



Business women leading the charge

Shane Murphy

FIVE female entrepreneurs have been recruited by the organisers of National Women's Enterprise Day on November 19, to help boost the number of women setting up their own businesses in Ireland.

The stories of the home-grown entrepreneurs, who all run their own established businesses in different parts of the country, will be showcased in front of 300 delegates at a major conference in Limerick that day, to inspire confidence in other women and help bridge the gender divide.

Although the county and city enterprise boards, including the Clare County Enterprise Board have supported nearly 13,500 female entrepreneurs in 2009, 1000 more than in 2008, men are still almost three times more likely than women to set up their own business in Ireland.

To help address this imbalance, Donna Daly Blyth from Donna's Dance Studio in Cork, **Alison Boardman** from Unique Voice Language Institute in Kerry, Ann Marie Durkin from Shasta in Longford, Alison Ritchie from Polar Ice in Offaly and Jennifer Ryan from Pónaire Roastery in Limerick have been invited by the county and city enterprise boards to share their experiences, challenges and advice with other women on November 19.

"Research from the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor shows that women who know an entrepreneur are five times more likely to be-

come an entrepreneur themselves," said Eamonn Kelly of Clare County Enterprise Board. "Through profiling the success stories of female entrepreneurs in Ireland on National Women's Enterprise Day, we hope to encourage more women to seek out new business opportunities by setting up their own business."

The founder of the UK High Street Chain Coffee Republic, Sahar Hashemi, is one of the keynote speakers, along with local entrepreneur and hotelier, Mary Fitzgerald and Ivan

Yates, broadcaster and founder of Celtic Bookmakers. The Minister of State for Equality, Integration and Human Rights, Ms Mary White, T.D. has been invited to officially open the conference, which takes place at the Strand Hotel in Limerick.

Tickets cost €100 each and are available to buy through www.nwed.ie. For more information about National Women's Enterprise Day, please contact Clare County Enterprise Board, Enterprise House, Mill Road, Ennis, Co. Clare. Tel 065-

6841922. Email clareceb@clareceb.ie or see the website at www.nwed.ie

Below: At the launch of National Women's Enterprise Day 2010 are Donna Daly Blyth from Donna's Dance Studio in Cork, Georgina Sweetnam from the County and City Enterprise Boards, **Alison Boardman** from Unique Voice Language Institute in Kerry, the Minister of State for Equality, Integration and Human Rights, Mary White TD, Jennifer Ryan from Pónaire Coffee Roastery in Limerick and Alison Ritchie from Polar Ice in Offaly.

