

# VIRGINIA COLLEGE

## CO. CAVAN



NEWSLETTER  
SUMMER 2017

## Principal's Message - Thank you and Farewell!

My time at Virginia College has come to an end. I will be moving on to Cavan Institute for the school year 2017-2018 to take up the post of Deputy Director. I am very excited about this opportunity and the new challenges that it presents. That being said, I am sad to leave Virginia College and I would like to thank everyone for the support that I have received over the past eleven years. I have had the distinct honour of working with a passionate team of experienced staff in our school community from whom I have learned a lot. As a parent myself, I deeply value the role of parents in education and I would like to thank you for your input and involvement in your child's education in our school over the years. It is important that education remains a joint venture between home and school. Students make the role of Principal a very rewarding job. Students never cease to amaze me with their creativity, energy, thoughtfulness, kindness and resilience. They are a credit to Virginia College and to you, their parents. I would like to thank members of the Board of Management, Parent Association and the Management and Staff of CMETB who have been steadfast in their support of our vision for the school.



Again, I would like to thank you for the support, the understanding and all the wonderful memories over the past eleven years and I wish you all every success in the future. As Steve Jobs said "Have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow know what you truly want to become"

Best wishes,

*Karen Fitzpatrick*



## VIRGINIA COLLEGE STUDENT MAKES HISTORY

Virginia College student, Britney Arendse made history winning gold for Ireland at the World para powerlifting World Cup in Hungary, qualifying for the 2020 Paralympics in Tokyo in the process. The 17-year-old won the junior 73kg event in Eger thanks to successful attempts at 70kg and 73kg, finishing sixth overall in the senior competition. The successful lift at 73kg sees Britney hit the qualifying mark for Tokyo 2020.



Britney is no stranger on the national stage, previously winning at February's Fazza World Cup in Dubai, and has now won at the only two World Cup build-up events this year, that lead into September's World Championships in Mexico City.

Last year Britney was approached by a para powerlifting coach, Ken Hurley, to try out powerlifting. Para Powerlifting is new to women in Ireland and currently there is only one senior lady representing Ireland and Britney is the first junior girl.

Britney secured a silver medal in the Irish Nationals in Cork in November 2016 and she qualified for the 2017 Fazza Junior World Cup in Dubai.

Britney is also paving her way towards the Paralympics in Tokyo 2020.



## BRITNEY ARENDSE WINS CATHAOIRLEACH AWARD 2017



The Co Cavan Cathaoirleach's Annual Awards recognise exceptional achievement, effort or service in a voluntary or unpaid capacity in County Cavan. The six award categories are, youth (under 25), social inclusion, arts/culture/heritage, Community, Sports and Active Age (over 65).

This year we were delighted to nominate Britney Arendse in the youth category for her exceptional achievement of winning her gold medal in the World Para Powerlifting Championships.

We were delighted to see Britney win the prestigious youth award but to also go on and win the overall prize on what was a very proud night for Britney, her parents, family and school. Well done Britney.

## BLOOD BROTHERS



### Third Year Trip

On Tuesday 28th March 76 third year students visited the Bord Gais Theatre in Dublin to see the well known musical Blood Brothers. This was an excellent opportunity to see the studied play for their Junior Cycle. Students thoroughly enjoyed this experience.



## TRIP TO BALLYHAISE



In March 2017, the 5th year Agricultural Science class went on a trip to Ballyhaise college accompanied by Mr. Duffy and their teacher Ms. Faughnan

Students changed into an assortment of coloured wellingtons and work boots as they braced themselves for the farm walk. Following a warm welcome from Mr. Kelly (Principal) students were given practical talks and demonstrations as they were guided around the various areas of the farm.

Students got a chance to see various aspects of the farm which helped consolidate the theoretical aspects of the course

Our first talk dealt with **Farm Health and Safety** which is of paramount importance on all farms.

This was followed by a visit to the **machinery shed** and included a demonstration on the importance of calibrating a fertiliser spreader correctly.

**Soils and Fertilisers** was our next stop where we examined a soil profile and how an auger is used to take soil samples.

Our next two areas of interest were the **dairy and beef sections**. In the milking parlour we saw where the cows are milked twice daily and the milk is then cooled to prevent bacterial growth.

Milk can be processed to produce many products such as infant formula, butter, cheese and yogurt and we were delighted to taste samples of delicious yogurts from Lacpatrick Co-op as we left the dairy section.

An excellent demonstration on **sheep** was given to us by a former student Cormac Smith who now lectures in Ballyhaise.

Finally following a grassland demonstration we headed back to Virginia tired but enlightened after a very enjoyable and interesting morning.



Awards Ceremony 2017



Virginia College welcome Mr Richard Corrigan



Student of the Year Katie Hetherton



Sports player of the year Ben Kelly Flynn



Mr Richard Corrigan addresses Virginia College

## STUDENT AWARDS

Virginia College celebrated our Annual Presentation Awards on May 25th 2017. The awards acknowledge the tremendous achievements of our students across the whole spectrum of education in the school. The awards recognize that this pursuit of excellence is not confined to academic achievement but encompasses the whole range of activities that makes for a rounded and balanced education. The ceremony was a celebration of the achievements of the students over the past school year.

This year we were delighted to have Mr Richard Corrigan, chef and patron of Corrigan's, Mayfair, Bentley's Oyster

Bar and Grill, Bentley's Sea Grill in Harrods, London and Virginia Park Lodge, Virginia, as our guest speaker. The school was especially delighted to have a local personality to share their thoughts and advice with us on the day.

School Principal, Ms Fitzpatrick, welcomed the large attendance which included, members of the Board of Management, Teachers, Parents and most importantly, the students themselves.

Certificates of recognition of academic excellence, attendance and achievement in extra curricular activities were awarded during the ceremony.



International soccer player Sean Mc Evoy



Mr. Corrigan with newly appointed Head Girl Colette Greene and Deputy Head Boy Eric Clarke



Britney Arendse with Mr Richard Corrigan



## VIRGINIA COLLEGE VISIT FIGHTING WORDS

The 16th February saw an enthusiastic group of 2nd year students participate in the Roddy Doyle established Fighting words creative writing work shop. Our workshop facilitator was a former Virginia College student, Djamel White. Djamel led the students and team of tutors through an engaging session of short story writing. It began with writing a group

script on a giant screen, moving on to small group work around what happens next. The groups were supported by individual tutors who encouraged and supported the students in the writing. Brilliant short stories were produced and the students enjoyed the whole experience.

## EURO LANGUAGES - SPANISH

Blathnaid O Brien received a CMETB scholarship for the Spanish Euro Language College that takes place this Summer in Galway. This is a substantial prize and she will represent the school very well, while learning and making fun memories.

Scott O Rourke, 5th year, has also received a position as a student assistant on the course. He attended an induction day in Dublin and he was selected as a student assistant.



## EURO LANGUAGES SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME



Congratulations to 5th years Aaron Cooney & Jessica Brady on winning scholarships to attend the Euro Languages College in Tipperary. Both students have received 66% of the costs to attend this French residential summer language course. They will enjoy over 40 hours of tuition with a 1:6 pupil to teacher ratio. There is also

total immersion in the language and a wide range of extra-curricular activities. We wish them both a very enjoyable stay.

## COOKERY DEMONSTRATION

On Monday 13<sup>th</sup> of March, Veronica from O'Egg visited the school to give a cookery demonstration to 5<sup>th</sup> Year Home Economics students. She provided a very enlightening presentation on the O'Egg range and prepared a range of delicious dishes which the students had the opportunity to taste.



## BAKE OFF

During the year, TY students had a 'Bake Off' competition. Students worked in pairs to prepare, bake and decorate a sweet dish. There was stiff competition between all the entries with each group producing a mouth watering treat. Jasmine Cooper and Keelan Mc Elhinney were overall winners and claimed the accolade of 'Star Bakers'.



## WORLD BOOK DAY VIRGINIA COLLEGE

### Thursday 2nd March

Virginia College was a hive of activity celebrating World Book Day on Thursday 2nd March. All students were involved in numerous events throughout the day including an Oracy competition, where they chose their own pieces of writing and read expressively. The winners were Stephen Seavers (1st Year) and Marie Chiara Lisotto (5th year).

In the Spelling Bee, a new event this year, heats took place in classes and the class champions fought it out to be crowned Junior and Senior spelling champion. The winners were David Murphy (3rd Year) and Chloe Duffy (5th Year).



A Literary Quiz written and run by TY students took place for First Years. It turned out to be a tough battle that went to a tie breaker with the eventual winners being Martha Smith, Conor Smith, Malachy Walker & Christopher Whelan Calnan.

Students and the English teachers dressed up as literary figures, with some incredible entries that took lots of time and effort. The winners were Freddy Sheridan (1st year), Hannah Cullen (1st Year), Hannah Cooney (3rd Year) and Grainne Nugent (5th Year)

Well done to all the talented artistic students who designed bookmarks. Judith Lorenz won for her "Bookie Monster" creation. Prizes were sponsored by By the Book in Virginia and we are very grateful for their continued support of World Book Day.

## VIRGINIA COLLEGE ON-LINE SAFETY DAY

Graham Mulhern of on-line safety firm BeSecureOnline.ie visited Virginia College on Monday 8th March. He addressed 2nd and 5th year students on issues regarding internet safety and general online pitfalls. He also discussed cyber-bullying.

App privacy, data sharing and sexting were discussed in relation to how they impact an on-line reputation. Students learned that there is no such thing as a "free" app. Google, Snapchat, Instagram and Facebook will access your contacts, photos, email and snaps and use or sell them to others. This was a surprise to most of the students in attendance.

"On-line Reputation" was discussed in detail. It is vital for all students that they understand the impact their on-line activity can have on their future. It may seem irrelevant to them today but will affect their ability to gain employment or entry to college courses. Online reputation needs to be nurtured and preserved. Not every night out needs to be posted! Employers and colleges/universities will check online profiles and use them as a form of selection process.

Graham spoke about search engines tracking people, making money from that data, content and video, profiling people now and using data for future exploitation. Students were amazed at the data that search engines such as Google held on them.



Cyber-bullying was highlighted and students were advised that once a comment is posted it cannot be taken back. The dangers of "sexting" were discussed with students being warned of risks of onward distribution and the dangers connected to that.



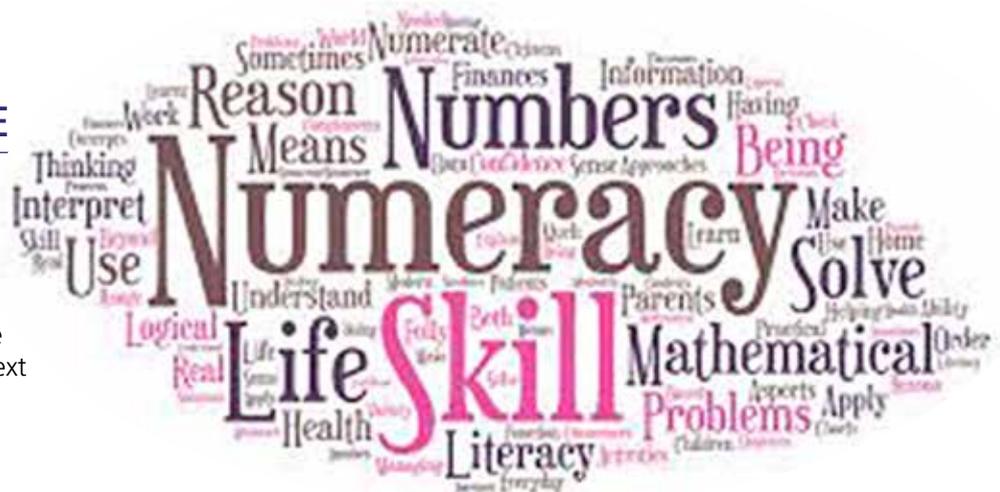
## VIRGINIA COLLEGE LANGUAGE EXCURSION 2017

In March this year 70 students and 5 teachers headed to Bundoran for three fun-filled days of French & Spanish language classes and loads of adventure. Students stayed in hostel type accommodation and meals were provided by a local restaurant. Every student spent a couple of hours surfing along the beautiful Rossnowlagh beach, as well as high ropes climbing, team building exercises and a nightline activity. The Donegal Language & Adventure centre run a very well organised and safe programme and this trip, which runs each year for 2nd years, proves to be very popular. Mobile phones, TV and tablets were forgotten as students jumped into the activities and had good old -fashioned messy fun. The French & Spanish departments look forward to taking next year's 2nd year students away, so get saving!



## VIRGINIA COLLEGE NUMERACY COMMITTEE

The Numeracy Initiative has gone from strength to strength in Virginia College thanks to the dedication of staff and students. Targets have been achieved beyond expectations, with results showing a dramatic improvement over the last three years. We are looking forward to the next phase of the project.



## SPORTS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Sports Development Committee (SDC) is a voluntary group made up of parents and teachers who work together to raise money to improve participation and sport facilities in our school. The Committee also contributes towards the costs of travelling to matches and competitions. In order to raise money, they arrange various activities through-out the year, for example this year they had a Jersey day, a 5km sponsored walk and an annual Good Friday bingo.

SDC has been very busy again this year. Having raised enough money last year, in conjunction with East Cavan Eagles, they applied for a Sports Capital Grant which, if successful, would allow us to upgrade facilities in the hall. This will include adjusting the height of the baskets to allow all students to participate in basketball. They hope to find out whether they are successful during the summer. The committee is also working to improve the football field with funding in the range of €2,500 needed to improve the grounds. SDC also spends money annually upgrading the sportswear of our students. This year the committee bought a new senior kit for basketball and a senior away kit for soccer. They are always looking for more parents to become involved in whatever way is possible. They will be holding their AGM in September and look forward to seeing new faces.

## SOCCER NEWS



U15 Cavan/Monaghan Champions 2016/2017 and U17 Cavan/Monaghan Runners Up 2016/2017



Picture: (L-R) Karen Fitzpatrick, Principal, Donal Dunne, Student, Eamonn Melley, Teacher.

## VIRGINIA COLLEGE STUDENT WINS EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT TRIP

Congratulations to transition year student Donal Dunne who has won a four-day trip to Strasbourg on The Graduate online civic awareness competition. Donal will be accompanied by twenty-three other students on the trip in early 2017. Donal will spend one full day at the European Parliament where he will take part in Euroscola, which is a youth parliament, where he will be involved in discussions on a number of pre-selected topics about the European Union with students from other member states. Donal will be taken to other places of educational interest while on tour.

The trip has been kindly sponsored by Solas and The European Parliament.

## FIFTH YEAR STUDENTS RAISE MONEY FOR TEMPLE STREET HOSPITAL

On April 28th our fifth year home economics class raised €324 for temple street children's hospital by hosting a bake sale for the whole school. Well done to Ms Markey and her class.

