



## Girl Guide Connections

*This month's news:*

*July 2020*

- [IGG members leading the way in STEM!](#)
- [Thank you to our Honorary Ambassador Dr Niamh Shaw](#)
- [Children and young people disproportionately impacted by Covid19](#)
- [Campaign to retain 'youth affairs' in Department title](#)

Dear |FNAME|

Irish Girl Guides (IGG) believes that girls and women can contribute hugely in the area of **STEM** (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths). We were delighted to appear in the [Women In STEM supplement](#) that was distributed with *The Irish Independent* on 29 June.



Given the relatively low numbers of girls pursuing **STEM subjects** in school and young women pursuing **careers in STEM**, IGG has made it a priority in recent years to develop badges in these areas. Thanks to our partnerships with **Aer Lingus**, **Engineers Ireland** and **Dublin City University's STEM Education, Innovation and Global**

**Studies** department, girls are now discovering just how interesting STEM can be. Some of our own members are leading the way in this area, as you can see below.



We are thrilled that **Ciara-Beth Griffin**, one of our Senior Branch members from Galway, has had great success with the Mi Contact app she developed to help children with autism improve their eye contact skills.

You can hear her brilliant **TedX talk** [here](#) and see her appearance on the **Tommy Tiernan Show** [here!](#)

We were also delighted when **Emer Hickey**, who was involved in Guiding in her home town of Kinsale for many years, won the **BT Young Scientist** competition in 2013 and also went on to win awards at the **EU Young Scientist** and **Google Science Fair**.



Emer is now Chief of Staff at the London International Youth Science Forum.

**We are sure many more of our members will go on to be equally successful in STEM careers!**

We are hugely grateful to **Dr Niamh Shaw**, who was our wonderful **Honorary Ambassador** for over a year, but finished up her term at the end of June. Our members of all ages greatly enjoyed meeting Niamh. Her energy and enthusiasm for all things **STEM** and for the Arts ... and for the whole of life ... rubbed off on us all!



We were thrilled that Niamh was able to join us for a number of our events, including our **2019 General Council** meeting, the **Ladybirds' 30th birthday** celebration in Dublin Zoo, the **National Guide Awards** in Croke Park and the **Mishon App launch** in Dunsink Observatory.

Our three teams who took part in the **FIRST LEGO League** were also delighted to find her MC-ing the Regional and All Ireland finals earlier this year.



All our members who met Niamh were wowed, not only by her zest for life, but by her **enthusiasm** and **determination** to follow her dream of getting to space.



These qualities have been a great **motivation** for our youth members and volunteers alike and, if you don't already have a copy, we would highly recommend you get yourself a copy of her inspiring book, [Dream Big](#), which was recently published by Mercier Press.

We had hoped to launch our new **Space badge** with Niamh on the June solstice but unfortunately that could not go ahead because of current restrictions. Our fingers are firmly crossed for a launch during Space Week in October instead!



We would also recommend you take a minute to watch this [Girl Guides In Space video](#) two of our members filmed with Niamh last autumn. You have to agree she has a unique gift of making STEM accessible, interesting and fun for all!

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We all deserve some rest and relaxation, given how stressful recent months have been for everyone and in so many different ways. **We mustn't forget about our children and young people who have been disproportionately impacted by Covid19.**

After supporting the Children's Rights Alliance campaign for the retention of the **Department of Children** in the new Government, we were hugely relieved to see the

Department and a Minister retained. However, we are concerned that 'youth affairs' might be dropped from the title of the department and, as members of the National Youth Council of Ireland, we are advocating to have 'youth affairs' reinstated.

**It is vital that young people remain central to the Department.  
They need to be visible and have a strong advocate in Cabinet.**

We hope you will have the opportunity to enjoy a relaxing break over the **summer** months. Ireland has plenty to offer in terms of different kinds of holidays and getaways and our tourist industry desperately needs our support now more than ever.

Most Girl Guides will extol the virtues of a **camping** trip, which need not be expensive. Just look at the joy on the faces of these Guides pictured at Eastern Region Camp in the Dublin foothills two years ago!



Kind regards,

*Fiona Murdoch*

Communications Officer  
Irish Girl Guides

**What we do ....** The **Irish Girl Guides** began in 1911 and continues today, as a registered charity, to offer girls and young women a safe space to develop life skills while exploring our inter-connected world and learning to become responsible global citizens. Learn more [here](#).

