

Transition Year Students Experience Cutting-Edge Science at UCC

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Thirty three “Budding Biologists” from seventeen Munster secondary schools gained invaluable “hands-on” experience in a weeklong programme at Science Foundation Ireland’s research centres based in University College Cork.

Organised by the APC Microbiome Institute, Budding Biologists is an action-packed week that provides real insights into “hot” topics such as antibiotic resistant bacteria, neuroscience, pharmaceutical chemistry, the chemistry of food, photonics (the science of light), perinatal research, and renewable energy. The cutting-edge research at each of the 5 Research Centres and several UCC departments proved fascinating for the students.

“It was so interesting and I loved it. It really benefited by knowledge of science” said Scarlett Dinigivan, Colaiste Mhuire, Buttevant.

“A very thought-provoking course - I learned a lot about the problems in the world and how they are being solved” said Laoise Donovan, Colaiste Choilm.

In addition to laboratory workshops, talks and tours of facilities, a “Smart Futures” Science Careers Workshop was held. Smart Futures is Science Foundation Ireland’s programme which aims to help students make informed decisions about their career choices. APC’s Research Fellow Pauline Scanlan and General Manager Sally Cudmore talked about their careers in science and postgraduate students Jonathan Keane, Carol McCarthy and Ade Fajemisin, who gave short snappy talks about their research so far. The students also found the session on ‘Tips for CVs and Interviews’ by Careers Advisor Shay Nolan to be “super useful”!

“It has opened my eyes to the vast range of careers in science “ said Leah O’Mahony, St Vincent’s Secondary School

“We are delighted to be able to provide this programme for transition year students and welcome applications from students who have a real interest in science and who are considering pursuing a career in the sciences” said Dr Catherine Buckley, Communications & Public Engagement Manager at the APC Microbiome Institute.

Eva McArdle, who coordinated the programme added “we are very grateful to the all the Science Foundation Ireland Research Centres who contributed to the programme: Infant – the Irish Centre for Fetal and Neonatal Translational Research; IPIC - the Irish Photonics Integration Centre, MaREI – the Marine & Renewable Energy Ireland Centre and SSPC - the Synthesis Solid State Pharmaceutical Centre as well as to UCC’s Schools of Microbiology, Food & Nutritional Science and Anatomy & Neuroscience, for providing workshops, facilities and tours. Without such help from all our colleagues we would not be able to provide such a varied programme.”

ENDS

For further information please contact Dr Catherine Buckley, Communications & Public Engagement manager, APC microbiome Institute, UCC mobile 086 8554744; email: c.buckley@ucc.ie

About APC

The APC Microbiome Institute (<http://apc.ucc.ie>) is the Irish research institute for diet, medicine and the microbiome, funded by Science Foundation Ireland and industry partners. The APC, a partnership between University College Cork, Teagasc and the Cork Institute of Technology, carries out research on the gastrointestinal bacterial community (the microbiome). The microbiome is not only a target for treatment and prevention of disease, it is a repository for functional food ingredients, new drugs and biomarkers of disease. Over the past decade APC scientists have related food and microbial diversity with health, have discovered new anti-microbials and anti-inflammatories and developed templates for future foods.

#ScienceRising supporting Innovation 2020 – is a Science Foundation Ireland campaign that creates the connection for industry and individuals with science and innovation in Ireland.

Science Rising - sciencerising.sfi.ie – The Story

Ireland is a nation where curious minds live, learn and discover. Known as the land of famous writers, actors and musicians, Ireland is also home to esteemed inventors, explorers, scientists and leaders. Together we shape the future. Science is part of our past, a past that is often overlooked, an immense part of our present and it is key to our success. There is endless potential still to be realised. The growing impact of Irish scientific achievement will make a difference in people's lives, support industry investment, future proof our skill base and involve everyone in the potential of science and innovation. We will continue to question, imagine, collaborate, discover, answer and create. We will make a difference to Irish society and our economy. More importantly, we will make a difference to humankind.