

Dr Patricia O'Lynn

Biography

1. Bio Summary

With over 10 years' experience working in the school exclusion sector, Dr Patricia O'Lynn is a skilled researcher, political activist, education consultant experienced leader and committee chair. She has a demonstrated history of leadership in the field education and youth studies where she champions collective impact approaches to reducing the use of the disciplinary sanction of exclusion and in the field of politics where she campaigns for shared future, greater educational equality, women's rights and effective services for young people.

1.1 Educational Background

Patricia completed doctoral research at Queen's University, which focused on better understanding young people's experiences of exclusion from school within the context of Northern Ireland. Her thesis is called 'Mainstreams, Margins and the Spaces In-Between: Youth Experiences of School Exclusion in Northern Ireland.'

Prior to embarking on doctoral research, Patricia achieved a Master's in Social Science, a Degree in Law and a Diploma in Strategic Level Leadership and Management. Patricia is also a Chartered Manager and Northern Ireland's Lead Consultant for the Chartered Management Institute. She is also a recipient of the Sir Tomas Dixon Award and the Department for Economy doctoral scholarship.

1.2 Political Background

Patricia was a candidate in the most recent Westminster and Assembly elections and is a former congressional intern to Senator John McCain. In 2019 Patricia was elected to local government to represent the people of Ballymena town via the Alliance Party of Northern Ireland. Since then, she received a public appointment from the Health Minister, where served as a Commissioner to the Northern Health and Social Care Trust and also recently served as a Special Political Advisor to the Alliance Party Leader and Justice Minister for Northern Ireland- Naomi Long MLA.

1.3 Leadership Background

Currently employed as the Executive Director of Politics in Action, Patricia is passionate about political education and strongly believes in the transformative potential of initiatives designed to amplify youth voices. She works to enhance youth opportunities to make their voices heard through the core KS4 programme delivered by Politics in Action which is currently delivered to 35 schools across Northern Ireland.

Throughout 2021, Patricia completed her PhD, received Chartered Manager status and bought her first house. She identifies her proudest achievements to include giving a presentation to Her [Majesty](#) Queen Elizabeth II on the future of democracy, becoming a lifelong Fellow of the prestigious Cumberland Lodge Institute, participating in the Washington Ireland Programme and rescuing an abandoned kitten which has since become a fully integrated member of the O'Lynn family, also known as Smudge O'Lynn.

1.4 Personal Interests

Patricia is passionate about amplifying the voices of young people. She has a deep enthusiasm for political education and youth participation and has keen interest in transformative action-based research, the arts and broadcasting. Patricia believes the three core values that any institution must cultivate to ensure inclusivity are belongingness, recognition, and representation. In the near future, Patricia looks forward to representing the people of North Antrim when she is elected as the first Alliance MLA in the area on the 5th of May 2022.