



Young Donegal Entrepreneurs inspire their peers at the ECO-UNESCO National Youth ECO-Forum

YOUNG Donegal entrepreneurs shared their story of successful entrepreneurship and inspired their peers at ECO-UNESCO's National Youth ECO-Forum 2011- Young Green Entrepreneurs: Learning to Inspire, Innovate, Create this November at the Greenhouse as part of Innovate **Dublin** month.. This event brought together over 60 young people aged 15- 18 from all over Ireland to speak directly with young entrepreneurs and business experts to develop youth-led ECO-Enterprise action plans for entry into the Young Environmentalist Awards 2012 before the project submission deadline of February 2012

Young entrepreneurs presenting at the event were renowned Donegal brothers, Ronan, age 14, and Conor Mc Garvey, age 11 from the Gaeltacht village of Loughanure in County Donegal, who set up Donegal Pens. The boys set up the company in 2009 out of an interest in wood-turning and now sell on an international market on their website www.donegalpens.com.

This Annual event, run by ECO-UNESCO, Ireland's environmental education and youth organisation and held in The Greenhouse, **Dublin** 2 gives young people the chance to learn about and voice their opinions on green entrepreneurship. Participants took part in a pilot of a Green Business Trail of **Dublin** city supported by **Dublin City Council**, Cornucopia and Patagonia. Through interactive workshops during the day, young people got an opportunity to explore entrepreneurship, learn about green business and come up with their own ECO-Enterprise action plans which they will develop for entry into the Young Environmentalist Awards 2012.

'This years National Youth ECO Forum aims to Inspire and up-skill young people in the area of green entrepreneurship and we are delighted to have two groups of young entrepreneurs presenting their innovative projects and companies' commented Elaine Nevin, National Director of ECO-UNESCO. 'Entrepreneurial skills can be developed in young people through school and out of school project work to

encourage young people to create their own businesses and be innovative in their communities and help support the green economy'

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation Richard Burton TD in a message of support to participants of the National Youth ECO-Forum commented 'A new wave of creativity and entrepreneurship will be the key to Ireland's success in the Green Economy. We have a bright well-educated and highly-informed young population who will become future innovators and entrepreneurs in the Green Economy.'

Young Environmentalist Award winners, Ciara Walsh, Ruth Dargan and Kate O' Regan from Loreto on the Green, Dublin also presented the on the Smartphone app which they developed to calculate the carbon footprint of household appliances commonly used by teenagers.

The young people also had the opportunity to interact with and learn from a panel of experts including Mark Bennett, Green Business Officer at **Dublin City Council**; Anne Bedos, founder and director, Rothar; Deirdre McCafferty, founder and director, Cornucopia; and Olivier Vander Elst, co-founder, GreenAer.

ECO-UNESCO 'Clubs in Action' Showcase was unveiled in The Greenhouse during the ECO-Forum. Young people, in ECO-UNESCO Clubs, from all over Ireland carried out action projects, using seed grant support from ECO-UNESCO in collaboration with Toyota. 18 Clubs are showcasing their work in environmental protection in the Greenhouse until the 29th November.

ECO-UNESCO's National Youth ECO-Forum 2011: 'Learning to Inspire, Innovate, Create,' took place on Wednesday, 17th at The Greenhouse, 17 St Andrew St, **Dublin** 2 from 10.00am-4.30pm.

For schools and youth groups who want to take ECO-Action, but missed out on this year's National Youth ECO-Forum, there's still time to register for the ECO-UNESCO Young Environmentalist Awards which is open to any group of young people aged 10-18.

For more information visit www.ecounesco.ie or call 01 662 5491.