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NUI Galway has the wind in its sails. Over the past 12 months, it has attracted more EU Horizon 2020 funding for research and innovation than any other Irish University. Four of its up-and-coming research leaders won European Research Council (ERC) grants, a rare feat for a University. It also confirmed its status as the only Irish University to be consistently rising in the QS World University Rankings.

To cap it all, it welcomed Britain’s Prince Charles and President Joachim Gauck of Germany, to a fanfare of international publicity. Not a bad year’s work for our most westerly University.

While enjoying the successes, Dr Jim Browne, President of NUI Galway, has his sights set on the future.

“We are very ambitious. Over the next five years, we aim to secure our place in the top 200 universities worldwide while securing €100 million in competitive EU research funds.” These and other goals are outlined in the recently published ‘Vision 2020’, the University’s Strategic Plan 2015-2020.

“For students, the commitment is to provide work-based learning experiences across 80 per cent of undergraduate programmes. Locally, the University plans to develop a major ‘Industry and Innovation Hub’ in order to continue to play a dynamic role in building Galway’s growing reputation for entrepreneurship and jobs. It aims to support Galway’s bid for the European Capital of Culture 2020 designation,” Browne said.

While cranes are a rare sight in Galway in recent years, NUI Galway bucked the trend by continuing to invest in infrastructure. In September 2015, An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny officially launched the €25 million HRB Clinical Research Facility and Lambe Institute for Translational Research, which is on the grounds of University Hospital Galway.

“Once fully functional, it will be possible to run clinical trials with medtech businesses located in this region in conjunction with Saolta University Health Care Group, representing the hospitals in the west of Ireland.”

Another new facility, the Centre for Cell Manufacturing, officially opened in 2014, has already succeeded in attracting major funding to the University under the EU Horizon 2020 programme. It is the first facility on the island of Ireland to be licensed to manufacture cultured stem cells for human use.

“It further confirms the University’s leadership in world class biomedical research and positions Ireland as a strategic global leader in the new technology of regenerative medicine,” said Browne.

“When you consider our new Clinical and Translational Research Facility in combination with the Centre for Cell Manufacturing, NUI Galway is now in an excellent position to win funding for large clinical trials. This allows us to build cutting edge, real projects with both the indigenous and multinational, locally-based medtech businesses, leading on to clinical trials. It’s a tremendous advancement.”

Added to this, NUI Galway was chosen to host the new SFI-funded national research centre Curam – the Centre for Research in Medical Devices – established on the campus in 2014. The prime objective for Cúram is to radically improve health outcomes for patients by developing innovative implantable ‘smart’ medical devices to treat and meet medical needs.

Not done with the builders just yet, having secured private funding through Galway University Foundation, the University recently began construction on a new Centre for Performance and Theatre.

“The centre will include a 120-seat theatre, rehearsal rooms, a workshop space, seminar rooms and office space and will build upon our current strengths in drama, theatre and film studies and in our broad understanding of performance while greatly enhancing capacity,” said Browne. “It’s all part of our plan to prioritise and develop the areas in which we excel.”
“Another achievement is the integration of the internationally recognised Shannon College of Hotel Management, with the University. “Both institutions have a long history of cooperation, but this represents a change in how we work together. Shannon College of Hotel Management, which attracts over 50 per cent of its annual student intake from overseas, will remain at its current location in Shannon, but there will be additional benefits for students, including postgraduate opportunities.

Reflecting on the past year, Browne is particularly pleased with the level of competitive funding won by NUI Galway. “We set ourselves an ambitious goal to achieve €100 million throughout the seven year lifespan of the EU Horizon 2020 programme. Having won €15 million in year one, we are already ahead of target.”

He is also pleased that the four European Research Council grants - in itself a huge achievement - were won across a diversity of sectors. Dr Eilionoir Flynn won her grant for research in the area of disability law and policy, Dr Marie Louise Coolahan, for women’s literature in English, Dr Martin O’Halloran, for biosciences and Dr Martin O’Donnell, for translational medicine.

This year has also seen the US-based Blackstone Charitable Foundation extend its campus entrepreneurship Programme ‘Blackstone LaunchPad’ outside the US for the first time, to include NUI Galway. The Foundation’s three-year, €2 million grant will establish a partnership between NUI Galway and two other Irish universities to introduce entrepreneurship as a viable career option and provide over 50,000 students, with a network of venture coaches and an entrepreneurial support service.

“This initiative is designed to help undergraduates explore and bring forward ideas. By choosing NUI Galway as one of the three Irish university recipients, it acknowledges our already strong entrepreneurial ethos and gives us a great opportunity to further promote the culture of undergraduate entrepreneurship in the University,” said Browne.

NUI Galway has enjoyed many achievements of late, but has not escaped challenges. Gender equality became a highly publicised issue for NUI Galway following a court decision.

Browne said: “We are not alone among universities in having a serious problem in this area, but we acknowledge that we need to take big steps in a short space of time to right the situation. We have been actively and positively addressing this issue through a quota system since 2013, and we are determined to empower all staff to reach their full potential.”

In general, he is very optimistic about the future of the University and also Galway itself. “There’s a great buzz around ICT at present and NUI Galway’s role in the Insight Centre for Data Analytics is an important enabler for innovation in this sector. So too is the establishment of the PorterShed, as the first stage in the development of Galway’s planned Innovation District.

“This marks the first part of the re-development of a brown site near Eyre Square. The success of the Innovation District could yield hundreds of new jobs and seal Galway’s claim as an ICT hub.”

Feeding into that ambition, the inaugural Venture West Conference, held recently at NUI Galway, and supported by Galway Chamber of Commerce and the Irish Venture Capital Association, attracted over 400 delegates and clearly demonstrated the appetite for ICT start-ups in the region.

September 2015 saw the opening of Synapse, a ‘tech carnival’ run by NUI Galway computer science and information technology students.

“The students who have organised Synapse have provided a fantastic opportunity for top ICT firms to come here, exchange ideas and learn about what’s happening in the West. It all adds to the ICT eco system being actively developed here in Galway.”

Dr Browne is convinced that the ‘can do’ attitude so prevalent in Galway will continue to underpin the city’s success, one that belies its peripheral location.

A fuller version of this interview featured in The Sunday Business Post in September 2015
NUI Galway’s iconic Quadrangle lit up in orange as part of World Suicide Prevention Day on Thursday, 10 September 2015, and as part of the national campaign ‘Cycle Against Suicide’ in collaboration with the UNESCO International Year of Light 2015 and Solus.

On 19 May 2015, The Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall visited NUI Galway on the start of their visit to Galway, Clare and Sligo.

Over 2,500 students graduated from NUI Galway during Autumn Conferring Week in October.

Madison Ni Thoirealaigh Stockon and Éabha Ni Dhonnchadha from Scoil Phursa, Galway, experienced the sound and smoke effects during the ‘Science of Sound’ show visit to their school as part of the 17th Galway Science Festival.

The Year in pictures

The ROYAL Visit

Autumn Conferrings 2015

World Suicide Prevention Day
Young scientists from Galway Educate Together National School and St. James National School, Bushypark, Galway, preparing fantastic DNA with Anna Trego, their NUI Galway Cell Explorers mentor.

In January 2015, Julia Filiapiak (5) from Scoil Shéamais Naofa, Barna, Co. Galway, brought her teddy to the 10th annual Teddy Bear hospital for treatment. The Hospital is organised by Sláinte Society, the NUI Galway branch of the International Federation of Medical Students Associations.

Twins Sarah and Amy McMahon (10) from Castlegar, Co. Galway, were among the sixth cohort of ‘graduates’ from the University’s Youth Academy. Since its establishment in 2012, over 1,000 children have graduated from the Youth Academy.

Pictured viewing the solar eclipse at NUI Galway on 16 July 2015, where up to 500 people gathered in front of the Quadrangle, were Nevenoe Guegan, Laura Boyle and Aonghus Mullins of the NUI Galway Centre for Astronomy.

Aoibhin Connolly from Moycullen, Co. Galway, gets up close to a tarantula at NUI Galway’s ‘Scientist for a Day’ workshop.
Research Round-up

Small Tortoiseshell Butterfly (Aglais Urticae) Photo by Oisín Duffy as part of NUI Galway Biodiverse campus
**€2.2m research investment into Blood Cancer Network**

A new national clinical research network was launched in November 2015 at the Lambe Institute for Translational Research at NUI Galway by Minister for Skills, Research & Innovation which will bring fresh hope for blood cancer patients in Ireland. The newly established Blood Cancer Network Ireland represents a multimillion euro investment in cancer research by the Irish Cancer Society and Science Foundation Ireland.

The €2.2 million investment has established a new virtual clinical research network that will offer early stage haematology clinical trials, providing blood cancer patients in Ireland with the opportunity to be among the first in the world to test new, potentially life-changing, drugs and treatments. This joint investment with Science Foundation Ireland comes on foot of the Irish Cancer Society’s strategy to establish and support collaborative cancer research initiatives to bring Irish clinicians, scientists and population researchers together to increase the pace of discoveries. This new national cancer research initiative is also supported by the pharmaceutical industry.

Over the next five years, Blood Cancer Network Ireland (BCNI) hopes to make novel drugs and treatments available to patients with all types of blood cancers across Ireland. The first clinical trials being rolled out through BCNI will bring fresh hope, in particular, to patients with difficult to treat blood cancers. This new clinical research network will establish a blood cancer biobank to collect and analyse patient samples to further our knowledge and understanding of blood cancers and an enhanced registry, in association with the National Cancer Registry of Ireland, to collect information about the treatment, outcomes, and quality of life of patients with blood cancers in Ireland.

Director of Blood Cancer Network Ireland, Professor of Haematology at NUI Galway, Michael O’Dwyer, said: “This investment will put Ireland on the map in terms of developmental therapeutics in blood cancers. We are now in a position to attract cutting edge Phase VII trials to Ireland giving Irish patients the earliest access to promising new treatments, while the development of a dedicated biobank and registry will greatly enhance our efforts in the areas of translational, population and health economics research. Overall, this investment will have many potential benefits: it will make Ireland internationally competitive in blood cancer research, increase access to expensive medicines free of charge with consequent savings to the taxpayer, enhance research and development in Ireland, contribute to job creation, and most importantly of all, benefit patients.”

**Risky fishy favourites**

Popular North Sea fish such as haddock, plaice and lemon sole could become less common on our menus because they will be constrained to preferred habitats as seas warm, according to a study published in April 2015 in *Nature Climate Change* and authored by a team that included Professor Mark Johnson of the Ryan Institute at NUI Galway.

The team took survey data dating back to 1980 and used the change in distribution between decades to derive predictive models. In the last 40 years, the North Sea has warmed four times faster than the global average, and further warming is predicted over the coming century. The North Sea is associated with fish landings valued at over €1 billion, leading to great interest in how changing environmental conditions will impact on commercial species.

Fish distributions are limited by a number of factors, including water temperature, and some species can only thrive in certain habitats and depths. The research developed models that combine long-term fisheries datasets and climate model projections to predict the abundance and distribution of consumers’ favourite fish over the next 50 years. As the North Sea warms, species appear to choose habitats of a suitable depth over the benefits of moving to cooler waters. Due to higher temperatures in the future, many of the species studied may suffer population declines.

**Robots for old age**

A new European research project aimed at managing active and healthy ageing through the use of caring service robots began at NUI Galway in February 2015. The MARIO project brings together a consortium of partners from academic institutions and industry across Europe, led by the School of Nursing and Midwifery at NUI Galway.

Funded by the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, it assembled a team of international experts from academia, industry and dementia groups to work collaboratively in tackling the burdens imposed by dementia and developing innovative solutions using caring robots.

The €4 million project will last for three years, during which three pilot studies of robots interacting with people with dementia will be undertaken in Ireland, the UK and Italy. Professor Kathy Murphy, of the School of Nursing and Midwifery at NUI Galway, explains: “MARIO is an exciting and innovative project that will make a huge difference to the lives of people with dementia. We will be working directly with people with dementia to ensure that the issues they see as important are addressed. Multi-faceted interventions will be developed, which will be delivered by humanoid robots.”

**Stem cell trials**

Following on from the official opening of the Centre for Cell Manufacturing Ireland (CCMI) in 2014, the custom-built facility at NUI Galway designed to manufacture stem cells, a number of human clinical trials have progressed. The first clinical trial using CCMI-manufactured stem cells, funded by the Health Research Board and Science Foundation Ireland, is underway. The trial is investigating the safety of using stem cells isolated from bone marrow for the treatment of critical limb ischaemia, a common complication associated with diabetes, which can often result in limb amputation.

The project is led by Professor Tim O’Brien, Director of the Regenerative Medicine Institute (REMEDi) at NUI Galway. Professor O’Brien is also leading a new €6 million research project (NEPHSTROM) to combat diabetic kidney disease. The project has been funded by the European Union’s Horizon 2020 programme to evaluate the clinical safety and efficacy of a next-generation cell therapy discovered by NUI Galway spin-out Orbsen Therapeutics.

In another example of ground-breaking stem cell research, a large-scale clinical trial using adult stem cells to treat knee osteoarthritis is expected to be underway across Europe by the end of 2015. Almost €6 million has also been granted to the project by the EU’s Horizon 2020 research funding programme. The project will include 18 partners from Ireland, France, the UK, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands, and will be led by REMEDI.
Genetics of fruit flies

In June 2015, NUI Galway’s Dr Elaine Dunleavy was announced as the recipient of the Science Foundation Ireland President of Ireland Young Researcher Award (PIYRA). The researcher was welcomed to a special meeting with the President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins, at Áras an Uachtaráin to mark the announcement.

The award supports Dr Dunleavy’s research in the field of genetics which is focused on gaining an increased understanding of how stem cells divide. Dr Dunleavy’s approach will utilise genetic manipulations in fruit fly stem cells, combined with state-of-the-art high-resolution imaging, to investigate genes and molecules that affect stem cell identity. Data generated from this research will substantially improve our knowledge of mechanisms of genome stability in stem cells with implications for fertility, reproduction, ageing, cancer and regenerative medicine.

PIYRA is Science Foundation Ireland’s most esteemed award for researchers who have shown exceptional promise as possible future leaders in international research and are known for excellence in their field.

Dr Dunleavy received funding for her work from the SFI-Health Research Board-Welcame Trust Biomedical Research Partnership in 2013. Professor Brian McStay, a colleague in the Centre for Chromosome Biology, School of Natural Sciences at NUI Galway, also became a recipient of funding from the Wellcome Trust to study uncharacterised regions of the genome that could advance our understanding of a wide range of human diseases.

Social media and journalism

In a world where the first person to see and write about a breaking news event is a random individual with a smartphone, instead of a seasoned reporter in the field, what role does social media play in contemporary journalism? This and many more questions were addressed for the first time in the Irish context by a survey on social journalism undertaken by the Insight Centre for Data Analytics at NUI Galway.


Irish journalists still rely on traditional methods to verify stories, according to the first nationwide survey of news reporting in the digital age. While the vast majority of journalists in Ireland use social media for sourcing news leads and content, and verifying information, the majority still believe that without external verification the information cannot be trusted.

Overall, the survey found that 99 per cent of Irish journalists use social media, with half of those using it daily. While most journalists believe that using social media makes them more engaged with their audience and with other journalists, over half state that they believe social media is undermining traditional journalistic values.

Very few journalists were found to use specialist tools to validate information, instead relying on the practice of contacting individuals directly.

Spin-out Embo Medical raises €3 million in seed capital

Embo Medical, an early stage medical device company focused on developing technology to shut down blood flow in blood vessels, has secured €3 million in seed-funding.

Embo Medical is based in NUI Galway’s Business Innovation Centre. In 2011, the management team of Wayne Allen, Colin Forde and Liam Mullins undertook the Biolinnovate Ireland Fellowship, a specialist medical device innovation programme. Upon completion, they founded Embo Medical to develop solutions to unmet clinical needs that were identified while observing embolization procedures in hospitals during the Fellowship.

Embo is developing the first true one-shot (one device per vessel) vascular embolization device. The product is aimed at the peripheral vascular embolization market, a market where physicians perform about 180,000 procedures per year worldwide. The Embo platform technology is intended to provide a superior solution in shorter procedural times, resulting in safe, cost-effective embolization. In preclinical studies, Embo’s technology reduced blood vessel treatment time by over 80%, while ensuring rapid and durable occlusion across all blood vessel sizes.

Embo CEO Wayne Allen said: “This investment will accelerate Embo’s development of a state-of-the-art solution for the treatment of several diseases, will further prove the product’s value through clinical studies and enable us to access the large US market. Our technology has the potential to become the standard of care while simultaneously reducing the cost of healthcare.”

NUI Galway Research Finds Irish Children are Exposed to Large Volumes of Alcohol Marketing

Alcohol Action Ireland, the national charity for alcohol-related issues, has said the introduction of legislation regulating alcohol marketing is a child protection issue.

A study carried out by the Health Promotion Research Centre at NUI Galway, commissioned by Alcohol Action Ireland, found that Irish children are exposed to large volumes of alcohol marketing, which increases their likelihood of drinking alcohol and engaging in risky drinking behaviour.

The research found:

- More than 90% of children reported that they were exposed to traditional, or offline, alcohol advertisements in the week prior to the study and more than half saw four or more alcohol advertisements per day
- 77% of the children reported exposure to alcohol marketing online
- 61% of children reported that they owned alcohol branded merchandise.

Dr Michal Molcho, of the Health Promotion Research Centre at NUI Galway, said their findings indicate that there is widespread exposure to alcohol marketing among children aged 13 and upward. “We found that almost all children reported seeing or hearing a traditional or off-line advertisement for alcohol drinks, while 77% were exposed to online marketing and 61% reported that they own alcohol-branded merchandise.”

Dr Molcho said that increased exposure to alcohol marketing increased the chances of children to report drinking, binge drinking, and drunkenness.

“These findings clearly indicate that the more intense the exposure, the greater the risk of drinking alcohol and engaging in risky drinking behaviours. Given that these findings echo previous studies, coupled with the vulnerability of young people to alcohol, there is a clear need for immediate action on alcohol marketing regulation.”
Dr Elaine Dunleavy is using fruit flies to advance our understanding of fertility, reproduction, ageing, cancer and regenerative medicine.
Dr Jim Browne and Professor Chen Xu, Chairperson of Tsinghua University Council, signed an exchange agreement in front of the Presidents of Ireland and
University collaborations

The University has academic exchange and collaboration agreements with 30 institutions in China and Hong Kong. In December 2014, a high-level institutional agreement with Tsinghua University, Beijing, was signed by Dr Jim Browne and Professor Chen Xu, Chairperson of Tsinghua University Council. One of Asia’s leading universities, Tsinghua University has been collaborating in teaching and research with NUI Galway for a long time.

The signing of the memorandum of understanding (MOU) was witnessed by President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins, and President of China, Xi Jinping, in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing as part of the Irish President’s State visit to China.

In October 2015, NUI Galway hosted a special delegation from Tsinghua University led by Professor Chen Xu, Chairperson of the University Council as they accompanied President Xi Jinping on his official visit to the United Kingdom. The visit also saw the signing of a Student Exchange Agreement between both universities.

In April 2015, NUI Galway signed a co-operation agreement with Addis Ababa Science and Technology University (AASTU). With the support of the Ethiopian government, NUI Galway will serve as a developmental partner to AASTU, helping it to become an internationally recognised hub of science, technology and higher education.

AASTU was founded by the Ethiopian government in 2011, with a mission to become a leading force in higher education in Ethiopia, a country with one of the fastest growing economies in the world.

September 2014 saw an agreement to formalise collaborative ties with the Mayo Clinic Centre for Regenerative Medicine in the US. The memorandum of understanding follows many years of close cooperation, and paves the way for joint collaborations in clinical trials using regenerative therapies, biomaterials and biomedical engineering. The agreement also facilitates ongoing student and staff exchange between Galway and the US.

This was followed in October 2014 by the signing of significant partnership agreements with the University of Massachusetts, led by the chancellors of UMass Medical School, based in Worcester, and UMass, Lowell.
In both the QS and Times Higher Education [THE rankings], NUI Galway saw a sustained improvement in its position confirming that its global reputation continues to grow. This represents steady progress towards achieving the University’s vision for 2020, as outlined in the new Strategic Plan. The achievement is all the more marked considering the challenging environment we continue to face in higher education in Ireland, as well as the increased competition from around the world.

THE rankings success
In this year’s THE Rankings, NUI Galway improved its overall scores and maintained its position. While most Irish universities registered a fall in the rankings this year, the University remains in the 251-275 band and continues to be ranked third in Ireland.

QS world ranking rise
Earlier in September 2015, the University increased its position to 271st in the world in the QS World University Rankings 2015/2016, one of just two Irish universities to improve their standing this year. This nine-point rise is significant given that it is a further gain on last year’s improved position. NUI Galway also ranked in the Top 100 most international universities in 2015 in Times Higher Education’s indicator for international outlook.

Researchers among world’s best
Earlier this year, Thomson Reuters ranked four outstanding researchers from NUI Galway among the ‘World’s Most Influential Scientific Minds: 2015’ – more than any other Irish university. The 3,000 international academics named on the list earned their distinction by publishing the highest number of articles that rank among those most frequently cited by fellow researchers. Congratulations to Professor Henry Curran, Professor Colin O’Dowd, Professor Donal O’Regan and Emeritus Professor John Simmie on their achievement.

The European Commission’s U-Multi-rank system in 2015 gave NUI Galway the highest ranking of four A grades. NUI Galway has also outperformed other Irish universities by securing the highest amount of funding during the first nine months of the EU’s Horizon 2020 funding programme.

Tacaíocht don Ollscoil Ghaeilge
I mí na Samhna 2015 chuir ÓÉ Gaillimh fáilte roimh chinneadh Aire Stáit na hOllscoile, Joe McHugh T.D., soláthar €2.7 milliún a chur ar fáil d’Acadamh na hOllscoile Gaeilge.

Bainfidh an soláthar seo le gniomhóirí choitireachtaí agus léinn a réachtáil i nIonad ÓÉ Gaillimh sa Ghaeltacht. Iocfar allúntas bliantúil de €900,000 ón Roinn Ealaíon, Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta leis an Ollscoil le linn na tréimhse 2015-2018 de bhreis ar shheitacaíochtaí don Ollscoil Ghaeilge ón Údarás um Ardoideachas.

Tá trí lonad ag an Óllscoil sa Ghaeltacht agus iad lonnaithe i nGaith Dobhair, Contae Dhún na nGall agus i gCarna agus ar an gCeathrú Rua i gContae na Gaillimhe.

Cuireann Acadamh na hOllscoilíochtaí Gaeilge cúrsaí léinn fochéime agus aarchéime sa Ghaeilge Fheidhmeach, i Léinn an Aistriúcháin agus sa nAisteangaireachta, sa Chumarsáid agus Teinecolaithe Páisnéise. Ar aghaidh a feidhmeantaí agus as cabhrú leis na hOllscoile i nGaillimh.

I measc na gcuspóirí straitéiseacha atá ag ÓÉ Gaillimh idir seo agus 2018, tá:

- Cláir sealbhaithe teanga barr feabhais a chur ar fáil le go mbeidh inniúlacht den scoth sa Ghaeilge ina priomhthréith ag céimithe ÓÉ Gaillimh;
- Cláir struchtúrtha do sheimeastar Gaeltachta agus do shocrúchan oibre a chur ar fáil faoin mbliain 2016 le go mbeadh deiseanna sealbhaithe agus usáide teanga ag mic léinn ÓÉ Gaillimh;
- Leas a bhaint as Ionaid na hOllscoilíochtaí Gaeilge le go mbeidh ÓÉ Gaillimh ar an bpríomhionad do Thumcháil Theanga in Oideachas Tosaigh Múinteoirí go náisiúnta.

New Institute for Lifecourse and Society
The Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection Joan Burton T.D. officially launched the Institute for Lifecourse and Society (ILAS) in November 2015. The Institute is dedicated to supporting applied research that informs policy development and practice to make a positive difference to people’s lives.

The Institute for Lifecourse and Society represents an €9m investment comprising significant philanthropic contributions from The Atlantic Philanthropies and Galway University Foundation in a rare example of an interdisciplinary research hub designed to examine and reimagine important social issues, especially for vulnerable populations.

Speaking at the opening of the Institute, An Tánaiste Joan Burton T.D. said: “The goal of the Institute is to achieve international excellence in social policy and practice development through the pursuit of interdisciplinary research in the social sciences. This will be done by creatively integrating the rich and diverse intellectual resources from within the University and beyond.

To mark the opening of ILAS the University established a biennial Distinguished Lecture series inaugurated by President Higgins on 30 November 2015.
Global Irish Economic Forum

NUi Galway hosted the Galway element of the Global Irish Economic Forum in November which included a public forum, entitled 'Gaillimh Nua'. The Global Irish Economic Forum is organised by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The Global Irish Economic Forum Galway showcased MedTech activities in research and translational science in NUi Galway and the broader region with members of the Global Irish Network in order to share expertise and explore collaborative opportunities.

Members of the Network also participated in a public forum, moderated by NUi Galway graduate Eimear Ni Chonaola, Journalist and TG4/RTÉ broadcaster. The ‘Gaillimh Nua Roundtable discussion engaged with local initiatives in the areas of Gastronomy, Culture, Innovation, Smart City, Marine and The Emigration Experience. Leading local representatives in each of these emerging and growing areas addressed the Forum which was then followed by a healthy discussion.

NUi Galway Ireland’s most biodiverse campus

For the second year running, NUi Galway has won the top award for the most biodiverse campus at Ireland’s Intervarsity BioBlitz competition. Over a 24 hour period, volunteers combed the University’s campus and recorded a total of 628 species. Last year, the University recorded 581 species.

With extensive semi-natural habitats across the NUi Galway estate, the BioBlitz teams logged 324 plants and tree species, 91 mosses, 34 bird species, 31 terrestrial and freshwater slugs and snails, 29 flies, 15 mammals, 14 butterflies and moths, 14 diatoms, 13 beetles, 12 terrestrial and freshwater bugs, 11 fungi, 10 caddisflies and 10 ants/bees and wasps, 3 millipedes and 3 spiders, 2 lichens, 2 leeches, and 2 worms and a fish, earwig, mayfly, grasshopper, woodlouse, water hoglouse, mite and a flatworm.

Ireland’s BioBlitz is designed to increase public awareness of the variety of life in Ireland, and to highlight some of the ecological services that biodiversity provides to enhance our quality of life at a global and local level. The Bioblitz demonstrates the high level of skill and expertise necessary to study many aspects of Ireland’s biological diversity. It also demonstrates the importance of being able to survey and identify plants and animals as these are important aspects of Ireland’s biodiversity and skills that are taught at NUi Galway.
Renowned Australian artist Patricia Piccinini’s spectacular 100-foot long and 70-foot tall Skywhale takes off on its maiden voyage from NUI Galway during the 2015 Galway International Arts Festival.
Shannon College - a Strategy for Higher Education

Minister for Education Jan O’Sullivan TD officially marked the incorporation of Shannon College of Hotel Management with NUI Galway on 9 November 2015. This integration is the culmination of a considerable amount of work between Shannon Airport Group, Shannon College and the University. The mutual benefits of the integration for NUI Galway and Shannon College of Hotel Management, led by Dr Phillip Smyth, will be seen over the coming years.

Bringing educational institutions together is an important part of the Higher Education Authority’s strategy for reconfiguring higher education in Ireland. NUI Galway’s Strategic Plan for the coming years - entitled Vision 2020 - includes among its goals the integration of Shannon College of Hotel Management and St Angela’s College Sligo with the University.

The vision for this merger is to sustain and develop excellence in the participating institutions, and to ensure that available resources are put to best use to meet the challenges of today’s research, education and learning landscape.

A-Level pilot scheme

Earlier this year, NUI Galway announced a one-year pilot scheme for GCE A-Level students to enter the University in September 2015. The initiative is intended to increase the number of Northern Ireland students attending NUI Galway. Around 200 places across more than 50 undergraduate programmes, with the exception of Medicine due to the Health Professions Admission Test requirement, were made available to students sitting three or more A-Levels under the scheme.

Currently the A-Level to Leaving Certificate points conversion model is based on four A-Levels, which is the equivalent to six Leaving Certificate exams. Approximately 80% of A-Level students only sit 3 A-Levels, which means the maximum number of points for these students is 450 points. In addition to this, a student might earn up to 65 points if they sat a fourth AS-Level, but this cohort is in the minority.

For each course, A-Level students will be ranked in order of their achievement in their best 3 GCE A-Level exams and places will be offered to the applicants who rank highest to fill agreed scheme quota places per programme. As with CAO applicants, all other minimum entry requirements will also need to be met.
Legacy endures
Kevin Boyle

The legacy of world-renowned human rights lawyer and scholar, the late Professor Kevin Boyle, endures at NUI Galway. On 28 November 2014, his personal archive was launched by Attorney General, Máire Whelan, S.C. The archive contains a wealth of material and unique insights into the field of human rights, legal research and scholarship.

Kindly donated by the Boyle family since Kevin’s untimely passing in 2010, the archive has now been catalogued by the University’s James Hardiman Library, and represents a major resource for the study and teaching of human rights.

Professor Boyle, who came originally from Newry, began his career at Queen’s University Belfast, where he was deeply engaged in the civil rights movement. In the late 1970s, he joined NUI Galway where he co-founded the Irish Centre for Human Rights with Denny Driscoll in 1980. He also served as a special advisor to Mary Robinson from September 2001, when she was UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

An international symposium, hosted by NUI Galway’s School of Law and the Irish Centre for Human Rights, also took place to celebrate Professor Boyle’s career. The keynote address was provided by Professor Sir Nigel Rodley, Chair of the United Nations Human Rights Committee.

International Year of Light

The UN designated 2015 the UNESCO International Year of Light and President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins, was announced as the LIGHT2015 Ireland Patron. NUI Galway is coordinating Ireland’s involvement with a series of events across the country. Schools were invited to learn more about the science of light and the contribution of light to our communities.

LIGHT2015 is a global initiative adopted by the United Nations to raise awareness of how optical technologies promote sustainable development and provide solutions to worldwide challenges in energy, education, agriculture, communications and health.

Leading the initiative in Ireland is Professor Martin Leahy from NUI Galway’s School of Physics. “Light particles, or photons, are harnessed for use in the world around us. Photonics is the science and technology of generating, controlling, and detecting photons. We are no longer in the electronic age. The 21st century is all about harnessing light through photonics. We have truly entered the Photonics Era.”

LIGHT2015 represents a unique opportunity to marry science, engineering, medicine and the arts - particularly cinema and the fine arts. As part of the International Year of Light, children will have the chance to have their art projected onto walls in city centre locations and app enthusiasts will get access to new apps.

Celebrating Yeats 2015

A major exhibition at NUI Galway was part of the worldwide Yeats 2015 series of cultural events marking the 150th birthday of W.B. Yeats. The University’s Moore Institute and Hardiman Library presented ‘Yeats & the West’, an exhibition exploring Yeats’ life, work, legacy and deep connections to the west of Ireland.

Rare artworks, books, original documents and exclusive film clips feature in the interactive exhibition, which continues until the end of the year.

Items on display reflect W.B. Yeats’ attention to life, love, and landscape in Galway, Sligo, and beyond. ‘Yeats & the West’ details the many artistic collaborations between artists inspired by the western world, which centred on Coole Park.

The exhibition follows the foundation of the Abbey Theatre in Galway and Yeats’ work with J.M. Synge, George Moore and Edward Martyn, using exclusive materials from NUI Galway’s Lady Gregory Collection, the Abbey Theatre Digital Archive and the Lyric Theatre Belfast archive. It explores his interest in local poet Antoine Ó Raifteirí, and highlights the gifted artists of Yeats’ own family, whose pioneering work is showcased in exquisite handprinted books and in embroidery from Loughrea’s St. Brendan’s Cathedral.

Original watercolour sketches and oils by W.B. Yeats’ brother, the celebrated artist, Jack B. Yeats, also feature.

NUI Galway was part of the worldwide Yeats 2015 series of cultural events marking the 150th birth of W.B. Yeats.
Thoor Ballylee, the former home of W.B. Yeats in County Galway.
We join all of you at this hallowed University, to which my Great Great Great Grandmother originally gave a Charter all those years ago.” Prince Charles
On 19 May 2015, the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall visited NUI Galway on the start of their visit to Galway, Clare and Sligo.

The visitors were greeted by a display of Irish music and dance curated by Tourism Ireland in the Quadrangle, followed by an exhibition showcasing NUI Galway’s heritage and research. They also met with students from Ireland and across the Commonwealth.

NUI Galway’s prestigious history, which spans 170 years since its foundation in 1845 as Queen’s College Galway, gave huge resonance to the occasion.

In the Aula Maxima, in front of an invited audience, Prince Charles spoke of his feelings about the visit.

“I must say it is a very great pleasure to be with you on this occasion, for both my wife and I. I am hugely grateful to the President, Dr Jim Browne, for his very generous and warm words”

President Browne added: “I often reflect on the significance of that historic decision in the 1840s to establish three Queen’s Colleges, in Galway, Cork and Belfast.

That decision at a time of real austerity was transformative for our country – and especially our region.

Our royal visitors have seen how 170 years later – our academics, our students and our researchers are making a real difference.”

There followed a special ceremony, during which Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall, planted a sessile oak beside the Quadrangle. The sessile oak is the national tree of Ireland and Wales and is also known as the Cornish Oak.

Around the world, media outlets broadcast pictures and details of the event.
Prince Charles addressing the audience in the Aula Maxima at NUI Galway
Royal Visit at NUI Galway with Showcase of Heritage and Research

The historic Quadrangle at NUI Galway was the setting in May 2015 for this elaborate showcase of heritage, culture, research and education. NUI Galway’s President, Dr Jim Browne, welcomed Their Royal Highnesses The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall to the campus for the start of their visit to the west of Ireland.

The visitors were greeted by Irish music and dance in the ‘Quad’, followed by an ‘NUI Galway Expo’ and reception. The Expo provided the visitors with first-hand insights into the University’s heritage, the Irish language and Celtic studies, and the latest cutting-edge research. They also met with students from Ireland and across the Commonwealth.

Heritage
Their Royal Highnesses were shown memorabilia from the founding times of the University. NUI Galway’s prestigious history spans back 170 years to its foundation in 1845. Known then as Queen’s College Galway, the University was one of three Queen’s Colleges, the others located in Cork and Belfast. Items on show will included original architectural plans, pencil, ink and watercolour on canvas, of the Quadrangle, built in local limestone and modelled on Christ Church at the University of Oxford.

They were also shown the first roll-book, also known as ‘The Declaration Book’, dating from 1849, original leather binding with gilded inlay and insignia, contains the signed oath and declaration of the first Presidents, all academic staff and register all students who matriculated and enrolled as Queen’s College Galway from its first academic year of 1849-50. Initially, there were only 63 students enrolled at the College, which is now home to over 17,000 students.

Irish Language and Celtic Studies
A unique aspect of NUI Galway’s role as a university is its strategic commitment to the provision of university education through the medium of Irish and NUI Galway’s aim to serve the Gaeltacht and the Irish language community, and to create an exemplary bilingual campus.

From the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, Irish writers claimed the ‘Crown of Ireland’ was theirs to bestow on their preferred candidate as the rightful king of the three kingdoms. For Irish language writers of the late medieval period, cultural allegiance was more significant than religious or political affiliation as a marker of Irish identity.

Research Impact
Situated on the edge of Europe, NUI Galway is a dynamic location for research and innovation. The University’s approach is to be collaborative, creative, interdisciplinary and entrepreneurial. The University partners with almost 3,000 research institutes worldwide to create global networks of expertise.

The ‘Expo’ showcased research across five broad areas, including: Applied Social Sciences and Public Policy; Biomedical Science and Engineering; Environment, Marine and Energy; Humanities in Context, including Digital Humanities; and Informatics, Data Analytics, Physical and Computational Sciences.

Tree Planting Ceremony
NUI Galway is Ireland’s most biodiverse university, and over 100 specimen trees surround the historic Quadrangle, some as old as the building itself. As part of the special ceremony, Their Royal Highnesses planted a sessile oak beside the Quadrangle.

The sessile oak has particularly special meaning as it connects Ireland, Wales and Cornwall. It is the official National Tree of Ireland, where it is known as the Irish oak or Dair ghaelach (‘Gaelic oak’). Also, it is the national tree of Wales and is considered the national tree of Cornwall, as reflected by its other common names, the Welsh oak and the Cornish Oak.
Dr Nata Duvvury is investigating the social and economic costs of violence against women and girls in developing countries.
Violence against women and girls is a global issue, and one which is costing society on many levels, according to Dr Nata Duvvury, an established global expert in the field, and Co-Director of NUI Galway’s Centre for Global Women’s Studies: “We need an immediate, pragmatic, informed and coherent response across nations. We understand today, more than ever before, the debilitating impact it has on individuals, families and communities. What we now need to understand are the myriad impacts of violence on the economy and society, we can then identify which interventions need to be prioritised for the benefit of individuals and society as a whole.”

In February 2015, a new research project was announced to investigate the social and economic costs of violence against women and girls in developing countries. Led by Dr Nata Duvvury at NUI Galway, the project is funded by the UK’s Department for International Development to the value of £1.5 million.

NUI Galway now leads an international team comprising Ipsos MORI in the UK and the International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW) in the US on the three-year project. The ambitious project will take a multi-disciplinary approach, involving experts in economics and the social sciences, including political science, sociology, gender studies, public health and psychology.

The research aims to pinpoint identifiable links between violence against women and girls and the economic impact this has on nations at differing stages of development. The focus will be on three countries – Ghana, Pakistan and South Sudan – and over 4,500 women will be surveyed. Researchers will carry out in-depth interviews with survivors of violence.

By producing new empirical research and evidence on the economic and social costs, the research project will strengthen the argument for resources to implement laws, provide health and social support services, and to mobilise communities to shift the social norms that underpin violence against women and girls.

There is growing interest in estimating the socio-economic impact of violence against women in many parts of the world. In a previous study led by Dr Duvvury, on costing domestic violence against women in Vietnam, the estimated loss of productivity, out-of-pocket expenditures, and foregone income for households came to about 3.19% of GDP.

The project is part of the UK Department for International Development’s investment of £25 million over five years, in a pioneering violence against women and girls research and innovation programme called ‘What Works to Prevent Violence’.

NUI GALWAY’S RESEARCHERS TAKE ON SOME OF THE MOST PRESSING CHALLENGES OF OUR TIMES AND BRING REAL CHANGE TO LIVES AROUND THE WORLD.
A new research partnership between J.K. Rowling’s international children’s organisation Lumos and NUI Galway will increase global momentum on transforming the lives of children who are separated from their families and live in orphanages.

Research carried out by the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre (CFRC) at NUI Galway, expects to increase global understanding of why an estimated eight million children worldwide live in institutions and orphanages in different regions of the world, despite the fact that as many as 80% of those children still have living parents. The research will evaluate methods of deinstitutionalisation, and investigate the best ways to offer support to families allowing them to stay together.

Lumos, founded in 2005 by J.K. Rowling after the writer read about the plight of children in caged beds, has an impressive record. In the last four years, under CEO Georgette Mulheir’s leadership, the organisation has helped provide support to over 14,000 children, moving them from institutions to safe and caring family environments. Lumos has also trained 23,000 social workers, medical professionals, teachers, carers and policy makers and helped redirect €367 million that was planned to be spent on orphanages and institutions, and ensured the funding was spent on community-based services instead.

Mulheir is one of the most influential social workers in the world. She has dedicated her life to closing down orphanages across Central and Eastern Europe, mostly in Moldova, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Haiti and Russia, where many disabled children are left tied all day in filthy cots. In the worst cases, many institutions are used by paedophile rings to traffic children. Mulheir said: “Our mission is to help eight million children in institutions by promoting large-scale reform through our influence on governments and major international aid donors. We need compelling evidence to achieve the greatest impact. We are delighted to work with NUI Galway, which will bring world-leading independent academic rigour to our programmes, as well as an understanding of what works in practice to gain the best outcomes for children.”

Thanks to a generous grant from Atlantic Philanthropies, the partnership will start its activities by establishing links and learning opportunities between Irish examples of best practice, much of it also supported by Atlantic Philanthropies, and governments and practitioners in countries in the process of reforming systems of care and protection of children.

Eighty years of scientific research has shown that children are best raised in families. Many children who grow up in institutional care and are deprived of the close, sustained adult engagement they receive in a family, suffer a negative impact on their physical, intellectual and emotional development. The European Union, the US Government and a number of international aid donors are committed to ending institutionalisation.

The UNESCO Chair Professor Pat Dolan, NUI Galway, will work with UNESCO Chair Professor Mark Breman at Pennsylvania State University on the Lumos project.

Professor Dolan said: “The prospect of completing usable real-world research that helps to end the institutionalisation of children and youth globally, will be particularly fitting not only for UNESCO, and our research centre in NUI Galway, but for Ireland as a country given its sad and horrific past track record in relation to children in large orphanages.”

Lumos is dedicated to ending the institutionalisation of children worldwide by 2050. The non-profit organisation has a track record in demonstrating that most children can be reunited with families given the right support. Meanwhile, the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre at NUI Galway is at the forefront of research, education and training in family support and youth development. It is the hub of an international network of universities, centres of excellence and agencies in the children and youth field.

Aileen Shaw, Manager of Strategic Development at the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre, explained: “The Child and Family Research Centre is at the start of a long term relationship with Lumos. The research posts have been identified and we expect to have an official launch of this project early in 2016. Our priority is to ensure the protection of children improves in all countries and we are here to provide solutions.”
J.K. Rowling’s organisation Lumos, and the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre, hope to transform the lives of eight million children.
Louisa Brophy Browne is presented with her medal by Legal Counsel and Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs at the United Nations and Irish barrister, Patricia O’Brien at the Undergraduate Awards.
NUI awards

Graduates and students of NUI Galway featured prominently again in 2015 at the annual NUI Awards ceremony which took place in November in the Royal Hospital Kilmainham, taking home an impressive 30 awards. This brings to 70 the number of awards in the last two years.

NUI Awards honour scholars of distinction at every stage of their academic studies, from undergraduates to senior scholars well established in their fields of expertise.

NUI Galway graduates received a number of awards, including an outstanding Five Travelling Studentships – one in the Humanities and four in the Sciences. The Dr Mary Thornton Scholarship in Education was shared by two winners, both connected to NUI Galway. These awards will support postgraduate and doctoral research in a variety of subjects, from human rights in Uganda to bioprosthetic heart valves.

NUI Galway student Dr Ciaran O’Neill was awarded a Special Commendation in connection with the Publication Prize in Irish History 2015, for his new work Catholics of Consequence: Transnational Education, Social Mobility and the Irish Catholic Elite, 1850 – 1900 (Oxford University Press, 2014).

NUI Galway undergraduates were equally successful. Students received the Mansion House Fund Scholarship in Irish History, the Mansion House Fund Prize in Irish, two medals in the Dr H H Stewart Literary Scholarship competitions, and twenty-one medals in the Dr H H Stewart Medical Scholarship competitions, including nine first prizes.

Sports Scholarships

NUI Galway supports athletes from a range of sports in their academic and athletic endeavours. The University presented 30 outstanding athletes with NUI Galway Student Sports Scholarships in November 2015. The ceremony commenced with a special address by Irish and Connacht Rugby player, Robbie Henshaw, who is also an NUI Galway student. Fresh from his return from Ireland’s recent Rugby World Cup campaign, Robbie spoke to the scholarship students and parents about his recent experiences and the demands of world class sport.

This year’s ceremony saw the Performance Points Sports Scholarship awarded to eight outstanding athletes. The scheme provides 40 additional points to those earned in the Leaving Certificate for elite athletes, for academic courses over 350 entry points.

In November was delighted to announce the appointment of Mike Heskin as Director of Sport & Physical Activity. The newly established post underpins NUI Galway’s commitment to further strengthening the sport reputation and ethos of the University.

As Director for Sport & Physical Activity, Mr Heskin will play the lead role in the strategic management of sport and physical activity in the University and the development of the infrastructure necessary for all sports activity to ensure that NUI Galway will remain at the forefront nationally and internationally in sports excellence through elite and high performance.

Mr Heskin will ensure that the University will build on previous successes in attracting top athletes and sportspeople to campus as well as supporting and developing opportunities in the area of sports and physical activity across all faculties, he will also ensure the University’s contribution to Ireland’s playing fields and realise the University’s strategic aspirations in relation to sport, health and well being.

Undergraduate Awards

Cited as the ultimate champion of high-potential undergraduates, and often referred to as a “Junior Nobel Prize”, The Undergraduate Awards is the world’s largest academic awards programme, recognising excellent research and original work across the sciences, humanities, business and creative arts.

Jonathan O’Rourke won the Classical Studies & Archaeology category for his paper ‘Self and the Other: The Construction of Barbarian Identity in Antiquity’.

This is the second year in a row the University has won this category, in 2014 final-year Arts student Louisa Brophy Browne, presented with the George Berkeley Gold Medal. Louisa was given the award for her winning paper Discuss and Evaluate the Main Points of the Debate on the Ethics of Archaeological Work in War Zones and Occupied Territories Using Case Studies in the Classical Studies and Archaeology Category. A further 10 NUI Galway students were also Highly Commended.

The world’s only pan-discipline academic awards programme, the Undergraduate Awards recognises and rewards innovative young thinkers across 25 disciplines. Judged by a panel of academics and industry experts from each field, 120 winners were selected from almost 5,000 submissions from 200 colleges and universities across the world.

Throughout the year, NUI Galway students garnered numerous awards and recognition for their talents. Some recognised included Mahmoud Abukhadir, a final-year Law student at NUI Galway awarded the prestigious Thomas Addis Emmet Fellowship 2015, which is supported by the Free Legal Advice Centres in conjunction with the University of Washington, Seattle.

Dr Girum Azmach from Ethiopia, Dr Mercy Kitavi from Kenya, and Dr Gezahegn Tessema from Ethiopia, became the first to graduate from the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture-NUI Galway PhD Scholars programme.

Faith Amany, an Irish Aid scholar in the Global Women’s Studies Masters programme, was invited to meet with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon during his visit to the UN Training School Ireland in the Curragh.
Could the next President of the United States be an NUI Galway honorary graduate?

Every four years, many Irish eyes turn their gaze to the fascinating, lengthy and complex process by which the American people decide who will be their next president. The extent of the interest in American politics in Ireland is among the things that have most amazed me since relocating here from Boston in 2001 to take up a post in the School of Law at NUI Galway. Offering my analysis of developments as they unfold to media outlets has also kept me very busy over the years.

Students, graduates and staff of the University have a unique stake in the outcome of the 2016 presidential election in that two recipients of honorary degrees from NUI Galway – former Secretary of State, US Senator and First Lady, Hillary Clinton, and former Maryland Governor and Baltimore Mayor, Martin O’Malley – are seeking the nomination of the Democratic Party. Hillary Clinton received hers in 1999 and Martin O’Malley was awarded his in 2008.

Martin O’Malley receiving his honorary doctorate in 2008 at NUI Galway
Their Irish connections are myriad and significant. Hillary Clinton aided in the peace process in Northern Ireland as First Lady, has been a prominent supporter of the Irish Lobby for Immigration Reform in its advocacy for the undocumented Irish and is a regular visitor to this island. Martin O’Malley, whose ancestors hailed from Maam in County Galway, actually wrote the position paper on Northern Ireland for then-presidential candidate Gary Hart when he was just 20, travels to the west of Ireland frequently and, through his traditional music band, O’Malley’s March, has struck up a close friendship with Leo Moran and the other members of Tuam’s Saw Doctors.

To date, the presidential campaign in which they are participants has been shaped by the populist sentiment which is clearly on the rise in the US and is evidenced by the surprising levels of support for the billionaire businessman, Donald Trump, on the Republican side and for the self-proclaimed socialist US Senator from Vermont, Bernie Sanders, among Democrats.

Polls of the American people reveal that the levels of confidence about the future are at a historical nadir. That vast, amorphous and almost indefinable entity called “middle America” is unhappy with the realities that manufacturing jobs are now scarce, that wars in the Middle East have resulted in tens of thousands of deaths and catastrophic mental and physical injuries and that the skyrocketing cost of third level education is putting attainment of further qualifications out of reach for many.

Without doubt, Mr. Trump has been the big story of the campaign thus far. He has appealed adroitly to voters’ fear and anger. Some of these voters don’t disagree with the unsavoury comments he has made about Hispanics, women and other groups or individuals. And even if they do disagree, they appreciate his “calling it as he sees it” – something that they don’t believe most politicians ever do. After every “Trump shocker,” a chorus of pundits has opined that he would be finished. Yet his standing in the polls has either stayed the same or actually improved.

That said, the campaign remains in an early stage. Mr. Trump’s name recognition and the fact that he draws viewers and sells newspapers have been crucial to his popularity in 2015. When voters really tune in over the coming weeks and months and as more of the numerous Republican contenders fade away, it is likely that one or more alternatives will emerge as realistic potential nominees.

Most of the early speculation centred on the former Florida Governor, Jeb Bush. But he hasn’t caught fire in the polls or received the overwhelming support of his party’s establishment, as most political watchers had predicted. What’s more, Republican voters very badly want to recapture the White House and understand that the Bush surname would be a real liability against the Democratic nominee in light of his brother’s failed presidency. Although Jeb Bush may still win, there are several credible challengers who, if they do well in the early states (Iowa, New Hampshire, Nevada and South Carolina) and raise enough money, could pull off an upset. Ohio Governor John Kasich and US Senator Marco Rubio are among the candidates to watch.

As for the Democrats, there is near universal agreement that it will be extremely difficult for anyone to overcome the tremendous advantages Hillary Clinton has. She has raised an enormous amount of money and racked up endorsements from elected officials and activists throughout the country. Despite this, there is some dissatisfaction with her and also a sense of “Clinton fatigue” in the party. Senator Bernie Sanders has capitalised on both and some polls have actually shown him leading Mrs. Clinton in New Hampshire. Nonetheless, it is virtually impossible to conceive of any scenario in which the Democrats would select Senator Sanders to be their candidate for president, given his hard left ideology and rather kooky persona.

At the same time, Mrs. Clinton’s campaign has been overly cautious and stage managed and has made a serious blunder in dealing with scrutiny of her email account from her tenure as Secretary of State. Her dominant performance in the first major debate, however, put to rest a lot of the doubts about her. The subsequent decision of Vice President Joe Biden not to run leaves her a relatively clear path to the Democratic nomination.

The polls indicate that Martin O’Malley hasn’t garnered any traction yet. Those who have watched him for a long time caution against underestimating him and point to the strong relationship he enjoys with the African-American community and his capacity to draw the votes of ethnic Catholics. But his 2016 candidacy seems more likely a “dry run” in advance of a future campaign for the presidency.

Alternatively, some observers have posited that Mr. O’Malley is actually running for the vice presidency – hoping that a decent primary campaign, together with heightened name recognition and the aforementioned electoral strengths, will render him an attractive choice as the running mate of the Democratic nominee, probably Mrs. Clinton. Those of us on campus in Galway, and NUI Galway alumni throughout Ireland and around the world, will continue to watch our two honorary graduates with keen interest and no small amount of pride as American voters make up their minds.

Larry Donnelly is Lecturer and Director of Clinical Legal Education in the School of Law, NUI Galway. He is also a regular media commentator on American and Irish politics, current affairs and law.
2015 will have been another year of very strong growth for the Irish economy. The consensus among forecasters is that the economic activity will expand by more than 5% this year, following a similar rate of expansion in 2014. Growth at this pace is expected to generate some 50,000 new jobs, as businesses hire new workers and expand productive capacity to meet growing demand for their goods and services. The unemployment rate remains elevated at around 9 per cent, but is projected to decline by ½ -1 percentage point per year over the next few years, with full employment pencilled in by many forecasters by the early 2020s. With low interest rates for many borrowers and wages beginning to rise, the burden of high household debt – another legacy of the housing boom and bust – should continue to ease gradually.

Both external and domestic factors are driving the economy forward. The external influences largely relate to the marked easing of financial conditions in Europe and elsewhere.

For starters, the steep drop in the value of the euro against other major currencies has boosted the international competitiveness of Ireland’s export sectors. As a result, businesses here are gaining market share in global markets. The abundance of American and British tourists in parts of Ireland and elsewhere in the euro area this summer is testimony to the powerful effects on economic activity of movements in exchange rates. The downside of a weak euro is that it tends to push up the prices of imported products, though overall inflation remains very low.

Second, the European Central Bank has driven both short-term and long-term interest rates to historically low levels by buying large quantities of government bonds. The State has taken the opportunity to refinance some government debt at low cost, with resulting savings for the Exchequer. Moreover, low global interest rates have encouraged investors in search of reasonable returns to invest money in Ireland. These financial inflows have spurred activity in the commercial property market and helped parts of the property market to start functioning again.

Third, some of our major trading partners are enjoying solid growth, boosting demand for Irish exports. Growth in the UK and US remains robust, driven by improvements in labour market conditions, lower energy prices and a strengthening in the housing market.

Even the troubled euro area economy is showing tentative signs of life. The ECB now expects GDP growth of 1.5 per cent in the euro area this year, and is pencilling in growth of about 2 per cent for both next year and 2017. Indicators of business and consumer confidence are pointing towards moderate recovery, with notable improvements in Spain. Retail sales and industrial production have also nudged up in recent months. Bank lending to households has ticked up over the past year, while lending to the business sector is no longer declining.

For a small open economy like Ireland, these positive developments have created opportunities for robust recovery. Globally competitive sectors of the economy have taken full advantage of the improved external environment, including sectors such as agriculture and agri-food, information and communications technology, medical technologies, pharmaceutical and chemical, and tourism.

Data on industrial production for the second quarter of 2015 show an eye-popping 50% jump in the production of computer, electronic and optical products compared with the same period last year, while food and beverages production has surged more than 10%. The number of overseas tourists visiting Ireland soared 12% in the first half 2015.

Ireland’s structural strengths in these industries reflect competitive advantages gained through decades of investment in knowledge, technology and physical capital. High levels of human capital and talent are key drivers of the economy’s competitiveness.

The medical technologies (MedTech) cluster in the Galway region serves as a good illustration. The flow of skilled graduates produced by NUI Galway and other higher education institutions is critical for the sector’s success. On the research front, close cooperation between MedTech firms and higher education institutions is driving innovation and growth.

None of this is to suggest that there are no risks to the near-term outlook. Nor does it mean that there can be room for complacency among policymakers. The recent crisis in Greece has taken a toll on confidence in the euro area and underscores the fragility of the recovery in the region. Recent volatility in Chinese financial markets raises the spectre of an unexpectedly sharp slowdown in economic activity in that part of the world. In addition, markets may react badly to increases in interest rates by the Federal Reserve, as the era of ultra-cheap money on the other side of the Atlantic comes to an end. Closer to home, a potential Brexit (that is, the UK leaving the EU) would have implications for the Irish economy.

Policymakers in Ireland can best guard against downside risks to Ireland’s recovery by keeping the country’s debt to GDP ratio on a firm downward trajectory and by continuing to focus on competitiveness. In the current favourable environment, prudent economic policies and a long-term focus by policymakers are crucial to sustainable growth.

Professor Alan Ahearne is Head of Economics at NUI Galway. He is Chairman of the steering committee governing the newly launched Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) and Department of Finance Joint Research Programme on the Macro-economy and Taxation.
Eoghan Clifford, (Environmental Engineering ’02) was diagnosed at an early age with progressive muscular dystrophy. As a child, he was a realist and knew that although he was faster than everyone else, competing at an Olympic level might not be on the cards for him. Needless to say, as he is now Rio bound for the 2016 Olympics, not much has slowed this cyclist down.

A Limerick native, but living in Galway since 1998, Eoghan Clifford has a zest for life that seems rare these days. Working as a full time lecturer at NUI Galway since 2010, Eoghan stays on his toes at work by doing research. He divides his time between Transport Engineering and Water Waste Engineering. It is easy see how this line of research would keep anyone interested.

"On the transport side, it is all about sustainable transport and, not surprisingly, mobility. Mobility in the sense of designing cities better to suit able bodied and disabled people. Also, to encourage more public transport and the use of bikes, so that people do not look at their bike as a means of exercise, but as a means of transportation."

Eoghan’s love for his bike began at a young age, when he had to cycle to secondary school every day. Like all other teenagers, he was mad into hurling, football and rugby, but with muscular dystrophy, the muscles in the body are progressively wasting away so this posed as a challenge.

“I had to cycle the 7 km in and out to school every day, because of this I was fitter than most of the lads in the rugby club. When I went on to college at NUI Galway, I took up rowing too, which I still like, but the training for rowing was restricted and the views are hard to beat when you are cycling a 200 km ride around Connemara.”

Eoghan concentrated solely on the bike from his early twenties, and has been competing and winning alongside able bodied people ever since.

“Participating in sports, of any kind, is a great way to stay on top of mental health issues, whether you are an abled bodied or disabled person. Most of the athletes I train with, we never talk about disabilities. Those fellas are strong in mind and body and could beat most able bodied people in a race. If you are disabled then get involved in sport if you can. If you compete, at any level, the professional world is the exact same as it is for the able bodied athletes. For me, with Rio in the future, any medal will do, but it would be crazy to go all the way to the Olympics and not think about bringing home the gold.”

The staff, faculty, students and alumni at NUI Galway wish Eoghan all the best for the future and look forward to welcoming him home from Rio next year.

Eoghan Clifford is a lecturer in Civil Engineering, NUI Galway and has almost 10 years experience in the areas of water, wastewater, waste treatment and sustainable transport.
Engineering student Mary Rose McLoone will drive Ireland's most energy efficient car in the Shell Eco Marathon in 2015.

The West of Ireland had particular significance in the years prior to the 1916 Rising; for those involved in the Gaelic and Anglo-Irish revivals, it was the repository of authentic Irish culture. Among these was Patrick Pearse, whose cottage at Ros Muc became a landmark of the revival. During the Rising, Co. Galway witnessed the largest mobilisation outside Dublin, of over 600 men and women. Some dreamed of a republic, others hoped for land reform. In Galway city, however, there was little appetite for rebellion, leading one Volunteer to describe it as ‘the most shoneen town in Ireland.’

NUI Galway’s commemorative programme examines a variety of perspectives on the Rising and, indeed, the revolutionary decade, at local, regional and national levels. It also considers the international contexts. A dozen conferences and a plethora of seminars and talks will explore this complex period from historical, legal, linguistic, literary, dramatic and cinematic perspectives. These seek to shed new light on events and their legacies. An exhibition will provide insights into the universities’ responses to political and cultural developments in this dramatic period.

As Ireland looks forward to 2016, Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Heather Humphreys TD launched NUI Galway’s 1916 Programme of Events, ‘A Nation Rising: Commemorating 1916 and Beyond’ in October 2015, as part of the Ireland 2016 Centenary Programme. A nation rising: Éire á múscailt

Mary N. Harris

The West of Ireland had particular significance in the years prior to the 1916 Rising; for those involved in the Gaelic and Anglo-Irish revivals, it was the repository of authentic Irish culture. Among these was Patrick Pearse, whose cottage at Ros Muc became a landmark of the revival. During the Rising, Co. Galway witnessed the largest mobilisation outside Dublin, of over 600 men and women. Some dreamed of a republic, others hoped for land reform. In Galway city, however, there was little appetite for rebellion, leading one Volunteer to describe it as ‘the most shoneen town in Ireland.’

NUI Galway’s commemorative programme examines a variety of perspectives on the Rising and, indeed, the revolutionary decade, at local, regional and national levels. It also considers the international contexts. A dozen conferences and a plethora of seminars and talks will explore this complex period from historical, legal, linguistic, literary, dramatic and cinematic perspectives. These seek to shed new light on events and their legacies. An exhibition will provide insights into the universities’ responses to political and cultural developments in this dramatic period.

The concept of sovereignty and the approaches to achieving it have a prominent place in this programme. While many events focus on political and military men, other voices will also be heard. One conference will examine children and childhood in the revolutionary period and other events consider the experiences of women – those involved in public life and those hidden from view. All of these events will be open to the public. While most are on campus a number are not: the Irish Centre for the Histories of Labour and Class has organised a number of seminars for the Mechanics Institute, reflecting its interest in engaging the wider public. A film festival on the theme of revolution will be held in Connemara in May, following a film conference on campus.

In order to promote research on the West of Ireland in this period, a scholar in residence has been appointed to the Moore Institute. In the coming year, Dr Conor McNamara will identify and investigate resources in NUI Galway’s library and archives and elsewhere for research into the political, social and cultural contexts of revolutionaries in the West of Ireland. He will also engage with local community groups in Co. Galway. In July 2016, he will lead a
conference discussing recent research in this field and exploring competing narratives of the revolution in the West. A catalogue of sources and resources will be produced to facilitate further research on this theme.

A number of projects reflect the concerns of Gaelic revivalists’ interest in preserving Ireland’s heritage for future generations. Early twentieth-century Irish language recordings by Professor Tomás Ó Máille will be digitised and a digital exhibition will be created of recordings by Rádio na Gaeltachta relating to 1916. A catalogue of NUI Galway’s holdings of manuscripts collected by Douglas Hyde will also be prepared.

In recognition of the great interest in culture and the performing arts in years prior to the Rising, the University’s Arts in Action programme includes a number of performance based events. These will present music, songs and literary works composed during the revolutionary period as well as those popular at the time.

The commemoration is of particular interest to scholars in the humanities; we are revisiting an era of great cultural ferment and scholarly interest in our disciplines.

The excitement of Gaelic revivalists such as Patrick Pearse and Eoin MacNeill was palpable in their writings as they sought to raise awareness of the richness of Irish literature and culture. Thomas MacDonagh playfully considered the possibilities of translation and Eamonn Ceannt sought to promote interest in Irish traditional music, particularly in piping. While the military struggle diverted energies to some extent, serious scholarly work on early Irish law took place in Mountjoy jail!

Such work was seen as part of a national project. The Irish Review, a prominent review of the time, cited its objective as ‘the application of Irish intelligence to the reconstruction of Irish life.’ Inevitably we will consider what became of the optimism and idealism of the period, asking where Ireland stands now. In November 2016, NUI Galway will host a major national academic conference addressing Ireland’s position.

Almost fifty scholars have come forward with plans for commemoration. The programme has now developed a dynamic of its own, one project inspiring another. Participants have discovered colleagues in other disciplines with cognate interests. We can look forward to a highly stimulating year of intense debate, with clear potential for intellectual synergies.

Dr Mary Harris, is Senior Lecturer in History at NUI Galway and Co-ordinator of the University’s 1916 Commemorative Programme. She is also a member of the Government’s Expert Advisory Group on the Decade of Centenaries

For more information on NUI Galway’s events commemorating the 1916 Rising visit www.nuigalway.ie/anationrising.
Enrolled on a BA in Science course during her first year at NUI Galway, Moe Honan (BA '88) realised half way through her first year that she was more interested in her older sister's course work (English literature) than her own. She switched the following year and flew through four years of English and German, before throwing herself immediately into an MA in German Literature.

With the sudden passing of her father, Moe left her MA dreams behind and has been working in the world of media and film since 1993. With a natural flair for communications, she engaged with documentary storytelling, which led to work in post production and animation.

"Once I started to work in animation, I knew it was for me; I just loved the medium. You have so much more freedom with what you want to express. I loved it at every stage of the process. The story development, the script writing, the animation, the voice recording and working with the actors, it all appealed to me. And these days, when I am buried alive under the legal and tax end of the business, I always make time to indulge in voice directs. It keeps me sane!"

Putting her natural business acumen to work, Moe wanted to build a business model that would sustain itself in the west of Ireland. Making content for TV and Film to entertain a variety of audiences means that the work is long running and a much slower process. Her desire to create new projects and get people into work pushed her to start her own business and Moetion Films was born.

"The industry and film sector in Ireland has grown from strength to strength. We are now punching well above our weight, producing world renowned and award winning pieces. Irish people have a natural storytelling ability so it makes sense that we would be good at it. Now we just need to make sure students are offered the chance to obtain the digital skills required to enhance their natural storytelling skills."

With her debut film, Two by Two, one of the highest grossing films at the box office this year, Moe is confident we will be hearing more from Moetion Films in the near future. When Entertainment One closed the deal in December 2014 to distribute the film in English speaking countries, including the UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the US, she knew the future looked bright.

The film was written by Irish writers Richard Conroy and Mark Hopkinson and Galway-based writer Marteinn Thorisson. In total about 120 people were employed in Ireland during the course of the film production.

As a final note, Moe shared her true inspiration for taking the ball and running with it into the world of creative arts and film.

"It was Michael D. He brought these opportunities to the west. There was job creation when he brought the Irish Film Board to Galway and his passion for ensuring the arts have a vibrant place in Irish society was infectious. Now, with Galway being listed as a UNESCO City of Film, the annual Film Fleadh that attracts industry people from all over the world, and the Picture Palas cinema project finally nearing completion, it is easy to see why we might qualify for European Capital of Culture 2020. We are wearing our badge proudly."

Moe's film, Two by Two, an animated story about a couple of animals who never made it on to Noah's ark, is available on DVD.
A third generation graduate, John Concannon ('94 BComm) followed in his grandfather’s, and father’s footsteps when he picked NUI Galway as his college of choice in 1991. His grandad, Michael Concannon, graduated in 1935 with a BA degree and both his mum and dad, who met in college, graduated in 1964 (BSc) and 1965 (BE) respectively.

The Sligo native fell in love with his wife Mary Concannon (nee Frawley) (Environmental Science ’96) whilst in college. He also fell in love with his college course.

“It was funny. I thought I’d end up doing law and accountancy but I became fascinated with marketing and quite taken by the psychology of it all. Right after I graduated with the BComm in 1994, I carried on to do the Masters in Business Studies (MBS). This was a real eye opener. I came out of the BComm knowing it all and came out of the MBS knowing I still had so much to learn!”

John carried on to do the Higher Diploma in Marketing practice (DMP). A work placement in Ballinasloe with Dubarry was a real eye opener. The MBS at college, loosely modelled on Harvard Business School, was all about case studies. At Dubarry, there were 207 people working on the factory floor. The focus was on making money; they needed real revenues to pay their staff.

“I got to experience the reality of running a business, and experience the challenges a company faces on a day to day basis in the West of Ireland.”

Although John stayed with Dubarry for a year or so, it was not long before he got a phone call from Unilever, the consumer goods company, and in 1997 he accepted a job as a traditional brand manager.

But he and Mary were ready for a change. They had started a family and had an urge to get out of Dublin. The West was calling. At that time, Ireland West were looking for a CEO, so John applied and was offered the job.

“This was a fascinating experience. I went from working at Unilever, where budgets and bank accounts were big and healthy, to Ireland West, which was not heavily funded at all. We had to do everything on a shoestring budget. This was a welcome challenge.”
Shortly after that, Fáilte Ireland appointed John as a Regional Development Officer, and not too long after that he was appointed Marketing Director.

Although John has worked on several big projects like The Gathering, he claims success has many fathers. Most recently he was appointed as the Director of the 1916 Centenary Programme, and has been seconded out of Fáilte Ireland until the end of 2016.

Recognising what a huge privilege it is to work on a project that allows our nation recall the details of such a pivotal period of our history, John is enjoying his current role.

“This project is gathering great traction. Reflecting and remembering the past, reviewing our last 100 years as a republic, acknowledging the sacrifices our parents’ generation made for us, and now, excitedly looking forward to the future.”

Shortly after John started on the Centenary project, he met with President Jim Browne to discuss the University’s role as a key partner in the project.

“I can’t emphasise enough the importance of the leadership Dr. Browne has brought to this project. He grasped immediately that this is a pivotal moment in history and that the opportunity presented was something so much bigger. There is a whole series of events organised by the academics, seminars, and one huge overarching event for all third levels in the state that will take place next year on this campus.”

Although John is kept busy with work, and three kids who all attend Coláiste Iognáid Jesuit school in Galway city, he still makes plenty of time to volunteer.

Currently John holds the title of Chairman for the President’s Award, Gaisce. This award, in its 30th year, is a personal development programme for young people.

John is also Chairman of COPE, which operates a homeless shelter in Galway. COPE’s main focus has been the development of a women and children’s centre for those who suffer from domestic violence in the home. Right now, they are housed in a building near the courthouse, but last year, they had a fire so plans are underway for a new location.

Although this would seem like his plate is full. But not one to rest on his laurels, John also volunteers his time with his cousin, Paul O’Hara (another BComm grad from NUI Galway) who recently launched a company called ChangeX, where John is Director. The idea is that ChangeX will become a one-stop online location for people to visit if they are ready to develop positive change in their community. So, if you are ready to start a Coderdojo group for kids, or a Men’s Shed for your neighbourhood, ChangeX.org should be your first port of call.

With so much going on in John’s life, one has to wonder what is next for this Galway grad!
With her recent appointment (August 2015) as Chief Justice of Seychelles, Mathilda Twomey has had an interesting career path to date. Originally from Mahe, Seychelles, Chief Justice Twomey is the first Seychellois woman to hold the position of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Seychelles.

Qualifying as a lawyer and admitted to the Bar of England and Wales in 1987, Mathilda worked as a lawyer in Seychelles in a private practice before moving to Ireland in 1995. In 1996 she was a regional coordinator for Multiple Sclerosis Ireland, the non-governmental organisation working in advocacy, policy development and legal advice for people with disabilities.

In March 2011, while studying for an LLM at NUI Galway, she was appointed to the Court of Appeal of Seychelles, making her the first female judge in the history of Seychelles. Mathilda completed her PhD last summer and was appointed Chief Justice of Seychelles on 9 August 2015. She will now combine both roles, serving both courts with equal energy and fervour.

While reminiscing about her time spent at NUI Galway, Mathilda recalled having highly stimulating and intellectual discussions with academic staff and students during her time in Galway, and is thankful for the close friendships she formed from her time as a student and lecturer.

We look forward to following Chief Justice Twomey’s story as she spearheads constitutional and structural reforms to bring the Seychelles judicial system ‘into the 21st century’ and hope to see her back on campus at NUI Galway soon.

Offering a little advice to current students, Chief Justice Twomey advised:

“know that your dreams can be realised....also know that study on its own can be extremely fulfilling and rewarding”
An Taoiseach Enda Kenny TD launching Blackstone Launchpad in July 2015
Innovation for Undergrads at NUI Galway

Earlier this year, the US-based charitable foundation, Blackstone, extended its campus entrepreneurship programme ‘Blackstone LaunchPad’, outside the US for the first time, to include NUI Galway. The foundation’s three-year, €2 million grant will establish a partnership between NUI Galway and two other Irish universities, introducing entrepreneurship as a viable career option and providing over 50,000 students, with a network of venture coaches and an entrepreneurial support system.

“This initiative is designed to help undergraduates explore and bring forward ideas. By choosing NUI Galway as one of the three Irish University recipients, it acknowledges our already strong entrepreneurial ethos and gives us a great opportunity to further promote the culture of undergraduate entrepreneurship in the University,” said Dr. Browne.

Blackstone LaunchPad in Ireland will connect University campuses, business communities and local entrepreneurs to create an environment that nurtures students, providing them with the necessary skills and network required to succeed as entrepreneurs.

“Ireland’s young people are driven and curious; they are innovative thinkers - all the qualities needed to become successful entrepreneurs” said Blackstone’s Chairman, CEO and Co-Founder Stephen A. Schwarzman.'

With a physical presence on three University campuses in Ireland and access to the Blackstone LaunchPad global network technology platform, this programme has the potential to generate 1,500 new ventures and up to 3,700 new jobs across Ireland over the next five years. Blackstone LaunchPad will enable students to develop strong entrepreneurial skills and mindsets, building strong enterprises rooted in Ireland, and increasing economic activity even further.

Dr. Jim Browne said: “We want our students to participate in this type of activity, allowing them to learn, prior to graduation, the potential they have, gaining confidence to go out into the world and shape their own futures. At NUI Galway, we have a vibrant ecosystem of student innovation and entrepreneurship. Through the Blackstone LaunchPad program, our students will now have access to an even more powerful international network, based on this national partnership between all three universities. We are delighted to acknowledge the vision and funding of Blackstone Charitable Foundation, with support from the Galway University Foundation, to ensure our students will develop their capacity for innovation and become the entrepreneurs of the future.”

The opening of Synapse, a ‘tech carnival’ run by NUI Galway computer science and information technology students has also caused waves at the University this year. The event took place in September 2015 in the Bailey Allen Hall, providing attendees with unique exposure to the most important companies in the technology sector in Ireland. Dr Browne is convinced that the ‘can do’ attitude so prevalent in Galway will continue to underpin the city’s success.

“The students who have organised Synapse have provided a fantastic opportunity for top ICT firms to come to Galway, exchange ideas and learn about what’s happening in the West of Ireland. Its all enhancing ICT eco system being actively developed here in Galway” said Dr. Browne. Events like this, a marrying of students with corporate Ireland, are essential, giving students a unique opportunity to engage with big business.

“I am very proud that our third year Computer Science and Information Technology students are showing the immense energy and enthusiasm they have for the software industry by making events like Synapse a reality. They are showcasing the kind of drive and determination that is characteristic of NUI Galway graduates, which has been so hugely valued by major employers for many decades. The response of so many Tech Leaders is testament to the hunger for more graduates and talented professionals in the Galway area,” said Dr Michael Madden, head of the Information Technology discipline at NUI Galway.

We live in a mobile, cloud-based world and highly skilled students are graduating from college, motivated and excited to be part of these technologies; Synapse has provided many of them with a space to get up close and personal with technology giants who share an equal interest in Ireland’s rapidly expanding start-up scene.
1. Grace Taggart from Aille, Inverin, Co. Galway, was conferred with an Honours Bachelor of Arts degree during the autumn 2014 ceremonies.

2. Cillian McNamara from Ennis, Co. Clare, was conferred with an Honours Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery, Bachelor of Obstetrics (MB, BCh, BAO) degree during the summer conferring ceremonies 2015. Cillian was also awarded five Final Medical Medals for his outstanding academic performance. Every year, NUI Galway awards the Final Medical Medals to the student who receives the highest mark in each subject area.

3. Sarah Brosnan from Killavullen, Co. Cork, Donal Ennis from Sandy Cove, Co. Dublin, Tracy Deane from Tinryland, Carlow, and Adam Langbroek from Blackrock, Co. Dublin, were conferred with Honours Bachelor of Commerce degrees during the 2015 Autumn Conferring Ceremonies.

4. Oisin Tierney and Zoe Mannion from Menlo, Co. Galway, who were conferred with Honours bachelor of Science degrees in 2014.

5. Graduating with an Honours Bachelor of Engineering in 2014 were (l-r) Adam Ryan from Ennis, Co. Clare, Eoin McKeon from Galway City, Eoin McEvoy from Co. Laois and John Coughlan from Galway City.

6. Graduating with Honours Bachelor of Engineering degrees in autumn 2014 were Elizabeth Hurley from Roscam, Galway City, and Cliona Casey from Kilbeacanty, Co. Galway.

7. Dr Caoimhe Sweeney from Barna, Co. Galway, Eimear Dolan from Claremorris, Co. Mayo, and Sabrina Kirrane from Headford, Co. Galway, who were conferred PhDs from the College of Engineering and Informatics.
8. Catherine Boyle from Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, and Sean Doherty from Curry, Co. Sligo, were conferred with Honours Bachelor of Arts degrees during the 2015 Autumn Conferring Ceremonies.

9. Louise Duffy from Lanesborough, Co. Longford, and Sharlene Cunningham from Rooskey, Co. Roscommon, were conferred with Honours Bachelor of Arts degrees during the 2015 Autumn Conferring Ceremonies.

10. Lieutenant Philip O’Leary from Blarney, Co. Cork, who was conferred with an Honours Bachelor of Arts with Human Rights degree during the 2015 Autumn Conferring Ceremonies.

11. Medical Class of 2015

12. Rebecca O’Reilly from Galway was conferred with a Master of Science in International Management. Rebecca is pictured with: her mother, Robyn Cunningham, who works in the University, her grandmother, Kathryn Reilly, and NUI Galway President, Dr Jim Browne. Rebecca is holding a picture of her great grandmother Kathleen Lydon, who was conferred with a Bachelor of Commerce in 1933 and a Higher Diploma in Education in 1934.
‘Little Mo’
By Mary J. Murphy

Maureen O’Carroll TD, 1913 – 1984
University College Galway graduate, BA, 1935

Although sometimes called ‘Little Mo’ in jest, usually by political detractors in Dublin, the only ‘little’ thing about the mighty powerhouse that was Maureen McHugh O’Carroll was her stature. A graduate of Galway University 80 years ago, Maureen was an extraordinary woman who packed enough into her 71 years to fill three lives. All who knew her spoke of her remarkable presence and the adjectives just keep on rolling when people tried to pin down the unusual reserves of energy she possessed. The vitality. The verve. The vim, vigour and determination. The chutzpah and sheer unstoppable that were contained inside her modest little frame were obvious to all as her defining characteristics.
This woman, the mother of the well known Irish comedian Brendan O’Carroll, Eilish O’Carroll and their eight siblings, was Ireland’s first female Labour TD, elected in Dublin North Central in 1954. Prior to marrying Gerard O’Carroll in Dublin in 1936, she had been a Novitiate in Jesus and Mary College in Gortnor Abbey in Crossmolina, where she had boarded as a secondary school student.

There, she was known as Julia or Julia Mary McHugh, her father having been the Caherlistrane-born journalist, Michael J. McHugh. His own drive, determination and energy levels were also remarked upon by contemporaries and he too led a singularly productive life.

As an 18 year old, Michael McHugh wrote startlingly mature articles in the local Tuam Herald newspaper, and went on to work in The Freeman’s Journal in Dublin in the early 1900s. That’s where Maureen was born, in Manor Street, in 1913. Michael was an intelligent, educated man who was heavily involved in Gaelic League circles in the capital. He was also a documented 1916 combatant in Dublin during the Rising, a member of Michael Collins’ intelligence inner circle around the Castle, a linotype operator, a man who wrote a version of the Bible in Irish, a trusted member of the IRB, and one of the original 1913 Irish Volunteers, well known to people like Piaras Beaslaí and Seán MacDermott.

As a matter of some interest, McHugh is one of two (at least) Caherlistrane-born participants in the Rising, the other being Eva O’Flaherty of Lisdonagh House. Eva, the first cousin of the poet, Eva of The Nation, ran St. Colman’s Knitting Industries on Achill Island for 50 years before her death at almost 90 in 1963. She was a great friend of Seán MacDermott, was a bicycle courier of some description around the GPO in 1916, (and was the subject of my second book).

Maureen McHugh was the oldest of Michael McHugh and Elizabeth O’Dowd’s four children, and her father was by far the greatest influence on her as a child. When he died in 1924, Maureen was in her teens, and told her own daughter Eilish that he had left an indelible mark on her. “He believed that education was the key”, explained Eilish.

“He loved all things Gaelic. He led my mother to believe that she could do anything she wanted to do and be anything she wanted to be. Hence her amazing record in politics and social affairs”.

And amazing it was because Maureen was actively involved in social housing matters, and in the Lower Prices Commission, set up after WW II to try and counteract profiteering on the black market. Housewives were finding it impossible to afford basic foodstuffs for their families, and Maureen was right there in the middle of that fray from the 1940s on. Other women active in that arena at the time were Mairéad McGuinness (mother of Proinsias MacAonghusa and mother-in-law of Judge Catherine McGuinness), and Jill Tweedy of the Irish Housewives Association, not at all as innocuous a grouping as its quaint title might suggest.

Many’s the politician at the time felt its teeth, including (the likes of) Seán Lemass, then Supplies Minister. While in the Dáil, Maureen was also instrumental in setting up the Ban Gardaí (who formed a guard of honour at her funeral in 1984), and was actively involved too in having the status of illegitimacy removed from birth certificates. She also had a huge interest in matters pertaining to the adoption of Irish children to the United States.

Maureen served as the first female Chief Whip of the Labour Party, and in between raising ten of her own children, plus another cherished addition, she lived a ‘normal’ life with cabinet-maker husband Gerard, in Finglas.

Eilish O’Carroll remembers her mother as having been a great reader, usually having The Irish Times propped up in front of her when she was doing the dishes. The telephone hopped interminably and the door bell ringing constantly, as endless callers came to seek Maureen’s assistance for innumerable causes. Brendan O’Carroll, her son, is the creator of the Mrs. Brown’s Boys TV series, and his older sister, Eilish, plays Winnie McGoogan in that show.

A formidable woman in every respect, Maureen O’Carroll proceeded to storm the social barricades following her graduation from Galway University in 1935, righting wrongs and fighting injustices. That’s because she was forced to resign her teaching post barely a year later, upon her marriage to Gerard O’Carroll – that was the fuel that flamed her passion for reform.

Maureen O’Carroll’s extensive links with Galway are explored in a new book called Caherlistrane by this writer, launched by Eilish O’Carroll in October 2015.
“We believe everyone is capable. They might not believe in themselves, but we do. Their circumstances typically can be overcome; they may not see that right away, but we can see it.”

Imelda Byrne - Access Officer at NUI Galway

In 2017, the Access Office at NUI Galway will celebrate 20 years in existence. The need to promote greater participation at undergraduate level led to the creation of a dedicated access programme within the University. The NUI Galway Access programme, established in 1997, facilitates the promotion of initiatives that encourages access to NUI Galway for everyone, especially amongst school leavers and mature students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds.

The aim of the Access programme at NUI Galway is to create and provide a supportive learning environment, where students who have experienced socio-economic or educational disadvantage, are enabled to successfully participate in, third level education. The main objective for Access courses can be explained in two words, preparation and provision.

Preparation - enabling students to progress to higher education, and preparing them for third level.

Provision - to equip learners with confidence, study skills, academic skills and the knowledge required to progress to, participate in, and graduate from higher education.

In addition, it aims to take the fear out of going to college for students, as well as aiding in relationship building with tutors and lecturers, while offering an introduction to third level learning styles and academic structures.

Earlier this year, the Access Office reached out to connect with a few former and current students, to see how they were faring out. Several were happy to share their stories about how the Access course had helped guide them along the path to education, setting them up for life. Not only did entering into the Access course at NUI Galway have a positive impact on these students' lives, it has also had a hugely positive trickle down effect on their families lives, their communities and the University.

It is clear to see how widening access for everyone, not just underrepresented groups, to higher education has many positive outcomes; yet funding these courses proves an ongoing challenge.

Imelda Byrne, Access Officer at NUI Galway, explains:

“Access courses in higher education institutions are not approved for student support schemes, such as the higher or further education grants scheme, the free tuition fees initiative, the top-up grant, the student assistance fund or the fund for students with a disability. By opening the doors of higher education to everyone, economic competitiveness thrives, civic engagement becomes a regular occurrence and social inclusion, the norm.”

It is fair to say that students who engage in higher education access or foundation courses are very successful in higher education environments. Almost all graduate to become active citizens contributing to the social, cultural and economic life of the country. Sometimes, all it takes is a little help from someone clearing the path into higher education.

As a young school-leaver Dr. Manus Biggs ('99 Access graduate) was more interested in sports than his books when it came time to sitting his Leaving Cert. While he did fine in his exams, he had no interest in the courses he applied for on his CAO form. He was too young, and too unfocused on what the future might hold for him. His mother encouraged him to apply to the, then quite new, Access course at NUI Galway.

“It was pretty obvious from the start where I was headed once I entered into the Access programme at NUI Galway. The lecturers were excellent, giving me all the support I needed to focus on Science, Physics and Maths – still my favourite subjects. Gone was the notion of playing sports all day, and, well, I have been studying ever since.”

Dr. Biggs is now a lecturer at NUI Galway in the nano-tech camp, making small things like particles and devices. He lives in Galway with his wife and two children.

Olga O’ Mahony ('07 Access), a first generation entrant from her family, had a decent Leaving Cert but did not matriculate. She did not study a language so could not get into the BA in Arts. Her older sister and brother had come through Access and were well on their way to becoming a barrister and a civil engineer respectively, so Olga hesitantly took the plunge.
“The Access course was harder than I first thought, but enjoyable. I think because you hear it’s like a pre college course you think it will be easy, but it takes work and patience. The staff were great; they helped and explained things really well. There’s a lot of support there and it definitely helps.”

Lack of confidence is a common trait seen with first generation entrants, as there is a lot of pressure on them in one sense, but the positive influences outweigh the pressure for the most part. Now, her eldest sister is a barrister and her brother an engineer. Olga carried on to do her BA, then a HDip in Education. She has now come full circle and is teaching the Access course in Ballinasloe, while she is finishing up her PhD in Maths.

“I would say to students to have faith in themselves. It can be hard sometimes. You can be unsure about your abilities; I felt insecure and worried in case college wasn’t for me or in case I wasn’t capable of what it all entailed. But if you put the work in and try to enjoy yourself you will succeed. Don’t let what did or didn’t happen in secondary school hold you back; college is a lot different. Look at me, I did ordinary level for junior and leaving cert and now I’m doing a PhD. School isn’t always indicative of what you are capable of.”

Looking at the bigger picture, when it comes to accessing education for everyone, community development is still at the crux of it all. Access courses help students who are under-represented at third level for a variety of socio-economic reasons and mature students who may not have the formal qualifications required for entry to University.

An early school leaver, Orlene Cox (‘99 Access Course) returned to school at the age of 18 to do her Leaving Cert but did not get enough points to gain entry to University. Her personal circumstances and lack of confidence made it impossible for her to see a path forward to third level education but Orlene had a strong desire for education.

“The first year was very difficult, but the Access course was very helpful in every way throughout the year. Now, I am a trainee solicitor and hope to qualify in two years. I Love my job”.

Not knowing what she wanted to do in college, Orlene enrolled in the access course at NUI Galway in 1998, and the tutors and lectures helped her figure out what she would excel in. Orlene graduated with a BA degree in 2004 and with an LLB in 2007.

The main courses offered (thanks partly to funds donated by alumni through the Foundation Office at NUI Galway) are named as Access and Foundation courses, and these can be broadly defined. Imelda Byrne continued:

“Access courses allow students to start a course of continuing education having received recognition for knowledge, skills or the competence required whereas Foundation courses are intended to give a foundation to students in a subject that allows them to progress on to further study in that subject area.”

By opening up the doors to third level education, active citizenship is harnessed in disadvantaged communities and the knock-on effect is seen within their families and neighbourhoods. Students are provided with an opportunity to experience satisfaction that can be gained from learning in an academic environment. The joy of learning has been reintroduced and, for many, it is there to stay.

This year, please consider making a donation to the Foundation office to help support our Access students.
The work of the Lambe Institute for Translational Research, recently officially opened by the Taoiseach, is something that affects all of our lives. Advances made by researchers enable clinicians to address health challenges and pioneer medical interventions in order to improve patients’ lives. Galway is at the forefront of such discovery – and is recognised as an emerging global hub for the medtech sector.
Since the early 2000s, NUI Galway has focussed its research on biomedical engineering science as a priority area. It has developed a range of interdisciplinary research centres and initiatives, working closely with partners in industry, healthcare and government agencies to build a world-class clinical, research and people-based piece of infrastructure. This building comprises the Lambe Institute for Translational Research and the Health Research Board (HRB) Clinical Research Facility. It represents an innovative partnership between NUI Galway, the Health Research Board, Saolta University Health Care Group and Health Services Executive and is supported by philanthropy through Galway University Foundation. This facility represents the nexus of research and its translation into the clinical setting.

The co-location of these two facilities in one building on hospital grounds will mean basic laboratory research conducted in the translational research facility can be evaluated in clinical trials next door in the clinical research facility. This will ultimately benefit patients faster. Some of the studies undertaken in the two facilities will include:

- Predicting risk of breast cancer due to inherited characteristics
- Conducting stem cell trials to help improve blood flow in legs of diabetic patients and prevent amputation
- Conducting clinical trials in blood cancer patients to establish whether new treatments can be combined with existing treatment for better outcomes.
- Exploring how implantable medical devices can provide new solutions for patients

Funded under the Government’s Higher Education Authority Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTLI-5) award, the Lambe Institute has encouraged interdisciplinary research programmes and collaborations with industry partners in areas of strategic importance, both regionally and nationally.

The Translational Research Facility is operated by NUI Galway and was developed with support from the Galway University Foundation (GUF) and chief donors Dr Ronan and Mrs Ann Lambe. A contribution of €1 million was also made by the National Breast Cancer Research Institute.

Officially opening the building, Taoiseach Enda Kenny began by saying: “This is a place where miracles will happen. Someday someone in this building will discover something that will impact people all over the world.”

Ireland is recognised as an emerging global hub for the ‘medtech’ sector. Galway is at the very heart of this development and NUI Galway is the powerhouse for much of this progress.

With over 100 clinical trials underway, involving people with cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, the clinical translational research facility represents a significant development for the health care and medical technology sector in Ireland and enable the best researchers and health professionals to carry out studies that will change people’s lives for the better.

“THIS IS A PLACE WHERE MIRACLES WILL HAPPEN”

An Taoiseach Enda Kenny TD

Speaking at the opening, NUI Galway President, Dr Jim Browne, explained: “NUI Galway has given strategic priority to the development of biomedical engineering science. Over the past two decades, we have invested heavily in this area, with major new research facilities on our campus. Our researchers advance scientific knowledge to address health challenges. Here in this building, that scientific knowledge is being developed into novel treatments, which are then carefully applied in the clinical setting and tested in clinical trials led by NUI Galway. So this is a milestone in the development of medicine at NUI Galway.”

Philanthropy has played a central role in this development. Galway University Foundation acknowledged the support of philanthropic donors, in particular, Dr Ronan and Ann Lambe, the 50 plus members of the Corrib Medical Network, Bank of Ireland and the National Breast Cancer Research Institute. Speaking at the launch, Dr Ronan Lambe said: “It is a great privilege for my wife and I to be associated with such a state of the art facility, which will enhance the reputation of NUI Galway as a centre of excellence for biomedical research.”
A number of renowned individuals became NUI Galway Honorary Graduates during the academic year 2014/2015. Their names join those of previous honorees, including the late Nelson Mandela, Hillary Clinton, Margaret Atwood and Enya.

Irish actor Stephen Rea and Dr Charlotte McIvor, lecturer in Drama and Theatre Studies, attending the conferral of Stephen Rea’s Honorary Doctor of Arts Degree.
In June 2015 the following were conferred with honorary doctorates:

**Professor Svante Pääbo**, Swedish biologist and Director at the Max-Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig, Germany: Doctor of Science.

**Phillip Smyth**, Director of the Shannon College of Hotel Management: Doctor of Laws.

**Billy Lawless**, Chicago-based businessman and Vice-President of the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights: Doctor of Laws.

**Áine Brazil**, Vice-Chairman of Thornton Tomasetti, New York, USA: Doctor of Engineering.


**Dr Mick Loftus**, former GAA President: Doctor of Laws, 20 February 2015.
The alumni relations team at NUI Galway are dedicated to maintaining a strong connection with alumni at home and across the globe. There is a year-round schedule of events both nationally and internationally. Graduates celebrating a milestone anniversary of their conferring are always invited to return to campus to reconnect with former classmates and lecturers for a weekend of renewed friendships, a showcase of the University then and now and a tour of our newly enhanced campus.

We have strong growing engagement with alumni through social media on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and have over 40,000 graduates connected with us on LinkedIn. Gathering an up-to-date email address is really important so please do contact us at alumni@nuigalway.ie to update your details.

As we near the end of 2015, I look forward to meeting with some of you over the next 12 months at various alumni reunions or events and I thank you for your involvement with us throughout the year. And please do remember to contact us if you are interested in becoming involved or arranging an event for fellow alumni.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank those who have contributed in the past year – my fellow board members, volunteers, the President and University staff, Galway University Foundation and, in particular the alumni relations team.

If you and your classmates are planning your own reunion, please contact the Alumni Office at 091 493750 for help with administration, contacting your lost classmates, finding your old yearbook from the archives and much more.

It was with sadness that NUI Galway noted the passing of actor, Maureen O’Hara on 24 October 2015 at the age of 95.

In 1988, NUI Galway conferred Maureen O’Hara with an honorary degree, a Doctor of Laws, honoris causa. The University’s James Hardiman Library, Archives Collection also holds records from O’Hara’s most famous film, The Quiet Man, in the Arthur Shields collection.

During her conferral ceremony, then President of NUI Galway, Dr Colm Ó hEocha, made the following remarks as part of his citation to honour Maureen O’Hara:

"Maureen was born Maureen Fitzsimons in Dublin, and for a stage name another West of Ireland surname was chosen for her. The O’Hara’s are a dual sept – O’Hara Buí and O’Hara Ríabhach – and no doubt she rightly belongs to the former.

The director with whom she was most closely associated with was John Ford, whose father, named Feeney, emigrated to the US from An Spidéal in 1872. Their work together started with How Green Was My Valley (1941), and then Rio Grande (1950) with John Wayne. There followed, after many years’ preparation by director and actors, her first film to be shot, in part, back in Ireland. It was The Quiet Man (1951), based on a story by Maurice Walsh in Green Rushes.

Reviewers of The Quiet Man placed particular emphasis on Maureen’s ravishing beauty and glorious red hair. The film also featured much magnificent scenery in the West of Ireland and is still attracting viewers and, consequently, thousands of tourists to the hinterland of this college. Rest in peace Maureen."
MEMOIR

OF AN IRISH ECONOMIST

A memoir recalling life of a lecturer and economist who made his home in the West

Memoirs are a dime a dozen in this varied world of modern print. Initially, many glitter in the glow of television lights, attract attention, and die a death of indifference on a lonely bookshelf – their purchase, the popular thing to do at the time. Not this one.

At first sight, the main title, “Memoir of an Irish Economist” might suggest a similar fate. If the truth is told, economists, even in the crazy world of ‘boom and bust’ are often seen as a bore. Their subject matter is for a parallel world, far removed from that of sport, music and the daily scandal.

Yet the subtitle of this intriguing memoir, “Working Class Manchester to Irish Academia” makes us look again. This fine work, edited by Niamh Ó Dochartaigh, is different, as it tells a story of a world in reverse! Today, as millions flee their homelands from war or economic degradation, this book tells the story in reverse. Labhrás Ó Nualláin (1912-2000) was born Laurence Nolan in Manchester - the Gaelic version of his name gives a clue to why his story upsets the normal migration pattern of life itself. While thousands left Ireland to find work, any work, in Britain in the early part of the 20th century, a youthful Labhrás was already seeking to migrate back to the devastated Irish homeland of his parents to find more than his inner self.

He was born to Westmeath man Michael Nolan, a railway worker in Manchester as World War 1 was about to begin, while his mother, Johanna Hyde came from County Cork. The young Labhrás visited his twin Irish family homes at a very early age, on many holidays that can only be classed as sublimes. The fresh air and nuances of rural Irish life, so different to those of industrial Manchester, were already sowing the seeds of change in a young, impressionable mind. They began very early, it seems, when he heard soldiers in 1917, while crossing on the ferry to Ireland, telling his father that ‘they were going across to fight the Irish’ and became more profound when his mother displayed the Irish tricolour instead of the Union Jack fluttering from every terraced red-brick house in their street in Manchester on Armistice Day in November, 1918. There was something rather special in being Irish, and this memoir is fascinating in its detail of how Labhrás became ‘more Irish than the Irish themselves’.

It traces his myriad of efforts in this regard, from buying a booklet, Teach Yourself Irish, while still at school, to making full use of free public libraries to self-educate himself while he obtained initially mostly menial work jobs, which, like his father, tuned him to the benefits of socialism as well as stimulating a growing interest in Irish republicanism of the more benign kind. Joining the revised local branch of the Gaelic League, “Crroibh Osian”, was a major step, where the Irish language was taught. Here, he came in contact for the first time with teachers with an Irish background, while the Clarion Club introduced him to political and economic public discussions, while still only eighteen years of age.

Changing his name to Irish was a turning point, as was his passing a Civil Service examination in Dublin in 1930 for the Clerical Officer grade, but he was not awarded one of the vacancies. The die was cast, however, and when he was successful in 1934, his uncle in Dublin sent him the £1 one-way ticket to Ireland – “he was going back to his own people”.

He initially gained employment in the Employment Exchange in Dublin, at £2 a week, and later in Sligo and Carrick-on-Shannon, where, in the former, he met and married Frances Hegarty in 1938, and started a family. During this period also, he sought to do a B. Comm degree in UCD, and after six years in Sligo, he was transferred back to his old position in Dublin in 1940, and, eventually, in 1943, was one of the few awarded the Hon. B. Comm. degree in UCD. While at college during the World War years, he served his time for his new/old country by serving in its LDF battalion, as did Charles Haughey beside him.

After being awarded his well-earned degree, Labhrás was moved upwards to other branches of the Civil Service, at one time even confirming the travel expenses of Sean Lemass, before eventually being appointed to the post of Prices Inspector in 1945. However, the lure of further advancement in the academic line was still there, and he registered for the Master of Economic Science Degree at UCD and the BA at Trinity, gaining honours in each in 1945.

More success followed when he was appointed Secretary/Accountant at the Institute of Research in 1946, while also studying for the LLB. He eventually was appointed a full time researcher on the Mansion House Anti-Partition Research group, leading in 1949 to being asked to research the question of the financial relationship between Britain and the Northern Ireland governments, a work which was later published and widely acclaimed. At this time also, he had joined the new Clann na Poblachta party, ending up as joint-editor of its magazine, “Our Nation”, and befriending no less a person than Sean MacBride, Minister for External Affairs.

However, becoming a lecturer at University level always beckoned to Labhrís and when a vacancy for one in Economics, Commerce and Accountancy arose in 1953 in UCD, as it was then, he applied. This, of course, is where his memoir becomes fascinating, as he first encountered the strange ways of college life and procedures, some dating back to the foundation of the college itself in 1848. He was eventually successful in his application, and, initially sad after spending thirteen years in Dublin, he and his family moved west to eventually find a peaceful home at Eagle Lodge in Barna. His new workplace was something else, however, as we read, with bated breath, his initial attempts to settle in to the intriguing life of the academic in college. From then, until he was appointed to the Chair of Economics in UCD in 1970, and to his final retirement in 1982, we learn much about the academic life in our University of the West. It makes fascinating reading.

While, obviously, fighting his own corner in his much varied academic career path, we learn also that Labhrís sought at all times to upgrade, and bring into modern times, the whole area of his assigned subjects. Here also, he covers the much-debated subject of lecturing through Irish or English, or both, as well as evening courses, as the college marched more confidently towards the future, thanks in no small measure to continuous efforts by him and other academics, as well as those of young, upcoming former graduates, whom he always encouraged.

There is much more in this tome, as we learn also about his love of running in younger days, and cycling in older ones – he even cycled all over Northern Ireland when doing his research, which culminated in the publishing in 1953 of his work, “The Finances of Partition”, for which he received the Doctorate of Economic Science. His many travels, external lecturing in America and presenting welcome advice at national and international conferences are also covered - he even found time to enjoy a pint or two with Brendan Behan on the Aran Islands.

All of this, culminated eventually in official retirement, during which he travelled widely and continued to write learned papers. Swimming also was a favourite, and soon he was a member of the Blackrock Regulars, the winter swimmers, whom he joined in later life. I met him there, but I also was one of the lucky ones whom he taught in UCD back in the 1950s. My thanks to Niamh Ó Dochartaigh, his daughter, for editing this life story of a gentle man in every respect.

Written by Peadar O’Dowd and printed in The Connacht Tribune on 30 October 2015
On 7 March 2015, NUI Galway presented the 2015 Alumni Awards at the 15th annual Alumni Awards Gala Banquet.

The Alumni Awards recognise individual excellence and achievements among the University’s more than 90,000 graduates worldwide.

This year Alumni Awards were presented to six outstanding individuals:

**Award for Arts, Literature and Celtic Studies**  
Sponsored by AIB  
Dr Tom Mitchell, Former Provost, Trinity College Dublin.

**Award for Business and Commerce**  
Sponsored by Bank of Ireland  
Catriona O’Farrell, Former CEO, Fintrax Group.

**Award for Law, Public Policy and Government**  
Sponsored by Bank of Ireland  
Ms Justice Carmel Stewart, Judge of the High Court.

**Award for Engineering, Science and Technology**  
Sponsored by Aramark  
Pearse Mee, IT Entrepreneur, founder of AMT-SYBEX.

**Award for Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences**  
Sponsored by Medtronic  
Dr Morgan O’Connell, retired Medical Officer for the Royal Navy, Consultant Psychiatrist and specialist in PTSD.

**Award for Contribution to Sport**  
Sponsored by Galway University Foundation  
Olive Loughnane, Olympic athlete and World Champion, Irish race walker.
1.  Siún Nic Gearailt.
2.  Dr Richard Pearson and Caroline Loughnane.
3.  The Mayor of Galway City, Cllr Donal Lyons, with his wife Moira.
4.  Ruth Curran of MERC Partners and Darren Cunningham from Inflection Bio.
5.  Avril and Sean Kyne.
7.  NUI Galway Alumni Award recipients (back row, l-r): Catriona O’Farrell, Pearse Mee, Dr Morgan O’Connell, Dr Tom Mitchell and Ms Justice Carmel Stewart. Front row, l-r: Dr Jim Browne, NUI Galway President, Olive Loughnane, and Sean O’Rourke, Alumni Association Chairperson.
8.  Olwyn Long, Anny Lyons and Susan Butler.
9.  Clare and John Fallon.
10.  Margaret Wright, Aisling Nolan and Rachel Geraghty.
Dublin Alumni Club
The Dublin Alumni Club hosted a debate on the recent referendum on 12 May 2015 in the Aviva Stadium, debating on the topic of ‘Should Ireland have same sex marriage?’. Two of NUI Galway’s alumni, Lorraine Higgins and Rónán Mullen, took part and argued for the yes and no side respectively. The debate was chaired by fellow alumni and Irish Times journalist Harry McGee.


Alumni Gathering in Toronto
On 12 March 2015, Alumni Relations held the first alumni gathering in Toronto in 25 years, an event which saw over 50 graduates and friends of NUI Galway gather together to reconnect and share memories of their time spent in Galway.

Pictured above: President Browne presents the Cumann Caoga Bliain certificate to the President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins, who accepted the certificate on behalf of his class.

Biotechnology reunion
On 3 May 2015, a special reunion event took place at NUI Galway when the inaugural class of Biotechnology assembled in the Department of Biochemistry after 20 years. Following a welcome address by the then Programme Director and now Vice-President for the Student Experience, Dr Pat Morgan, the current Programme Director, Dr Andrew Flaus, gave an overview of the degree programme today. Dr Eric Mortimer and Dr Aideen O’Doherty, both members of this first class of Biotechs and now NUI Galway staff, gave participants a tour of infrastructural developments on campus in the decades since graduation before hosting the group with a reception in the quadrangle.

Pictured opposite: Biotechnology class of 1995 taking a selfie in the Quadrangle
A night at the Abbey Theatre

In January 2015, a night for Dublin-based graduates was held in the Abbey Theatre for a performance of ‘She Stoops to Conquer’, a play by Oliver Goldsmith. During the pre-show reception, alumni were treated to a presentation on the relationship between NUI Galway and the Abbey Theatre, displaying some key pieces from its archives which are being digitized at NUI Galway. Alumni Association Board Chair Sean O’Rourke welcomed everyone and emphasised the importance of the relationship between the two institutions and the work being done in preserving the history of the Abbey.

Pictured below: Alumni Association Chair Dr Sean O’Rourke with NUI Galway alumni at the Abbey Theatre.

Book launch

‘Connemara and Elsewhere’ by Tim Robinsons

NUI Galway, in association with the RIA, launched Tim Robinsons book ‘Connemara and Elsewhere’ in the Irish Embassy in Paris on 17 June 2015. A discussion at the event was chaired by the Irish Times journalist, Lara Marlowe, and included Tim Robinson, photographer Nicholas Féve and book editor Professor Jane Conroy.


Alumni Golf Outing

The alumni annual golf outing took place in Galway Golf Club, Salthill, on 17 July. 28 teams of alumni and friends all played the 18 holes of golf, and the overall winner with 84 points was team Ó Muircheartaigh, followed by team Val McNicolas on 79 points and the third team Peter Crampton, also with 79 points.

Opposite: First place with 84 points Team Ó Muircheartaigh with Alumni Association Chair Sean O’Rourke receiving their new golf shoes each as the winner’s prize.

Medical Class of 1975 40th Reunion

Forty members of the medical class of 1975 came back to campus on 13 June 2015 to celebrate 40 years since their graduation. After reminiscing over a lunch in the Quadrangle, the group were brought on a campus tour and visited the University’s new medical building.

Pictured above: Dr Barbara Ó’Beirne and Dr Kathleen Faller from the class of 1975.
1960s


Denis O’Dwyer, BA 1964 HDip in Ed 1965 MEd 1983 [1], was conferred with a PhD in University College Cork on June 17, 2015.

1970s

Dr Patrick Gullane, MB Bch BA 1970, has been invested into the Order of Ontario. Patrick, a pre-eminent head and neck surgeon, was recognised internationally for his enormous contribution to the field.

William (Bill) Lynch, BSc 1975, retired this year after 40 years of service in education. For almost 17 years he worked in the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), initially as an Education Officer on secondment from his teaching position, and from 2002 as a Director, Curriculum and Assessment, with responsibility for post-primary syllabus developments in science, mathematics and technology subjects.

John Kehoe (BComm 1978), has been recently appointed as the Chief Financial Officer of the $18 billion global food group Kraft. Mr Kehoe will lead all of Kraft’s finance operations.

1980s

Dominick Sutton, BSc 1980, became Chief Data Officer for The Deal, the institutional business of US-listed firm The Street, in February 2015.

Deirdre Falvey (BA 1984), was recently appointed Features Editor at The Irish Times.

Shane O’Mara, BA Psychology 1986 MA Psychology, is Professor of Experimental Brain Research at Trinity College, Dublin, and Director of the Trinity College Institute of Neuroscience. His book, Why Torture Doesn’t Work: The Neuroscience of Interrogation, is being published by Harvard University Press and is due for release in November 2015.

Dómhal Slattery (BComm 1988) [3], was honoured at the ninth Annual NUI Galway Gala in New York City in November 2015. Dómhnal is founding CEO of Avolon, a global leader in the aircraft leasing industry.

John Sweeney (BA 1988), retired from Office of the President at NUI Galway earlier this year. John served in various roles across the University for over 40 years.
Deirdre Fottrell, BA 1989 LLB 1992 (2), daughter of former NUI Galway President Pat Fottrell, received Letters Patent as Queen’s Counsel at a ceremony presided over by the Lord Chancellor, Chris Grayling, MP, in Westminster Hall, London, in February. She works at Number One Garden Court Chambers in London, specialising in Family and Child Law, and lectured for a number of years at Essex University. While a student at NUI Galway, Deirdre was Vice-President of the Students’ Union and Editor of Unity Magazine.

Michael O’Dwyer (MB BCh BAO 1990 MD 2005), will lead the new €2.2 million Blood Cancer Network Ireland, an initiative by Irish Cancer Society and Science Foundation Ireland. Michael is Professor of Haematology at NUI Galway.

Professor Kangsen Mai, PhD Zoology 1995 [4], is now a Professor in Aquaculture Nutrition at Ocean University of China and is also an Academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering and Jimei University. This latter award is an extremely prestigious one. Only a handful of Chinese academics receive this recognition.

Caroline Loughnane (BA 1993, MA 1996, HDipEd 1998) [5], was appointed Academic Secretary for the University in September 2014. Caroline previously held the role of Director of Marketing and Communications since 2008.

Colleen Dube (MPhil 1994), was appointed as the Chief Executive Office of University in June 2015.

Eimear Ni Chonaola (BA 1997, HDipA 1998) [6], Journalist and TG4/RTÉ broadcaster, was the MC at the recent Galway element of the Global Irish Economic Forum 2015. Entitled ’Gaillimh Nua’ Eimear led a programme which brought together members of the Global Irish Network, SMEs in the West region, Galway City and County Councils and the academic community.

Mark Roche, BA 1998, is now studying a technology entrepreneurship masters at the University of Notre Dame, on a Naughton Fellowship. This is the first year that students from NUI Galway have been permitted to apply to the programme.

Dr Andrew Ó Baoill, BSc 1998, has recently returned to NUI Galway as a lecturer in English, with responsibility for the BA with Journalism and the MA in Journalism.
Mathilda Twomey [9], NUI Galway law graduate, Justice Mathilda Twomey, was this year appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Seychelles. Justice Twomey graduated with a BA in English and French Law from the University of Kent, Canterbury, holds a degree in French Law from the University of Paris-Sud and was admitted as a Member of the Bar at Middle Temple, London, and as an Attorney-at-Law in Seychelles. She holds an LLM in Public Law from the School of Law, National University of Ireland Galway, and has also completed her PhD research there (under the joint supervision of Marie McGonagle, NUIG, and Seán Donlan, (UL).

Lorcan Shannon (BA 2007, LL.B 2008), from Lisdoonvarna in Co. Clare, launched a boutique immigration law practice based in New York. The Law Offices of Lorcan Shannon is a full service immigration firm offers a personalised approach on all immigration matters across the United States and Ireland in order to guide clients through the immigration process.

Rónán Gearóid Ó Domhnaill, BA International in 2000 MA in German (2005) PGDE 2007, has written two books on Irish history, Fadó Tales of Lesser Known Irish History and Fadó Fadó-More Tales of Lesser Known Irish History. Rónán is originally from Galway and is currently teaching Irish in Dublin.

Ailbhe Ní Ghearbhuigh, BA in Irish and French 2005 MA in Modern Irish 2007 PhD in Irish Studies 2013, has written a poem, Fillleadh ar an gCatháí, which has been selected as one of ten of Ireland’s best loved poems. Fillleadh ar an gCatháí was selected as the EU presidential poem in 2013. Ailbhe moved to France for a number of years to teach French after completing her undergraduate degree at NUI Galway.

Michael Kavanagh (MA 2004, Diop sa Ghaeilge 2012), Retired as the NUI Galway Academic Secretary late 2014.

Grainne McMahon (BA Int hons 2004) (LLB Hons 2009) [7], has been appointed as Litigation Solicitor with Berwick Solicitors Galway and Dublin. The Galway native is former Editor of GALWAYnow and WEDDINGnow Magazines and Head of News & Sport with iRadio. Gráinne is also a qualified Attorney-at-Law in New York.

Siobhan Seoige, MA Nua-Ghaeilge 2006, was appointed to the state board of Údarás na Gaeltachta.

Róisín Gilmore, BSc 2008, from Galway, was appointed as the first woman Chief Executive of Universal Music Ireland. Róisín is a qualified Accountant and a former Director of the National Concert Hall, Dublin.


Paul McMahon, MA 2008, recently won the Keats Shelley Poetry Prize, which was judged by the UK’s poet Laureate, Carol Ann Duffy.

Mark White, MSc 2010, is founder of Codacast, a tech start-up based in Galway. Codacast was featured as ‘One to Watch’ by Business & Finance magazine recently and, Silicon Republic awarded it ‘Start-up of the Week’ in July.

Niamh Hughes, BComm 2003 and Adrian Boyle, BComm 2002 MBS 2003, were married on campus on April 25, 2015, after having both graduated on the same day in 2003.

Likando Kalaluka, LLM 2012 [10], has been appointed as the Attorney General of Zambia. Pictured below is Mr. Likando Kalaluka [right], being sworn in as Attorney General of Zambia by Republican President of Zambia, Mr. Edgar Lungu.
1. In accordance with the Universities Act, 1997, Údarás na hOllscoile will include four Graduates of the University, two of whom shall be women and two of whom shall be men (subject to the candidates’ including at least two women and at least two men), elected by the Graduate body. Graduates for this purpose include persons on whom a degree of the National University of Ireland was conferred as a result of their studies at the National University of Ireland, Galway or University College, Galway. Employees and students of the University are not eligible to stand for this election under the Graduate electoral category. The term of office of the next Údarás na hOllscoile will be five years from February 1, 2016.

2. The Graduate election will be conducted by e-voting on Thursday, 21 January, 2016 from 11:00 to 23:00 GMT.

3. Graduates, who intend to vote, and who are not currently registered with the University Alumni Office, should register before January 5, 2016 www.nuigalway.ie/alumni-friends/get-in-touch.

Gearóid Ó Conluain
Secretary to the University

NUI GALWAY ANNUAL GALA DINNER IN NEW YORK

NUI Galway hosted its ninth annual Gala Dinner in New York City in November. This year’s honoree was Dómhnall Slattery, NUI Galway graduate and founding CEO of Avolon, a global leader in the aircraft leasing industry.

Pictured at the New York event from left: Dómhnall Slattery, CEO Avolon with Maureen O’Dowd, New York Times and honorary graduate NUI Galway, and President of NUI Galway, Dr Jim Browne.

www.nuigalway.ie
As the Yeats 2015 celebration draws to a close perhaps the most fitting reveal took place on 14 December as the Abbey Theatre Minute Books were revealed and made available to the public for the first time in history. Collectively the minute books amount to nearly 2,000 pages, covering some of the Abbey’s most significant events. These minute books have never before been made available publicly, and are now being published as part of the Abbey Theatre and NUI Galway Digital Archive Partnership (2012-2015).

A Digital Journey through Irish Theatre History, the Abbey/NUI Galway digital archive partnership is the largest digital theatre project ever undertaken, and heralds a new era of scholarship for Irish theatre internationally. Previously unseen, the Abbey Theatre Minute Books date from 1904 to 1939 and include the period in history when both Lady Gregory and W. B. Yeats ran the Abbey Theatre.

The Abbey Theatre minute books contain notes from meetings of the theatre’s Board of Directors. They offer a fascinating glimpse behind the scenes of the theatre, showing how the Abbey’s managers dealt with a variety of issues, from choosing plays to determining how much to pay their actors.

Along the way, important information about leading figures from the Irish Literary Revival and beyond: not just W. B. Yeats, Lady Gregory and John Millington Synge but Sean O’Casey, Lennox Robinson, Teresa Deevy, Sean O’Faolain, Frank O’Connor, and many others. A lot is also to be learned about great Irish actors such as Molly Allgood, Ria Mooney, Barry Fitzgerald, Cyril Cusack and many more.

NUI Galway Professor of Drama Patrick Lonergan said that the minute book will be of huge interest to theatre scholars, historians, and anyone with an interest in Irish culture: “the story of the Abbey Theatre is in many ways the story of our nation in microcosm. This online resource shows the Abbey Theatre and NUI Galway working together to reveal new aspects of that theatre’s story – and, by extension, new aspects of the story of Ireland. Users of the site will be able to search easily through hundreds of pages of records, and can move between the handwritten originals and carefully transcribed webpages. And all of this is available entirely free of charge to readers anywhere in the world.”

We also learn much about the day to day activities of keeping a theatre in business: the struggles to find appropriate funding, the actors’ requests for extra money or time off, and the maintenance of the building.

And of course we learn much about Ireland, both before and after independence. The Abbey Theatre famously was the first state-subsidised theatre in the English-speaking world, earning funding in 1925 from the newly independent Irish Free State.”

In total, the Abbey Theatre and NUI Galway are making available seven minute books, including such details as:

- 1904-1905 – outlining the foundation of the theatre, its relationships with other theatres in Ireland, and its evolving approach to its actors and patron Annie Horniman.
- 1926-1931 After a hiatus, the Abbey Theatre Board of Directors resumes taking minutes in 1925, following the Free State government’s decision to fund the theatre. A central topic of debate here is the fate of Sean O’Casey’s The Plough and the Stars.
- 1932-1936. The theatre grapples with ongoing financial difficulties, responds to the death of Lady Gregory, and its actors are offered the opportunity to make movies in Hollywood. Ernest Blythe formally joins the Board.
- 1936 to 1937. While covering a relatively short period, this minute book gives a fascinating account of the Abbey’s relationship with Teresa Deevy. Where growing tensions between the Board and the Abbey company of actors can be seen.
- 1937 to 1939. Dominated by negotiations with the Irish government for the creation of a new theatre, which would house the Abbey Theatre and Gate Theatre (the outbreak of war in 1939 meant that this plan was never completed). Also notable here is the production of Yeats’s final plays, in particular the controversial Purgatory, which appeared at the Abbey Theatre Festival in 1938.

This is a major milestone in what is largest digitisation project in the world. It has brought the most advanced digital technology to bear on one of the country’s most historic theatre archives. The combination of historical material with the technological ability to bring to new audiences across the globe has far reaching benefits to students and researchers of the University and beyond. The unveiling of the Abbey Theatre Minute Books goes one step further as all is made available to scholars and non-scholars alike at www.nuigalway.ie/AbbeyTheatreMinuteBooks.
With the increasing pace of modern life, we are transitioning from human beings to human doings. We are losing connection with ourselves and with each other. This lack of ability to stop and reflect before responding is contributing to the rise in mental health issues in society, and the World Health Organisation’s predictions indicate that by 2030, depression will be the leading cause of disease burden globally. 75% of all adult mental disorders begin before 24 years (the age of students within our universities), and close to 30% of young adults have at least one mental illness.
Prescription of anti-depressants in the UK between 1991-2011 increased by 500% and, in an analysis presented at the World Economic Forum, Geneva, in 2011, it was estimated that the cumulative global impact of mental disorders in terms of lost economic output, will amount to US$16 trillion over the next 20 years.

Based on official suicide mortality data, the rate of youth suicide in Ireland is currently the fifth highest in the EU (at 15.7 per 100,000) among 15-24 year olds, the age group that is typically preparing for or attending University. This places Ireland’s suicide rate at 19 times greater that of Greece. This all points to a clear risk factor for Irish universities, where most of our student population falls within the ‘at risk’ age range.

As a scientist, I have been interested throughout my career in the importance of both mental and physical well-being in maximising people’s work performance and ability to adapt to changes in a work environment.

There is convincing scientific evidence of physiological changes to our bodies under certain conditions – for example, when we are under stress, during exercise and also when we engage in mental activities such as mindfulness and meditation.

Research pioneers such as Jon Kabat-Zinn at the University of Massachusetts and Richard Davies at the University of Wisconsin, along with other scientists, have demonstrated the impact of mindfulness and other contemplative practices on reducing stress and anxiety, enhancing focus and well-being, and bringing about changes in gene expression, inflammatory pathways and neural anatomy.

Until recently, the brain was considered unchangeable grey mass. But it is now clear that our neuronal connections and brain mass are undoubtedly affected by thoughts, repeated actions and electromagnetic stimulation. This is commonly known as neuroplasticity: neurons that fire together, wire together.

For Irish higher education institutions to remain competitive globally, the health and well-being of students and staff is of paramount importance

In simple terms, continuous anxiety, fear and negative thoughts or stillness and positive thoughts, have a profound impact on our brain as well as our physiology.

The higher education sector is going through a dramatic change, with continuing pressure in terms of student numbers, student retention, academic performance, globalisation, funding and resources. Of course, students and staff in higher education institutions are not immune to the mental health and work-based stress issues facing communities elsewhere.

For Irish higher education institutions to remain competitive globally, the health and well-being of students and staff is of paramount importance.

Empirical evidence available today suggests that the practice of intentional awareness of our moment-to-moment experiences can assist in the cultivation of well-being in the individual’s life, and can lead to benefits at a personal and professional level.

Chris Ruane, a former UK member of parliament, has been practising meditation and mindfulness for many years. So convinced is he of its positive impact that he has persuaded the UK parliament to offer mindfulness courses to MPs. As of July 2015, 100 UK parliamentarians have attended mindfulness workshops, the US Military has invested $150million to provide mindfulness training to its armed forces and returning war veterans, and corporate giants that include Google, Microsoft, Sony, SAP and Apple are providing mindfulness training to their executives.

In summary, educational attainment is a key factor for success in life. Mindfulness can help to bring about that excellence in education. By enabling people to live in the present moment, and releasing the mind from the habitual ruminative patterns that lead to worry, depression and burn-out, mindfulness can enable creative responses to new challenges.

NUI Galway is starting on this journey to adopt a mindfulness culture. Our University has recently hosted a conference of mindfulness experts, leaders in society and entrepreneurs, along with students, staff and University leaders, to discuss the importance of mindfulness in higher educational institutions.

The Mindful Way Conference represented our first steps towards understanding the role mindfulness can play in providing a more enriching experience for staff and students. There was such an enthusiastic response that we now want to build on that momentum to see what can be achieved collectively through a more mindful approach.

Over the next year, we will host a monthly Mindfulness Lecture Series from experts in the field to bring evidence-based mindfulness to NUI Galway. Our first speaker is leading a mindfulness programme at Cambridge University.

We are also working with Oxford graduate and Tibetan Buddhist monk, Gelong Thubten, who will provide mindfulness workshops to students and staff, to demonstrate how mindfulness can help to develop wellbeing, resilience and enhanced performance. We plan to dedicate physical spaces on campus for mindfulness practice, and to offer drop-in meditation sessions for staff and students.

NUI Galway is collaborating with academic leaders and entrepreneurs who have expertise in mindfulness to bring a ‘mindful entrepreneurship’ dimension to our Blackstone Launchpad programme, a unique programme geared towards promoting entrepreneurship among NUI Galway undergraduates.

Investment in mindfulness has the potential to bring about significant positive change in the lives of our students and our staff through reduced stress and enhanced mental clarity and performance. The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step; NUI Galway is taking that step!

www.nuigalway.ie/mindfulway

Professor Lokesh Joshi is Vice-President for Research at NUI Galway

Having obtained a PhD from UCD (1999), she published a seminal biography of Kathleen Lynn: Irishwoman, patriot and doctor; Business archival sources for the local historian (jointly with her husband Ciarán); a biography of Edward Hay based on her first class honours MA from UCG; Quiet revolutionaries Irish women in education, medicine and sport, 1861-1964; Gender and medicine in Ireland 1700-1950 (edited with Margaret Preston); His Grace is displeased: selected correspondence of John Charles McQuaid (edited with Clara Cullen). She was engaged in research on a biography of Nano Nagle before her untimely death. She also contributed to bibliographies and wrote authoritative articles in the Encyclopaedia of Ireland (2003), the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (2004), Enzyklopädie Migration in Europa vom 17. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart (2007), and the Dictionary of Irish Biography (2009).

In a ‘recollection’ for An Cumann Staire (http://www.cumannstaire.com/media/recollections/), she wrote: ‘I arrived in UCG in October 1985 and immediately joined the History Society, along with the Athletics club and the Literary and Debating Society; all three have fed into my activities for the last quarter of a century’. During her time at UCG, Margaret was an active member and officer of An Cumann Staire, UCG AC and Lit & Deb, representing the University in track and field and in The Irish Times Debating Competition. She served as Clubs Officer of UCG Students’ Union (1989-90). A prolific researcher, a resilient athlete and a talented presenter, she published six books and more than sixty articles, won national athletics medals in Ireland and New Zealand, and a silver medal for Ireland in the Hammer at the European Masters’ Games in Sweden (2008), and taught in Ireland, New Zealand and the US (where she was a Fulbright scholar at Boston College [2000-01]).

When she was diagnosed, Margaret remarked that she was glad she had read the Stoics in first year Philosophy in Galway. One of those Stoics, Seneca, wrote: ‘as is a tale, so is life: not how long it is, but how good it is, is what matters’. This could be said of Dr Margaret Ó hÓgartaigh’s life (10 July 1967 – 17 December 2014).

She is survived by her husband, Ciarán, who is the Dean of Business in UCD.

MÁIRE GREENE, BE 2005
Tom Tuohy, BComm 1976
Denis Carroll, HDip in Ed 1965
Victor Dillon, MIE 1974
Michael Hanley, BA 1988
Stella Coffey, HDip in Ed 1975
Mary O’Hara, BComm 1960
Mary Keane, BComm 1967
Patrick Madigan, BA 1957
Matthias Hynes, BA 1988
Kieran Duffy, BA 1993
Sheila Harrison, BA 1974
Brian McDermott, BA 1983
Francis Britton, BE 1981
Donnchadh McGinley, BSc 2004
Diane Halley, LLB 2002
Timothy Naughton, BComm 1961

Jack Toolan, BA 1990
Margaret Ó hÓgartaigh, BA 1988
Noel Colleran, BA 2010
Fidelma Burgess, BComm 1965
Patrick McHugh, MB, BCh, BAO 1967
Kieran Woodman, BA 1946
Irene O’Byrne, HDipHPr 1999
Eamonn Ralph, MB, BCh, BAO 1979
Tracey Melia, BA 2011
Philomena Keane, BA 1970
Cathal Torpey, BE 2005
Muireann Ní Bhrolchain, BA 1975
Winifred Cunningham, BComm 1975
Michael Kieran, BComm 1975
Maire Leonard, MD 2010

Should you wish to contact us to update on graduates, please email alumni@nuigalway.ie
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Visit www.nuigalway.ie/network and tag yourself; tell us where you are and what you are doing, connect to former classmates and tap in to your Global Alumni Network.

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Galway University Foundation gratefully acknowledges the support of its donors in assisting with the development of the Lambe Institute for Translational Research. The building was officially opened on 28 September 2015 on the grounds of University Hospital Galway.

For more information on ways to support Galway University Foundation visit www.guf.ie or Tel +353 91 493536