

## **IBEC-CBI Joint Business Council and Universities Ireland Press Release**

### **North South Scholarship scheme boosts collaboration**

David Sterling, Permanent Secretary, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment today presented five students with masters scholarships, worth €15,000 each, at an awards ceremony in the Stormont Hotel, Belfast. The scholarships, part-sponsored by ESB and Dublin Port will assist students who are crossing the border to undertake postgraduate studies in the other part of the island.

This unique scheme is a joint initiative by the IBEC-CBI Joint Business Council, which promotes North-South business co-operation and Universities Ireland, which promotes collaboration between Northern and Southern universities. It aims to improve collaboration between the business and higher education sectors on the island.

Congratulating the award recipients on their achievement, David Sterling, Permanent Secretary, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment said: “The Postgraduate Scholarship Scheme is an outstanding illustration of how Northern Ireland graduates are playing their part in building a knowledge and skills based economy. The aim of the scheme is to develop innovation in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, and this in turn will encourage effective synergies between the business community and academic institutions. Good quality training and education, in conjunction with access to industry expertise, is vital if we are to ensure that we have a skilled and adaptable workforce in the years to come. This will enable indigenous companies to thrive and compete in the global marketplace and, in so doing, encourage ongoing economic growth.”

Speaking at the event, IBEC-CBI Joint Business Council Steering Committee chairman, Hugh Crossey said: “Cross border mobility of graduates is an important component in both the development of the all-island economy and the on-going peace process. The very low number of graduates registering for courses in the other jurisdiction is a cause for concern.”

“This programme s objective is to provide outstanding students with the opportunity to avail of education opportunities in the other jurisdiction, an objective which can be achieved at low cost with support and endorsement from the two Governments,” he said.

Congratulating the award winners Queen’s University Belfast, Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Gregson said: “Queen’s University values postgraduate students extremely highly. Every year we welcome hundreds of graduates who are keen to pursue their studies in an intellectually stimulating environment.

“Postgraduate students enrich our thriving research culture and contribute much to our academic activity. In return, we ensure that their time at Queen’s is as fulfilling as possible.

“For those students who have chosen to come to Queen’s I am confident you will have a student experience that will set you on a firm course for many more future successes” he said. ESB Chief Executive, Pdraig McManus said, “This unique North-South scholarship scheme plays an important role in promoting the movement of high-achieving post-graduate students in order to pursue research with a strong business dimension across the jurisdictions. Areas such as sustainability, corporate responsibility, international business and economics are all critical to the future of our industry”.

Business scholarships were presented to the following students:

1. Cliona Harkin doing a Masters in International Business at Queen’s University Belfast (Sponsor: Dublin Port).
2. Emma Ryan doing a M.Sc. in Sustainability and Social Corporate Responsibility at Queen’s University Belfast (Sponsor: ESB).
3. Patrick Molloy doing a M.Sc. in Business Economics at Queen’s University Belfast (Sponsor: ESB).
4. Paul Davidson doing a Masters in International Management at Trinity College Dublin (Sponsor: ESB).

Universities Ireland North-South Masters Scholarships were also presented to:

1. Laura McCabe doing a Masters in Human Rights and Criminal Justice (Cross Border) at National University of Ireland Galway and Queen’s University Belfast (Sponsor: Universities Ireland).

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