



# **WHAT EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE MEANS FOR ADULT LEARNERS**

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# ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

- At that stage we had no choice really, the older ones. We had to leave school and go out working or we had to stay in and look after the kids. You had to stay out of school and that was just a routine thing and everyone had to do this to help. *Una*
- Ma or Da never could read or write so school wasn't on their agenda. *John*
- I was just about fourteen and I was the youngest of seven. I honestly think that when I came along my parents were saying thanks be to God we are nearly finished, so they weren't all that interested, there was going to be a job in CIE. My father worked in CIE and that was that. *Terry*
- I left school when I was nearly 14. I wanted to go back but I was pregnant and that was the end of that. *Breda*
- When my mother got sick I left to help my dad with the house and the other kids. *Mary*



# EXPERIENCE OF FORMAL EDUCATION

- Right from the beginning when I look back I think we were just from the flats and we weren't expected to do well. *Niall*
- I left school without learning to read or write. I was at the back of the class and you would be left sitting there all day. Most days I was holding the door so it wouldn't blow open. That was my job. *Tom*
- I didn't hold the pen the right way so I got smacked across my knuckles. I was afraid to go back. *Judith*
- The first group knew everything, the second group were ok and the third group just left. *Sabina*
- I went on the hop all the time. I just used to run off anytime I had the chance really. I would just go into town, rob in town. *Barry*
- well the first half of it was a mad laugh. I was dossing. The last few years I took seriously though I had a pretty rough time in the last few years. *Fergal*



# RETURNING TO LEARNING

- It was for myself and the kids, the two of them together. Micheal
- My children are my motivation because if I hadn't got the children I wouldn't be here. Breda
- I don't want my kids growing up like me, stupid. Mary
- I thought I'll never get a job, I'll never work again unless I go back. Vera
- It was not a choice. I was told I had to change that I cannot go back to the building trade any more. Angus
- I came back to learn about the internet. What the hell was this internet they are all talking about on the radio, and emailing. I hadn't a clue what my kids were doing on that computer. Moya



# RECRUITING ADULT LEARNERS

- Lack of time and apathy
- Low self esteem; being too 'down' to participate
- Fear of coming into a 'new' situation
- Lack of accessible and affordable venues
- Scarcity of neighbourhood work
- Lack of child/eldercare
- Lack of skilled and experienced tutors
- Limited budgets for marketing.
- Community Education and Social Change. Co Donegal VEC 2007



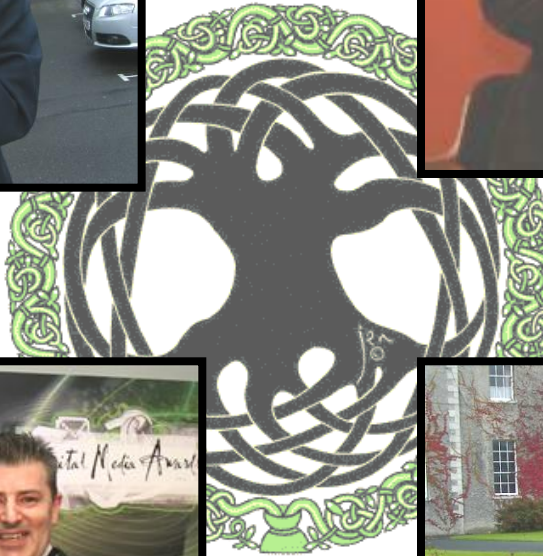
# STEPHEN STEWART

- Left school early age sixteen (1984)
  - Served 4 years apprenticeship / went abroad for work (1988)
- Returned in (1992)
  - Last-in First-out - stop-start temporary jobs / unemployment.
- *'The more you do of what you're doing, the more you get of what you've got..'* Time to change-(2000)
- Part-Time ECDL (2001)
  - Part-Time Community Studies ITT (2002)
    - Part Time 'Return to learning' NUI Maynooth (2003)
      - Applied for the course in (2004), failed exam
- Applied, passed exam and interview, offered place in NUI (2005).





**TITHE AN OIREACHTAIS**  
**HOUSES OF THE OIREACHTAS**



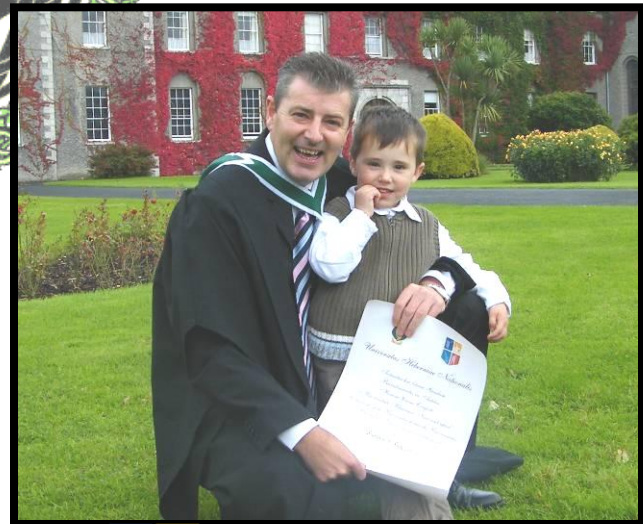
**PLAY YOUR PART**



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**AN TÚDARÁS COMHIONANNAIS**



*Digital Media Awards*  
**Winner 2008**



**NUI MAYNOOTH**  
 Oíscéal na hÉireann M4 Nuad

**GRADUATION 2008**



# MOVING BEYOND EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE

- Re-examining fundamental assumptions
- Recognising learning as a lifelong process
- A holistic approach to disadvantage
- Joined up thinking, planning and action at local and national level
- Change the mainstream not the margins



# MOVING BEYOND EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE

Although in the early stages of my own learning journey at the moment I can now help my children with their learning. I am very much a role model for my children now. I will always advise them on college life and encourage, support and motivate them to go further with their education after second level. I always tell them that education isn't only about earning; it infiltrates every part of our lives and its all about the value of lifelong learning. I am lucky that I have had an opportunity to go so that I can pass on my values, experience and knowledge to my children. I took my son to college one day and my daughter is now saying she wants to be a doctor, so hopefully this new dream of hers will come true. *Samantha*

