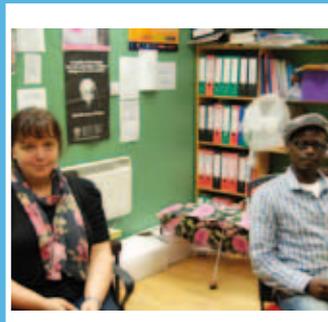


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# Volunteers Give Galway a Makeover

by Donnacha Foley

Teams of volunteers were busy in Galway city last Friday October 1st as part of the National Day of Volunteering. The events were co-ordinated by Galway Volunteer Centre, the one-stop shop for volunteering in Galway City and County. Galway Volunteer also hosted the Keith Finnegan Show from Galway Bay FM, where a number of organisations and their volunteers spoke about the work they did and the benefits to be gained by volunteering.

Groups of volunteers including a team of volunteers from ACC Bank who visited local charities such as COPE and the Croi na Gallaimhe Resource Centre to help out with some painting, gardening and landscaping work.

"It was fantastic to have such valuable work all happening on the one the day" stated Donnacha Foley, Development Manager of Galway Volunteer Centre, "the volunteers involved should be congratulated for their generosity of time and spirit".

GVC estimates that that people finding voluntary work through GVC in the last 4 years have contributed at least 100,000 hours volunteering in their local community, which is the equivalent of 55 full-time workers. Statistics also show that most of the people registering with the centre



Loyola King and Henry Geraghty volunteering at Croi na Gallaimhe Resource Centre

have never volunteered before. "The 4,500 people that are registered with us represent a huge bank of skills and energy that can be given to the community in these difficult times" stated Donnacha.

Any members of the public wanting to volunteer can call to the office or register online at [www.volunteergalway.ie](http://www.volunteergalway.ie). The centre usually has around 100 vacancies available at any one time. It tries to meet with as many people as possible to identify suitable opportunities for them. Galway Volunteer Centre is a one-stop shop for voluntary activity, providing volunteering opportunities for the public, sourcing much needed volunteers for organisations and providing support for organisations in managing volunteers.

For more information on Galway Volunteer Centre you can visit the website or phone **091 539930** or call into the office at **17/18 Mill Street**.

## Got an hour to spare for the Galway Rape Crisis Centre

by Andrea Murphy

The Galway Rape Crisis Centre, a member of the Rape Crisis Network Ireland, provides services to female and male survivors of rape and sexual violence. It has gone from small beginnings in 1984 to becoming one of the largest rape crisis centres in the west of Ireland catering for an increasingly high population. The range of services include short and long term face to face counselling, a telephone helpline, court accompaniment and an asylum seeker clinic. Education, awareness and research are other important aspects of the centre's work.

An annual report is published by the organisation which provides important statistics on rape and sexual abuse in our region. It is evident from this information that GRCC is a vital organisation for our community. Here are some statistics from the newly released 2009 report which illustrate this; last year 2,180 calls were made to the helpline and 2,609 face-to-face counselling sessions took place and the number of male clients has nearly doubled since 2007. The latter being most likely due to increased awareness of services.



Tribes Basketball Fundraiser

Fundraising is greatly relied upon by the GRCC, particularly in these times of economic recession. Recently the HSE cut our budget by 7% and corporations which provided donations in the past are no longer in a position to do so. The upcoming December budget is not likely to spell good news for us either. This means we need to organise more fundraising events than ever. This is not possible however, without the kind help of volunteers.

In the past few months GRCC has had to organise many fundraisers from Bring and Buy Sales and The Tribes 3 on 3 basketball tournament (€2300 raised) to the recently successful concert 'A Night for Manuela'. We have much more up our sleeves for the coming months, including a traditional concert, 'T with the Maggies', on November 19th in St Nicholas' Church and another sale in Kelly's Bar before Christmas. Of course we cannot forget the highlight of our fundraising year; the Christmas Fundraising Dinner which is to be held in the Galway Bay Hotel on December 12th.

As we are currently having more fundraisers than ever before, I am now urging the people of Galway to get in touch if they have an hour or two to spare and would like to get involved. There is something to suit all interests! Volunteers and donations of cds/dvds for our bring and buy sales are particularly welcome. Tickets to the Christmas Fundraising Weekend which includes a four course meal, entertainment and bed and breakfast are currently on sale. To volunteer for any of our upcoming events, buy a ticket for the Christmas Fundraising Dinner or to donate sale items contact fundraisers Glyn Carragher on **085 2462959**, or Andrea Murphy at **andreaग्रcc@gmail.com**

The Galway Rape Crisis Centre would like to take the opportunity here to offer a sincere thanks to all of the local businesses, organisations and individuals who have helped us with our fundraisers this year. We are truly grateful for all of the support received. For more information on Galway Rape Crisis Centre see **www.galwayrcc.org** or you can find us on Facebook under Galway-Rape Crisis-Centre.

## Youth Work Ireland Galway

by Irene Murphy

2010 is the 30th Anniversary of our first paid youth development worker. We have changed a lot over the years but the core has remained the same: a strong belief that all young people should have access to quality youth work services if they choose to avail of them. Youth Work Ireland, Galway is a voluntary organisation that works with young people in Galway City and county. We do this through supporting communities to set up and deliver youth programmes on a voluntary basis, and by developing services to young people implemented by paid staff. We work in partnership with a number of community groups and statutory bodies in the development and promotion of youth services.

In Galway City we deliver the Ragoon Youth Project (Corrach Bui and Droim Chaoin estates), Westside Youth Project (all of the Westside), CAPE, SPARK, shOUT! and Youth Clubs are city wide supports. In addition the Teen Between an individual service for teens who are experiencing difficulties as a result of parental separation and Rainbows and Spectrum loss and bereavement programmes are run based on need.



Summer Camps 2010

Ragoon and Westside Youth Projects have a geographic remit and provide a range of supports for young people including recreational activities such as dj and rap, hip hop, art, outdoor education, swimming, cookery, soccer etc based on the interests of the young people in the area. In addition the projects support young people to remain in school with individual tutoring, grinds, after school and are supported locally by Galway City Council,

in-school programmes. Both projects also provide other development programmes e.g. Copping On (Crime Awareness), Putting the Pieces Together (Drug Awareness), Health and Wellness, Development Education and Environmental Awareness.

Contact the project for further information on Teen Between, Rainbows or Spectrum. The projects are funded by the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs through the City of Galway VEC and Ragoon Family Centre and Le Cheile. The projects are located in the Corrach Bui Community Centre off Seamus Quirke Road.



Coole Park Summer 08

CAPE is a project that delivers peer education training to older teens in the area of Drug Awareness (using Prevention and Harm Reduction strategies). The Worker is based in The Gaf Youth Café and runs activities there and in school settings. It is a partnership initiative with Foroige and is funded by Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs through the City of Galway VEC and supported by the HSE West. It is open to all teens city wide.

SPARK is an adolescent service for teens from the asylum seeking and refugee communities in Galway City. The worker meets with young people on a one-to-one basis and currently 2 groups are running cookery and swimming based on the interest of the participants. Young people who are in Ireland without their parents are prioritised for support. The project is funded by the HSE West. The Worker runs a drop-in service in The Gaf on Wednesday afternoons and accepts referrals (with the permission of the young person) from Social Workers, Teachers, Direct Provision Hostels and from the community or young people can access the project directly.

shOUT! Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender youth project has recently launched their meeting space and is open to young people aged 14 years upwards. There is a Saturday Group and an email and text support service and the Worker runs a drop-in service in The Gaf on Thursday afternoons. The Project provides a safe space for young people to explore their identity and share their experience with peers or a leader in a confidential manner.

An outreach information and education service is available to schools, clubs, community groups and agencies. The Project is looking at parent supports and ways to develop this service. The project has its own website [www.lgbtyouthgalway.com](http://www.lgbtyouthgalway.com). shOUT! is funded by the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs through the City of Galway VEC and supported by locally by The Gaf and nationally by BeLoNG To.

Youth Clubs are volunteer led groups that affiliate to Youth Work Ireland. The Clubs have their own committees and structures but are supported through insurance, training and inter-club activities. All Youth Clubs are unique in that they cater for different ages or have a geographic remit or are a community of young people interested in particular activities. Keep The Beat Klub in Castlegar caters for 1st to 6th Class and has teen and adult leaders and develop young people through music and song. You can usually catch them carol singing in Dunnes Stores in Terryland for St Vincent de Paul before Christmas or at their annual Community BBQ in Castlegar where the young people showcase their year's work. Our Lady's Boys Club on Sea Road has just completed their new Clubhouse and young men from across the city attend club several evenings a week. The Club also run an annual residential summer camp in Claremorris. The Youth Alive Initiative Club in Ballybrit operates 6 days a week and young people from right across the city are members. The Q Club is based in Ragoon/Tonabrucky and recently held a very impressive variety show in the Town Hall Theatre and young people performed at the launch of the Youth Work Ireland Galway Strategic Plan. That's a flavour of the city based Clubs. They are unique to the leaders and young people involved. Feel free to contact us if you are interested in support to start a club, receive training in leadership and child protection or engage with other clubs.

Over 4,000 young people availed of our services last year and 323 people volunteered their time. We host student placements from PLC and 3rd Level Colleges as well as TY and Youthreach. Youth Work Ireland, Galway is managed by a voluntary Board of Directors. Check out our website [www.youthworkgalway.ie](http://www.youthworkgalway.ie) for contact details of the Project or Clubs Workers. Contact **091 561637** or **info@youthworkgalway.ie** or on Facebook for further information on any of our services.



Volvo Ocean Race Sailing

# Galway Migrant Service

by Nollaig McGuinness

Galway Migrant Service was established by Galway City Partnership in 2007 in response to the need for a dedicated information and advocacy service for migrant workers in the city and has since become an important part of the local integration framework. Like other advocacy services, Galway Migrant Service is based on a model of one-to-one support whereby staff will work closely with clients on an ongoing basis in order to help resolve particular difficulties they may be experiencing. The service provides practical information and support on employment-related issues, immigration legislation, accessing public services such as education, health and other support service and general information and advice on living in Galway City.

Galway Migrant Service has also established English language classes run by volunteer tutors and more recently has piloted a new mentoring project to support individuals in their efforts to integrate and participate in local society.

The service has 2 part-time staff members, Katya Okonkwo and Foley Sarumi, and is open 4 days per week Monday – Thursday. To speak with Katya or Foley or to make an appointment to see them please phone us on **091 773466**.



Katya Okonkwo and Foley Sarumi



## GAEILGESPAINNIS Launches in Galway City

by Pilar Alderete-Diez

On Monday the 27th of September 2010 to coincide with the European Day of Languages, Dr. Dorothy Ní Uigin (Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge) and Ms. Pilar Alderete-Diez, (Spanish) both language teachers at NUIG launched a new website for their Project: PAISAGE: Portal Audiovisual Intercultural sobre el Aprendizaje de Gaélico y Español

(Audiovisual Intercultural Platform for the Teaching and Learning of Spanish and Irish). This project seeks to investigate the potential of a range of media and web technologies in order to enhance the student learning experience in languages, in particular Irish and Spanish.

As part of the project, we have shot three videos without audio of (a) the NUI Galway Campus (b) Historical Galway (c) County Galway; these have been voice-overed in Spanish. The Irish version voice over will be completed in the coming weeks. These videos could be voice-overed in any language and aim to introduce newcomers into county Galway, Galway City and the university itself, highlighting the local history and culture. Ten interviews have also been recorded and edited. The interviewees included Irish speakers living in Spain and Spanish speakers living in Ireland, and the topics they discussed ranged from the difficulties of learning a new language and living in a foreign country to the question of minority languages and literature with an eye to unveil some of the intercultural issues that these people bumped into.

For further information on this project, please look up our Youtube channel, [www.youtube.com/user/gaeilgespainnis](http://www.youtube.com/user/gaeilgespainnis). We have also set up a Google Docs site, which we are happy to share with teachers interested in using our material.

## Westside Community Development Project by Vernice Murray

Westside CDP coordinates and supports community work and participation in the Westside area. We aim to listen and respond to individuals and groups in our community and facilitate their development. We liaise closely with other organisations and agencies in the area and strive to empower local people for positive change. The project consists of two key workers Ms Vernice Murray the co-ordinator and Ms Sidikat Agboola who is the project administrator.

Westside CDP is currently taking names for a variety of courses that will be starting in Westside Resource Centre in January 2011. In partnership with Galway City Partnership and Galway City VEC we have been running 'Taster Courses' for the past twelve months for people living in the Westside. Such courses include computers, driver theory preparation, sewing, patchwork quilting, flower arranging, reflexology, health and beauty, yoga, interior design, health and

wellbeing, web design, cookery and card making. We hope to run additional courses in 2011 such as photography, carpentry, art and music. Everybody from the Westside is very welcome to participate in these classes which are free. In October 2010 the Back to Education (BTEI) programme which is run by Galway City VEC started in Westside.

We have recently established a new Westside Community Choir in partnership with Galway City VEC. The group is currently preparing for a fulfilled Christmas Choir performance! This project welcomes people of all singing abilities living in the Westside area and a choir facilitator will be working with the group. In addition to group classes the CDP also links closely with the VEC to provide one to one literacy support for people living in the Westside. We are in the process of establishing some new community groups for the Westside also. If you would like any additional information about activities going on within the CDP or would like to get involved please give me a call on **091 528325/087 9303468**. Westside CDP would like to thank everyone who has helped the work of the CDP over the past year and we look forward to their continued support.

## Harvest Morning Celebrations at Westside Resource Centre, by James Coyne



Nora Ward and Karen O'Donnell at Westside Harvest Morning

They say that the 'spirits walk abroad' at Halloween but only 'high sprits' were in evidence at the recent Westside Harvest Morning. The Harvest Morning was organised as a joint initiative by Westside Community Development Project, Westside Age Inclusion, Galway Brothers of Charity & Westside Resource Centre for Social Inclusion Week.

Well over 100 participants from all walks of life took part in various interactive workshops throughout the morning and later all came to gather for refreshments before being regaled in song by the newly launched Westside Choir. Proceedings came to a conclusion with the Halloween Raffle with over 25 individual prizes given out. Westside Resource Centre would like to thank all those who contributed to the celebrations and we look forward to seeing you all again soon.

Westside Resource Centre is a community based organisation with charitable status. The centre provides serviced office accommodation to community, voluntary, educational, not-for-profit and charitable organisations. Westside Resource Centre also provides a number of meeting rooms which can be booked out hourly or daily. These rooms are ideal for meetings, training sessions, short courses and seminars. The building is equipped with its own computer room, broadband access, free car parking and is fully accessible.

A number of organisations are based in the Westside Resource Centre, which also provides meeting and training space for numerous other local and national groups and educational organisations. For further information please contact Westside Resource Centre on **(091) 528325**.

The Photographs from Westside Harvest Morning were taken by Christopher Sherlock.

## ***"You can do it, but you can't do it alone". Free mental health booklet for young adults now available***

GROW, Ireland's largest community-based mental health organisation, recently launched a free booklet called "You Can Do It - But You Can't Do It Alone". The booklet hopes to reduce the stigma associated with mental health issues and suicidal thoughts. It is aimed at young adults (15 to 25 years old), and features testimonies from young people who have been through difficult times and who have come out the other side.

### *"You Can Do It - But You Can't Do It Alone"*

is part of a co-branding campaign with the National Office for Suicide Prevention, which has recently launched its Letsomeoneknow.ie website, also aimed at young people at risk. The Letsomeoneknow.ie website contains useful information related to young people's mental health including, looking out for a friend, common problems and creating an Action Diary.

GROW, founded in Australia in 1957 by former

mental sufferers, has had a presence in Ireland for over 40 years. It currently has a national network of over 120 weekly support groups in Ireland. Its principal strength is the support members give each other from their own experience in matters to do with mental health.

GROW's first weekly support group for young adults was established in Galway city in 2007. There are now 5 young adult groups nationwide.

The overarching message from GROW is that it is important to recognise the early warning signs, and to act upon them – because many people can and do recover from mental health issues.

David, a GROW young adult member who suffers from Bi-Polar Disorder, emphasises the importance of being able to talk about problems at an early stage. "After hospital I started attending my local GROW support group. I found it useful to talk openly with other people about the problems I was experiencing. Now I am not as scared as I was before. I am more open about myself and



Free Booklet Launched

my feelings. I am able to identify early symptoms and act accordingly. I now discuss my difficulties openly with medical staff and take my medication regularly. I have even gone back into hospital to tell my story at an information session for patients."

As a group young adults are particularly vulnerable to mental illness and despair. Approximately 75% of mental illness cases begin before the age of 24. The group most at risk of suicide are young adults aged between 15-34 years. There are thousands of young adults across Ireland who suffer from mental health problems on a daily basis. Many don't know where to turn to look for help.

Mutual support has been shown to be a vital tool in the process of recovery from mental health problems. The booklet title, "You can do it, but you can't do it alone", aims to emphasise this fact. "You Can Do It, But You Can't Do It Alone" is available either online at [www.grow.ie](http://www.grow.ie), or in print at [www.healthpromotion.ie](http://www.healthpromotion.ie), where organisations and members of the public can place an order through the publications section of the website. To view the National Office for Suicide Prevention's website aimed at young people visit [www.letsomeoneknow.ie](http://www.letsomeoneknow.ie).

GROW weekly support groups are free, confidential and open to all. For more information about GROW visit [www.grow.ie](http://www.grow.ie).

## Public Meeting on Mental Health in January 2011

See Change will in association with Galway City Community Forum and Galway County Community Forum be hosting a public meeting about mental health stigma and what can be done to reduce it on Monday 31 January 2011. Further details regarding time and venue will follow.

The aim of the meeting is to raise awareness of the stigma and discrimination people with mental health problems face and explore ways in which communities can work with See Change to reduce stigma and discrimination. Mr John Moloney TD, Minister for Disability and Mental Health will address the meeting, as will speakers on the area of mental health stigma.

See Change is Ireland's new national partnership to reduce stigma and challenge discrimination associated with mental health problems. It is an alliance of organisations working together through the National Stigma Reduction Partnership to bring about positive change in public attitudes and behaviour towards people with mental health problems. For further information on See Change, please log on to [www.seechange.ie](http://www.seechange.ie)

# New Community Forum Policy Document on the way

by Poul Walsh Olesen

## The Mercy

by Margaret Wynne

Like a sped arrow, like a careless word.  
Heaven and earth cannot recall it now.  
The room inhales, holds its' breath,  
counts its blessings.

Whistling varnish vibrates tense air.  
A voice inside whispers "hold it steady,  
do not cry".

The room exhales.  
Stung palms walk upright - resume their seat.  
Flushed with excitement she adjusts her veil  
and beads.

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## Life

by Margaret Wynne

Reality ambushes me like a blow to the head.  
Is life the norm and death just the end of it?  
Is death the constant  
and life a game death lets us play as we wait  
for it?

No cure for a broken spirit.  
No prosthetic for that.

The fear visceral.  
The sadness profound.  
The slopes are vertical now.  
Show me, I want to see what you see.  
Unworthy to ask my God for help,  
What can man do for me?

Can anything save me from the body  
undergoing this death?

Margaret Wynne grew up in Galway City. She is currently attending a poetry workshop facilitated by Kevin Higgins at Galway Arts Centre.

It is important that Galway City Community Forum (GCCF) have clear and concise policies, as they support and direct the viewpoints put forward by Forum representatives on the Strategic Policy Committees of Galway City Council, Galway City Development Board and other committees on which the Forum is represented.

The Community Forum's policies are currently outlined in a comprehensive document of more than 80 pages, many of which are dating back to the formation of the Forum in 2000. At the Community Forum's quarterly meeting on the 7th of September 2010 it was therefore agreed to start working on a review of the Forum's Policies, with the aim to:

- Ensure that the Forum's policies are up-date and reflecting the collective viewpoints of the Forum membership
- Provide support for the Forum's representatives, so they have a clear mandate for representing the Forum on committees and boards etc.
- Ensure that the Forum's policies are clear, concise and easy to communicate to external partners, including elected representatives. Direct the work of the GCCF Steering Group and GCCF Sub-Groups

It is the aim of to launch the new Policy in May 2011. Many of the Forum's Sub-Groups have already begun the review process, and now is the time to get involved if you have an interest in a particular area. For further information please contact the Community Forum Co-ordinator on Tel. **091-536458** or E-mail:

**communityforum@galwaycity.ie**



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