

# SEARCH IS ON FOR IRELAND'S HIDDEN HEROES

With nominations now open until 5 August, family members, friends and co-workers across Ireland still have time to nominate their Hidden Heroes for 2016, which will be announced at a national awards ceremony in Dublin on 5 September.



Activist and campaigner Joanne O'Riordan (centre) pictured at the launch of this year's awards scheme in Dublin with Irish paralympians Greta Steimikyte and Niamh McCarthy.

**N**ow in its sixth year, the Hidden Heroes Awards scheme recognises the achievements of people, young and old, who have made a significant contribution to Irish society, in their community, workplace, family or through sporting excellence.

Launching this year's Call for Nominations, activist and campaigner, Joanne O'Riordan said she strongly believes that it's not the disability, it's the ability of the person, that's what matters.

"No Limbs, No Limits is my motto and you can do anything you want if you just believe in yourself. Each and every day I live by the motto of what I fail at today I will overcome and conquer tomorrow," Joanne noted.

One of seven people in the world born with the condition Tetra-amelia syndrome, the native of Millstreet in Cork, was the Grand Marshall at this year's St Patrick's Day Parade in Dublin.

She has successfully taken on Taoiseach Enda Kenny, addressed the UN and discussed technology with Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Apple. She was named 'Young Person of the Year' at the People of the Year Awards and Junior Chambers International Most Outstanding Young Person 2015.

Some of last year's winners joined Joanne at the launch of Hidden Heroes 2016. These included 'Sporting Hero' Cillian Dunne who has represented Ireland at javelin, shot-put and discus, winning 200 medals in Ireland and the UK despite being confined to a wheelchair.

The 'Triumph Over Adversity Hero' Neala Dempsey put her life on hold to care for her husband Dermot who was diagnosed with terminal brain cancer. Meanwhile, 'Healthcare Hero' Hilary Noonan (an outreach nurse) has been a hero to countless families over the years as she continuously goes over and above the call of duty to support and mind terminally ill children and their families.

## TEN HERO CATEGORIES

The Hidden Heroes Awards were established in 2011 to honour those who have made a significant contribution to Irish society, their community, workplace, family or through sporting excellence.

**Age Is No Barrier Hero:** Celebrating the achievements and accomplishments of someone over 65.

**Young Hero:** Recognising the achievements of a young person under the age of 16 who has accomplished a lot in their young life.

**Deaf/Hard of Hearing Hero:** Recognising the achievements of someone who has overcome the challenge of being deaf or hard of hearing.

**Family Hero:** In recognition of the hundreds of people in Ireland who care for members in need.

**Healthcare Hero:** Recognising the achievements of a healthcare professional who has gone beyond the call of duty for his/her patients.

**Sporting Hero:** Recognising the achievements of a person who has overcome adversity to excel in sport.

**CSR/Diversity Hero:** Recognising an employee who goes above and beyond their daily job to volunteer and support the community.

**Unsung Hero:** Recognising a male hero who has overcome adversity in his life to excel.

**Unsung Heroine:** Recognising a female hero who has overcome adversity in her life to excel.

**Triumph Over Adversity:** A hero who has overcome significant adversity in his/her life.

All entries must include the name, contact details of the nominee and nominator. Outline in no more than 500 words why the nominee deserves to become a Hidden Hero, online at [www.hiddenhearing.ie/heroes](http://www.hiddenhearing.ie/heroes), through Hidden Hearing branches nationwide or by post to Hidden Hearing Ltd., Hidden Heroes Awards, 3030 Lake Drive, Citywest Business Campus, Freepost F1570, Dublin 24.