



*On International Women's Day 2023,
we are acknowledging inspirational past pupils, who have been nominated by
the OLS community for their achievements in*

Dr Niamh O' Brien, Class of 1996

Dr Niamh O'Brien has recently been awarded the Dr Fiona Bradley national award for her extraordinary work in Mervue Health Centre, Galway, and at the HSE West Addiction Services. The award citation described Dr O'Brien as "an outstanding exemplar of a general practitioner combining excellent clinical care with a fierce advocacy for all patients." Dr O'Brien is an inspirational advocate for all patients including those most socially disadvantaged. She has worked in the Galway Drug Treatment Centre and has a special interest in youth mental health.



Dr. O'Brien's response to the OLS community:

As a proud Our Lady's girl, it is a great honour to receive this acknowledgment from the school. The late Dr Fiona Bradley was a champion of social justice and medical equality. In my work in Galway city as a GP and Addiction specialist doctor, I am proud to provide care to the most under-served members of society. It was with enormous gratitude that I received the Fiona Bradley award last Friday at the University of Galway. In my speech I paid a special tribute to my best friend in Our Lady's, the late Orla Kearney, who was a remarkable example of bravery in the face of her long-term illness and her memory will never be forgotten by all who knew her.

Catherine Ann Cullen, P House, Class of 1979

Catherine is a poet and author who is fully committed to bringing her love of these arts to others. As the inaugural Poet in Residence with Poetry Ireland, she ran poetry workshops with different groups, including prisoners and groups from the inner city to help make poetry more accessible. She also worked with a lot of schools as the A&L Goodbody Writer in Residence in East Wall, and did work for the Trinity Access Programme. During the pandemic, she did a daily poetry prompt for both adults and children on Twitter and Facebook to help people feel connected. On top of all this she has written 3 poetry books and 4 children's books. She really promotes writing and poetry to everybody, regardless of their background, and has inspired lots of people to start writing!

Catherine Cullen's response to the OLS community:

I was the oldest of five sisters to go to Our Lady's: Patricia, Romy, Lisa and Jennifer followed, with plenty of overlapping! Jennifer's two daughters, Jane and Sally Cunnion, are carrying on the tradition in OLS today. On International Women's Day, it's important to keep our good traditions and to act to jettison those traditions that preserve inequality in the world. I wish all the OLS community a creative and critical IWD!

Ciara O'Toole, L House, Class of 1992:

Ciara is a pilot, author, and entrepreneur! She has a wide background in senior marketing roles with L'Oréal, Red Bull, Diageo, the National Lottery and Social Entrepreneurs Ireland. Originally from Blessington, Ciara moved to Italy in 2006. She went on to achieve her private pilot's licence for single engine aircraft on both land and sea. Ciara shares her experience in her novel, *Going Solo in Lake Como*, and is now writing her second book. She is an exceptional woman and very inspiring. She is strong, independent, kind and overcomes challenges with grace and dignity.

Ciara O'Toole's response to the OLS community:

*I'm very honoured to have been nominated for this and am a proud and grateful OLS Alumni, having spent many happy years at the school.
Many thanks and best wishes!*