

## Meeta Student Award Winners 2011



It was all about Limerick success at national Level in Dublin this November when the team of Danny Allen, Richard Childs and Patrick Byrnes were presented with the prestigious ESS MEETA Student National Award at a high profile ceremony following the keynote address at the 2011 MEETA Conference, Engineers Ireland HQ, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4.

All three are students of Engineering at CIT with Richard Childs hailing from Galbally, Patrick Byrnes from Patrickswell and Danny Allen from Newmarket.

MEETA is the Irish Maintenance and Asset Management Association and is incorporated in Engineers Ireland. They adjudged Danny, Richard and Patrick as the Outright Winners of the ESS MEETA Student National Award 2011 for their project on the design, development, manufacture, commissioning and testing of an automated system for the sand blasting of prosthetic shoulder stems, carried out in conjunction with Croom Precision Medical of Croom, Co. Limerick.

The shoulder stem is used in reconstructive surgery of the shoulder joint and can give a whole new lease of life to those undertaking the surgery. Part of the existing process for the manufacture of the stems carried out in the bio-medical manufacturing plant Croom Precision Medical was too time consuming, inefficient and led to a high volume of rework. The judges were particularly impressed with the practical nature of the solution including automation of a very labour intensive loading and unloading process, improved operator safety and full traceability. The developed system has a payback of just nine months and has other lasting financial benefits including reduction in scrapped parts and waste material, increased reliability, better quality control and increased productivity as an operator no longer has to be with the process full time.

In a further Limerick twist to the story, the sponsors of the awards - ESS are a Limerick company headquartered on the Ennis Road. Specialising in Maintenance and Asset Management, they are in business since 1991 and work with people to improve maintenance in Ireland, UK, India and South Africa. Their Managing Director, Ray O' Neill, was on hand to present the cash prize to the team and wish them well in their future careers, commenting " Great to see this standard of practical work being done by students. A very valuable project with a great return and increased safety too - hard to beat that. Well done to the three lads and I've no doubt they'll make further valuable contributions in their working careers. "