

Thoughts from the Patron

The CBC Debating Society has once again had a very enjoyable and rewarding year. This is illustrated both by the high level of participation, and the great success achieved by Junior and Senior debaters.

On an international level, we were very proud of Ian Chisholm and Conor Mahon who travelled to Germany to represent Ireland at the European Youth Parliament. This is the third time that members of the Society have been selected for the Irish delegation in this prestigious competition. We were also delighted with Fourth Year students Kevin Horgan, Gearoid Wrixon, Oisín O'Kelly and Brian Conroy who were national finalists in this year's competition, and with Mark Moriarty who was a finalist in the Rotary Youth Leadership Competition.

The involvement of our students in competition closer to home is also a source of pride. In the Denny Philosoph Munster Schools competition, CBC was represented by Conall O'Deasmhunaigh, Ian Chisholm, Philip Cremin and Conor Mahon. Our Concern Debating team this year consisted of Brian Conroy, Oisín O'Kelly, Aaron O'Sullivan and Gearoid Wrixon. These debaters also attended a forum on the developing world organised in UCC by Concern.

We must give due recognition to the exceptionally hard working committee, led by President Conall O'Deasmhunaigh, ably assisted by its Vice President Ian Chisholm, whose dedication helped to make this year so successful. The committee consisted of Recording Secretary Owen Murphy, Alan O'Regan, Aodhaghan O'Deasmhunaigh and First Year Rep Conor O'Brien. They have been instrumental in the day-to-day running of the society as well as in the preparation for tonight. These students work throughout the year to arrange inter-school debates at all levels and have continued the tradition of encouraging new members, particularly 1st years, to get involved in debating. Senior members committed themselves to regular training sessions throughout the year to introduce junior members to the essentials of debating, the fruits of which you will see tonight during the Prize Debate.

This year also saw the society once again organising two competitions

that are fast becoming recognised in Cork and further afield. The first, the Cork City Schools Debating Competition, was aimed at junior debaters and we were delighted to see how well it was received. In all, twenty four teams took part, with the final held in the Ambassador Hotel. CBC was represented in the competition by Sean McCabe and Matthew Kelleher, Alan O'Regan and Aodhaghan O'Deasmhunaigh. We were particularly pleased when Alan and Aodhaghan went on to take the runner up team place. The second, the Sean Lydon Memorial Mace, is now in its fourth year and was likewise a huge success. In all, twenty four teams from around the country registered to take part. The success of these two competitions is a tribute to the student committee. A special word of thanks must go too to Ross Frenett, Cian Hargrave Murphy and Conor O'Brien for their hard work and dedication to this competition. It was particularly gratifying to see so many past pupils from CBC returning to help adjudicate and advise over the course of the year. Their continued involvement is very much appreciated.

Before closing, I must mention Sixth Year student Greg Higgins who will be leaving us at the end of this 96th session and who has made his mark on debating in CBC. He has been involved with the society since First Year and his involvement in the weekly debates and competitions such as the Cork City Schools and Declamation Prize are a testament to his commitment to the college. I wish him well in the future.

The ability to communicate effectively with one's peers and others is a skill that will benefit students, not just during their academic studies, but throughout their lives. Debating offers students the opportunity to develop essential skills. Tonight, we look forward to seeing these skills in practice from the talented speakers taking part in the competitions. I wish them all the very best of luck.

*David Lordon,
Patron.*