



Giving back proves rewarding for GECAS volunteers in Ireland

On February 23, the GE UK & Ireland Citizenship Awards Dinner took place in London. The awards program is a tribute to the many individuals across GE businesses in the UK and Ireland who embody GE's spirit of citizenship and volunteerism. This year, GECAS' **Rebecca Connolly**, **Barry Downes** and **Sinead Scanlon** were among those shortlisted for their volunteer efforts over the past year.

The GECAS Diversity & Inclusiveness Council nominated Rebecca for her ongoing work with the Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities (TCPID), and Barry and Sinead were nominated for their work with Brothers of Charity, an organization that enables people with intellectual disabilities to access opportunities. "What makes their community efforts especially noteworthy was their focus on inclusiveness," said Virginia Connolly, People with Disabilities Network co-chair for GE Capital. "They have made such an impact on helping individuals with intellectual disabilities in their communities."

Rebecca Connolly was shortlisted – and won – the award for *Education Champion*. Her work over the past two years with Trinity College Dublin's Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities (TCPID) has laid the groundwork for GECAS Dublin to become a TCPID business partner and to host future students as part of the group's work placement program. Thanks to Rebecca's leadership in the Dublin office, they sponsored their first work placement student, donated laptops to TCPID, and have otherwise encouraged the students of the program through other learning opportunities. "This award was a team effort in our Dublin office, and I was happy to represent the team who continue to bring inclusion for all to GECAS which is such a great thing," Rebecca said.

Barry Downes and Sinead Scanlon were also shortlisted for the *Environment Champions* award. Since 2008, Barry and Sinead have been building GECAS' relationship with the Brothers of Charity in Ennis, County Clare. In 2016, they organized GECAS volunteers for a special project to renovate an unused building and surrounding area for beneficiaries to enjoy peace and sensory stimulation while developing an interest in horticulture and nature. The planning for the project included input from not only the charity and their clients, but also from the families, neighbors, and community. "Most importantly, the garden was about including people in the decisions that were made about their lives and enabling them to plan their own destinies," said their award nomination.

The GE UK & Ireland Citizenship Awards program recognized individuals in six Champion categories – Community, Education, Environment, Health, STEM, Help for Heroes – and three special awards: Volunteer Team of the Year, Citizen of the Year, and the President's Award.

Congratulations to Rebecca, Barry, and Sinead for their shining success as leaders in volunteerism.

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