Back ing our Heroes: GMIT supports frontline staff in time of Covid crisis

Last batch of GMIT face visors delivered to Galway University Hospitals GUH

While the campus doors may be closed, the work goes on. Over the last eleven short weeks, GMIT staff have been challenged in exceptional ways. Whilst having to adapt to new ways of teaching and assessing online, they have also been engaged in the background supporting the fight against Covid. Several initiatives undertaken have included the opening of a contact tracing centre, pioneering the development of open source ventilators, in addition to the production of face coverings.

One particular project was the production of face shields – “GMIT Project Visor” – led Dr Brian de Souza and Eddie Dunbar of the Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering. Faced with unprecedented and immediate demand for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), the project initially targeted the production of PPE for primary care settings before being subsequently expanded to meet the requirements of Galway University Hospitals (GUH). Working both from the Dublin Road campus and from homes all around Galway City and County, the two lecturers, together with GMIT volunteers and their families, assembled over ten thousand face shields.

“We initiated a call for staff within GMIT to volunteer for the project in mid-April and were astounded by the response. We were inundated with offers to help”, says Gerard Mac Michael, Head of School of Engineering, GMIT. “The goodwill and sense of unity was humbling”.

President pays tribute to GMIT staff and students

GMIT president Dr Orla Flynn has paid tribute to the resilience of GMIT staff and students during the current Covid-19 pandemic, and its “community response” to a national crisis.

In a broad-ranging interview in this issue of GMITNEWS Dr Flynn, formerly Vice President for External Affairs at Cork Institute of Technology, took up her appointment in GMIT on 18 March at the onset of the pandemic.

She has said that the flexibility shown by staff in offering remote tuition and support to students, while also meeting wider needs, is indicative of a confident new era for GMIT.

“Over the past two months, we’ve been together - though apart - working remotely, and demonstrating a strong community leadership role,” she says. This will stand the college to good stead as it plans for a re-opening on 28 September.

When the national lockdown took hold in March, plans were activated for online delivery while GMIT also set up a contact tracing centre for the Health Service Executive (HSE) at the Galway and Mayo campuses.

She recalls how business, engineering, science and computing staff and researchers rowed in, producing PPE and establishing links with teams in other colleges.

“GMIT really came up trumps over the past two months in terms of its community approach, and its commitment to students, both collectively and individually - students who required support no matter where they were,” she says.

“Those instincts, that effort, will stand to us as we plan ahead,” Dr Flynn says.

GMIT is collaborating with Letterkenny IT and IT Sligo in the Connacht-Ulster Alliance application for the first technological university (TU) for the West and North-West, which has been billed by several governments as central to regional growth.

“'This pandemic has forced us to think local, and also to think about sustaining communities in which we live,' Dr Flynn says.
A member of staff in GMIT’s School of Design and Creative Arts has been putting her creative skills and resources to great use since April, making hundreds of reusable face coverings for use in nursing homes and homes that are self-isolating. "I really wanted to use my skills and resources to help fight this Coronavirus pandemic but it had to be something that was useful," said Dr Seamus Lennon, Acting National Director, Strategic Planning, HSE, at NUIG centre. “The leadership shown by all our colleagues in GMIT in making available and fitting out the infrastructure at their campuses and mobilising their own colleagues to participate in the GMIT Contact Tracing Centre was immense.”

"There was a lot of work that had to be carried out in an extremely short timescale with a great sense of purpose. The response was phenomenal and the HSE is grateful for their fantastic support. GMIT’s input helped hugely to control the spread of Covid-19."

"This project brought to the fore a sense of the character of our institution and the people within it: empathy for and with the communities around us, and the drive to act beyond any narrow definition of duty. We also place enormous value on the external relationships developed as part of this engagement."

"Initially we worked 12-hour shifts, but as time went on, thankfully there were fewer and fewer cases, and the associated contact tracing workload decreased."

GMIT’s Contact Tracing Centre at its Dublin Road campus wound up its operations on Friday 29 May. Over 110 GMIT staff volunteers were trained by HSE public health workers in March to undertake the work of both establishing the contacts of those who tested positive for Covid-19 and to communicate with those contacts. Dr Seamus Lennon, Acting Assistant Radiographer, GMIT and HSE Contact Tracing,RN, were inundated with offers from GMIT staff members who wished to volunteer to work as contact tracers. Initially it was decided to establish the centre as soon as possible so as to meet the effort during the early part of the Covid-19 crisis. Initially we worked 12-hour shifts, but as time went on, thankfully there were fewer and fewer cases, and the associated contact tracing workload decreased."

"The leadership shown by all our colleagues in GMIT in making available and fitting out the infrastructure at their campuses and mobilising their own colleagues to participate in the Contact Tracing Centre was immense."
Lecturers in engineering, science and computing together with academics in GMIT’s Medical Engineering Technology (MET) Gateway, have built ventilators and produced face visors and shields.

The past few weeks have flown by for a large number of GMIT staff who have been working day and night to design, produce and deliver vital personal protection equipment (PPE) in a variety of settings around the west and mid-west. Scholarly and practice-based researchers have adapted and assembled three-dimensional printers, plotters, and machinery to GP surgeries, in the race to save the spread of Covid-19.

Adapting to remote teaching and assessment, lecturers in engineering, science and computing together with academics in GMIT’s School of Engineering Technology (MET) Gateway have designed and developed numerous teams, nationally and internationally, working towards finding an answer to the anticipated global demand as, currently, ventilators and PPE can cost tens of thousands of euros upfront.

“This new emergency ventilator automates the squeezing of a manual Bag-Valve-Mask (BVM) respirator, so that it can act as a rudimentary ventilator to aid a person breathing, or to replicate some basic ventilation functions,” explains Dr Oliver Mulryan and James Boyle, who are heading the project.

The system is designed out of bio-grade, readily available and low-cost material, so that it can be built anywhere by anyone as a last resort if needed. Ultimately, our objective is to make the calibrated device (flow, pressure and oxygen levels) open source, providing regulatory and governmental approval.

Regardless of acquiring this certification, several units will be manufactured for demonstration and calibration purposes, and for undergraduate engineering learning and teaching.

“Currently, in conjunction with local company Collins Plastics we have developed a low-cost prototype and we are in the process of automating and controlling the device so that it can interact with both the physician and patient for assisted ventilation,” says James Boyle, Head of the Advancing GMIT’s Critical Care Program for Essential Medical Ventilators.

“Calculating the cost of purchasing licenses for software to program automation systems makes simple projects for software to program automation systems unaffordable. We wanted to make it possible for anyone to recreate our ventilator. Therefore, the automation system was designed with low-cost controllers that can be programmed locally and source software.”

The lightweight and air volume delivery is fully controllable under the control of a shutter and a motor. This is a great advantage over existing ventilators of similar cost, which are sold as a complete system. The control of the motor and shutter ensures that the patient will feel no difference when switching from a manual BVM to the new ventilator.

The project team includes Pat Cusack from the Dept of Electronic & Electrical Engineering, David McDonnell and Dr Alan Hannon from the Dept of Mechanical & Industrial Engineering, and Liam Collin and Kate Thompson from Collins Plastics, who provided their time, expertise, materials and machining.

“We have been very encouraged by the numbers who initiated and those who volunteered their help... We are immensely proud of their enthusiasm and energy,” Dr Orla Flynn, President GMIT.

“This new emergency ventilator automates the squeezing of a manual Bag-Valve-Mask (BVM) respirator, so that it can act as a rudimentary ventilator to aid a person breathing, or to replicate some basic ventilation functions.”

Dr Orla Flynn, President GMIT
The women's entrepreneurial programme will be delivered online from this month (June)

Empower programme expansion a boost for women entrepreneurs

EMPPOWER, the women’s entrepreneurship programme run by GMIT Letterfrack in the Galway and Sligo Letterfrack campuses last month, will now be delivered online for the first time to provide wider access to women entrepreneurs in the West of Ireland.

GMIT’s Letterfrack campus has been synonymous with furniture design and visual merchandising since 1997. This industry is dominated by regionally dispersed, small and micro enterprises involved in areas such as architectural woodworking, cabinetwork, panel processing, kitchen manufacturing, bespoke furniture, shop fitting and joinery products.

EMPPOWER Letterfrack has developed a network of more than 100 industry partners in Ireland and abroad and has estimated that more than 1,400 companies are operating in the sector in Ireland.

The Centre at GMIT Letterfrack in 2011, a shared vision was reached by GMIT, Western Regional Skills Forum (WRSF) and industry representatives to develop a roadmap to support and nurture this sector.

Sooner, the Irish Wood and Furniture Manufacturing Network (IWFMN) was formally established, prioritising four key strategic pillars:

1. Commercial Development
2. Design and Innovation
3. Manufacturing Excellence
4. Education and Training

The IWFMN has grown from strength to strength, organizing two national conferences in Galway and Dublin and facilitating a range of training and peer-to-peer learning experiences for Network members. When Covid-19 arrived in March 2020, it looked like the work undertaken to date by the IWFMN might be compromised. However, since then the IWFMN has begun hosting a weekly online forum with industry members. The forum is designed to be open and constructive, where companies can learn from each other and share experiences and expertise to help overcome some of the challenges facing the sector. This writer, as a member of the IWFMN steering committee, chairs the meetings.

Initially, just a few companies came on board, but gradually the interest grew. While we were bringing along an expert in a particular area, followed by a general discussion, with companies sharing their experiences and expertise to help overcome some of the challenges facing the sector.

Embracing digital technologies for marketing products and communications is particularly important so that companies can continue to connect with customers and suppliers. But equally, practical things like the implementation of social distancing in the workplace and on sites are regularly discussed. For some of the companies we have collaborated with WRSF and have had over 50 companies attending, so we definitely are companies responding to the opportunity to stay connected, share information and learn.

Paul Leamy, Head of Department for GMIT Letterfrack says: “For GMIT, it helps us stay in touch with the industry and we have just completed a Training Needs Analysis with the WRSF for the sector. Understanding and meeting the unique and sector-based learning needs of the sector is more crucial than ever.”

The IWFMN has a number of exciting applications in the pipeline and its focus is on supporting the industry through the immediate and medium-term challenges posed by Covid-19. In this regard, GMIT Letterfrack has initiated a project called Education and Work Integrated Learning (EWIL) which is focused on transitioning undergraduate programmes to become work based as they move towards year-long work placements.

To find out about courses at GMIT Letterfrack, visit: https://www.gmit.ie/faculties-design-and-technology/

For further information, email: gmitletterfrack@arcadegroup.ie
An eye on diversity and the future

Lorna Siggins talks to the woman at the helm at GMIT

Main photo: Aengus McMahon

Orla Flynn President GMIT

"One of the biggest challenges for the CUA, or what­ever the new university name is called, will be in leaving behind what we were – as in the fact that we will no longer be GMIT.

"I also believe in being aware of your own biases and calling yourself out when needed..."

"It is almost two years since Ireland's first technological institute – TU Dublin - was formally approved by Government and plans for a similar alliance in the West/North-West have been billed as central to regional growth.

"I have been very impressed by the way the Consortium University Alliance (CUA) has approached this challenge, with demonstra­tive working groups in the key areas of research and innovation, teaching and learning and so on;" she says.

"Given the growth in applied research, we have the potential to become a real resource for the West and North-West, and this is already embedded in our thinking here at GMIT, there is engagement with business and industry. It is natural, looking, and I'd like to think that the IDEA and Enterprise Ireland take GMIT as their first port of call." 

"One of the biggest challenges for the CUA, or whatever the new institution called university is called, will be in leaving behind what we were – as in the fact that we will no longer be GMIT." she says.

"Like a caterpillar transforming into a butterfly, it should be very different, and we need to ensure that students and staff will embrace it," she says.

"GMIT could serve as five campuses from Galway city to Letterfrack to Mountbellew and Galway College of Mayo in a microcosm of the CUA, she notes. The geographical area is the largest of any of the other consortia.

"So, whether we are working with a multinational like Boston Scientific or with smaller SMEs and communities, we need to ensure we have a collaborative approach, whether we are supporting knowledge transfer, because course development or student placements," she says.

"The West and North-West is already facing many challenges, with the enorm­ous shift to work contributing to Ireland's unbalanced growth, she notes.

"This pandemic has forced us to look at the main local, and to think about sustaining communities in which we live. We have already proven in the last few months that we can teach and work remotely, and that students can meet the EU challenge.

"It has taken us upkeeping a year ago, and the life cycle and organisational skills that have been honed, and kept her "grounded," she says. Even as she speaks, she is looking out her window at a bulb at the gate of the north Cork farm that she and her family – in this case her whole family – look after. However, she already feels she had found her "flow".

"GMIT really came up trumps over the last year, because it’s inherently an online institution and the culture and the approach to education online is cultural and it’s a natural approach;" she says.

"It is already two years since Ireland's first technological institute – TU Dublin - was formally approved by Government and plans for a similar alliance in the West/North-West have been billed as central to regional growth."

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Virtual World

‘We’re Virtually Open’ - GMIT site has all the answers for students

An exciting exhibition of artwork by students on the BA in Contemporary Art Practices course at GMIT Mayo was unveiled online on 5 June, the first in a series of summer virtual exhibitions by GMIT’s design and creative arts students.

The Mayo campus online event https://issuu.com/john.mulloy/docs/gmit-cat7-
Ph.D. Julia Garvey, Head of Lifelong Learning, GMIT Mayo, says: “This year marks the 21st year of our provision of access to part-time art education in the region. In 1999, we enrolled our first students on the BA in Contemporary Art Practices course at GMIT Mayo, and today we celebrate this region. In 1999, we enrolled our first students on the BA in Contemporary Art Practices course at GMIT Mayo.

The virtual platform was live from April to April 11, opening prospects and features information about all campuses and courses, advice and guidance for students, person-

Donoghue’s paintings, looking at patterns and textures of their studies and practice. “Important end of year degree exhibition – the highlight of the year. GMIT staff were so happy with the virtual end of year exhibition that the virtual platform will continue for several more weeks each Friday afternoon.

GMIT President Dr Deirdre Garvey says: “This Virtual Open Day is not a one-off event, rather a micro-site that will be open 24/7, with no obligation to connect in at any specific time. We invite you to continue browsing our campuses and courses, and get advice on careers, accommodation and our range of services. We look forward to hearing your questions at our live Q&A sessions every Friday.”

GMIT Schools Liaison Officer Lorraine Cunningham and GMIT Marketing Officer Karen Smyth explain: “We were aware that there were many disappointed students and parents who were unable to attend our Spring Open Day due to Covid-19 restrictions and we want to ensure that this Virtual Open Day will give prospective students and their parents a feel for GMIT. Together we will try to get through this challenging time until we can welcome you onto our campuses again.”

In the live Q&A chats, prospective students and their parents can get quick feedback from staff about GMIT’s wide range of courses in Arts, Business, Computing, Creative Arts and Media, Engineering, Furniture Design, Making and Technology, Nursing, Health Sciences and Social Care, Outdoor Education, Fine Art Practices, Textiles, Ceramics, Digital and Culinary Arts, Teacher Education, as well as the CAO process. GMIT will be there to answer your questions and we are very grateful.”

Sean Rowland added: “I think it’s incredibly brave of all the individuals to step out of their comfort zone and take part in a virtual choir. It’s a very positive project and I think it’s given me a brilliant opportunity to improve my singing. Personally, I’ve been really positive and the physical feeling we get from the process is amazing. I’ve never thought of myself as a singer, but now I feel like I’ve come together wonderfully. There is something magical about coming together to sing. Sean put forward the idea to encourage participation, and we are very grateful.”

Sean Rowland completed a mammoth task - over 80 hours of post-production and editing which is usually done by a team of people. We are so grateful for all the passion he brings to this virtual choir.
Dr Seán Duffy is appointed CUA executive project lead

Dr Seán Duffy to lead project seeking a Technological University for the West & North-West

T he President of the Connacht Ulster Alliance (CUA) of the Technological University of the North West, Dr Paul Hannigan, has announced that Dr Seán Duffy will oversee the move to Technological University status in the region. Dr Seán Duffy will lead the TU ambition for the CUA.

Dr Seán Duffy says: “Being involved in the development of the new Technological University for the West & North-West is an exciting opportunity as it will be a gamechanger in terms of higher education in the region, I look forward to working with colleagues across the three Institutes on this project.”

Dr Duffy holds a PhD from the University of Limerick, MSc (Distinction) from Ulster University and a B.A (Honours) from GMIT, formerly RTC Galway. Prior to joining CUA he was Director of the International Hotel and Tourism Management Institute, Lucerne, Switzerland for six years. He has been actively involved in promoting the tourism and hospitality sector and regional development in Ireland for 20 years, with memberships of Donegal’s Tourism Sectoral Forum, Donegal Food Coast Steering Committee (Chair), Local Enterprise Office (CEO), Donegal’s Ultra Ltd Development Project, and was a member of the EU North-West Cluster Group (GMIT, LIT, IT Sligo & NUIG). Recently, on behalf of the CUA, he was a member of the Technology Transfer & Innovation Framework (T2IF) Working Group 1 which focused on TU staff guiding norms and capacity development.

Dr Duffy is a Fellow of the Irish Hospitality Institute and a member of numerous professional bodies. He was awarded the first Fáilte Ireland Service Fellowship in 2005/2006 for research on technology adoption and SMEs. He has been an external examiner on programmes from Level 6-9 in Ireland and has worked with national and international further and higher education bodies.

“Being involved in the development of the new Technological University for the West & North-West is an exciting opportunity as it will be a gamechanger in terms of higher education in the region.”

As part of its plans to become a Technological University, the Connacht Ulster Alliance (CUA) has expanded its administrative centre which it originally established in 2014. It comprises staff from the three institutes, GMIT, IT Sligo and Letterkenny IT.

The new centre is managed by Dr Seán Duffy, Executive Project Lead. Dr Shirley Wynn, GMTT CUA Project Manager, and Anne Higgins, IT Sligo CUA Project Manager. The office is supported by Anna-Marie McCormack, CUA Data Analyst, based in IT Sligo; Tracy Madden, GMIT CUA administrator; and Catherine McNally, LYIT CUA administrator.

All CUA meetings have moved to Microsoft Teams since the Covid-19 lockdown in mid-March. Over 120 CUA staff are engaged on a regular basis in CUA Working Groups and sub-groups. The office has focused on the important process of compiling the relevant datasets in preparation for drafting a submission document.

CUA2020 has successfully appointed a lead writer, Dr John Pettigrew, who will be supported by a team of volunteer writers. The project also has a Project Lead, Dr Shirley Wynn, GMIT CUA Project Manager; and an Executive Project Lead, Dr Seán Duffy, north of Ireland. The CUA’s three Executive Boards continue to meet and are due to have their formal meetings as a group later this month (24 June) via MS Teams. The CUA Project Management Team works closely with the CUA Communications Sub-group and produces a monthly update summarising all CUA activities.

Dr Shirley Wynn, CUA Project Manager, who is aligned with Working Group 7 (Research & Innovation), outlined some key recent developments: “Over the last two years there has been significant activity across the CUA. Working Groups and sub-groups and we have invested great effort in building up our research programme provision and strengthening our research collaboration across the CUA. Following these successes, we are now beginning the important process of compiling the relevant datasets in preparation for drafting a submission document.”

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Athena SWAN: the path to removing barriers

Mary Nestor, GMIT Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Manager, writes about the work of a new team aiming to achieve Athena SWAN recognition and the processes that entail.

Some of the values that underpin the Athena SWAN Strategic Plan 2020-2025 guide the institution’s thinking and actions for its students and staff: respect, integrity, egalitarianism, nurturing and impactful. All of these values are crucial in the priorities set out in the Athena SWAN. The framework provides to examine our policies, practices and staff experiences in relation to matters of equality and diversity in the institution. This was completed by 472 participants representing 59% of all staff. This was followed by a series of focus groups in May 2020 which covered concerns areas such as career progression, flexible working practices, support for staff with caring responsibilities and workplace culture. The survey and focus group findings are currently being analysed to highlight equality and diversity issues that need to be addressed by the Institute through the framework. The Gaia Gender Action Plan (2018-2022) is an opportunity to bring together a very diverse creative team to bring together very creative teams to produce this novel educational project. The seabirds we will be using were co-designed with industry artists and, registered taxidermists marrying art and science to draw attention to seabird pollution on seabirds. To track this project see: https://www.facebook.com/Marimim.com, https://www.instagram.com/marimim/ and https://www.linkedin.com/in/marimim/ There have been a number of innovative courses in the last few years, including a number of new MScs in design and innovation co-designed with industry. GMIT has collaborated with a wide range of industry and service sector groups to developgroud-breaking new postgraduate courses for employees in the MedTech, Technology, Manufacturing and Services sectors. The Master of Science in Design & Innovation was designed by a multi-disciplinary team from departments within the School of Engineering, Business and Design & Creative Arts with representatives from the IBA and several companies that included Thermos King and Araya.

New MSc in design and innovation co-designed with industry

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For GMIT Sport the year 2020 is a year we won’t ever forget. While Covid-19 has certainly played its part in cutting the season short for many of our teams there were, as always, a number of hugely positive success stories that we will fondly remember. None more so than the launch of our new sports brand, GMIT Falcons. GMIT unveiled an exciting new identity for its sports activities across all campuses, bringing student teams and individuals together under the one sports brand, ‘GMIT Falcons’, for the first time in the history of the college.

The new brand was formally launched at a special function in the college on Friday, 14 February, when students wore the new kit and colours during a presentation by Dr Michael Hannon, Acting President of GMIT, attended by students, coaches, staff and representatives from sport organisations across the region.

Central to the new identity is the falcon bird of prey, conveying elements of agility, grace, speed and ferocity while the predominant shades of blue echo the traditional blue of the Connacht coat of arms. Student response has been enthusiastic as they fell in love with the new kit, logo and colours were unveiled. Student teams have been wearing the new kit since January (2020) and we have already extended the range to leisure wear and other branded accessories.

On the sporting arena and fields we had another highly successful season. GMIT were crowned league champions in their divisions in Senior Men’s Rugby, Senior Camogie, Fresher hurling and Senior hurling. The success continued into 2020 with GMIT Falcons winning six titles in the National Boxing Intervarsity’s and Gold at the National Cheer leading Intervarsity for the 6th year running.

There were also individual successes in both Handball & Judo. Unfortunately, a number of our team’s seasons were cut short due to Covid-19, where we have no doubt, we would have seen many more of our students excel. While we do not know what the 2020/21 season in third level sport will look like, our sports students as always will embrace the challenge and represent GMIT Falcons with pride.

Check out the GMITSU Life YouTube Channel for videos from our virtual GMIT Sports Awards, GMIT Falcons Launch and much more - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CmFKOk8BSUI

NEW GMIT FALCONS BRAND UNITING SPORTS ACROSS ALL CAMPUSES FOR FIRST TIME

By Molly Dunne, GMIT Sports Development Officer

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Check out the GMITSU Life YouTube Channel for videos from our virtual GMIT Sports Awards, GMIT Falcons Launch and much more - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CmFKOk8BSUI

NEW GMIT FALCONS BRAND UNITING SPORTS ACROSS ALL CAMPUSES FOR FIRST TIME

By Molly Dunne, GMIT Sports Development Officer

For GMIT Sport the year 2020 is a year we won’t ever forget. While Covid-19 has certainly played its part in cutting the season short for many of our teams there were, as always, a number of hugely positive success stories that we will fondly remember. None more so than the launch of our new sports brand, GMIT Falcons. GMIT unveiled an exciting new identity for its sports activities across all campuses, bringing student teams and individuals together under the one sports brand, ‘GMIT Falcons’, for the first time in the history of the college.

The new brand was formally launched at a special function in the college on Friday, 14 February, when students wore the new kit and colours during a presentation by Dr Michael Hannon, Acting President of GMIT, attended by students, coaches, staff and representatives from sport organisations across the region.

Central to the new identity is the falcon bird of prey, conveying elements of agility, grace, speed and ferocity while the predominant shades of blue echo the traditional blue of the Connacht coat of arms. Student response has been enthusiastic as they fell in love with the new kit, logo and colours were unveiled. Student teams have been wearing the new kit since January (2020) and we have already extended the range to leisure wear and other branded accessories.

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Dennis, originally from Booterstown, Co. Dublin graduated from Trinity College, Dublin in 1972. Before joining GMIT in 1973 (RTC Galway) he first worked with the National Youth Council of Ireland and then spent two years in Waterford RTC and one year in Cork RTC.

He lectured in the GMIT School of Business from 1977 until November 1986, when he became Head of the Department of Hotel and Catering Management. In 2003, the President, Marion Coy, asked him, along with Hugh McBride, to prepare the Institute’s application for Delegated Authority and, on the successful completion of this application, he then went on the alignment to the National Framework of Qualifications.

He was always interested in the welfare of students and, as can be seen from social media since his death, was highly regarded by graduates who would have known him while he was Head of Department.

Written by Gerry O’Neill, retired Head of Dept, GMIT Hotel School.

Dennis Murphy: having a great love of art, he had built up a considerable collection of paintings, some by graduates and staff members of GMIT. The paintings will be exhibited in prominent areas of the institute.

Our surfers on the crest of a wave after securing national title for third year in a row

GMIT Mayo Campus Surf club held off stiff competition from UCC (2nd) and NUI Galway (3rd) to claim the competition from UCC (2nd) and all were up the task.”

To win the 3-in-a-row is a brilliant achievement and a testimony to the work and mentoring of Jarlath McHale”, said his collection to GMIT and the students hosted a hugely successful national event. To win our third title in a row and establish ourselves as the top club in colleges surfing.

Dennis had developed a keen interest in art, and had made many trips to China, and to Japan. His travels to China for a number of universities where he lectured in Management in a number of universities.

In Oughterard over forty years, Dennis was very involved in the local community. He was a founding member and trustee of Oughterard Rugby Club, and from 1985 was Clerk of the Course for the Ballyvaughan Hillclimbs for a number of years. He took part in a number of events in a Mini with PJ Gannon in recent years.

Unluckily, Dennis became seriously ill in June 2019 and spent the last eleven months of his life gravely ill in June 2019 and spent the last eleven months of his life...