

## DERI Scoops IT Industry's Education Award



At a gala dinner event in the Westwood Hotel last Thursday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, the Galway IT industry honoured Brendan Smith for his successful implementation of a range of innovative web- based projects for local schools through the DERI Outreach programme.

Brendan was presented with the 'Schools Initiative Award' by media celebrity Gareth O'Callaghan and Caroline O'Neill, secretary of the Information Technology Association of Galway (ITAG). ITAG President, Seamus Kilbane, and Minister for Europe Noel Treacy outlined some of the other pioneering activities that Brendan has carried out in promoting science and technology in the Irish classroom over the last few years including the 'Fionn' Primary School Science project and his involvement in the annual Galway Science and Technology Festival. These initiatives have helped place Galway schools at the forefront nationwide in this critical area.

The ITAG award is the latest in a list of awards bestowed on DERI for its Outreach initiatives. In September, DERI was one of only four groups recognised and honoured by the Galway Development Board at an official ceremony in the city museum for their role in helping Galway to become the first in Ireland to attain the international WHO standard of 'Healthy City'. In the case of DERI, this was due to the Institute's Internet programmes that are targeted at groups from across the social spectrum including older people, the disabled, third level students, children, parents, neighbourhood associations, asylum seekers and non-national communities.

In August DERI took part in a group that was listed as finalists in the Galway County Heritage Awards for the 'Birds in Schools' project.

In February, Brendan was presented with the Mayoral 'Social and Community' Award by the Lord Mayor of Galway City Councillor Brian Walsh for his significant contributions to community development that included laying the groundwork for DERI's ambitious vision of an 'Online Galway Accessible to All.'

Last November, Minister Noel Treacy presented Brendan with the prestigious 'Galway Science and Technology Festival annual prize' for his efforts in successfully promoting the science and technology disciplines in Irish schools.

Finally, in February 2005 DERI was one of the support mentors that helped St. Patrick's Primary School Galway City win the coveted Irish Digital Media Education Award for the film entitled 'The Changing Face of Technology in the Classroom 1954-2004'.

Through its involvement in the educational and community sectors, DERI Outreach is increasing public awareness and practical utilization of the latest web tools. In addition, DERI's has been creating a series of environments and test sites for its research products and services currently being developed by its research personnel as part of the next generation of the World Wide Web known as the "Semantic Web."