

Junior Chamber Ireland

NEWS

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“On Top Of The World”

Dublin 22 October 2003, An Tanaiste, Mary Harney, TD today presented Caroline Casey, of The Aisling Foundation with a TOYP (The Outstanding Young Person) international award from Junior Chamber International (JCI) to recognise her achievements as one of only ten world’s most inspiring individuals. Junior Chamber Ireland (through JCI) is part of the world’s largest personal development organisation.

In attendance were Mr Bruce Rector, World President of Junior Chamber International and Mr Jeremy Doyle National President of Junior Chamber Ireland.

Picture also shows Geraroidin Burke who has been selected as Junior Chamber Ireland’s TOYP nominee.

As a recipient of this International Award Caroline joins a list of well-known previous winners such as management guru Anthony Robbins from the USA, Scandanavian Linus Torvalds author of the Linux software and Fr Joe Young from Limerick.

For further information about Junior Chamber checkout the website at www.juniorchamber.org.

ENDS

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

WHAT IS JUNIOR CHAMBER IRELAND?

Junior Chamber Ireland is a not-for-profit association of young men and women between the ages 18 and 40 from all walks of life and professions who have a desire for self-improvement, to make an impact on their community, and to socialise and network with other like minded young people.

Junior Chamber Ireland, through its affiliation to Junior Chamber International, is part of the Worlds' largest, out of hours, personal development organisation. It should be noted that whilst Junior Chamber Ireland and Junior Chamber International support the activities of the Chamber of Commerce we are not directly affiliated with that organisation.

Structured under four areas of opportunity, Personal Development, Community Activity, Internationalism and Business Junior Chamber invests many hours of volunteer time serving the needs of the communities in which we live. Junior Chamber has proven itself to be the ideal platform on which members can develop leadership skills, social responsibility, entrepreneurship and business training in a friendly, non-threatening environment.

Over the years Junior Chamber has had, and continues to, have an effect and influence on the communities around Ireland in which it is present.

THE TOYP AWARD PROGRAMME

Junior Chamber Ireland participates in the Junior Chamber International Worldwide Programme, TOYP, (The Outstanding Young People). This programme seeks to recognise and honour the achievements of individuals of Junior Chamber age (18-40) who have excelled in their field of endeavour and exemplify the finest attributes of young people. Nominations are held locally and then successful nominees move to the National Competition and if successful from there to the International level.

The competition has been running on an International basis since 1983 and there are ten categories under which individuals can be nominated;

1. Business, economic, and/or entrepreneurial accomplishment
2. Political, legal, and/or governmental affairs
3. Academic leadership and/or accomplishment
4. Cultural achievement
5. Moral and/or environmental leadership
6. Contribution to children, world peace, and/or human rights
7. Humanitarian and/or voluntary leadership
8. Scientific and/or technological development
9. Personal improvement and/or accomplishment
10. Medical innovation

Nominees from Ireland have been successful on three occasions before the success of Caroline Casey.

In 1991 Ms Una Burke under the category of Personal Improvement and/or Accomplishment;

In 1992 Fr Joe Young from Limerick under the category of Moral and/or Environmental Leadership;

In 1998 Ms Sophia McColgan under the category Political, Legal and/or Governmental Affairs.

Caroline Casey was successful under the category Personal Improvement and/or Accomplishment.

Other International winners have been Linus Torvalds (inventor of the Linux computer operating system), renowned trainer and management guru Anthony Robbins, author David Pelzer and Dr Jerrold Petrofsky.

Caroline Casey, Founder, The Aisling Foundation

PROFILE

In June 2000 Caroline Casey set up the Aisling Foundation, as an adventurous, major fund-raising initiative *“to inspire people into thinking of disability in a positive way. I wanted to help open people’s eyes.”*

From January – May 2001, Caroline trekked 1,000 Km across southern India on the back of her elephant Bhadra, raising awareness of what people with a disability can do. A former management consultant, Caroline is visually impaired to the degree that she is registered legally blind.

As she explains, *“I love the sense of adventure and the excitement of achieving things you can only dream of. I also want to capture people’s imaginations as we prove we all have ability, regardless of what the label says.”*

International response to her trek as chronicled in the National Geographic documentary *“Elephant Vision”* (also screened on RTE1) has been widespread.

In recognition of her achievements she has been named one of the ESB/Rehab People of the Year 2002 to recognise her “efforts to increase awareness of the issues facing people with disabilities” and one of the RADAR (Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation) UK’s People of the Year 2001.

A Board member of FAS since January 2001, and Comhairle since October 2002, Caroline continues the work of the Aisling Foundation.

About The Aisling Foundation

The mission of the Aisling Foundation is unique. We make a difference by raising awareness of what people with a disability can do. Our philosophy is to always focus on Ability. The Foundation aims to create inspiration through adventure, create awareness of ability, not disability and to encourage employment by running work experience programmes in leading private sector organisations.

Further information at www.theaislingfoundation.org