Professional Certificate in Education: Choral Conducting in Education and in the Community

AIMS

This part-time professional certificate course (Level 9, 20 ETCS) seeks to generate and enhance choral participation through the professional development of emergent and aspiring choral conductors. In order to:

- Bridge schools and communities through choral participation
- Increase well-being in schools and communities, and across the lifespan
- Enable artistic, challenging and enjoyable experiences for all
- Meet DCU’s strategic objective of Engagement in its fullest sense.

The course provides a stepping stone for educators at all levels of musicianship to become activists in their communities—not just in establishing choral music in schools and classrooms—but in working with other educators and musicians to support learners of all ages, and thus extending their reach into the community.

Benefits of Choral Participation

Participation in group singing or choral music has the potential to transform lives across the lifespan (European Choral Association, 2015).

- Scientifically proven to lower stress, relieve anxiety and elevate endorphins.
- Impact and enhance the brain in powerful ways.
- Act as a survival mechanism that can help heal strokes and depression.

The benefits of singing for brain damaged individuals was first observed by a Swedish physician, Olaf Dalin in 1736, and continuing research confirms this observation.

Student Nomination

Tara Gallagher led a choir from St Catherine’s Vocational School, Killibegs, Co Donegal. Tara has since progressed to conducting the Donegal Youth Choir.

Róisín McGrath directed 5th class pupils for Brooklodge NS in Glanmire, Cork. Róisín is a music teacher with County Cork School of Music.

Caitriona Quigley is originally from Monaghan and teaches in Gaelscoil Chluain Dolcain (Clondalkin), a primary school with the 4th and 5th class choir. Caitriona currently conducts the Cameron Singers based in Raheny.

Ciara Clancy led the Dolce Chamber Choir based on the North side of Dublin. As she says, each person gets something different from the group, be it improving sight-reading, gaining more confidence by singing in a smaller group or improving their listening skills.

Helen Gubbins travelled with a choir from Gaelcholáiste na Mara, a post primary school from Arklow, Co. Wicklow to take part in the performance assessment in St Patrick’s College.

Fiona Sweeney led Lucan East Educate Together National School, Dublin, with children from 4th class. She conducts several nights a week in CÓRus (based in Lucan) and works as a music/singing teacher with Enable Ireland adult services where the service users are all adults with physical and cognitive disabilities.

Laura Wickham led a 134-member choir from St Brigid’s Girls School in Killester, Dublin. Laura began with 25 girls and grew her voluntary, early morning group to 134 primary school children. They have performed with St Joseph’s School for the Blind and Fr Liam Lawton, participated in Feis Ceoil winning in 2011, 2012, appeared on the Late Late Toy Show, the launch of Encountering the Arts in Ireland in 2014 and numerous other events. Laura is currently completing the Professional Diploma in Education (Choral Conducting in Education and in the Community).