

Press Release 1 May 2018

Microbiome Baking for Cancer Support

- Charity Bake Sale for Cork ARC Cancer Support House

Cork ARC Cancer Support House was the beneficiary of a cake sale with a difference at APC Microbiome Ireland, the Science Foundation Ireland Research Centre based in UCC and Teagasc. APC researchers baked amazing edible creations, both sweet and savoury, all relating to the microbiome – the community of microbes (bacteria, viruses, bacteriophage and fungi) living in and on us, which are essential for our health. The bake sale raised more than €600 for Cork ARC Cancer Support House, a local voluntary organisation.

Bakers were set the challenge of representing their research on the microbiome as a sweet or savoury food. More than 28 imaginative and tasty creations included “It’s What’s on the Inside that counts”, “Fruit is Funky”, “GI Bifidobacteria”, “Microbe Man”, “Mint your Microbes” and “Bristol Stool Chart”.

The winning entry was the delicious “Probiotic Fresh Lemon and Raspberry Cheesecake” baked by Francesca Bottacini and Philip Kelleher. Lorraine Draper won the audience prize for her wonderful “Examining the Microbiome” chocolate “poo”, complete with a candy magnifying glass. These edible works of art tasted better than some of their names suggest!

Judges Anne Fenton, from the School of Food and Nutritional Science and Joanne McCarthy, Marketing and Communications Manager at Cork ARC, had the difficult task of choosing a winner for the coveted trophy and APC baking apron. Quote from Joanne “Cork ARC are honoured with the support and kindness received from APC Microbiome Ireland. The team brought science alive in the most creative and delicious way with their microbiome-themed bake sale to raise vital funds and awareness about Cork ARC Cancer Support House’s services, all available free of charge to cancer patients, their families and carers.”

Cork ARC Cancer Support House, (Registered Charity No. 20049881 / <http://www.corkcancersupport.ie/>), is a safe haven for people with cancer and their families, where they can find information, practical help, emotional support and trust. Cork ARC aims to provide therapies that complement the medical model and adhere to best practice, so as to make a difference to the lives of those affected by cancer. Based in Cork city, Bantry, Youghal and with a Friday morning community support service in Cork city’s north side, all of their services are available free of charge.

APC Microbiome Ireland, (<http://apc.ucc.ie>) has established itself as one of the leading global centres in gut microbiota research since its establishment as the Alimentary Pharmabiotic Centre 15 years ago. It is widely recognised that the gut microbiota plays an important role in human health and has become one of the most dynamic, complex and exciting areas of research in both food and pharmaceutical arenas. Researchers in Prof Paul O’Toole’s group at APC Microbiome Ireland are investigating the gut microbiota of patients with colon cancer with a view to learning how the different gut bacteria found in cancer

patients interact with their immune systems and to developing better diagnosis and treatments.

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