

#SundayWiMIN24 Week 10: Dr Ivanna McMahon

Dr Ivanna McMahon was crowned Miss Ireland in 2022, and competed in the Miss World 2024 finals which took place in India this week.

Dr McMahon who is from Barefield, Co. Clare, studied medicine at University College Cork and graduated in 2020. She went on to do her medical internship at Cork University Hospital working in cardiology and neurology, and completed her surgical rotation at University Hospital Tralee. She entered the Southwest GP Training Scheme and worked at Tralee General Hospital throughout the pandemic. During her reign as Miss Ireland she also volunteered in Zambia.

She also represented the Dyslexia Association of Ireland (DAI) and spoke at a briefing for Oireachtas members to highlight the challenges faced by dyslexic people in Ireland and described her lived experience as a person with dyslexia outlining her journey to understand and embrace her dyslexia and also the challenges she faced through the Irish school system and higher education to become a doctor.

In an interview with The Sunday Times she stated, "It's so common, 10 per cent of the world is dyslexic. When I went to the Oireachtas in October with DAI to share my experience, it was to fight for those accommodations and support that people with dyslexia need.

"It's really commonplace across the board in the rest of Europe that students will get extra time for their secondary school exams, but not so in Ireland. Even though, if you decide to go on to third level education, you will get extra time in your exams. It's not an unfair advantage, it's about levelling the playing field, and that's what we're asking for."

Ivanna took the title of Miss Ireland having wowed guests at the Miss Ireland Diamond ball with her performance Cosmic Love by Florence and the Machine on the electric Harp. She started playing the harp at the age of 13 and has played with the National Irish Harp Orchestra and toured Germany and Austria. She also plays six other instruments including the drums, harmonica, fiddle, bodhrán and tin whistle and won all Ireland Championships for drums and harmonica. Ivanna is also a fluent Irish speaker.

Her performance on the harp at the Miss World finals secured her a top 10 placement for talent, ensuring her a spot to perform at the esteemed Miss World ball. Ivanna also placed as a finalist in the public speaking challenge this week and stood out as one of the most highly educated and articulate contestants this year.

During the week of the competition, Dr McMahon has been promoting a number of Irish charities, including the Irish Heart Foundation, Pieta, COPD Ireland, RNLI and the Julian Benson Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.