

Ballymakenny College Class of '21 celebrate magnificent results

BY ALISON COMYN

IT has been a particularly trying year for students of all ages in the past two years, not least those who have had to complete Leaving Certs in lockdown and uncertainty.

But there was fantastic news right across the board in Drogheda, with many students reaching top marks and beyond in their exams!

Ballymakenny College welcomed back students from the Leaving Certificate class of 2021 to congratulate them on their fantastic Leaving Cert results. Years of hard work, study and sacrifice resulted in a range of offers for students.

Students were delighted and expressed relief at having made it through what was another uncertain year in the Leaving Certificate exams and first round of CAO offers. All of them thanked the school for their unique and special time in Ballymakenny College and shared their experience during this year's exam process.

Lisa Smith achieved 601 points and is heading to DCU to study PE and Biology.

Like many others Lisa found the Leaving Certificate stressful but the accredited grades process provided reassurance and she recalls her decision to choose DCU.

"When it came to the actual exam, it was a lot less pressure because we knew that there was a grade to fall back on if things went wrong on the day," she said.

"I always loved Biology and most of my science teachers did that course, they always talked about it, and it sounded like the type of course I wanted to do."

Zuzanna Rusin also achieved 601 points, and is going to DCU too, to study primary teaching. Zuzanna chose this career path due to her love of children. Reflecting fondly on her time in Ballymakenny College she recalls the positive relationships between staff and students. 'I really enjoyed it, I'm going to miss it, there was mutual respect and I liked that.'

Leon Eakin has accepted a place in DKIT to study engineering. He highlighted that demand for his course had led to a rise in points and that it was a relief to be on the other side of it all. 'Engineering was always in mind, I was thinking that I wanted to



Deputy Principal Eddie Burke, Principal Alan Mynes, Oisín Dunne, Sadhbh Mc Donough, Leon Eakin, Zuzanna Rusin, Shiza Basit Rafique, Vitalia Rosca, Deputy Principal Caroline Toole, Deputy Principal Mike Lyons

get at least a H5 in Maths so that was my main target and then after that it was just the minimum requirement of points.' Leon achieved a fantastic 543 points this year.

Sadhbh Mc Donough with 589 points showcased the differing avenues Ballymakenny College students go down. 'I'm going to do first year common entry in NCAD, which is basically where you get to try all of the different areas that they offer and then you choose to specialise.' Sadhbh's interests lie in communication design.

Shiza Basit Rafique opted for an alternative route due to the pandemic. 'Last year I was unable to take a few tests that I needed to take for the UK and US because I want to go to college there. I want to pursue law and I'm going to take those tests in the coming months and then apply, so it's a gap year.' Shiza in the meantime will experience a legal internship in Belfast. Shiza achieved 589 points.

Vitalia Rosca achieved 579 points and is now due to start her chosen career of Physiotherapy in the Royal College of Surgeons Dublin. Highlighting that a change of mind is always

possible, Vitalia expressed a desire to transfer to medicine next year. Vitalia said that hard work begins early in 5th

year and that it pays off.

Oisín Dunne opted for the PLC route. 'I'm going to be attending a

dance course in Inchicore College of Further Education in Dublin' it's something I've been doing since I was five, so to finally be able to go and focus on it full time now instead of trying to balance school and dancing at the same time, I'm really looking forward to it. 'When asked how he would describe his time in Ballymakenny College he replied, 'It was pretty amazing I just think that the atmosphere in the school is extremely unique to most other schools I've seen, and heard about, I think it's just a really special place.'

The school wishes all Leaving Certificate class of 2021 the very best in their future careers and education. The students themselves along with their teachers & SNAs know the hard work that went in to each and every one of their results. To perform so well under very difficult circumstances of the last 18 months makes all of those results all the more impressive. Thanks to all of the parents, guardians and families who have supported our senior students during their time with us in Ballymakenny College. Every Leaving Certificate Class has their own distinct personality and this group were so unique for lots of different reasons.

The challenges they have dealt with certainly bodes very well for the future.



Oisín Dunne, Sadhbh Mc Donough, Leon Eakin, Zuzanna Rusin, Shiza Basit Rafique, Vitalia Rosca.



Students with House Leader Paddy Carroll



DP Eddie, Principal Alan, Lisa Smith, DP Caroline Tool, DP Mike Lyons