

Dunboyne College of Further Education
Graduate Association

Celebrating Our Graduates 2003 – 2018

College: Dunboyne College of Further Education.

Address: Dunboyne Business Park, Dunboyne, Co Meath.

Principal: Mr. Denis Leonard
DLeonard.dbc@LMETB.ie

Deputy Principal: Ms Emer Cloak
ECloak.dbc@LMETB.ie

Phone: (01) 802 6577
Fax: (01) 801 5968

Email: DunboyneCollege@LMETB.ie

Facebook: Dunboyne College of Further Education @dunboynecollege

Twitter: Dunboyne College FE @DunboyneCollege

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INTRODUCTION

Dunboyne College of Further Education Graduate Association was formed in 2015 and continues to grow and develop.

The Graduate Association aims to maintain the positive relationship with our graduates that began in the classroom and now extends into their world of work and college. It encourages co-operation, lifelong learning and professional and social growth. It offers an opportunity for communication and networking. It is a chance for graduates to stay connected with the college and the college to stay connected with its graduates.

'Celebrating our Graduates' brings together some of our most successful graduates and celebrates their achievements. Most of them entered DCFE as nervous students, unsure of their potential or direction. They found the year invaluable in helping them make choices and in gaining the confidence to follow up on those choices.

This book tells their story in their own words, and in turn tells the story of DCFE.

PRINCIPAL & DEPUTY PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME



Welcome to the Dunboyne College of Further Education Graduate Association.

It gives us great pleasure to introduce this celebratory book that charts the journeys of students of DCFE since its inception in 2003.

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all students who have completed courses with us. As a student of DCFE you helped form a community of intelligent, innovative and pioneering individuals. The association has found that many individuals cherish their experiences and memories of classmates, tutors, and friends, and that these remain with them throughout their lifetimes. We hope that you maintain a life-long interest in the college, no matter where in the world you are.

The main purpose of the Graduate Association is to celebrate the incredible and diverse stories and progression routes of our graduates. Additionally, its focus is to maintain links between graduates and the college in order to benefit future students, current students and alumni.

Dunboyne College has seen thousands of students pass through, gaining qualifications in a diverse range of areas, and progressing either to further studies at higher level or into the world of work. It is hoped that the association will become an important point of contact between DCFE and all graduates.

We are tremendously proud of the accomplishments of you - our graduates. As you continue on your paths, fulfilling your potential, you are the embodiment of our motto, "Begin here, go anywhere."

Denis Leonard, *Principal*
Emer Cloak, *Deputy Principal*



KARINA MONAGHAN



Course: Animal Care

After DCFE I progressed to study Veterinary Nursing in Athlone Institute of Technology. I am currently in my final year of that course and am working in the pet emergency department in University College Dublin.

I had an excellent experience in DCFE, which equipped me to enter the veterinary nursing course with a head start on other students. Having completed the various animal care modules in DCFE I found that a lot of the first year course work was covered already and I was very comfortable progressing to degree level.

I definitely think my experience in DCFE and my Level 5 award helped me secure my work placement in the pet emergency department in UCD.

I enjoyed the small class environment in DCFE and have made life-long friends from the course; I am still in touch with the majority of my classmates. I feel DCFE was really a stepping stone to higher education but it also gave me the opportunity to ensure I enjoyed the course and the content before taking the leap into higher education.

"I enjoyed the small class environment in DCFE and have made life-long friends from the course."

EYITEMI ARENYEKA

Course: Pre-University Business

After DCFE I progressed to study Law and Accounting in Bangor University, Wales. I then completed a Master's degree in Accounting and Finance, also at Bangor University. I am currently working as a Fund Accountant in Statestreet Global Services Ireland.

I enjoyed every minute of my time at DCFE. Having just finished my Leaving Certificate and not having achieved the grades I had hoped for, I placed my faith in Dunboyne College to provide a stepping-stone into higher education. I felt that in DCFE I was given excellent tuition and time to excel at the modules I was studying. I particularly enjoyed studying Communications for the first time and Business Administration. The teaching methods and teamwork in the class helped me to realise my potential.

I don't know where I would be now if it weren't for applying to DCFE. I feel my year there set me on the right track and I am still in touch with many of my former classmates. My year there really prepared me for my time in university, as the set-up is the same but on a smaller scale, and I graduated knowing what to expect from university life.

"I enjoyed every minute of my time at DCFE... I placed my faith in [it] to provide a stepping stone into higher education."



PAULA CONLON



Course: Childcare

I came to Dunboyne College of Further Education having already completed a degree in Social Studies in IT Blanchardstown. I was unsure of what my next step would be, but was very interested in potentially working in childcare. I completed the Level 5 course in Childcare and decided it was the right path for me. I'm currently doing a Master's Degree in Education in Early Years in Maynooth University. I work part-time in a pre-school in Clane and I hope to progress into management and hopefully one day run my own facility.

I credit my year in DCFE with helping me decide on a definite career path. Although the work

was challenging I found the classes were very engaging and the course structure kept students very busy and involved. While the course was, at times, difficult in terms of assignments and workload I know the course prepared me for the world of work and further education. There is no doubt a QQI certificate in Childcare from DDFE is widely recognised as a very credible certificate, well known by local employers to produce graduates of an excellent calibre.

I also enjoyed the social aspect of the course and am still in contact with a number of my fellow graduates. I would say my year in DCFE was inspirational.

"My year in DCFE was inspirational."

KEVIN MAXWELL

Course: Music Performance

After completing the course in DCFE I went on to a BA honours degree in Commercial Modern Music specialising as a guitarist at BIMM Dublin. I am now in two original bands as a guitar player and I am currently looking into starting a commercial covers band.

I had a great experience in DCFE, many life-long friends were made and I left with information that has already, and will continue to, help me going forward in my career in music. Out of all the memories made, the stand-out ones are all

from the countless hours we spent in the studio rehearsing and all the jokes and fun we had!

I learned lots of vital information but what stuck with me was the importance of running efficient rehearsals with bands, which is a skill that I could not have lived without. Being a student at BIMM, we spent many hours in rehearsal studios and being able to rehearse at a professional standard is one of the most important things I learned in DCFE; it has helped me in my progression as a musician.

"Out of all the memories made, the stand-out ones are all from the countless hours we spent in the studio rehearsing and all the jokes and fun we had!"



AMY LEE

Course: Nursing Studies

I graduated with nine distinctions and progressed to Dublin City University where I studied Health & Society, graduating last year with a 2:1 honours degree. I have accepted a place to study on a Master's programme in Audiology. I am hoping to work one day as a speech and language therapist or an audiologist. I currently work in a special school as a tutor.

My time in DCFE was brilliant. The tutors were supportive and wanted the students to do the best they could. I had fun in the college and met great people. I learned a huge amount, which

I then brought with me to my next course. I particularly enjoyed the practical side of the Nursing Studies course and I learned life-long skills. My year spent in DCFE was a very valuable experience and the course brought out the best of everyone's abilities.

"My year spent in DCFE was a very valuable experience and the course brought out the best of everyone's abilities."

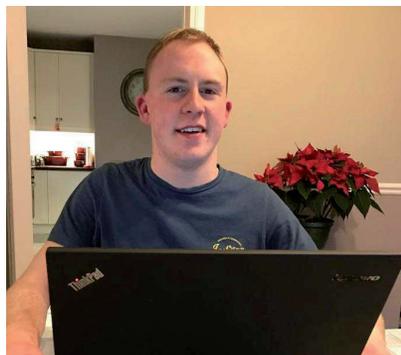


PAUL STENSON

Course: Computer Systems & Networks

Since leaving DCFE I have progressed on to study Common Entry to ICT Engineering at Athlone Institute of Technology. This is a 3-year course where students can experience a wide range of computer-related modules, from which you specialise in year two and three.

Studying at DCFE was great. It's a really down-to-earth learning atmosphere with great tutors and fantastic support staff. If I was ever having trouble understanding something or wasn't sure, help was always at hand. Having a separate exam centre for my term exams really helped me as I work best in a quiet and relaxed atmosphere. The canteen was a great place to hang out with your mates when you had no classes. I made loads of friends there and the social atmosphere was brilliant.



One of the greatest memories I have of my time at DCFE was having the opportunity to participate in an experience-ship in Barcelona for 2 weeks. This was a huge achievement and I really enjoyed working there. I learned an extremely valuable skill set from some of the most successful business entrepreneurs in the world. It was definitely an opportunity not to be missed.

"DCFE [gave me] the opportunity to participate in an experience-ship in Barcelona for 2 weeks ... it was definitely an opportunity not to be missed."

JAMIE-LEE QUINN



"Lectures were always interesting and there was never a day that I would not want to come in."

Course: Pre-university Law

After DCFE I progressed to Bangor University, Wales. I became the secretary of the Law Society and a known face throughout the Law School. It was one of the best decisions I made and I graduated with a 2:1 degree. Since graduating Bangor University I knew I had two options. One was to go home and try to become a solicitor in Dublin or the other option was to study my Legal Practice Course (LPC) and become a solicitor in England and Wales. I decided to stay over here and completed my LPC and Master's part time at the weekend in the University of Law, Chester. I am now a paralegal working in a defence criminal law firm. I will be starting my training contract in May/June 2018. I will become a fully qualified solicitor in December 2019.

After I received my Leaving Certificate results I was feeling a bit flat as I knew I did not have enough points to study Law in any of the colleges I wanted to so I applied to DCFE. The tutors there made my experience at DCFE more enjoyable than I thought it would be. Their lectures were always interesting and there was never a day that I would not want to come in. I made some amazing friends with whom I am still in regular contact. My number one moment has to be when I graduated Dunboyne with 10 distinctions and as Student of the Year; that is one of my proudest moments to date. DCFE helped me grow as a person and made me realise that if I do the work I will get the reward.

JEANNIE FLYNN

Course: Applied Social Studies

After I left DCFE I began a 4-year degree in Trinity College studying social work. I completed my first professional placement as a Medical Social Worker in Connolly Hospital in December 2017. My second placement will be in Tusla Child and Family Agency, on the child protection team. As a result of studying at DCFE and Trinity College I am now a project worker in Focus Ireland.

Returning to education as a mature student was daunting. Not only had I been out of education for 30+ years, I only had basic computer skills. However, the staff at DCFE was extremely supportive and encouraged me in every aspect of my education. Within weeks of being there, I realised how much I loved this new experience; I wanted to learn everything. How the modules were presented and how the lectures were taught

was all-encompassing. The staff was eager to encourage learning; every class was interactive where many opinions were encouraged.

There are many stand-out moments in DCFE; the belief the tutors had in me and the encouragement they gave me was overwhelming. When I thought I couldn't do it, they made me see I could, and for that I am extremely thankful. My tutors encouraged me to apply to Trinity. When I won Applied Social Studies' Student of the Year, that was the moment I believed I could go to Trinity, and that was when I started to believe in myself.

What I learned in DCFE is everybody, irrespective of their social class, has the capacity to reach their full potential once they are surrounded by people who care for and believe in them and that anything is possible once you are prepared to work for it.



"Everybody ... has the capacity to reach their full potential once they are surrounded by people who care for and believe in them."

DANIEL HOLT

Course: Music Performance

After I graduated from DCFE I went on to study a Bachelors of Music and Religious Education in DCU and I am still completing that.

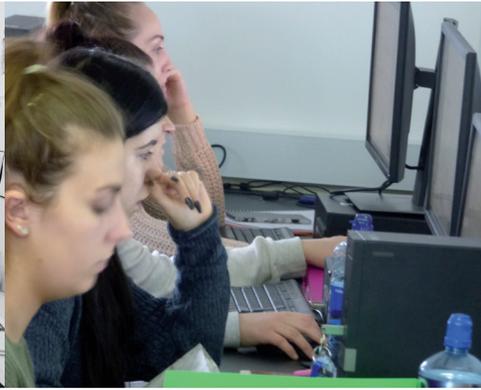
In DCFE I learned skills that I did not have before. I improved my skills as a musician, performing in a group, working on improvising and becoming more independent as a musician. I also improved my social skills a lot. When I came to DCFE I was very nervous and shy but the experience I had really helped me become more confident.

Part of a module was that we had to set up a concert at a venue and perform at it. It was such an amazing experience to be able to play as a class group and it helped to build up my experience as



a musician. I mostly learned how to be organised (like getting essays in on time) and how to write an essay. I also think I became more mature over the course of my time at DCFE, which prepared me a lot for college.

"When I came to DCFE I was very nervous and shy but the experience I had really helped me become more confident."



JESSICA MORIARTY



Course: Sports Management

After DCFE I progressed to University College Cork where I am currently in my 3rd year of Sports Studies and Physical Education. I hope to become a Physical Education and Irish teacher.

My experience of DCFE is that it was a great enabler and facilitator for the next step in my education. Without DCFE, I would not be where I am today. This college provided me with a platform for so many elements of college life. Every module I did in DCFE has helped me in some way in my current studies and therefore in my placements in secondary schools. DCFE gave me, not only the opportunity to go to college, but also the opportunity to do my best when I got there.

I came to DCFE because I didn't obtain the required points for my desired course in the Leaving Cert. I was always frustrated about how I was being assessed in areas I had little interest or talent in. But in DCFE, in a particular GAA lesson, I remember looking around at the group and the surroundings and thinking, "This is where I want to be, this is what I want to learn." Another stand-out moment for me was the Graduation Ceremony. The event was very special as it brought staff and students to celebrate the year and recognise all that had been accomplished by everyone.

"Without DCFE I would not be where I am today."

LAURA O'TOOLE

Course: Animal Care

After DCFE, I moved to Cork to study Veterinary Nursing in St. John's Central College. I spent 3 years in total there. I did an extra year in the middle of the veterinary course studying Animal Management and Enterprise as an extra certificate. Work placement was my favourite part of college because I am a practical learner and learn more efficiently that way. I now work for Active Vet Care. I love my job and am blessed to be doing it and making a difference to animals' lives every day.

DCFE gave me a great insight into the area I wanted to study. The staff was always helpful and supportive and helped me to achieve the best I could. One thing I loved in particular was learning in a classroom full of like-minded people who shared the same passions and interests as me. Being shy and quiet in school, DCFE allowed me to come out of my shell and express myself, talk to people and develop good social skills. Everyone was very

friendly and we had fun during lunch break in the canteen, and some good laughs with everyone, especially when going on our trips out.

DCFE was a big change from school. I loved studying something that I had a passion for, having more freedom, meeting new people and learning new things. It taught me a lot of responsibility, it taught me to push myself that if I wanted to achieve something it was up to me to put the work in and get it which I wasn't always great at, but I got better and more driven and took that with me to my next learning stage in Cork.

It was not always easy but seeing everyone proud of themselves and looking fantastic in their gowns on graduation night in Dunboyne Castle made it all worthwhile. I will always remember my time at DCFE; without it, I would not be where I am now.



"DCFE was a big change from school. I loved studying something that I had a passion for, having more freedom, meeting new people and learning new things."

KEITH NULTY



Course: Applied Social Studies

I studied Applied Social Studies in DCFE over two years and applied for a scholarship to progress to IT Tralee. I got the fantastic news that, subject to my results in Dunboyne, I would be offered a place in IT Tralee. I moved to Tralee in September 2016 to start my course in Health and Leisure. I hope to work as a coach for adapted physical activities.

I currently represent IT Tralee and Ireland in the Irish Karate Squad. Since moving to IT Tralee I am also involved in coaching. I credit DCFE with giving me the opportunity to progress on to

where I am now. I know a lot of what I learned there benefitted me in my new course of study. Much of the content I covered in Dunboyne has come up again in Tralee and I felt I had a head start on other students who were facing some of the topics for the first time.

I really enjoyed the two years I spent in DCFE. I made some wonderful friends, many of whom I am still in contact with. The course prepared me for further studies. Deciding to study in DCFE was one of the best choices I have made.

"Deciding to study in DCFE was one of the best choices I have made."

LAURA FREEMAN

Course: Pre-university Arts

After DCFE, I went to Maynooth University, where I studied English, Anthropology, and Psychology. After that, I chose to study Equine Veterinary Nursing in Newmarket, England. I gained experience in a variety of equine veterinary hospitals, and worked in Kylemore Stud in Galway and am now working full time in Owenstown Stud, and studying part time. I plan to finish my studies this September and I hope to get accepted onto the National Stud course in Newmarket. In the next few years, I would hope to make the move to either Kentucky or Australia.

I entered DCFE as a teenager who had been out of the formal education system for a number of years due to severe bullying. It was a huge step for me to re-enter education, and being among people my own age again was truly terrifying. Luckily, I had fantastic

support from all the tutors whenever I was struggling, and I made some great friends during the year. Being able to progress to university was a huge confidence boost, and something I never thought I would be able to accomplish.

If I didn't go to DCFE, I would never have gone to Maynooth University and studied English, where I somehow managed to spark a passion for creative writing. I have been a NYC Midnight short story finalist, a writer for Popularium (an LA based start-up), and received honorary mention and original artwork for a science fiction submission to XPrize Foundation's Seat 14C competition. My first short story is being published later this year in an anthology by the Tiny Owl Workshop, an Australian based publisher.



"Being able to progress to university was a huge confidence boost, and something I never thought I would be able to accomplish."

SABRINA BOLLARD

Course: Pre-university Nursing

After DCFE, I progressed to doing the MSc degree course in General Nursing at Dublin City University. I am currently working full time on a medical ward as a Registered General Nurse in Connolly Hospital, Blanchardstown.

I began my journey to becoming a nurse in DCFE. As a mature student, I was very nervous about returning to education but I found the tutors and students very welcoming and they really made my experience in the college a very good one. The stand-out moment for me was receiving the award from DCU for overall Student of the Year, recognising the work I had put into the course during the year.



In DCFE I learned the basic fundamentals and skills of nursing. It gave me a good start and a foundation for continuing my education in DCU. The course confirmed to me that nursing was what I really wanted to do.

"DCFE gave me a good start and a foundation for continuing my education."

SEÁN KEARNEY



Course: Sound Engineering

After leaving DCFE, I progressed to Maynooth University, where I am now studying Music Technology as well as English and Irish. I have also become a member of the Maynooth DJ Society.

The two years I spent at DCFE were some of the most fun times I've ever had. More than anything else, the moments that I'll remember the most would be the times I sang in front of people for the first time. Singing was something I never would've thought I'd be able to do, but my

classmates and my music tutor convinced me to give it a try. Hearing their reactions made me feel a mixture of pride and excitement that I'd never felt before. Later singing in front of family at gigs and in front of hundreds of people at the graduation forever boosted my confidence.

One of the most important things I learned is to always give things a try. Before I went to DCFE, I still wasn't completely sure what I wanted to be. Now, thanks to my tutors there, I want to learn more about sound engineering and music technology. I learned that it doesn't matter how long it takes to get somewhere. I wanted to go to Maynooth straight out of school, but I would have missed so much if I had. I'm looking forward to seeing where it leads me.

"I learned that it doesn't matter how long it takes to get somewhere. I wanted to go to [university] straight out of school, but I would have missed so much if I had."

TONI M^CCALLION

Course: Community Development, Level 6



After DCFE, I obtained a 9-month internship with Merchants Quay Ireland as a contact Crisis Worker. I pursued further study in UCD where I completed my Diploma in Drug & Alcohol studies. I am currently employed as a Project Worker.

When I started my course in Social Studies at Level 6, I was full of nervousness and anxiety about returning to adult formal education, knowing I had received little academic education as a child. It was a new experience I was embarking upon, one which filled me with dread and excitement at the same time. It was a roller coaster of emotions - happy, sad, but most of all challenging in the academic sense.

At DCFE I found a new love of learning. That was thanks to the amount of support I received from the college tutors and the extra support from the learning hub. I would also like to mention the support I received from my classmates and family. One tutor in particular helped me believe in myself and she inspired me to further my education. I know I would never have given UCD a go without this support.

"At DCFE I found a new love of learning."

DYMPNA MAHONEY

Course: Art Portfolio

After DCFE, I, as part of a group of artists with a connection to Connolly Hospital, Blanchardstown, set up Connolly Connective. The group donated paintings to the hospital to add visual interest and colour to the white walls. I studied Fine Art Printing for two years at the National College of Art and Design and exhibited that work in Connolly Hospital. I became an active member of Meath Arts Group and took part in many of their exhibitions. I had work selected for exhibition in the Solstice Arts Centre. I have just finished an evening course in Advanced Techniques in Acrylic Painting and will submit work for selection for Continuing Education in Art and Design (CEAD) exhibition.

While I attended many courses in the NCAD in the evenings after work, it was my time in DCFE that

led to me to becoming a full-time artist. We learned to research, explore, challenge and document our ideas. It was a really enjoyable, energetic and successful year, though at times very difficult. It challenged us to produce original work and it took me to places I never thought possible.

The end-of-year display and exhibition of our work was the stand-out moment for me. I was so proud of my work and being able to show it to my family and friends was wonderful. Seeing all the amazing work of all my student colleagues in one area was enlightening and thought provoking. DCFE equipped me with the knowledge and skill to continue my art practice in various media. It also set me on a path of artistic endeavour, which has become my passion and life-long challenge.



"DCFE challenged us to produce original work and it took me to places I never thought possible."

MEKA CLARENCE

Course: Pre-university Science

After leaving DCFE, I applied for 3rd level study in Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT). My chosen programme was a BSc Pharmaceutical Healthcare Level 8; it's a 4-year course. As part of a DIT requirement, I am currently undertaking a 4-month work placement in a research laboratory, BIOSENSIA Ltd. based in NOVA UCD. My area of work is immunodiagnostics.

Returning to school as a mature student and mother, I was lacking confidence but getting into the science course in DCFE was the best thing that happened in my **academic career**. As one of the oldest students in my class, if not the oldest, I was a bit shy and confused **at** the beginning of the year, but the encouragement, motivation and the mutual respect from tutors really played an important factor in my progress.

I remember the day I had to do a presentation in Communications class and it was in front of my classmates. Not being fully fluent in English, I was nervous but my tutor nicely praised and helped me along the way, which built up my confidence in public speaking.

Many of the modules I studied in DCFE gave me a good grounding for my chosen course afterwards. It was as if the first year in DIT was a revision year for me. I even found myself helping my classmates with referencing!



*"Returning to school as a mature student and mother, I was lacking confidence but getting into the science course in DCFE was the best thing that happened in my **academic career**."*

ANDREW MAHER



Course: Multimedia

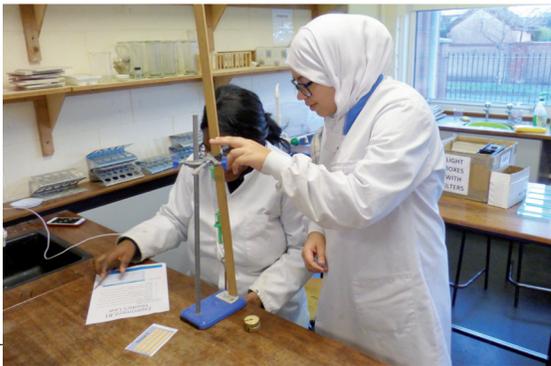
After DCFE, I took a year out and then went to Blanchardstown Institute of Technology to study a BA Degree in Creative Digital Media, Level 8. I am currently in year two of that course.

I had a great experience during my time at DCFE. I found the tutors to be very friendly and supportive. My favourite element in DCFE was learning to use Photoshop. I got on very well with my peers and tutors alike and have many good memories of doing assignments and using

creativity whilst collaborating with everyone. I received an award for achievement, which ended my time with DCFE on a high note.

My experience at DCFE was instrumental in preparing me for ITB. I really felt like I had an advantage starting the degree as I had lots of experience using different software and digital techniques. Even now, in my second year of ITB, I find my education from DCFE is still bearing fruit.

"Even now, in my second year of ITB, I find my education from DCFE is still bearing fruit."



ASHLEE BYRNE



Course: Pre-university Business

After DCFE, I progressed to Maynooth University where I am studying for a degree in Business with a marketing major. I am also working part time in Ireland's largest saddlery, Holmestead Saddlery.

Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed my time at DCFE. It gave me some major advantages when progressing to higher education, not just with doing assignments but also knowing more people on my course. Learning how to reference secondary sources and complete up-to-standard assignments definitely benefited me for higher education.

The general sense that all your tutors were there to support and help you with your goals; that they push you to strive to do your best 100% of the time. In addition, Rose in the canteen had a special place in everyone's heart at DCFE with the overwhelming love and care she gave to every single one of us.

"The general sense that all your tutors were there to support and help you with your goals; that they push you to strive to do your best 100% of the time."

ADAM SHARPE



"DCFE was the very first step in my 3rd level academic journey so it was wonderful to start at a college with such an inclusive and equitable attitude."

Course: Print Journalism

I have recently returned from Bochum, Germany, having completed a year-long internship programme with the Ruhr University, Bochum. I was working as Assistant Disability Advisor at the University. I am fluent in German and am currently considering my career options at home here in Ireland. I hope to make use of my recent employment experience in Germany and seek out employment in areas specifically related to my BA Hons. Degree in European Studies/Politics/Advocacy.

I have fond memories of my time at DCFE. From the very first day attending the college, I found the staff to be extremely supportive and helpful. As a wheelchair user I was treated with dignity

and respect at all times. Every one of the staff was kind and caring towards me. DCFE was the very first step in my 3rd level academic journey so it was wonderful to start at a college with such an inclusive and equitable attitude.

My course at DCFE in Journalism and Media afforded me the opportunity to prepare and learn how to research and study properly. These skills helped me to plan learning strategies, complete assignments and meet deadlines while learning how to cope with the demands of a 3rd level education. DCFE was instrumental in building my self-esteem and personal confidence to move forward and achieve my academic goals and dreams.

AOIFE MALONE

Course: Music Performance

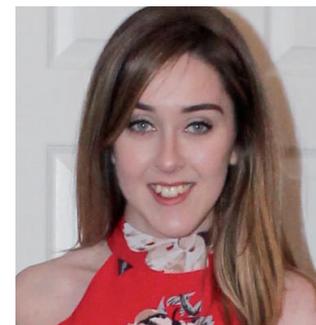
After graduating from my studies in DCFE, I accepted a place to study BA (Hons.) Psychology in Maynooth University, from which I am on track to graduate later this year with first class honours. After graduating from Maynooth, I hope to move on to study a Master's degree in Applied Psychology, in the hopes of pursuing a career in Clinical Psychology.

I feel I received a really rounded and comprehensive education from DCFE, which helped me develop my skills both personally and professionally. I mainly studied Music Performance but as part of the course, I was also able to sample classes in radio production, nutrition and culinary arts, in order to suit my interests.

I have lots of really great memories from my time at DCFE, one of which was organising a "Battle of the Bands" talent show competition for students of local secondary schools - we were involved throughout the whole process, from brainstorming ideas for the event, to booking the venue, and

presenting on the night! The experience was invaluable, and made for a really fun way of learning and gaining hands-on experience. In addition, I'll never forget our graduation ceremony, as it was great to see the culmination of everyone's hard work throughout the year and to be able to celebrate how far we'd all come in the space of a few months.

I learned a lot during my time in DCFE, which undoubtedly shaped me into becoming the student and person I am today. Not only did it give me the skills I needed to further my education, it also cultivated my confidence in my own abilities and gave me the time and space to decide what direction I wanted to go in after finishing secondary school. I would urge anyone who is not sure what they want to do after school, or don't feel ready to enter university straight after the Leaving Cert. to consider taking a year in DCFE to prepare them for entering this next stage in their lives. Without the opportunities provided to me by DCFE, I wouldn't be where I am today.



"I would urge anyone who is not sure what they want to do after school...to consider taking a year in DCFE to prepare them for entering this next stage in their lives."

SHANE WOODS

Course: Print Journalism

After graduating from DCFE, I received a place on the Bachelor of Civil Law (Law and Society) programme at Dublin City University. The flexibility of the modules in Dunboyne College allowed me to undertake a few modules in the area of Law as well as my core modules for Journalism. I quickly then realised that I wished to pursue a legal career rather than one in journalism. I am currently undertaking the Master's of Laws (LLM) in Trinity College Dublin.

Without undertaking the PLC in DCFE, I would not have developed my education to my current level. My time there was enriched with everything from fond memories with my classmates, to

courtroom visits, and receiving the Student of the Year for Print Journalism. The most important skills that DCFE helped me develop was the ability for good academic writing and research. These transferable skills have been the foundation for the rest of my education as well as my current work life. My time in Dunboyne allowed me to grow as a person and I believe that was down to being encouraged and fostered by the teaching staff in DCFE.



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ANITA BRADY

Course: Applied Social Studies

After DCFE, I obtained a BA in Social Policy and Sociology from Maynooth University with a first class honour in my final year dissertation. I was invited to study a Master's degree in Social Policy and in 2017 I graduated with my Master's in Rights and Social Policy, and achieved another first for my Master's thesis. I am now teaching Social Policy within the European Union and the Political Economy in the Welfare State to second year students in Maynooth University.

I entered DCFE in 2011 as a mature student. I had not participated in education since leaving secondary school many years previously and I had worked in many jobs from cleaning hotel rooms to working in large supermarkets, but I always knew I was clever and I promised myself I would return to education some day. Returning to education was the best decision that I had made in a long time, and I couldn't believe where it actually took me.



"I can guarantee you, with hard work and determination and with the quality education that DCFE provides, you can accomplish the same goals and achievements that I have had the privilege to experience."

At DCFE my eyes were opened when I began to delve into the different arenas that are connected to each of the disciplines taught. I attended all my classes, which is a vital component in returning to education. I listened to questions that my tutors posed which made me think of how life can be analysed in different ways. I also worked hard in achieving excellent results, as this was what I needed to make sure I was successful in entering Maynooth University. Because I maintained a driven attitude whilst studying at DCFE, it also helped to immerse myself into what university life would entail. The encouragement and guidance that the staff gave me supplied me with a confidence that I had never experienced before. I can guarantee you, with hard work and determination and with the quality education that DCFE provides, you can accomplish the same goals and achievements that I have had the privilege to experience.

JACK BIRD

Course: Information Processing

I started in DCFE studying Business. After a few weeks, I realised there were certain aspects of the course that I was not interested in and decided to move into the Information Processing course, which featured more IT-based modules and the core business modules. I graduated with 8 distinctions and secured a place in DCU studying Marketing, Innovation and Technology. I am working part-time and managing two football teams but I feel the year in DCFE showed me how to be organised and manage many different aspects of my life.

My year in DCFE was very busy and active. Having a long commute to Dunboyne, as well as working part time, I made the most of my time in the college working on assignments and studying my modules. I feel there is a huge difference between secondary school and university and that DCFE is the perfect transition between the two. Having worked on assignments and referencing throughout the year, I was prepared

for what university would be like. Many of my counterparts in DCU, who progressed straight from Leaving Certificate, found it very difficult to get used to assignments and referencing; however I was able to hit the ground running.

My best memory from DCFE was winning the Student of the Year award. I have now recommended the college to many others. The year in DCFE helped me find out what I really wanted to do and I was able to progress academically and personally during the year. DCFE was a key stepping-stone, which allowed me to further myself and gain access into higher education.



"I feel there is a huge difference between secondary school and university and that DCFE is the perfect transition between the two."

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We wish you all continued success.

Irene Togher
Chair, Graduate Association



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