

Prize Day 2012

## Principal's Address at Prize Day 2012

October 12<sup>th</sup>

A mháora, chathoirleach, a dhaoine uaisle, is mór an phribhléid agus onóir dom fáilte a chuir roimh gach duine anseo inniu chuig ócáid mhór i stair Choláiste Mhainistir na Corann an lá bronnadh na nduiseanna dha mhíle is a do dheag.

Ba mhaith liom fáiltē faoi leith a chur roimh ār aoī clūiteach, a easpaigh .... Ba mhaith linn ār mbuīochas a ghabhāil leat as sin. Tā sūil againn go mbainfidh tū taitneamh as an lā, anseo inār measc.

Bishop Good, Bishop Colton, Mayor, Deputies, Ladies and Gentlemen it is my great privilege to welcome you once again to the academic Prize Day for Midleton College for 2012. **Bishop Good**, I thank you for honouring us with your presence as Guest Speaker. It is wonderful for us to be the cause of you and your wife Mary returning not only to Cork but today, to Midleton College, your former school.

During the past year **our senior history** students visited Northern Ireland for their special topic research. The reality is that for many in the group it was their first visit to the North. Their experience is not untypical. It is a sign perhaps of the ongoing sense of separateness that still exists across our island. Your spiritual and pastoral work in Derry and Raphoe uniquely requires an immersion in life in both parts of our island seeking to extend and further the interrelationships between people in the living of their faiths.

I thank you on behalf of us all for all that you give in this regard and know that through your wisdom and guidance closer links continue to build between people of goodwill across Ireland.

I believe there are **many aspects** of our College that you will still recognize on a **tour of the campus** since the days when you were a student. The current generation of students and staff remain **the fortunate inheritors** of the work of many **previous generations** in creating the resources we still use today. **Our school is** still a place where people come first, where **friendship** matters, where parents are involved **as partners** whose support is vital to our ongoing success.

Equally, it is important that in our own time we maintain the constant forward movement of resources both in small ways and large ensuring our students are best catered for as far as we can provide.

The major work of the last six years culminated in the opening of **'The Colton Building'** by the Minister of Education and Skills, Ruairí Quinn T.D. on the 21<sup>st</sup> September. This was a significant day in the history of the College as the first serving **Minister for Education** performed the opening ceremony.

**'The Colton Building'** is the largest capital investment in facilities in a generation. **It is a building that** has been co-funded by the Department of Education and Skills and Midleton College. I expressed on the day of the opening, and do again now, the deep gratitude of our school community to the DES for the allocation of contributory funding to this project allowing it to provide long sought resources for our students. **It is transforming** our ability to provide relevant and important teaching facilities for our students,

**crucial as** it is our students who lie at the centre of all we do. It is the hub of our Information Technology activity, guided by Ms Linehan, Mr Power and our GAP student Mr Elission Ziemmer alongside the rapidly expanding Home Economics department led by Ms Lawlor.

Minister Quinn was good enough to recognize the inclusive, democratic structures that exist in Middleton College during his visit. Central to this has been the benefit that has derived from the creation of the Board of Management. It was right that the Colton Building opening occurred within weeks of the completion of the three-year term of office of the 1<sup>st</sup> Board of Management. **This body** is comprised of Patron Nominees, elected parent and teacher members. The energy generated by the co-operative fusing of talent and interest of the Board members, supported by Directors and Governors, lit the fire that drove the engine of activity which saw this project move from idea to reality. Today I take the opportunity on behalf of all of us who work and study in the College to pay tribute to the Board members who have overseen this great project. I ask you to recognize them with applause.

It is perhaps no coincidence that the attendance at our recent Open Day showed a significant increase on previous years as families wished to investigate the facilities the College is now able to provide. To our Board members I can confirm that your investment is fulfilling your vision day after day in the life of the College.

Yet it remains a reality that our school faces significant challenges in the immediate and medium-term future. By far the greatest of these is the government's on-going audit of fee-charging voluntary schools. Today I want to share with you the scale of the challenges the State is placing in

front of us. **Since 2009**, the State has withdrawn all **secretarial**, administrative, caretaker and ancillary grants from our school; these primarily amount to €200,000 per year. They have suspended access to the **Summer Works Scheme** for our school, they have **suspended future** capital funding from our school; **they have cut our** teacher allocation by a total of four teachers since 2009. We have reviewed, restructured and reorganised our operations to allow us to maintain our range of services in order to access for our full student cohort. In as much as our enrolments have increased from 306 to 354 in that time, we have been successful, but now I have to say that we cannot realistically hope to continue indefinitely in the face of what appears to be a concerted campaign targeting schools such as ours.

Though serving, in the first instance, the Protestant community of East and North Cork, our school is by nature coeducational, it has boarders and day pupils and is non-selective in enrolment. Our school is supported by families from across this region because we work very hard to provide for and cater for each and every one of our students during the six years of their education.

**Research commissioned** by the Council of Governors of minority faith schools from Ámarach Research in June of this year supports the belief in the unique and different structures of Protestant-managed schools. The results are robust as they are provided by 1,800 families from the total of just over 6,000 families who have students in our schools across the country. I wish to focus on two central research findings.

**For 71% of respondents**, the ethos and academic reputation of the school were the key deciding factors in parental choice. These figures were even

higher among the most economically and socially vulnerable families whose children are enrolled, reflecting the even greater importance placed on the power of education as an underpinning for the young person's future life.

**The second key feature** identified was the mix of social groups found within our schools. Our school is peopled by families, many of whom, have made a conscious decision to forego material goods in order to invest what you see as a key priority for your children – their education.

**What makes our schools** unique is that they are established to serve the community. We do not hold entrance examinations. We are co-educational. We serve students of all abilities. We have full-time learning support and resource provision in every year group in the school. We provide a comprehensive education.

**29% of respondents** confirmed that they had an annual family income of €60,000 or less. It is simply **iniquitous thinking** by certain voices within the current government parties to believe that people's use of their after-tax income on education in such circumstances is a luxury. It is a right, not a subsidy, for parents to have a provision of education made for their children by the State.

Some politicians, while advancing their general argument acknowledge that there is a specific situation regarding minority faith second level schools but claim that that is a separate debate for another day. **It is not.** The reality is that some of the proposals currently being raised could have the consequential impact, planned or otherwise, of removing many protestant-managed schools from the landscape of Irish education.

The application of a ‘one-size fits all model’ which gives no regard to the specific structure and function of this College may well sweep aside the community-based nature of this school. We will continue to challenge the flawed policy of those within the current coalition government who wish to reduce or remove the right of choice of an Ethos-based education choice by parents for their children.

I thank our Chairperson for his ongoing active involvement in bringing to the fore the unique structures of schools such as Midleton College which are within his diocese. I know Bishop Colton’s actions are supported by Bishop Good and other Bishops across the island. I also encourage our parents to make your voice heard with local politicians in the weeks ahead as Budget decisions are **finalised. (holding slide)**

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We welcome to our staff this year **Mr Andrew Levis**, Ms Valerie Ollivier and Mr Ellison Ziemmer. Higher Diploma Students **Ms Bridget O’Riordan**, Mr Daniel Mulligan and Mr Feargal Walsh also join us. Ms **Kristen Hollowell** joins us to take up the role of Church of Ireland diocesan youth link for the year. Ms Rachel Dool arrives as a teaching assistant in Mathematics and Science.

**The College welcomed** 68 new 1<sup>st</sup> Form students this year, a year which for the first time ever has more girls than boys. The first years have been getting to know each other and taking their first steps in the academic and extra-curricular programmes.

Another new group at the start of each school year are the incoming senior Prefects. The senior prefects play an important leadership role linking 6<sup>th</sup>

Form to the other years in school and to the staff of the College. **As they commence** into their respective roles I ask them to come forward now to receive their insignias for the year from our chairperson, Bishop Colton.

Head Boarding Girl: Jessica Knoblauch

Head Boarding Boy: Kim Crosbie

Head Day Girl: Fiona Power

Head Day Boy: Daniel Wardle

**I also wish to** congratulate the members of the Student Council on their election by their peers. I wish the Chairperson for the year, Eamon Moloney well, as he co-ordinates the work of the Council in the year ahead. A 99% turnout in the annual election gives each new member a strong mandate for the year ahead. I thank Ms O'Regan for taking on the role of staff liaison with the Student Council. Ms O'Regan's wisdom and sound guidance will prove an important asset for the Student Council in all its activities. This is in addition to Ms O'Regan's overseeing the ongoing transformation of the Art Room.

As our former students progress through to Third Level we endeavour to retain contact with their progress. In the past 12 months 2 former students have attained 1st Class Honours at degree level and we would like to make a small presentation to **them now**:

Presentation to 1st Class Honours students:

Colin Jermyn                      Engineering in UCD

Polo Crosbie                      Business Economics and Social Studies in TCD

**(Holding slide for return to seats)**

Last June the College said farewell to **Mrs. Ruth Levis** who completed 35 years of outstanding service as teacher, Post Holder, coach, Student Council liaison, mentor, colleague and friend. Mrs. Levis is living embodiment of all that makes an excellent teacher in this College; absolute mastery of subject material, excellent communication skills, organized, meticulous, nobody's fool but someone everyone respected.

These are all important qualities but Mrs. Levis possessed much more. Ruth loved the personal interaction that the role of teacher permits while possessing the confidence to utilize that space effectively in guiding the ethical and moral development of her students. At the end of the day we can most all of us teach subject material, but transmitting an appropriate ethical and moral pathway to the sometimes fragile understanding of adolescent students, that is what separates the good from the great. Mrs. Levis was a 'great'.

**In the concluding weeks** of the year, the Inspectorate had one final excitement for members of the Geography department, a Subject Inspection. The Inspector left well pleased with what he had seen. The final Report described the quality of teaching and learning as 'very good', the Inspectorate highest level of praise. 'Interaction, challenge and engagement were central to the classroom experience', the Report states. I congratulate the members of the Geography department on this outstanding Report. That our **Deputy Principal**, Mr Morrissey, continues to teach Geography in addition to the fulfillment of all his administrative responsibilities is proof once again of his unique personal and professional qualities. I could not do my job without his support and friendship and I thank him for all he does for the College.

**The College continues** to be the beneficiary of outstanding support from two associations, the Parent-Teacher Association and the Midleton College Association. In recent weeks the PTA has elected their new committee. **Mrs Bronwen Lynch**, Mrs Tracy Wardle and Mrs Bernie Browne have all retired from their respective positions. To each of them I express my gratitude for the leadership and input they have given over the past 3 years ensuring the ongoing development of the PTA in encouraging parents to have an involvement in the education of your children. **This week Mrs Gráinne Keating** has been elected as the new Chairperson alongside Mrs Mandy Devlin, Secretary and Mrs Liz Deane, Treasurer. I wish each of them and their fellow committee members well as they take on their new voluntary roles.

The MCA, led by President Mr John Smyth and Secretary Mrs Kay Cairns, also continues to support the activities of the students of the College and act as a point of communication and socialization for former pupils.

**Tomorrow the Association** is supporting the “Scrap Saturday” disposal of waste metal products fund-raising in Tattans Yard in Midleton. In a fortnight the annual gathering for past pupils takes place in the Dining Hall.

18 months ago we launched our fundraising initiative to build a **Sports Complex at the College**. The response of parents, friends and the local community to the ceaseless voluntary efforts of our committee members has been remarkable. To date we have raised €261,000, over a quarter of the costs needed to bring the project to a reality. I thank each committee member for their outstanding commitment to seeing this project through and likewise express gratitude to each and every person who has been kind enough to support the Sports complex in whatever manner they have felt able to do so. **(return to Holding Slide)**

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## State Exams

You will notice the 3<sup>rd</sup> Form of 2012 have been awarded a large total number of prizes. This reflects the fulfillment of potential right across the year group. There is clearly a coalescence of a pool of hard-working students, committed to achieving the very best they are capable of, which stretches right across the Year group. What is also demonstrated by these results is further evidence of the mutually supportive working relationship that exists between our staff, students and parents. Today we recognise the specific achievements of 30 of last year's Junior Certificate students, but in so doing we acknowledge the collective achievement within the Year group.

**Collectively they have** produced the most outstanding set of Junior Certificate results over the course of the past 25 years. **It is remarkable** that 99.68% of all papers were passed, 76% were taken at higher level and, perhaps most astonishingly of all, more than twice as many Higher Level 'A's were achieved as any year group who have sat the Junior Certificate at this school.

An extraordinary 96 Higher Level 'A's were achieved. It is no embarrassment to myself, my colleagues or previous years to note that only once in the past decade has a Junior Certificate group attained in excess of 43 Higher Level A grades.

Thus the total number of prizes awarded today for the **Junior Certificate** class is higher than ever before. This year we are awarding a greater number of **The Middleton College Scholarship**, Association and Principal's prizes

than ever before at Junior Certificate. These prizes recognise, each in their own way, the exceptional achievements of students whose attainment in this year's State exams surpassed their teachers' collective expectations and possibly the students' own. I salute each prize winner in Junior cycle.

**Ruth Provan-Bessell** is awarded the Intermediate Shield having attained 9 'A' Honours in all nine subjects – absolute mastery of each subject taken. Anthony O'Shea and Daisy Beth Gibbons ran Ruth very close, both attaining 7 Higher Level 'A' grades. Their achievement was emblematic of the exceptional performance in the Junior Certificate this year. 76% of papers were taken at Higher Level and, of these, honours were attained in 88% across all subjects.

Leaving Certificate 2012

**This overall level of achievement** was matched by the Leaving Certificate class of 2012. **73% of papers taken** at Higher Level is a record for the College. 99.3% of papers were passed with 100% pass rates attained in the subjects of Irish, English and Maths. The introduction of 25 bonus points for Mathematics has proved controversial and will be subject to Departmental review. Nonetheless we can give thanks for the achievements of our own students, allowing for the additional stress and strain that they, their families and their teachers lived with: all our candidates attained a D grade or higher. I wish to thank each member of the Mathematics department for having immersed themselves in preparation for the new Project maths curriculum and ensuring its introduction has been a success for our students.

In total, the average CAO points score attained by our students was 417 as opposed to a national average of 330. 45% of our students achieved 450 CAO points or higher in 2012.

**Amy Kingston** is awarded the Moore Memorial Prize for the highest overall set of grades obtained this year. Amy achieved 595 CAO points and is studying Medicinal Chemistry in TCD. **Andrew Colton** has been awarded the Maura Lee West Prize for Special Achievement, reflecting both his outstanding Leaving Certificate as well as his selection for Munster in hockey and his involvement in senior rugby in his final year. Andrew is studying International Law at UCC. **Ben Mitchell, who** is studying Commerce in UCC is awarded the Middleton College Citizenship prize, recognition of Ben's willingness to work for the good of all during his years as a student.

#### New Junior Certificate Reforms

**The new Junior Certificate** reforms published by the National Council for Curricular Assessment and due to commence on a rolling basis from September 2014 will create a new landscape in Junior Cycle, over the course of the next 6 years. The plans to introduce modular courses as part of Junior cycle, reducing or potentially removing the need for formal examination at the end of Third Year, will challenge both methods of teaching and assessment in all schools. It is noteworthy that the NCCA has invited Protestant-managed schools to have a direct involvement in the roll-out of Junior Cycle reforms. This is recognition of the successful manner in which our schools have managed the introduction of previous reforms such as the evolution of Transition Year. I am certain that the challenges created by Junior Cycle reform also bring potential opportunities for a school such as

our where student-centered education is embedded in our curricular and learning structures.

The academic curriculum forms the centre of gravity of our daily activity. It is the achievements of our students in that domain which we celebrate today. We will always retain that focus, while having a level of comfort in knowing that many of the revised provisions outlined in the new Junior Certificate give formal recognition to a range of student experiences that this College provides and has provided for many years.

In Midleton College we will plan for and put into practice what we believe to be the best set of structures to accommodate the diversity of learning abilities and needs which our students present. From that philosophical starting point we will not be diverted.

Change comes in more local forms as well. This year we are implementing our plans to move to more electronically based communication, both internally and externally. **Our website has** been fully revised and re-launched, a process overseen by Ms Linehan. We are attempting to maximise communication with parents and guardians by email or text and avoid duplicate posting where possible. **The ‘Friends of Midleton College’**, a support association for those who have no direct link with the College through the MCA has launched an online ‘Facebook’ which I commend to you.

In all these ways, small-scale and large, a complex long-standing organisation such as ours must manage change effectively in order to continue to fulfill our responsibilities to those we serve.

Our students are well served in this regard by the **dedication and commitment** that is required to teach successfully here. Our staff room is no place for the half-hearted or partially committed. Our professional work ethic demands and must continue to demand that our students sit at the centre of all we do. It is my belief that, as in all things in education, the student-teacher relationship will remain the core component of the learning process and in this our students can proceed with confidence. In making the choice to send children to Midleton parents rightly believe that each person will be positively challenged, set high expectations and be encouraged to do and achieve their best. As this is what we ask of our students it is only right that it mirrors what we ask of ourselves.

I believe a number of examples over the course of the past year highlight this truth.

4<sup>th</sup> Form / Transition Year co-ordinated by Mr Stanley and supported by every member of staff continues to fuse together a programme of academic and broader learning challenges for our students. It fuses together the creative abilities of staff, students, parents and friends of the College. With fusion you have exponential increase in energy, which is exactly what we see. **Three 4<sup>th</sup> Form 'Mini Company'** groups reached the County finals this year. All 3 companies were awarded prizes. 'Edu-Key' won the Overall Winner and went forward to the national finals in Dublin. 'Mad-Card' won the Best Marketing award. 'Scrudu-Beal' received the award for the Best School in the competition on behalf of the College.

**In our first** year of involvement in the Young Social Innovators programme our students reached the national 'Speak Out' finals in Dublin. Their project 'Don't Diss Ability' investigated the level of access for people with disability

in both the College campus and the town of Midleton. The Board of Management received the groups' final report.

The Young Rotary club, co-ordinated by Ms Twomey allows students to become active citizens participating in activities which aim to improve the society we all live in.

In a **different way Horticulture**, led by Ms Mackillop allows students to engage with the soil and discover the excitement of producing your own food.

When they had completed Work experience, guided by Mr Leopold, **all 4<sup>th</sup> Form students** travelled once again to Hehir Island where they participated in a week long sailing course

Our local fund-raising programme provides beds for residents in Midleton Community Hospital and involves our students in direct interaction with the hospital residents. Our national fund-raising programme sees us linking this year with Barnardos, whose centres in Mahon and Knocknaheeney we are beginning to support. **Our international fund-raising** with The HOPE Foundation continues to provide a fully equipped 24 hour a day staffed ambulance service thanks to the extraordinary generosity of the people of Midleton and East Cork. In each of these cases the willingness of our students, staff and families to look beyond themselves is testament to the generosity of spirit which pervades our community and from which we all benefit.

**The 3<sup>rd</sup> Form Spanish** exchange with students from IES Almija, Almeria, has been completed once again. This is the third year we have completed

this exchange, with this year's group leaving for a week in Spain next Tuesday. Thanks are due to all the families, the students and especially Ms Power and Ms Kelleher for making this exchange such a success.

**Equally the German exchange** with staff and students from Ellwangen College Stuttgart, organized by Ms Henry, Mr Hickey and Mr Baker has just been completed.

**Séachtain na Gaelige** Tá an Ghaeilge go fíorbheo anseo sa scoil, gan dabht ar bith. Bíonn seachtain na gaeilge bríomhar(breevar) agus spraoiúil(spreo) againn gach bliain i mí na Samhna; le céilí mór, tráth na gceist, biongó, poc fada agus comórtais talainne.

Freisin téann daltaí na séú bliana go dtí Ceann slé i gCiarraí ar deireadh seachtaine, roimh an scrúdú béil i mí Aibreán. Baineann siad an tairbhe(tarfe) as an taithí (tahee) seo, go háirithe anois, nuair atá daichead (dahad) fán gcéad(40%) do na marcanna ag dul don scrúdú béil amháin.

The generosity of members of the English department in organizing excursions for students to attend dramatic performances in Cork is appreciated and reciprocated by the large numbers of students who attend each of these during the year.

Important as the social dimension of these exchanges and excursions are, and exhausting as being involved in them may prove, the level and range of these type of activities is clear evidence of the desire of teachers, parents and students to invest in the learning of languages for the ultimate benefit of a broad education.

**The ongoing** implementation of our CSPE programme saw, among other activities all 3<sup>rd</sup> Form students travelling to Dail Eireann as guests of Deputy David Stanton whom I take the opportunity to thank today.

**Daniel Wardle**, David Cullinane and Graham Corbett were invited to attend the World Youth Science EXPO in Shanghai in July where they presented their prize-winning science project, “The ergonomic design of wind turbine blades’ accompanied by Mr Power and Ms Guest. Kieran Carew, Jack Cowhig and Andrew McGregor travelled to Shanghai in June having qualified from the Confucius Institute at UCC examinations for Irish students. They were accompanied by Ms Shan Wu. Remarkably, over the past three years 8 students have attended world-wide conferences in Sciences and Languages in China.

### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

The Senior Rugby Team captained by Ned Hodson, gave a magnificent display in narrow defeat to Ard Scoil Rís in the Munster Schools Cup. **They then qualified** for the final of the Mungret Cup against Bandon only to leave their previous performance behind them in the final. **Ned went** on to have the honour of playing for Munster Schools at out-half for the season and an Irish schools trial. Stuart O’Sullivan, Ben Mitchell and Bryan Moore played for Munster Schools. **Recent further success** has been achieved by former student David O’Callaghan, who has been selected for the Irish training squad ahead of the autumn internationals.

The Junior Rugby Team captained by Patrick O’Riordan was defeated with the last play of the game by Abbeyfeale Limerick 10-9 in the Junior Cup. A

great performance which, despite the disappointment of the defeat, bodes well for this group of players as they progress through the College.

**The Senior Girls Hockey** Team captained by Ruth O'Callaghan was narrowly beaten in extra time by Ashton in the Munster Senior Cup. The team, with a majority of 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Form players, can be pleased with how well they played and how close they came to victory on that occasion.

The Senior Boys hockey team was captained by Andrew Colton. The squad maintained the standards of previous years reaching the All-Ireland schools competition and the final of the Munster Schools competition. **It is noteworthy** the number of girls and boys who went on to achieve selection for Munster at U16 and U18 level, as you can see on the screen. **Alex Burns** has managed to go one step further and be selected for the Irish U16 team, a magnificent achievement for him, his family and his coaches.

The Girls Soccer Team, captained by Alannah Finn, qualified for the first time for the semi-final stages of the Munster soccer leagues. Congratulations to all members of the squad on this significant achievement.

The Show Jumping Team attained 7<sup>th</sup> Place overall in the Ballyrafter Interschool's Show Jumping Championships. Niamh McCormack (Form 3) and Sam Lynch both jumped clear in the final round. Niamh won the Individual Competition. Niamh is the first Midleton College student to win this competition. **Gavin Smiddy was** a member of the Irish pony eventing team which won the European Championships in Fontainbleau, France.

The College Orienteering Teams achieved a number of successes at the Munster Schools Championships in Doneraile. Sinead James, Sarah Murphy

& Zac O’Sullivan-Hourihan all won their categories. Students also won a number of individual and team placings.

27 students, accompanied by Ms Dennehy and Mr Sexton participated in the **Wesley Choral and Musical Festival**. Congratulations are due to all the participants for the standard of their performances. Daniel Wardle won the Percussion competition. The last days of the Christmas term were filled with colour, music and the **magic of Oz** as the drama group, led by Mr Doyle and Ms Dennehy, thrilled packed houses with ‘The Wizz’. The Summer Music evening raised the bar and standard of music to even greater heights. 42 performances, 12 of which involved members of 6<sup>th</sup> Form, held the audience captivated for the entire night and reflected the central place musical performance now holds in the life of the College.

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**What makes all of these** wondrous and diverse learning and developmental activities occur in our school?

Ultimately I believe it is an expression of a collective belief in the importance of our young people, your children, our students.

As I hope you will have seen, Middleton College is a place where people come from differing backgrounds, locations and family experiences. It is a place where the God-given and natural talents of each of our students can be fostered, encouraged and developed. A place where learning, growth and personal development can occur in an environment where our students feel secure, valued and challenged.

To the extent that this is the case, I wish to formally thank each of my colleagues without whose continuing commitment all that you have seen of our students’ experiences, simply would not occur.

On the occasion of the opening of The Colton Building, it was obvious how every 'team' within the collective of the staff worked to ensure that all went smoothly and effectively. Yet that **team spirit is** what drives this College every day. Our teaching team, household team, catering team, administrative and grounds team; to each member of staff on my own behalf and that of our Boards', students and parents I wish to affirm what you give and ask that we join in a collective expression of thanks to our staff members.

**Finally, I want to say** to our students that we are tremendously proud of who you are. It is you who give all of us who work here our sense of purpose. Your energy, your interest, your excitement in challenging yourselves to succeed, this is what, even though it may not always appear so, sustains myself and my colleagues. It is what gives us the determination, even in challenging times, that you have the opportunity to develop to be the fullest and most complete expression of who it is you were created to be.

Simon Thompson

Principal

Midleton College

October 2012

