

Kellie Cunniffe, from Lisdfuff, Virginia won the Cavan IBYE "Best New Idea category" 2017 with her new business idea "Remember Me" Dementia Supports



We spoke to Kellie in September 2017 to get an update and to get her advice for anybody considering entering the Irish Best Young Entrepreneur Competition

### What was the Business Idea that won you the Cavan IBYE 'Best New Idea Category?'

- My business idea was a bespoke reminiscence tool for individuals with dementia and Alzheimer's.
- A bespoke DVD that would be created for a loved one.
- It would contain things like their favourite music, favourite songs etc and also personal photographs.
- The idea came to me while I was on placement from college. I was working with a fabulous group of individuals who had early onset dementia.
- While there I got to know their likes/ dislikes, Interests and hobbies.
- I also listened to stories they told me.
- I then gathered all that information and put it into a DVD.
- That DVD lasted 55mins, the opening segment of that DVD was Julie Andrews coming over the hill in the sound of music
- When I showed it to the group, two individuals turned to each other and began to sing and have a conversation.
- That is when I knew I was on to something.
- Our memories are like a bookshelf, our most recent memories at the top and our more distant at the bottom.
- When someone develops dementia or Alzheimer's the first memories to go are the ones on the top shelf.
- The **Remember Me** idea was designed around this concept.
- The idea of the DVD is to open the memories on the bottom shelves.
- It accessed their childhood memories, they were "remembering by themselves".
- Witnessing this happen in front of my eyes was the most breathtaking experience I have had to date.
- To give a little independence back to these individuals was amazing.
- Not only that, I was giving these individuals something to talk about with their loved ones.
- For that 55mins a niece had her Aunty back, a son had his father back or simply a friend had their good friend back.
- Which I feel is "Simply Amazing"

### What did being involved in the Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur competition mean for you personally?

- I never thought at the age of 21 that I would ever be able to take part in a competition like this.
- I would have never been the person to talk in public, but when the opportunity presented itself I went for the competition.
- Being part of the IBYE programme has allowed me to grow and mature as an individual.
- Not only that but I developed a new-found confidence in public speaking and began to believe in myself.
- The idea I came up with would help others, and for me that was the bigger picture.
- Being part of the IBYE competition has meant the world to me
- I have made so many new contacts and have progressed with my business since the competition.
- Something I would have never achieved without the help of my Local Enterprise Office and the IBYE.

### How did it feel to be announced the winner of the IBYE "Best New Idea" Category?

- I was completely shocked and overwhelmed when I won my category.
- I cannot describe the feeling.
- I had put so much work into my idea and had a real passion for it that when my name was called out I couldn't believe it.
- It meant that now I could start developing my idea and I had support behind me.
- Having that feeling that someone believes in you and that your idea was worthy of winning made it all worthwhile.
- I still cannot believe that I won, a year on.
- There were so many talented people in my category, the support from every one of them was amazing and something I will never forget.

### How did winning the IBYE 'Best New Business' category help your business?

- My business has grown from an idea to an actual product in the developing stages.
- I have been in contact with Cavan LEO who has been so helpful since the competition.
- I have been working closely with my mentor and am hoping to launch my product soon.
- The idea that I stated out with had developed into a more accurate product which I would not have thought of without the help of Cavan LEO and the help I received from the IBYE.

### What advice have you for anybody considering entering IBYE

- Go for it. Enter the competition.
- It has been one of my best experiences to date.
- Meeting new people, being involved in the process of developing a business, seeing new and exciting ideas come to life and having the opportunity to believe in yourself and having others believe in you.
- I entered this competition not thinking I would ever get a call back, now I am here a year on with an IBYE ideas category win under my belt and a product about to be launched.
- Somewhere I would have never dreamt I would have been when I started this journey.

### What advice to those who win!

- Keep up the great work
- Don't let all your hard work go to waste.
- Take advice and support from your LEO, they have helped me so much.
- I came up with the idea but I needed help and support with business plans etc and that is where my LEO came in.
- They took the time to support me and guide me to perform to the best of my ability.
- Their help and support got me to where I am today and 1 year later their help is still there.

Finally Kellie's advice to anybody thinking of entering the IBYE is; ***"Go for it and apply today. You could be like I was last year – An IBYE winner! Our world is changing one idea at a time; all we need is your idea"***.

Kellie is currently working on a Remember Me App. We expect to hear a lot more of Kellie Cunniffe in the future.

For more information check out 'Remember Me' on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/RememberMeStaff/>



Kellie being interviewed on the Gerry Kelly show on LMFM talking about *'Remember Me'*



Kellie pictured on the day she won the Cavan IBYE "Best New Idea category" 2017 with her amazing family (L-R) Mum, Eilish, Kellie, sister Aimee and dad Tom.



Some *'Remember Me'* DVD's packaged and ready for dispatch