



## Friendship Four 2015 Outputs

### *Project Beneficiaries*

- 600 Bostonians travelled to Belfast for at least a 4 night stay- some of whom bookended the visit to make it a week's vacation.
- The Sister City delegation was cross sectoral and included business, academia, government officials and not-for-profit organisations.
- It is worthy to note that only one or two other ice hockey tournaments are exempt from a rule pertaining to home game defeats and that the fact that the teams were playing for league points – they were not just show games.
- During the month long STEM programme delivered at W5,12 events attracted 80 schools and 2 colleges of Further Education totalling 2,776 participants.
- 2,308 school children attended the Friday afternoon game, from 50 schools from across the city and a small number from the Giants outreach programme.
- 2,767 young people from community/youth/uniformed organisations attended the third game played on Saturday afternoon.
- Adults connected with the above games indicated that the overwhelming majority had never experienced an ice hockey match before and would never have been able to without the project support to do so.
- 2,867 tickets were sold including fans who travelled from outside the Province.
- Representatives from the 4 Colleges visited 8 local schools to inspire and connect with young people and learn about our educational and sporting culture.

### *Communications*

- The project media lead in commenced with the April Boston launch and maintained momentum through a series of Sister City and Friendship Four related activity e.g. Visit Belfast window dressing, the October inspection team visit, presentation of American bursaries, STEM events and then the core activity.
- Social media played a fundamental role in communication activity. 359,700 Twitter accounts were reached and there were 543,800 impressions on the same channel. Facebook was used continually to build pace and disseminate feeds with substantial results: the November window dressing in Visit Belfast reached 18,533; the "One week to go" message reached

over 10,000 people and our Welcome Message had a total reach of almost 9,000. The project also fared extremely well in terms of Council social media activity e.g. the Lord Mayor conducting the inaugural face off was the third most popular tweet of that week.

- Equally the Colleges' employment of the channels enabled live cross Atlantic messages to be conveyed- for example Brown University posted up a video of their school visits which they deemed to be the most valuable part of their experience.
- Games were broadcast live to America and Canada through the New England Sports Network (NESN) and The Sports Network Channel 1 (TSN1). NESN reaches 4.2million homes across New England and TSN has 158,000 subscribed viewers in Western Canada.
- A 20 second advertisement was also placed during the matches to promote the region.
- Friendship Four featured in both of Boston's major newspapers- The Herald and The Globe. The latter is the most widely circulated daily newspaper in Boston and in New England with average daily circulation of about 232,432 whilst The Herald has a daily readership of almost 96,500.
- Locally, the project received extensive media coverage including:
  - Radio coverage and interviews with Radio Ulster, Cool FM, Citybeat
  - Peak time television audiences thanks to UTV and BBC incorporating it into the main newsdesks
  - Written articles and editorials including Ulster Business, Sunday Life, Newsletter and The Irish News
  - Local written press: for example Armagh, Down, North West