



The power to inspire

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A CORK organisation who provide professional arts and craft training for children and adults with disabilities, mental health and sensory challenges as well as marginalised and older people in the community was honoured at this weeks Social Entrepreneurs Ireland awards in Dublin.

The Social Entrepreneurs Ireland Awards, supported by NTR, were held to honour 38 exceptional individuals from all over the country for their work in tackling social problems throughout Ireland. This year there was even more to celebrate on the night as the organisation announced a three year partnership with NTR plc who will commit €450,000 over the period to help Social Entrepreneurs Ireland deliver on its vision of bringing about fundamental social change.

Art and Craft in the Community, an initiative headed up by Robert Lee and Lucia Parle and run in conjunction with NANO Creative Integration, seek to 'bridge community gaps through open communication and creative processes'. Both Lee and Parle share backgrounds in art and art teaching as well as a desire to raise awareness of the arts as a valuable tool for developing personal skills and community relationships, unlocking individual potential, inspiring and instilling confidence.

The workshops offer people the opportunity to work alongside professional artists and craftspeople, learn new skills and hopefully inspire participants to go onto further education and employment opportunities. The artists, in return for their mentorship, gain access to subsidized workspace and a public gallery where works may be sold.

Guest speaker, Liam Black, former CEO of Fifteen, Jamie

Oliver's social initiative for disadvantaged youths, reiterated the importance and necessity of innovation in making social change and progress. Congratulating the recipients, he said, "Now more than ever we need innovative solutions to the social challenges we face, we need people to step up to the mark to take on the task of tackling these issues, the need for social entrepreneurship is stronger than its ever been. You may well ask whether social entrepreneurship and Social Entrepreneurs Ireland is still relevant in this climate of crisis - the answer is yes, now more than ever! Their work needs to be encouraged because without them a whole section of society is at risk".
