US students make Castlerea visit a High Point of study trip

SEVENTEEN STUDENTS and two professors from High Point University, North Carolina in the USA recently visited the Brothers of Charity, Castlerea. The visit came about when Castlerea native Dermott Henry, who works as a studies abroad programme director with ISA (International Studies Abroad) at NUI Galway, was asked by his colleagues in the US to co-ordinate a visit for the group to the Brothers of Charity in Ireland. Having known Pat O’Connor (Area Manager), Dermott contacted him to see if a visit would be possible, and he obliged without hesitation.

The group visited as part of a custom programme to Ireland, which was educational while at the same time allowing the students and professors to experience what Ireland had to offer from a cultural and tourism perspective.

One of the areas of study, which was of interest to the group, was non-profit management. During research for the visit in the US, the group identified the Brothers of Charity as one such organisation that it would like to visit. The group was headed by Dr Christine Cugliari (Professor of Non Profit Management) and Dr Pamela Palmer (Professor of Human Relations), both faculty members at High Point University.

The visit included a guest lecture by Pat O’Connor about the structure, ethos and development of the Brothers of Charity at Hillcrest House, Knockroe, Castlerea. The group also received a guest lecture from Eithne Jarrett, Coordinator for County Roscommon Supported Employment Service Ltd. This was followed by a number of visits to different centres around Castlerea, Ballintubber and Ballinlough. The group also got to enjoy lunch at the Time Out Café in Ballinlough, a café which provides employment for Brothers of Charity service users in the area. The group also visited the Roscara Centre at the Demesne, Castlerea where members were able to see first hand the activities and services provided to service users. The students got an opportunity to talk to service users and even participated in some of the sporting activities that were taking place in the nearby Hub Complex.

At the end of the visit Pat O’Connor presented Dr Christine Cugliari and Dr Pamela Palmer with a framed portrait, depicting an Irish thatched cottage, as a memento of the group’s visit to Castlerea, which will hang on a wall at High Point University. The students and faculty leaders expressed their sincere thanks to Pat and all his staff for the magnificent warmth and hospitality extended to them during their visit to Castlerea. They have no doubt, but that it was one of the highlights of their visit to Ireland.

Mary Reddy and Pauline Keegan make a presentation to Dr Pamela Palmer and Dr Christine Cugliari during a visit by students and staff from High Point University, North Carolina to the Brothers of Charity services in Castlerea. Also in the picture is Pat O’Connor (Area Manager).

Pat O’Connor (Area Manager) with Dr Pamela Palmer, Dr Christine Cugliari and Dermott Henry (Co-ordinator of International Studies NUIG) during a visit by students and staff from High Point University, North Carolina to the Brothers of Charity services in Castlerea.

Service users, staff and students and staff from High Point University, North Carolina during a visit to the Brothers of Charity services in Castlerea.