.

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South West College on song during the pandemic lockdown.



Northern Regional College's 3D masks. SC202012

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"As College Principals, we have been greatly inspired

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syncni.com | 17/06/2020

Media Source Online

Visits 92,900

NI's FE colleges promote business recovery through part-time learning

...Eastern Regional College, South West College, Southern Regional College, North West Regional College, **Northern Regional College** or Belfast Metropolitan College. About the author An article that is attributed...

[CONTINUE READING](#)

Colleges continue support for industry



THE CHRONICLE, 11th June 2020

Page 21

LOCAL FURTHER EDUCATION COLLEGES COPING WITH CORONAVIRUS

Colleges playing their part on front line of Covid-19 battle

THOUSANDS of students and staff from Northern Ireland's Further Education colleges have combined their time, talents and skills gained through their college courses to support frontline efforts to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Northern Regional College - PPE face shields 3D printed by NRC

Media Source Press Page 18
 Circulation 13,725
 Also published in Ballycastle Chronicle [+ 1 more]



Student support services continue despite college closures

STAFF and students across further and higher education colleges in Northern Ireland have been exploring new ways to ensure that teaching and student support services continue remotely while under lockdown regulations caused by the Coronavirus pandemic.

Across the six colleges of further and higher education - Belfast Metropolitan College, North West Regional College, Northern Regional College, South Eastern Regional College, South West College and Southern Regional College - staff have



Caitriona Cullen, a learning mentor at a further and higher education college, is continuing to offer virtual, one-to-one support to students while under lockdown regulations caused by the Coronavirus pandemic.

developed new ways to support their students and have adapted to technology to help maintain quality education standards.

A fundamental part of a fulfilling college life for many students is the delivery of support services, including pastoral care, counselling, health and well-being and learning support.

MENTAL HEALTH

As such, student support, particularly with regards to mental health and well-being throughout this challenging time, has been paramount in all actions taken by further and higher education colleges.

The colleges have moved quickly to implement alternative support arrangements for all students, whose day-to-day lives have been drastically changed by the pandemic.

Learning and support services are continuing online through a series of workshops, and there has been constant promotion of external support services. The counselling provision across all colleges, available through Inspire, has also been open for business.

A Level 3 BTEC IT Practitioner student with dyslexia, shared his experience of receiving continued virtual, one-to-one support, from a learning mentor who specialises in assisting with literacy, processing information and planning assignments.

The student said: "I didn't get off to a flying start with online learning. At the beginning I was finding it hard to take part in the classes through the online learning platform and I was quickly falling behind.

"Thankfully my tutors and learning mentor got in touch with me. Through a Teams Meeting we talked about the steps we could take to start learning from home. We agreed that I would receive the class notes beforehand to help me prepare for the lesson and to get more from it.

MENTOR

"My learning support mentor has also been able to continue providing virtual support through e-portfolios and discussion boards, to help with literacy, terminology and work plans, as we would have done in the college before the lockdown. This support has really boosted my confidence to take part in the online lessons and I'm back up to speed with my assignments."

Sharon Pritchard,

Student Services Manager at a college of further and higher education said: "Students are facing an incredibly challenging time - some students and their families may contract the Coronavirus, some have caring responsibilities, some students may struggle to study from home due to lack of equipment or internet access and others may be contributing to the frontline effort.

"Whatever the case may be, colleges have dedicated staff who are working immensely hard to ensure that students have the support and resources they need to keep up with their studies and also to keep a healthy frame of mind in these uncertain times."

Contact your local college of further and higher education for details.

Media Source Press Page 19
 Circulation 13,725
 Also published in Ballycastle Chronicle [+ 2 more]



Colleges continue support for industry

FURTHER and higher education colleges across Northern Ireland are urging local businesses to avail of the wealth of resources and new approaches to accredited training and upskilling opportunities quickly adapted by the colleges to meet current pandemic circumstances.

The online provision, mentoring and bespoke offerings will be essential to meeting the needs of the business community, learners in employment and those returning to employment in the drive to revive the economy.

The six colleges of further and higher education - South Eastern Regional College, South West College, Southern



Neil McCauley, who is employed by Northern Ireland based McQuillan Environmental, turned his career experience into Professional Recognition achieving the equivalent to a vocational masters with a Level 7 City & Guilds Professional Recognition Engineering Management at a college of further education.

Regional College, North West Regional College, Northern Regional College and Belfast Metropolitan College - continue to offer a range of facilitated programmes designed to upskill individuals and work teams in a range of industry sectors

including business, leadership management, construction, healthcare and hospitality along with

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He worked there for seven years before progressing to McQuillan Environmental, a Northern Ireland based family run business which incorporates a diverse range of activities including civil engineering, demolition, quarrying, hazardous and non-hazardous waste management, outdoor cleaning services and analytical chemistry.

He said, "I have learnt many things about the industry and picked up skills and experience over the years which has allowed me to progress in my career to Technical Manager."

"Essentially, I took a different route by learning and progressing on the job. I became aware of turning my skills and experience into a

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He added, "I would encourage anyone working in industry, who maybe didn't take the traditional degree route, but who have been working their way up their company to gather the evidence they need to achieve professional recognition with support from their local college."

Skills Focus programmes, which are fully funded by the Department for the Economy (DfE) and usually delivered in the workplace or college facilities, have been adapted for online delivery. This means that employees

who are currently working remotely can join programmes, available now, to upskill whilst they are furloughed or continue to work from home.

In addition, the InnovateUs programme, which is offered across Northern Ireland through the six further and higher education colleges, is a fully funded skills development programme from DfE which provides small business with less than 50 employees with the capacity to innovate across a range of business development activities, providing up to 60 hours of fully funded mentoring in a number of key areas including engineering, product design and development and digital transformation.

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northernirelandchamber.com | 29/06/2020

Media Source Online Visits 19,955
Also published in BUSINESSFIRST

Northern Regional College offers a helping hand with free virtual learning courses.

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Ballymena Daily | 25/06/2020

Media Source Online Visits 11,919
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syncni.com | 25/06/2020

Media Source Online Visits 92,900



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Jun 25, 2020 Posted by Niamh Campbell Northern Regional College (NRC) is offering a range of free, fully accredited short online courses for people who want to upskill or retrain. The courses will...

[CONTINUE READING](#)



Radox | 04/06/2020

Media Source Online Visits 115,827

We Are Radox | How James Davidson became a Mechanical Design Engineer at Radox

...to go to university as I had planned. I subsequently went along to an information evening at the Northern Regional College in Ballymena where I found out about the Higher National Diploma in Manufacturing...

[CONTINUE READING](#)

Media Source Press Page 26
 Circulation 12,381
 Also published in Tyrone Courier



Ministers welcome success of medicine delivery service
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Northern Regional College's 3D masks. SC202012

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THE CHRONICLE, 11th June 2020

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He added, "I would encourage anyone working in industry, who maybe didn't take the traditional degree route, but who have been working their way up their company to gather the evidence they need to achieve professional recognition with support from their local college."

Skills Focus programmes, which are fully funded by the Department for the Economy (DfE) and usually delivered in the workplace or college facilities, have been adapted for online delivery. This means that employees

who are currently working remotely can join programmes, available now, to upskill whilst they are furloughed or continue to work from home.

In addition, the InnovateUs programme, which is offered across Northern Ireland through the six further and higher education colleges, is a fully funded skills development programme from DfE which provides small business with less than 50 employees with the capacity to innovate across a range of business development activities, providing up to 60 hours of fully funded mentoring in a number of key areas including engineering, product design and development and digital transformation.

Contact your local college of further and higher education for details.



College applications down by 40% in some areas

Applications to Northern Ireland's six further education colleges are down by 40% in some areas.

[Radio-Clip](#)



Media Source Online Visits 1,213,791

Welcoming a new dawn of learning

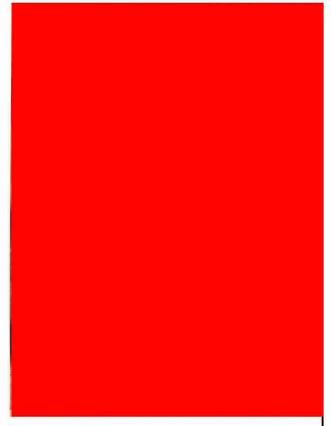
...colleges have also been involved in the fit out of the new facilities at a number of hospitals. **Northern Regional College** is one of those to embrace a wide range of technology and digital platforms to deliver...

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Page 56,57,58

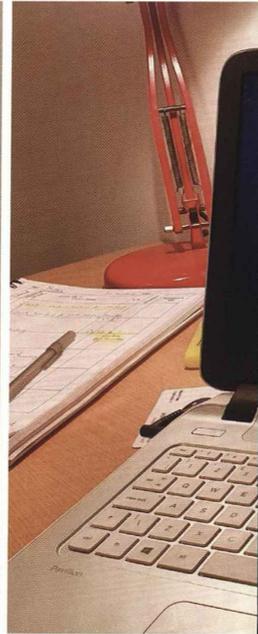
MANAGEMENT EDUCATION



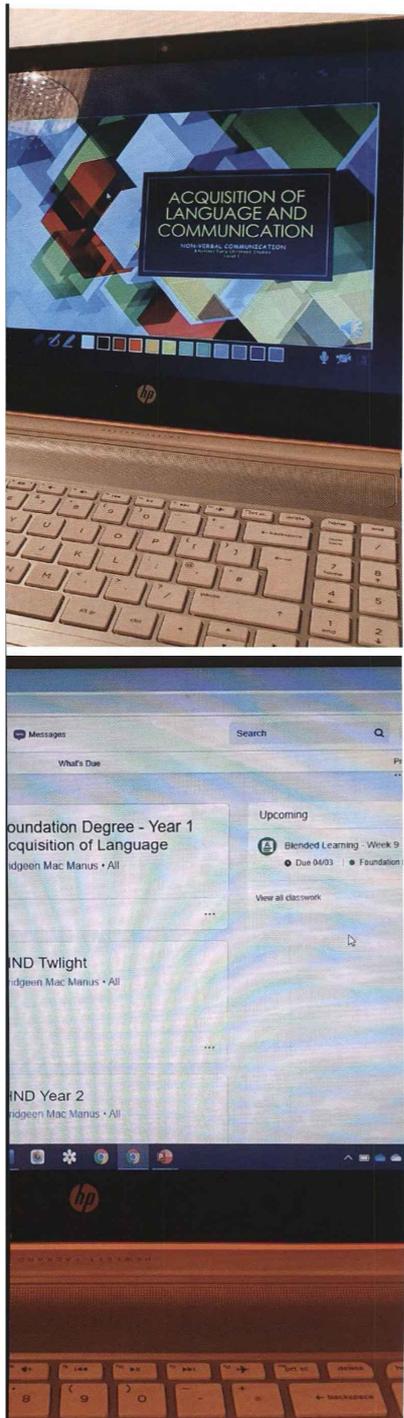
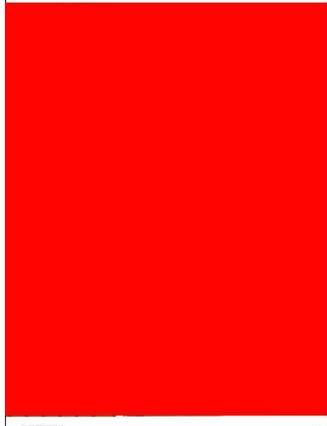
Welcoming a new dawn of learning



As Zoom, Microsoft Teams and other apps become the new (temporary) norm for many companies, colleges, schools and universities across Northern Ireland are turning their attention to teaching online, with remote learning – in some cases using their own technologies to help other countries train staff. **Ulster Business** looks at learning in a new environment



Bridgeen McManus from North West Regional College



All of Northern Ireland's further education colleges are now continuing study for around three-quarters of students through the prism of virtual learning.

It's something which has come out of necessity, rather than choice. And while we're all yearning for the days when we can return to a social, educational or working environment, we're having to deal with the problem that's now in front of us.

"There have been around 50,000 online engagements with students, and learning continues in subject areas as diverse as software development, engineering, hair and beauty, plumbing and languages," Economy Minister Diane Dodds said.

"Our further education colleges play a crucial and significant role in the success of Northern Ireland. Their response to the pandemic, ensuring that learners can continue their studies and providing crucial support networks to make that possible, demonstrates their commitment to the people who study with them. I commend and thank all the staff for their efforts in adapting to the challenges posed by Covid-19."

In one particular case towards the start of UK and Ireland-wide lockdown, a Belfast college began to help train students in Croatia within the construction sector through after offering up access to its online portal as nations make the switch to remote learning.

Belfast Metropolitan College's BIMcert digital

construction learning platform is now being used by a Croatian vocational school for its online training, as schools in country are having to shut to help curb the spread of coronavirus.

The Croatian Agency for Vocational Education and Training appealed for help in securing additional specific online training.

The pan-European action to help offer up the schemes is being taken by the Belfast Met-led project, along with the full support of the BIMcert programme manager, Mr Paul McCormack.

"We want our training offering to benefit the European construction industry but we are also conscious of delivering real societal benefit to countries at this time of need," he said.

"Due to the ongoing global crisis we are all dealing with currently we are all now looking at the way we live and indeed the way we work."

Our universities have also branched out and flexed their digital muscles amid the crisis. Queen's University has just launched a free online part-time postgraduate certificate in software development, to upskill and retrain individuals in programming, testing and computing foundations.

The Department for the Economy will be funding 100 places on the course, offering upskilling for those who have either been furloughed or lost their job due to the pandemic. >



Economy Minister Diane Dodds with Brian Doran, principal, during her visit to Southern Regional College in Lurgan to meet staff making PPE for frontline workers



Meanwhile, in recent weeks, thousands of students and staff from Northern Ireland's further education colleges have combined their time, talents and skills gained through their college courses to support frontline efforts to fight coronavirus.

All six colleges have been involved in the production of PPE equipment, while students from a range of courses across the colleges have also been involved in the fit out of the new facilities at a number of hospitals.

Northern Regional College is one of those to embrace a wide range of technology and digital platforms to deliver online learning to its students. Thanks to the power of technology, around 4,000 of the college's students who normally attend classes at its campuses in Newtownabbey, Magherafelt, Ballymena, Ballymoney and Coleraine are now learning from home.

Figures released by the college show that during the past few weeks its Canvas e-learning platform, currently being used by students at home, has received around 700,000 views, while students have logged into the college's learning assistant platform almost 13,000 times, uploading 5,775 pieces of work, and have viewed 1,912 videos, through LinkedIn Learning.

The college says "lecturing staff have also embraced technology and are staying in touch with their students by email and phone

using Zoom and Skype to carry out online assessments to ensure that students can complete their studies".

And South Eastern Regional College has launched a comprehensive programme of online support designed to upskill individuals and work teams in a range of industry sectors.

For those of a younger age, a Belfast educational technology company has also seen a fourfold increase in global demand for its maths learning tools as parents look for resources to help their children keep learning during the coronavirus lockdown.

Komodo Learning is a maths learning system for children aged five to 11 which is designed to supplement primary school maths at home. It provides animated video guidance and short practice exercises that can be accessed on smartphones, tablets and computers, with learning individually tailored to each child's needs by a maths teacher.

Founder Gerard McBreen said the lockdown in many countries has resulted in increased interest from parents looking for resources they can trust. "Komodo has been helping parents to support their children's maths learning for years but since schools have closed, we've been called upon by even more parents who have had to become their children's sole educators. It is not how we expected to grow the business but we are responding to the rise in demand."

But for our best and brightest already through the system, the final step has been irreparably damaged due to the crisis.

The rite of passage of all university students saw many forgoing the traditional grand graduation ceremony for something with a few more ones and zeros.

Among them was Dr Abbie Harte (24), who studied for six years to achieve her medicine degree, which she was awarded on her laptop screen in a virtual celebration last amid the Covid-19 lockdown restrictions.

The university has committed to holding further celebrations in the future to allow graduates to reflect on their achievements with family and friends.

"Although a traditional ceremony would be nice to mark the end of our medical degree and a lovely way to celebrate with close family and friends, I think that we are all extremely understanding of the current situation and why we weren't able to have a traditional ceremony," she told the Belfast Telegraph.

"It wasn't the celebration we were all hoping to have, but it was a lovely day and I was able to celebrate with my close family to acknowledge the end of a challenging six years. It's definitely a small sacrifice to make, especially when you see how hard all key workers are working at the moment." ■



SUPPORT FOR GROUPS HELPING OTHERS DURING PANDEMIC

Lottery funding for Mid Ulster projects

By STAFF REPORTER
news@midulstermail.co.uk
@midumail

Eight organisations in the Mid Ulster District Council area are to benefit from £277,990 in support from the National Lottery Community Fund.

The funding will help projects tackling issues affecting families and communities during the Covid-19 pandemic.

It is part of a roll-out of £1.8m to more than 100 projects across Northern Ireland.

Dyslexia & Dyspraxia Support is using a grant of £200,000 to extend their 'Empower' project which offers children with a learning disability and their families support, information and activities to increase their confidence and skills in the Magherafelt area.

Anaghmore Orange

Lodge, based outside Magherafelt, is using a £10,000 grant to support the local community through the Covid-19 crisis by providing food and heating essentials along with books and crafts to vulnerable people in the area.

The project helps build a network of connections to help reach those most affected by the pandemic.

Maghera Orange Lodge is receiving a £2,040 grant to purchase and distribute food parcels and leaflets to elderly and vulnerable people in the area in response to the Covid-19 crisis.

TABBDA Company is using a £9,625 grant to provide a food and prescription delivery service to households across Ballyronan and the Loup areas, to ensure those who are isolating, those with underlying mental and physical health conditions or low incomes have access to essential items.

Fairhill Hall Development

Association, based in Cookstown Orange Hall, is using a £9,600 grant to improve access to the first floor of their building, which is currently preventing older people and those with mobility issues from making full use of the building and services available.

Support for difficult times

Kate Beggs, Northern Ireland director of The National Lottery Community Fund commented:

"Thanks to National Lottery funding, these groups are able to step up to help people and communities through these difficult times.

"We are here to support them to overcome obstacles in bringing people together and get help to those in need, as well as to think about recovery and longer-term needs."

First Steps Women's Centre, based in Dungannon, is getting a £10,000 grant to run health and well-being programmes for women across the Mid Ulster council area, providing them with the tools and skills to cope and recover from the trauma of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Courses include confidence building assertiveness, living life to the full and managing stress.

Syerla Orange Lodge, based in Moygashel, is using a £6,150 grant to continue ongoing renovations at Syerla Hall, and are using the money for wall insulation to prevent dampness and for new security window panels.

And the Royal British Legion Fivemiletown Welfare Community Group is using a £10,000 grant to purchase and deliver food and PPE to older and vulnerable people isolated due to the pandemic outbreak.

Northern Regional College offers a helping hand with free virtual learning courses.

Published in: BUSINESSFIRST

Total Printrun:	Total Circulation	Total Visits	Sum of AVE:
		150,599	125.5 €

Northern Regional College offers a helping hand with free virtual learning courses

Published in: Ballymena Daily, Causeway Coast Community, Northern Regional College, northernirelandchamber.com

Total Printrun:	Total Circulation	Total Visits	Sum of AVE:
		116,235	96.86 €

Student Art and Design showcase to be broadcast online

Published in: Ballymena Daily, Northern Regional College

Total Printrun:	Total Circulation	Total Visits	Sum of AVE:
		77,963	64.97 €

Public views sought on major housing plan at old barracks

Published in: Radius Housing

Total Printrun:	Total Circulation	Total Visits	Sum of AVE:
17,229	13,725	5,000	1,044.37 €

Local Further Education Colleges combine talents & skills in support of pandemic fight

Published in: Tyrone Courier

Total Printrun:	Total Circulation	Total Visits	Sum of AVE:
31,084	24,762		2,201.52 €

Colleges show support for industry

Published in: Tyrone Courier

Total Printrun:	Total Circulation	Total Visits	Sum of AVE:
31,084	24,762		1,545.64 €

DADDY COOL Some well-known NI faces on that very special bond

Published in: Northwest Telegraph

Total Printrun:	Total Circulation	Total Visits	Sum of AVE:
63,328	35,594		5,834.73 €

McSorley is looking to the future despite Covid concerns

Published in: Strabane Chronicle

Total Printrun:	Total Circulation	Total Visits	Sum of AVE:
18,849	15,015		2,269.33 €

Never too late for career change

Published in: southantrimvox.co.uk

Total Printrun:	Total Circulation	Total Visits	Sum of AVE:
		57,556	47.97 €

Student turns passion into Instagram business

Published in: Ballycastle Chronicle

Total Printrun:	Total Circulation	Total Visits	Sum of AVE:
34,458	27,450		1,562.82 €

College move to Beresford Avenue remains "on schedule"

Published in: Causeway Coast Community, Northern Regional College

Total Printrun:	Total Circulation	Total Visits	Sum of AVE:
		77,442	64.54 €

"Hospitality is part of the heart and soul of Northern Ireland," says local chef

Published in: Ballymena Guardian

Total Printrun:	Total Circulation	Total Visits	Sum of AVE:
17,229	13,725	5,000	913.12 €

NRC campus move on schedule

Published in: Ballymoney Moyle Times

Total Printrun:	Total Circulation	Total Visits	Sum of AVE:
		47,285	39.41 €

Student support services continue despite college closures

Published in: Ballycastle Chronicle, Ballymoney Chronicle

Total Printrun:	Total Circulation	Total Visits	Sum of AVE:
51,687	41,175		3,927.85 €

Colleges continue support for industry

Published in: Ballycastle Chronicle, Ballymoney Chronicle, Coleraine Chronicle

Total Printrun:	Total Circulation	Total Visits	Sum of AVE:
68,916	54,900		4,255.89 €

Top marks for college staff's charity challenge

Published in: Ballycastle Chronicle, Ballymoney Chronicle

Total Printrun:	Total Circulation	Total Visits	Sum of AVE:
51,687	41,175		4,954.47 €

'Hospitality is part of the heart and soul of Northern Ireland,' says chef

Published in: Causeway Coast Community, Northern Regional College, northernirelandchamber.com

Total Printrun:	Total Circulation	Total Visits	Sum of AVE:
		104,316	86.93 €

Northern Regional College offers a helping hand with free virtual learning courses.

Published in: BUSINESSFIRST

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		150,599	125.5 €

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