



ERNST & YOUNG ANNOUNCES 2006 ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR SHORTLIST

-Irish finalists to journey into fastest-growing consumer market in the world-

Monday, 22nd May, 2006: Following over two months of entry assessment by an 11 strong panel of judges, Ernst & Young has announced the Irish shortlist for the 2006 Entrepreneur of the Year® Programme. The shortlist of 24 finalists was decided from a competitive pool of over 150 business and individual entries across the island of Ireland. The finalists represent companies in manufacturing, food, property & construction, technology, mature tree production, recruitment & training and sports retail.

Announcing the shortlist, Enda Kelly, Ernst & Young Partner- in-Charge of the Programme said that the enterprise culture in Ireland remains strong and there is a positive predisposition towards entrepreneurship. "About a quarter of a million adults here are actively engaged in enterprise and I believe that it is the self-belief that stimulates the Irish entrepreneur," he added

Commenting on today's announcement, Robert Gallagher, Chief Executive, Ulster Bank Corporate Markets, said "we are delighted to be sponsoring the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year awards for the first time this year and we at Ulster Bank recognise that great entrepreneurs need to be energetic, passionate and think outside the box. As the preferred partner to many great entrepreneurs, we applaud their innovative spirit and pride ourselves on our ability to tailor solutions to meet their unique needs".

The highlight of this year's Programme the Shanghai CEO retreat where the party of 50 plus entrepreneurs, including this year's 24 finalists and those from previous years, will have relevant

one-to-one meetings with Chinese business leaders and also receive master classes from global experts.

“As the fastest-growing consumer market in the world, China is bristling with opportunity for Irish entrepreneurs and this year’s visit is a fantastic opportunity to assist finalists in developing their business”, said Kelly. The trip has been made possible with the help of our support agencies, Enterprise Ireland, InterTradelreland and Invest Northern Ireland, he added.

Quoting a Chinese proverb “When you reach the top, keep climbing” Kelly commented that each of the 24 finalists are building and leading dynamic and growing businesses. The Entrepreneur of the Year® Programme has always been the very pulse of the entrepreneur community seeking to reward individuals and businesses for remarkable leadership and successful accomplishments in their field and to allow them due acclaim before their peers and the nation as a whole, he added.

Led by Chairman Denis O’Brien, the judges for the Entrepreneur of the Year® Programme, will use all of their expertise and personal experience as they get to know and assess the 24 finalists.

The 24 finalists in the 2006 programme fall into three set categories; Industry, International and Emerging and will each be profiled in further detail in the Irish Times over the next three weeks, beginning with the International Category on Monday 26th May. They are also interviewed in a three-part series to appear on RTE in September. The winner will be announced at a televised Awards Ceremony in September, held at City West Hotel, Dublin.

The Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year is run in association with The Irish Times, RTE, Ulster Bank, Enterprise Ireland, InterTradelreland, Invest Northern Ireland and The Ryan Academy.

The 2006 Shortlist Finalists – **see attached table**

Entrepreneur	Company	Business Activity	Founded	Location
International				
Christopher Watson	Chain Reaction Cycles	Retailing	1999	Antrim
Barry Smyth	Changing Worlds Ltd	Mobile Technology	1999	Dublin
Anne Heraty	CPL	Recruitment	1989	Dublin
Michael J Flynn	FLI Environmental	Environmental	1989	Waterford
Kieran O'Connor	FreightWatch Group Ltd	Security	1998	Dublin
Brian Connolly	OmniPay	ePayment Processing	2000	Dublin
Stuart Steele	Silver Hill Foods	Food Production - Duck	1962	Monaghan
Martin McKay	Texthelp	Software Products	1994	Antrim
Industry				
Declan Gallagher	Gallaghers Bakery	Bakery	1994	Donegal
Ray Grehan	Glenkerrin Group	Construction Property Development, Hotel & Leisure	1987	Kildare
Dermot McElroy & Ciaran O' Donoghue	IQON Technologies	Computer Manufacturing	1994	Louth
Fergal Broder	Lotus Automation Ireland	Engineering	1989	Sligo
Tony Woods	Midland Steel Reinforcement Supplies Ltd.	Construction Materials	1998	Laois
Mark Elliott & Noel Elliott	P. Elliot & Company	Construction & Property Development	1942	Cavan
Thomas Walsh	Sap Holdings Ltd	Mature Tree Production	1975	Tipperary
Richard Barrett & John Ronan	Treasury Holdings	Property	1989	Dublin
Emerging				
Aldagh McDonogh & Sandra Lawler	Alternatives	Marketing	2000	Dublin
Steve Brankin	Asidua Ltd	Software Consultancy	2002	Antrim
Colum O'Sullivan & Cullen Allen	Cully & Sully	Food Production	2004	Cork
Christopher Foley	Dansk Window Systems	Integrated Window Solutions	2001	Dublin
Dylan Collins	Demonware	Computer Games Software	2002	Dublin
Alan Scroope	FreeFlow	Software Development	2001	Kerry
Seamus McMenamin	Mantis Cranes (Masol Ireland Ltd)	Crane Manufacturing	1998	Donegal
Sean Gallagher	Smarthomes	Structured Cabling System: Residential Market	2002	Louth

The 11 members of the Judging Panel are:

- Denis O'Brien, Digicel Group (Chair), (Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year® 1998)
- Peter Fitzgerald, Radox Laboratories Ltd (Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2004)
- Aidan Heavey, Tullow Oil Plc (Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2005)
- Brian Long, Seer Partners Ltd (Ernst & Young Technology Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2000)
- Pat Maher, Enterprise Ireland
- Mary Martin, AGI Therapeutics Ltd

- Pat McDonagh, Riverdeep (Ernst & Young Master Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2005)
- Liam Nellis, InterTrade Ireland
- Pádraig O'Ceidigh, Aer Arann Express
- Donal Durkan, Invest Northern Ireland
- Liam Shanahan, Shanahan Engineering

Further information on the finalists and the features of the 2006 programme can be viewed online at www.eoy.ie.

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