

Junior Chamber Galway

Cumann Sóisearach na Gaillimhe



Ireland's Outstanding Young People to be recognized at Junior Chamber Awards Ceremony

NEWS

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Junior Chamber Ireland, in association with Pepsi Cola, will celebrate and recognise the exceptional achievements of eight of Ireland's outstanding young people at an awards presentation ceremony in Cloonacauneen Castle, Galway on Friday 10th October 2003 at 6.30 p.m.

The ceremony will involve an audio visual presentation outlining the extraordinary stories of each of the eight award winners. These interesting personalities are a source of inspiration to all who interact with them. The awards ceremony will be attended by friends and family of the winners as well as being open to members of the public.

Information on the National Award Winners

(Photos and further information available on
<http://www.juniorchamberireland.org/toyp/winners.shtml>)

Eight finalists have been selected from nominations across Ireland to win these awards:

Gearóidín Burke (24), from Galway, was nominated for 'academic accomplishment'. She was born visually impaired, but this didn't stop her achieving a First Class Honours degree in International Commerce. She is now combining her studies in accountancy and taxation with work as a trainee tax consultant in KPMG in Dublin. She also has the distinction of being chosen by Junior Chamber International as one of the ten 'Outstanding Young Persons of the World' for 2003 and will travel to Copenhagen in November to receive her award at Junior Chamber World Convention.

Colm Finnerty, aged 24, from Carrick-on-Shannon, was nominated for 'Moral leadership'. Colm is a trainee Garda in Dublin and rescued three men from drowning in the River Liffey in December 2002.

Liam Dilleen, aged 27, from Galway city, was nominated for 'business or entrepreneurial accomplishment'. He is the owner of a successful furniture store in Galway, Terryland Furniture, and also established the EZ Living Franchise between 10 independent retailers in Ireland, with plans to expand further afield.

Simon Coveney, from Cork, was nominated for 'Contribution to Children, World Peace and/or Human Rights'. He was the only Irish politician to make a humanitarian visit to Pakistan/Afghanistan and its refugee camps in the aftermath of September 11th and to give informed advice on how aid from Ireland could be distributed most effectively. He is also well known for his family's fund-raising sailing trip around the world for the Chernobyl Children's Project.

Joanne Freyne, aged 21, from Waterford, has been nominated for 'Humanitarian and/or voluntary leadership'. Joanne was diagnosed with Leukaemia at 19, but

immediately following her return home from hospital, she launched a campaign for funds to improve facilities at the two hospitals where she had received her treatment. This initiative raised more than €140,000.

Jacinta O'Neill, from Glasnevin, Dublin, was nominated for personal accomplishment. She was born with Down Syndrome, but devoted herself to a sporting career in swimming, gymnastics, ten pin bowling and skiing and has won gold, silver and bronze medals in the Special Olympics.

Patricia Neville, aged 26, from Cobh, Co. Cork, was nominated for 'Humanitarian and/or voluntary leadership'. While still a student, Patricia has volunteered as an Adult Literacy tutor, worked with the Simon Community and helped to procure a child-care facility at her local Family Resource Centre.

Ruairí O'Toole (27), from Spiddal, Co. Galway, was nominated for personal accomplishment. He was born with Down Syndrome and had a major heart-saving operation at two years of age. He has trained as a competitive swimmer and has also competed in Kayaking, winning a bronze medal at the Special Olympics earlier this year.

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Background Information

Junior Chamber Galway is a not-for-profit organisation led and co-ordinated by volunteers and is affiliated to Junior Chamber International which involves over half a million members worldwide. Through its activities, it provides unique personal development opportunities for its members while at the same time contributing to the economic, social and cultural development of the community.