

2006 has been an active year on a number of fronts for the Employment Services Division.

Quality Employer Programme



The Quality Employer Programme is now in its 10th year. Over the years, members have found QEP a very useful tool for implementing HR policies and procedures. As a structured HR system, the QEP provides a guide for employers, from the selection process, to working and pay conditions through to performance appraisals and training and promotion.

Employees too, have found the structured approach in HR matters in accredited properties helpful in their chosen career paths within the hotel industry, and indeed many employees have indicated that the deciding factor in their choice of employer was the availability of the QEP.

An integral part of the QEP is the re-assessment approach to the programme. This means that on-going monitoring occurs and the property receives continuous guidance and feedback in HR matters. Thus, accredited properties can sustain the progress they have made in their HR practices and be confident that their HR policies are fully up to date and compliant with current best practise.

Indeed, many employers in other sectors and industries are obliged to pay for such a service but the Federation offers this to properties as an added benefit of becoming a member of the Irish Hotels Federation.

Little Chef Programme

Throughout 2006 the Employment Services continued to sponsor the 'Little Chef Programme'. This programme is an early intervention programme initiated by the Department of Education and Science and is designed to enhance a child's development and to provide support and assistance.

The programme takes place over a five week period in a Failte Ireland Training Centre. The pupils attend the training centre one day per week and during that time they gain and develop new skills such as good eating habits, culinary skills, food hygiene and kitchen safety. Overall, they have a positive experience which helps shape their attitude towards later learning. The Failte Ireland Training centre also provides an insight into a professional working kitchen and life at a third level institution.

On the last day of the programme the children have a 'Graduation Ceremony' which involves a 'cook-in' where

the children dress in chef's whites and prepare, cook and serve a three course meal to their teachers and parents. On completion a Federation representative 'judges' each meal whereupon each student is presented with a 'graduation certificate'. To celebrate their successful completion of the programme the Federation awards the children with a special prize.



Students from Our Lady Immaculate Senior School in Darndale at the Little Chef Graduation Ceremony.

This is the IHF's third year to sponsor this programme and the positive feedback from all involved, parents, teachers, trainers and students themselves has been tremendous.

Education and Training

Trainee Manager Development Programme (TMDP)

28 students successfully completed the Trainee Manager Development Programme (TMDP) and were presented with their Certificates at a Graduation Ceremony which took in January. The 'Student of the Year' and 'Perfect Menu' awards were won respectively by Viachaslau Ziarnitski and Natallia Chuyeva.



TMDP award winners Viachaslau Ziarnitski and Natallia Chuyeva

It is heartening to note that all 28 of the graduates intend to remain within the industry with many planning to go on to further study and complete a Diploma in Hotel Management whilst others will no doubt go on to study for their Degree.

The TMDP is a recognised distance education route to training as a hotel manager. Students complete three years of rigorous on-the-job training and academic studies in Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology whilst remaining employed in a hotel. The programme is run in conjunction with the IHF, Fáilte Ireland, IHI and GMIT and is certified by HETAC.

In November 2006, 55 students commenced their first year of the programme.



Pictured (l-r): Martin Holohan, Chairman, Trainee Management Development Programme; Brid Duggan, Graduate, Fitzgerald Woodland House Hotel, Adare; John Power, Chief Executive, IHF; Cyril Laffan, Graduate, Jurys Inn Limerick and Seán O'Malley, Manager of Education Operations, Fáilte Ireland.

Career / Recruitment Events

As in other years the IHF maintained a presence at career events and in 2006 we shared stands with Fáilte Ireland at the two national career fairs, the Irish Times Higher Options and the FAS Opportunities, Education and Skills Fair.

These recruitment events play a pivotal role in attracting personnel to our industry, as the students are on the cusp of choosing a career. Events such as these give students the opportunity to speak to professionals currently working in the hotel industry. By actually meeting hotel personnel they can gain an insight into the Industry that a prospectus or recruitment pack may not include.



Students pictured with Nuala McLoughlin, IHF Employment Services Co-ordinator, at the Higher Options Recruitment Fair in the RDS

FAS Opportunities took place this year in February and ran inclusively over four days in the Croke Park Exhibition Centre. This event, which has become one of Europe's largest jobs, skills and education fairs attracted over 80,000 school leavers and job seekers.

In September the Irish Times Higher Options took place in the RDS and it is estimated that over 25,000 students, career guidance counsellors and parents visited the event. IHF representatives helped man the stands at both events. Thus, students and job seekers were able to receive career and course information on the tourism and hospitality industry and also chat with professionals currently working in the hotel industry.

The careers magazine, *Get A Life... in Tourism* was also distributed at both events.

Get a Life... In Tourism

The 7th Edition of the IHF / Fáilte Ireland career magazine *Get a Life... in Tourism* was published this year. It has a print run of over 25,000 copies and is circulated to all secondary schools, career guidance counsellors and is distributed at all career fairs and career events during the year. It is an extremely useful marketing tool for the industry - aimed at 15-18 year olds making that vital career or 3rd level course decision.



The magazine is very user friendly and contains a wealth of important career information. Each of the major careers available in the industry has a separate section which showcases that particular career. The magazine also contains information on college courses and 'day in the life of profiles'. In addition, *Get a Life... in Tourism* contains tourism facts and figures, salary scales, contact details for colleges, full course information and much more.



Pictured at the launch of *Get a Life... in Tourism* 2006 / 2007 in Dublin's Merrion Hotel were (l-r) Seán O'Malley, Manager of Education Operations, Fáilte Ireland, bellboy Alex Horace (4 yrs), chef Neven McGuire, waiter Coyle Fitzsimons (3 yrs), chef Eva Dunne (4 yrs) and Anne Lee, Manager of Strategic Issues, IHF.

Placement Services

Throughout 2006 it became increasingly obvious that the traditional sources of recruitment for the hotel industry

have shifted and that international employees will in future have a pivotal role in recruitment strategies.

The Federation therefore continued to forge links and develop partnerships with overseas hospitality colleges both within the EU and further afield. While the barriers to going through the work permit process were sometimes difficult to overcome, we were successful in placing 17 3rd Year commis chefs from Bangladesh in various hotels throughout Ireland. We also maintained our link with the Dutch Hospitality College, De Rooi Pannen Tourism College and ten students completed their placement period in member properties. In addition, many international employees have availed of the Federation to contact prospective Irish hospitality employers.

Inaugural Cultural Diversity Awards

In 2006 the Federation worked with the Irish Hospitality Institute (IHI) and other industry partners to celebrate and acknowledge the growing diversity in the industry and to reward properties which show exceptional practices in the area of cultural diversity. The Hospitality Diversity Awards are funded by the National Action Plan against Racism and were developed to celebrate and promote diversity within Irish Hospitality and Tourism.

Applications were received from hotels, bars, restaurants, catering companies and transport operators. As it was the first year of these awards the committee was delighted with the number of applications received. In fact, so many were received that the applications had first to be short listed and a small number of successful applicants were then interviewed on their policies and procedures.

In July the category winners and the overall winners were announced.

Category winners included the following:

Hotels Individual:

Fitzgerald's Woodlands House Hotel, Adare

Hotels Group:

Four Seasons Hotel, Dublin

Restaurants:

O'Connell's Restaurant at Bewley's Hotel

Catering Operations:

Skibbereen Residential Care Centre

Tourism Attractions & Transport Operations:

Dublin Bus



The Four Seasons Hotel Dublin was named as Overall Winner and Minister of State at the Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform, Mr Frank Fahey T.D., presented the award to Kate Desigar, Four Seasons Human Resources Manager, for the hotel's nurturing of the diverse staff backgrounds through a structured and meaningful integration strategy.

Due to their success in the first year it is anticipated that these awards will become an annual event.



Pictured at the inaugural Hospitality Diversity Awards ceremony were (l-r) Lucy Gaffney, NPAR; Sherif Avdel Sabour, Front Office Receptionist, Four Seasons Hotel; Annette Devine, President, IHF; Kate Desigar, HR Director, Four Seasons Hotel and Frank Fahey, T.D., Minister for State.

Babysitting Code of Practice

In April, in consultation with the ISPCC, the Federation formulated a Babysitting Code of Practice which detailed best practice guidelines in relation to the recruitment and selection of babysitters for casual employment within member properties. The Federation encouraged members to take every reasonable care to follow the guidelines set out in the Code of Practice and make every effort to engage a responsible, trustworthy and reliable babysitter.