



MSU Activity Report 2018/19

Maynooth Students' Union

A few words from...

Katie Deegan

**MSU VP Education &
Deputy President 2019/20**

A Chara,

I am delighted to present this years end of year Activity Report for 18/19. This year was packed full of campaigns, initiatives, and events right through the two semesters, all with the ambition to promote our core principles and enhance the student experience in Maynooth.

Maynooth SU worked hard all year with help from students, staff and the community. We are eternally grateful to everyone who helped make MSU's year a success. While nothing is ever perfect, this Report highlights the determination and dedication of all people involved to ensure that every student feels included and welcome to Maynooth University.

As I start my new role as President I want to thank everyone who has encouraged and supported our work so far and I look forward to everything the year ahead has in store.

Katie





July 2018

MSU Officer Training *Ongoing Training*

The Officer Team for 2018/19 started on July 01st and while there may not have been students on site, it was a very busy time!

After spending time shadowing the outgoing officers during late June the new team embarked on a very thorough training process during July. From Communications, Campaign and Event Planning, Finances and Budgeting; Representation Structures and Constitution Training through to Commercial Services and Negotiation Skills- no stone is left unturned in preparing the Officers for the year ahead. Phew!

USI Students' Union Training *Ongoing Training*

Each year the Union of Students in Ireland (USI) provide training for elected officers, this year it took place in Athlone IT. The purpose of SUT is to provide full-time officers with the skills required to plan and execute a successful year as a sabbatical officer.

SUT+ was held in Queens Belfast SU and united student officers from across Ireland as members of the executive committee of a fictional college, with many of the traits of a University in an IT setting. MSU officers experienced tough decision making, challenging narratives and an understanding of their own contribution to workplace issues.

August

Student Housing *Student Campaigns*

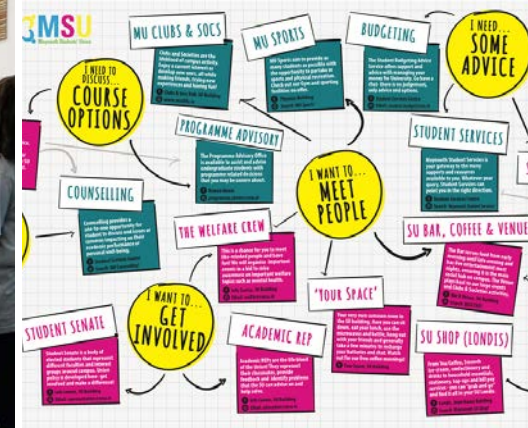
Accommodation is still a growing concern but MSU worked to highlight the unfair rates being charged of students and coordinated our efforts to ensure students find affordable accommodation.

Our primary focus in assisting students with their housing search was through our Facebook Accommodation group. The Officer team researched rent levels over the past 5 years to establish guidelines on what was an affordable rent for students to pay. We successfully called out landlords charging substantially more and improved the information flow between landlords and students.

'Your Space' Refurb *Service Improvements*

It was another busy Summer for facility improvements. The toilets in the Bar and Venue area of the SU Building were refurbished and new informational graphics installed across the Centre.

The major change you would have noticed though was the introduction of the 'Your Space' Common Area. After the loss of the old student Common Room there was a notable lack of recreational space on campus. The SU responded to this need by converting the old canteen area into a more inviting and comfortable rec space with extra seating and power points and the facility to hold small events.



NiteLine Funding Secured

Representation

NiteLine is a listening, support and information service run by and for the students of ITT, ITB, MU, NCAD, NCI, RCSI, TCD & UCD and their affiliate colleges. Their Volunteers go through a rigorous screening and training programme based on the Samaritans model and run with the help of the college counselling services.

This year there was an issue with funding and there was a risk of Maynooth not taking part in the programme. The VP Welfare met with MU authorities, stressed the importance of the service and secured the required funding.

Beat Your Repeats

Student Campaigns

This online campaign helped students who were doing repeats. We provided advice and support to students while signposting them to the relevant University resource when they needed it.

We visited the Library around exam times to hand out some freebies and be available to answer any questions or queries that presented. We also teamed up with MU Accommodation to make sure students were aware that they could stay on south campus.

September

MAP Launchpad Orientation

Representation

This was a residential orientation programme designed to support and ease the transition to third level for students who are coming to Maynooth University through the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) and/or the Disability Access Route to Education (DARE).

Incoming students supported by the Maynooth University Access Programme (MAP) can get to know fellow first years, ask questions and find out advice from existing student leaders on how to navigate the University. MSU provided entertainment for students at their Saturday social events, gave talks and hosted workshops.

Transition Campaign

Student Campaigns

Starting the next stage of your life in University can be a daunting time. From learning where everything is on campus, meeting new friends through to understanding the different types of learning at University - there's a lot to take in!

To aid the transition the Union created and distributed z-card flyers which had a handy Academic Year Planner alongside answers to some of the questions students were most likely to have. We also ran an online 'Jargon Buster' campaign to help students learn some of the frequently used terms on campus.



SPOTLIGHT: Weekly Coffee Mornings

Student Engagement

SPOT
LIGHT

As part of last year's Annual Survey of Student Opinion there were 10 Recommendations made. Making use of Your Space as a venue for a weekly Coffee Morning as floated as a means for addressing two of these recommendations.

5.2 Promotion of opportunities to get involved: Many students indicate that they would like to get more involved with extracurricular activities on campus and with the Union itself. Showcasing the opportunities that exist and outlining the time needed to effectively take part may lead to greater uptake.

5.5 Address the cohort of students who feel like they don't belong: Close to a quarter of the student population felt that they don't belong on their course or in Maynooth. While we can't be certain of the exact reasons for this, the SU should explore what services/campaigns it could offer to try to reach this demographic.

The MSU Coffee Mornings started in October and continued every Wednesday morning for both academic terms. Free tea, coffee and snacks were made available and SU Officers and staff were encouraged to get involved.

The Coffee Mornings were an ideal vehicle for carrying campaign messages or introducing students to SU or University services that they may not have been aware of. Most weeks also included some type of inclusive activity, such as painting or mindfulness, to encourage students to interact and get to know each other.

Over the course of the year almost every SU campaign, covering topics as diverse as sexual health and employability skills, made the Wednesday morning in Your Space part of their plan. University services such as Budgeting, Academic Advice and Chaplaincy also took the opportunity to get themselves involved.

Feedback was extremely encouraging and the Coffee Morning programme will be back for 2019/20!



Kim's Welcome Letter

Student Campaigns

Our VP Welfare & Equality Kim had vivid memories of her first days on campus. For her it was a time of anxiety and stress, so she wanted to help reassure our new intake that supports for them were available and that the Union can be somewhere to come to make friends and feel safe.

What started as an open letter ended up with Kim recording a series of Vlogs sharing her personal experience and how she was assisted in getting through. These were shared online and received a very positive response.

MU Orientation Week

Representation & Events

We had an amazing time getting to meet and talk to all the new first years attending Maynooth this year! As part of the Orientation Tour each student visits the SU, meets the Team and learns about the Union. We also debated the important issues-like, 'Does pineapple really belong on pizza?'

We also ran a number of lunchtime and evening events in the specially erected stretch tent outside the SU for the first years. From comedy to magicians, County Colours to Code Love- there really was something for every taste!

MSU FREE Freshers' Week

Events

We hosted a week of entertainment for our Freshers' in the Bar and Venue, all of which were totally free of charge! Our aim was to provide a variety of free events and activities to help new students socialise together and have fun.

Evening events for the week were '100% Irish' with Elkin and Hatchlings; 'Tuesday on Tick' with Kinghts of Leon and MU DJ Soc.; Bingo Loco and Casa Maynooth. We were busy every night and students responded really well to the 'Free Freshers' concept.

Maynooth Town Clean Up

Community

The herculean efforts of the Maynooth Tidy Towns committee in running clean-up initiatives throughout the year is something to be applauded.

To give them some much needed time off, MSU organised student clean-up crews to hit the streets at key times during the year, beginning with Freshers', to make sure everything was ship-shape for the mornings rush hour.

Our thanks go out to every student who volunteered for this initiative- it wasn't easy to be on the streets so early, but you made a difference.



October

Drugs & Alcohol Campaign

Student Campaigns

When students start University, or return after being away for the Summer, it can be a time for experimentation. We decided that this was a good time to remind students about the dangers of excessive alcohol or drug consumption.

This campaign focussed on the pillar harm reduction and sought to make students more aware of the amount of alcohol they are consuming when 'free-pouring' drinks, that the contents of a pill are never solely what you think they are and that you should be aware of changes in character of your friends.

MU Clubs & Societies

Training Day

Ongoing Training

Over 200+ club and society committee members attended the annual Clubs and Societies training sessions this year. In a change from previous years, training modules were delivered over a number of days and evenings rather than in one session. The aim of this was to encourage involvement from as many members as possible.

Committee members received training around many areas including; leadership; budgeting; event planning; social media strategy; data protection and how to make MSULife work best for their own Club or Society.

SU Coffee Mornings

Student Engagement

A new initiative to encourage student engagement and to promote awareness of our new 'Your Space' area was the 'MSU Coffee Morning'.

Free tea, coffee and snacks were served up to students every Wednesday from 10.00am-11.30am during term-time. SU Officers were always on hand to chat with students, encourage them to get to know each other and to listen to any concerns that they might have had.

As the year progressed each week took on a different theme with inspirational speakers and key SU and University staff available to meet with students.

Jump In: MU Clubs & Societies Fairs Day

Student Engagement

Time and again, we hear students tell us that the time that they spent as part of a Club or Society is something they remember fondly when they leave college. Joining a Club or Society is about much more than just the activity- it's the sense of camaraderie that comes from making friends with a shared interest.

Every October the Clubs and Societies Fairs Day descends on the Phoenix Sports Halls where students can browse everything there is to offer and sign up on the spot! We had massive crowds this year, with many Clubs & Societies increasing their membership numbers.

POP IN

PERK UP

CHILL OUT



POP-UP ACADEMIC ADVICE SESSION

22 NOV 10.00-12.00

YOUR SPACE IN SU BUILDING

JOIN KATIE (MSU EDUCATION OFFICER) FOR SOME P
AND TO CHAT ABOUT YOUR ACADEMIC ISSUES ALON
MU ACADEMIC ADVISORY AND MU PROGRAMME ADV

SPOTLIGHT: Pop-In, Perk-Up, Chill-Out *Student Campaign*



The 'Pop In, Perk Up, Chill Out' campaign was born from a desire to provide Maynooth students our students with the opportunity to speak to the relevant academic supports available in the University in an informal, approachable, accessible manner.

These supports included the SU Education Officer and MU Programme Advisory and Academic Advisory offices. Help is freely available in our university and it's fundamental that our students know this.

The sessions were held in a warm, informal, friendly environment which attracted a vast array of students from different courses. We also offered attractive but healthy free snacks such as smoothies and popcorn which greatly appealed to students and helped to boost attendance.

We also offered hot chocolate because of its warmth and comfort for students coming up to a hectic and stressful exam period because student wellbeing and support is key to us here at MSU.

The impact of the campaign meant that students felt informed, well supported and had the relevant knowledge to positively help and guide them during their education, particularly in times of difficulty. It meant that students struggling were pointed in the right direction to prevent them from dropping out.

As a result of the campaign students knew that; the Programme Advisory Office is available to assist them with programme related decisions they may be unsure about before and after their registration period; the Academic Advisory Office offers a convenient first point of contact for students who wish to seek assistance with their general experience of University life and that the SU is available as a friendly support.

It was a new, fresh idea which really positively impacted education for so many attendees. Education is a tool which we can use to change the world and it's fundamental that students have the knowledge to access help and support if ever and whenever they need it during the course of their degree.



World Mental Health Day

Student Campaigns

The SU and MU Mental Health Society hosted a coffee morning before raising the Amber mental health flag outside the SU. We raised the flag to show students that we are a campus that works to ensure all students with mental health difficulties are listened to, represented and supported.

As we raised the flag we invited students to share their stories about Mental Health- a number of people choose to do so, helping to challenge the stigma around sharing your mental health state publicly.

SHAG Week 1

Student Campaigns

This year during Sexual Health Awareness & Guidance (SHAG) Week we continued to open up the dialogue on consent and on getting regular sexual health screening. In particular, the campaign highlighted the theme that what someone wears does not equal consent.

We distributed Sexual Health packs across campus and hosted a number of workshops and events. We also worked successfully with the Health Centre in MU Student Services to provide free STI checks for a 2 week period and promote this service to the student body.

Constitutional Review

Representation

It is imperative that the Union ensures that its governing documents are up to date and reflective of both where the Union is but also sets the direction for where it should go. To this end the President established the Review Committee which undertook an extensive review process which ultimately ended in the drafting of a proposed new Constitution.

After a thorough consultative process this proposed Constitution was put to a Referendum and was approved by over 95% The new Constitution came into effect on July 01st 2019.

USI Housing Protest

Representation & National Issues

MSU joined USI and our colleagues in other HEI's across the country in marching to support the call for the Irish Government to end the exploitation and put in place measures to provide affordable housing for students.

Students are paying over astronomical prices for a room in a house, crammed with people due to the severe lack of affordable purpose built student accommodation. Our presence on October 03rd made sure the student voice was heard in the middle of this national emergency.



UpSkill

Student Campaigns

UpSkill Week is a continually developing initiative for MSU. There was an identified need for students to acquire employable skills outside those taught on their course. To meet this demand we hosted workshops facilitated by the Post Grad and Careers offices.

External workshops were also hosted in the SU as LinkedIn and Accenture gave students the inside track on job hunting and securing graduate places.

Academic REP Elections & Training

Representation

Academic REPs are the lifeblood of the Democracy element of MSU. Each year, classes across the University elect one of their own to represent their views and uphold their rights. To help REPs to do this, we put in place a suite of training that equips students to be effective representatives.

Training took place in the Venue and was facilitated by Katie, the SU VP Education, along with facilitators skilled in the various areas of student representation.

First MSU Student Senate Meeting of the year

Representation

The current MSU Student Senate entered its third year and looked to continue to develop as a pioneering student representative structure.

Senate members were elected to help govern the Union and hold its officers to account and met a subsequent five times to discuss motions and mandates on behalf of Maynooth students.

Also kicking off in October were the first meetings of the Academic and Clubs & Societies Councils.

Student Engagement Ambassadors Launched

Student Engagement

In a new initiative to boost student engagement and SU awareness across campus the VP for Clubs, Societies & Student Engagement introduced the MSU Student Engagement Ambassadors.

This led to a team of dedicated students who worked to support fundraising, community and engagement activities across campus, and beyond. You couldn't miss the Ambassadors while they were out and about due to their boundless enthusiasm and bright red hoodies!

questions

for a better union



SPOTLIGHT: MSU Annual Student Survey

You Speak: We Listen.

**SPOT
LIGHT**

2018 saw the first implementation of a revised and structured survey instrument for the Union. Over 700 students from across the population participated in this survey, contributing to a valuable data set on how students engage with their Students' Union, their University and with their studies and welfare.

Student opinion is at the heart of MSU's work planning and enhancement processes, and is integral to informing how the Union can improve the quality of everything we do. The survey of annual opinion, in this context, explores the understanding of the Union and its activities, and, also, examines the societal and personal factors that impact on the student experience.

The results of the survey are intended to add value at institutional level, and to inform Students' Union activities. A full report with 10 recommendations has been presented to the Union Officers to inform their planning for the year. Among the actions taken in response to these recommendations were the following:

Increase promotion of Structure and Roles

While students felt positive about the Union in general, many do not understand its various parts and personnel.

Response: Increased promotion of Student Senate meetings and their decisions. Also, a new website with an increased focus on Representation was put into development during the year which will launch Summer 2019.

Prioritise Health and Finance information

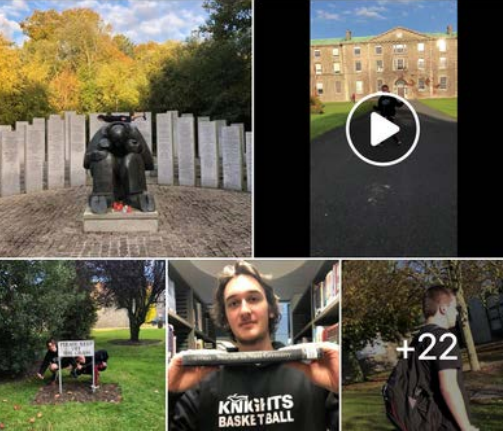
Health and finance issues dominate the student experience with recognition of University financial supports very low.

Response: Increased collaboration between the SU and MU Student Services, particularly in the areas of sexual health and budgeting information. Relevant services were brought over to the SU Building to increase visibility.

Explore the work/life balance of students

College workload and work commitments are reported as a barrier towards further involvement in University activities.

Response: Increased promotion of commuter friendly Clubs & Societies activities by the SU. The establishment of a Student Engagement Ambassadors and daytime engagement events such as the Wednesday Coffee Mornings.



November

Maynooth Games

Student Engagement

The Annual Maynooth Games took place early in February, with over 50 teams of 3-5 taking part we had a record 256 students taking part! The Games sees the teams work to solve riddles and complete challenges over the course of the week with the winners crowned 'Maynooth Games Champions'.

This event was first run 4 years ago as a commuter friendly that encouraged students to work as a team and to get out there and explore their campus. The Final took part in the Venue, raised over €500 for Barretstown and saw Seahawk Squad take the crown!

€100 Challenge Launch

Student Engagement

As part of our drive to collect as much money as possible for our chosen charity the €100 Challenge was born! The idea was to challenge individual Clubs and Societies to raise at least €100 during the year for Barretstown.

Digital badges were awarded to those who succeeded. In fact, some went way above the initial target so we introduced Gold, Silver and Bronze rewards.

This Is Not Consent

Student Campaigns

Something that became obvious to the Officer Team during October's SHAG campaign was that the issue of Consent was a hot topic on campus. In response to this the SU decided to run a specific campaign in response.

Alongside a poster and digital push the main focus of this campaign was the 'This Is Not Consent' rally, which saw 100s of students gather outside the SU before making their way to the centre of the campus. There they spoke out and shared powerful and emotional personal experiences around consent.

'Pop-In, Perk-Up, Chill-Out' Academic Advice Launch

Student Campaigns

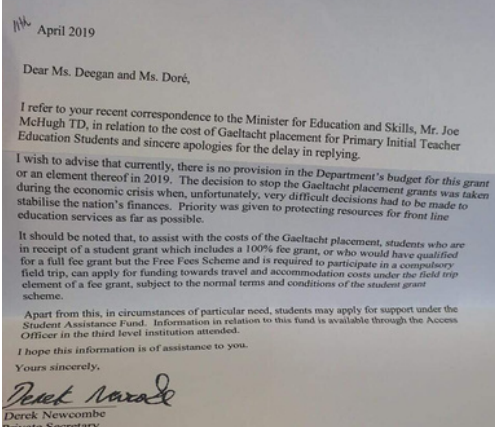
It's important that students ensure they are on track with their assessments and that their studies match their respective careers goals. That's why MSU, along with MU academic services, chose to provide 'Pop-Up Academic Advice Sessions' branded as 'Pop In, Perk Up, Chill Out' in Your Space.

Students were provided with the opportunity to speak to the relevant supports available in the University in an informal, approachable, accessible manner including the Education Officer, Programme Advisory and Academic Advisory.

STUDENT HOUSING

Town Hall Meeting

Tuesday 04th Nov.
Íontas Theatre



Accommodation Town Hall *Representation*

As part of the Union's efforts in putting pressure on the Government to provide affordable accommodation for students MSU hosted a number of 'Town Hall' meetings this month.

These meetings were open to the entire student body and featured question and answer sessions with local political representatives and special interest groups.

All of this with the aim that politicians are acutely aware of the student voice here in Maynooth when it comes time to make decision or lobby on the area of affordable accommodation.

Wheatus LIVE *Student Events*

'I've got two tickets to iron Maiden baby, come with me Friday, don't say maybe, I'm just a Teenage Dirtbag baby like you... Oh Ohh Ohhhhhh!

Yes- the original Teenage Dirtbags Wheatus, supported by MC Frontalot, were in town to share their unique brand of 90s spirit to a packed house here in the Venue.

However, it will be the promo video which featured our own Kim and Paul in a remake of the classic teenage Dirtbag video which will long in the memory (and our video archives!)

December

Gaeltacht Fees Campaign *Student Campaigns*

Students in primary teacher education have been required to self-fund fees relating to three weeks of mandatory Gaeltacht placement. Previously covered by a €637 state grant, student are under increasing pressure to cover this charge.

To highlight this issue the SU VP for Education Katie and the Oifegach na Gaeilge collected over 500 signatures from teaching students requesting that the Minister reinstates the Gaeltacht grant. The campaign was extremely effective as the minister responded to our 500 letters we sent him in the post and put the issue on the debating table.

Pink Training *Training & Development*

Pink Training is the largest LGBTQ+ training event in Europe, where hundreds of LGBTQ+ students and their allies get together to celebrate and get informed about their rights, their access to power and what they can do to bring about positive change in Irish society.

MSU organised for 20+ Maynooth students to attend Pink Training this year in NUIGSU. They had the opportunity to attend workshops on topics like: LGBTQ+ sex ed, supporting someone coming out, challenging stigma in sport and gaelic cultures in Ireland, and the Trans* movement in Ireland.

GOING TO AN AFTERPARTY DOES NOT MEAN YES.

Consent must be freely given, ongoing, informed, enthusiastic, and specific.

**Consent is unmistakable.
It is everyone's responsibility to ask.**

If you have any concerns about your Sexual Health talk to our Welfare Officer Kim in confidence and she can refer you to the appropriate service.

SPOTLIGHT: **This Is Not Consent** *Student Campaigns*

**SPOT
LIGHT**

The 'This Is Not Consent' campaign was a response to what has been an emerging issue over the past number of years. The campaign's aim was for students to be informed about what consent is and how obtaining it should be something natural and expected.

We also wanted to combat the idea that the language of consent is only about preventing rape, and is too formal to be used naturally during sex. Consent is about communication, empathy and awareness – and it's to do with sex, so it's also about fun and pleasure.

We want students to be comfortable asking "Can I touch you?", "Is this okay", "What would feel good?", and explicitly saying "I want you to do this", "It feels good when you do this", or "I don't like that". These types of questions and responses do more than establish consent; they establish comfort and mutual pleasure. Expecting sex to be good when either party is too immature, uncomfortable or uncaring to ask a partner what they want, and if what they are doing is pleasurable, is unrealistic.

Our campaign featured a poster and social media campaign that revolved around some of the misconceptions around consent. We took 5 different scenarios and made it clear that these do not represent consent and that students should think more about what consent means to them.

A poignant moment of the campaign was our 'Victim Blaming Demo' where students shared their past experiences with sexual assault, its aftermath and the practice of associating consent with the clothes someone is wearing. It was a touching and powerful experience for everyone present.

Elements of the campaign went viral on social media, increasing our reach both across campus and nationally. In this respect, our goal to promote or message to as many students as possible was met.

Workshops and speak-out session were also facilitated in both the SU and MU Student Services- these really insightful sessions complimented the message of the campaign perfectly.

3,981

- Printing Transactions



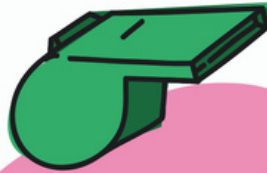
218

- Free Events run by MSU



€99,393

- Spending on Coaching by Clubs & Societies



53,618

- Chicken Nuggets Served



92

- Clubs & Socs Events held in SU Venue



29

- Instances of Special Events Funding



625

- MU Room/Hall Bookings for Clubs & Socs



SU BAR
& VENUE | MAYNOOTH

MU CLUBS & SOCS

MSU 18/19

- IN NUMBERS -

313

- Events in SU Bar/Venue



2,585

- Tickets Sold for Formal Ball Events by Clubs & Societies



13,053

- hours worked by P/T Student Staff



1,976

- Items of Merchandise Sold



€19

- Average Ticket Price for SU Ticketed Events




7,656


- Breakfasts Served



€56,556
- Student Contributions for Trips, Intersiversities etc.



8
- Average Weekly Hours per P/T Student Staff



124
- Performers Booked



564
- Events posted on MSU Life



4,831
- Student Travelcards Issued



11,518
- Evening Meals Served



€15,512
- Raised by Clubs & Soes through Sponsorship

2,442
- Event Tickets Sold



120,375
- Beverages Served



124
- Documents Considered by MSU Student Senate



176
- Off Campus Clubs & Soes Training Sessions




26,425
- Lunches Served




1,444
- SU Room/Table Bookings for Clubs & Soes



€33,457
- Ticket Sales Income by Clubs & Soes Events



18
- F/T Staff across SU, Shop & Bar (inc. Elected Officers)



57
- Part-Time Student Staff



Team Hope

Student Engagement

Each year the Team Hope Christmas Shoebox appeal puts gifts right into the hands of some of the world's most vulnerable children - many of whom will receive no other gift for Christmas.

VP Education Katie organised a collection point herein the SU and put out a series of appeals via social media explaining what was involved and how students could take part. It was an enormous success and Maynooth students played their part in brightening the Christmas of many children in 2018.

Snowed In

Student Events

Monday 17th December saw the SU host a full schedule of Christmas themed events under the title of 'Snowed In'.

Every event was free with charity collections for Barretstown taking place throughout the day. We kicked off at 11am with the reindeer Run on South Campus, moved on to the Apres Ski Lodge in Your Space, a Snowball Challenge in the Foyer, MU DJ Soc. in the Venue with a Camembert Quartet Christmas Special in the Bar- all rounded off with our very own DJ Prez Diop on the decks 'til late!

12 days of Christmas Draw

Student Engagement

This year we held a mega free prize draw in the SU Front Office. Whether students came in to purchase a Student Leap Card, or they simply came into say hi, they could enter into the draw.

There was a total of 36 prizes inc. Student Leap Card vouchers, One 4 All vouchers, Book Shop vouchers, power-banks, hoodies, chocolates, etc. the list was amazing.

Two draws were held each day on the run up to the Christmas holidays, with the delighted winners calling over to the SU Front Office to receive their prize. Thank you to all our partners/suppliers who donated.

MSU Diversity Day

Student Engagement

Led by the SU Officers and Senator for Ethnic Diversity; Diversity Day brought students, Clubs & Societies together to celebrate the diverse student body on campus. We looked at different Christmas cultures and heard from speakers.

The event was so popular that it was decided to expand it during the month of March and 'Diversity Maynooth' was formed- a celebration of fashion, culture, cuisine and customs. Events included a food fair and fashion show. There was great engagement from Clubs & Societies and the week was a tremendous success.



January 2019

DeStress Maynooth Exam Campaign

Student Campaigns

Stress levels can be higher than usual around exam time. While a bit of stress can help for students to stay motivated and focused, too much can be pretty unhelpful.

We built on our previous award winning DeStress Maynooth campaigns with the aim of helping students lower their stress levels and achieve the best academic grades that they can. We achieved this through running food and snack stations in the library, providing toiletries in the toilets and destress events such as the always popular Pet Farm!

New Student Centre: First Stage Sign-Off

Representation & Service Improvements

With agreement in place for the provision of a new Student Centre on campus, the first half of this year saw the Union involved in high level discussion around funding and planning issues as the Centre looked to move to the planning phase.

As this building will be the home of MSU and MU Clubs & Societies- it will be the heart of the student experience on campus. We wanted to ensure the student voice was acted upon during these negotiations. Additional funding was secured and agreement was reached on signing of Stage One.

Nurses Protest

National Issues

On Saturday 09th February tens of thousands of people attended a rally in Dublin city centre in support of the nurses' campaign for improved pay and for the health service to tackle recruitment and retention issues.

The MSU Officer team attended, alongside SUs from across the country, to add momentum to the nurses' cause. Every year students are either training to become nurses or are treated by the nursing profession- we wanted to be there to lend our support.

February

Jump Back In: Clubs & Socs Fairs Day 2

Student Engagement

It's never too late to join a Club or Society! If a student missed out during Semester One we run another Fairs Day at the beginning of Semester 2.

This time, the Venue was filled with music, drama, sports demos and games as Clubs and Societies showcased themselves to prospective members. Semester 2 is traditionally a busy time for Clubs and Societies as they run their main events and start to have one eye on the end of year Awards and BICS.



SPOTLIGHT: **MSU Events 2018/19** *Throughout The Year*

**SPOT
LIGHT**

MSUENTS kicked off the 18/19 academic year with a two-week 'Free Freshers' extravaganza as part of Orientation and Fresher's week. Orientation week had a range of student engagement activities including magic shows, comedians, a hypnotist, evening gigs and an outdoor cinema to name a few.

We hosted some fantastic acts during Fresher's Week with the highlight being the always crazy 'Bingo Loco'. These guys have blazed a trail across Ireland, and beyond, over the past couple of years and really pulled out all the stops for our freshers this year!

Our entertainment programme for the year we provided free entertainment in the Bar every Monday-Thursday night during term. This was supplemented by Clubs & Societies events and other one-off happenings, such as the 'Howl At The Moon' Halloween party. The majority of events were free of charge or saw a charity donation at the door.

Some of the bar events include karaoke, open mic nights, quizzes and lip sync. The bar also showed every big sports fixture including Premier League, Champions league. The bar will show all rugby world cup fixtures in the coming semester.

In semester 2 we ran two main gigs, Bingo Loco @ Charity Week and the annual Beach Party. Charity week saw us donate all door collections to Barretstown with the Bar and SU Londis Shop getting in on the act. Donations were made whenever a student bought lunch or a tea/coffee. In all over €3,000 was raised on top of the €10,000 raised by the Designer Dig- what a week!

For the Beach Party we sold 1600 tickets in less than a day. A mammoth production effort gave us 3 stages, 10 tones of sand and 1600 very happy guests with the red hot Wild Youth headlining.

A review of all events will take place this summer to ensure we are delivering the best event schedule for the coming academic year.



First Day Contact Launch

Student Engagement

Another new initiative for this year was the position of 'First Day Contact' within Clubs & Societies. Spurred by discussions with the MU Access Office it was noted that some students felt anxious or unsure about integrating themselves into University life on campus.

Launched as a pilot through a small number of Clubs & Societies this year, the First Day Contact's role was to engage with new members and ensure they felt welcomed and remove any barriers to their continued participation. Currently under review, we expect the programme to roll out in full next year.

Designer Dig

Community & Fundraising

With the major push this year on fundraising for our chosen Charity Partner (Barretstown), it was decided that the Union and Clubs & societies should host a large event off campus in an effort to engage with the local community- the Designer Dig fashion sale was born!

Local fashion shops and individuals alike donated thousands of items to be sold over a 2 day event in The Glenroyal Hotel. The never worn and nearly new items were price tagged and put on display by our volunteers in a professional sales setting. It went down a treat, raising over €10,000 for charity!

SHAG Week 2

Student Campaigns

Sexual Health is something that affects students all year round. That is why we bring back our SHAG Week campaign during Semester 2. The main focus this time was on sexual health screening.

Once again we worked successfully with the Health Centre in MU Student Services to provide free STI checks for a 2 week period and debunk some of the myths surrounding getting yourself checked.

We discovered at the end of the Semester that STI checks for the current year were significantly up on last year- great news!

Charity Week

Student Engagement & Fundraising

Every year Maynooth Students' Union and Maynooth University Clubs & Societies choose a charity and fundraise on their behalf for the whole college year. This year at a meeting of Clubs & Societies Council, where a number of charities were nominated, students voted for Barretstown.

Last year we raised €6,000 for our chosen charity over the course of a full year. This year we aimed to beat that total in one week, during Charity Week! Not only did we smash this aim but we went on to raise €30,190 in total. Thank you all so much!



March

International Women's Day Participation

Student Campaigns

Following a mandate from Maynooth Students' Union Senate, at 11.45am on the 8th of March MSU held a walk-out to mark International Women's Day. We called on on all Irish citizens to ensure that gender inequality, in all forms, is eradicated to make a more fair and just society.

We then took to the streets of Dublin as part of the #Time4Equality protest. Ending gender inequality will not be an easy task, but it is incumbent on all Irish citizens to ensure that gender inequality is eradicated to make a more fair and just society.

Irish Survey of Student Engagement

Representation

ISSE is a quantitative survey of the experience of first and final year undergrad and taught postgrad students, the findings are used to create index scores for student engagement. We worked very closely with the University to improve increase uptake of the survey.

The Survey culminates in a Report that examines the findings in order to suggest how institutions can work to improve student engagement and add value to the college experience.

MSU Executive Elections

Democracy

Each year Maynooth Students' Union (MSU) hosts elections to fill positions on MSU's Executive Committee. MSU have four full time positions (President, VP Education, VP Welfare & Equality, and VP Clubs, Societies, & Student Engagement) and six part time positions (Arts, Celtic Students, & Philosophy Faculty Convenor, Social Science Faculty Convenor, Science & Engineering Faculty Convenor, Postgraduate Representative, Oifigeach na Gaeilge agus Gnóthaí Cultúrtha, and Events & Promotions Officer). These officers, other than Postgraduate, will take up office on July 1st.

International Women's Day Participation

Student Campaigns / Community

On Friday 15th March we joined the Fridays For Future march here in Maynooth. After assembling on campus we made our way into the town to be joined by primary and secondary school students.

We were inspired by the young people of Maynooth- the time is now for Action on Climate Change. These actions will continue until the next generation is listened to.

#Fridaysforfuture#Climatestrike



SPOTLIGHT: **Student Achievement Awards** *Recognising Participation*



The USI Student Achievement Awards, in its sixth year, is the annual opportunity for the Student Movement in Ireland to recognise the contribution of students within the student community.

Always a fantastic night where you get to hear inspiring stories about students who work tirelessly, both inside and outside the classroom, to improve the student experience. This was no exception.

When the nominations came in we were delighted to see we had an amazing 16 nominations across 12 categories! To put that in perspective- we were nominated in 3 categories the previous year.

We are so proud of everyone who was nominated and in the case of campaigns or Societies, everyone who played their part in their success. At the end of the night Yvana Mpressa took home some glass as Class REP of the Year, following in the footsteps of last years winner Katie Deegan (VP Education).

Pictured: SU President Leon Diop accepting Yvana Mpressa's award on her behalf.

- Class REP of the Year:
Jana Khalil & Yvana Mpressa
- Charity Champions: **MSU**
- Education Campaign of the Year:
'Pop-In, Perk-Up, Chill-Out
- Welfare Campaign of the Year:
'SHAG & This Is Not Consent
- An Gradam Éacht ar son na Gaeilge:
Laurie Doré
- International Student of the Year:
Pablo Armas
- Outstanding Contribution to Student Life:
Maynooth Mental Health Soc.
- Outstanding Mental Health Activism:
Maynooth Mental Health Soc.
- Part-Time Officer of the Year:
Michael Butler & Ciarán Watts
- Postgraduate Engagement Award:
Jacquie Birkett
- Student Leader of the Year:
Leon Diop & Favor Weyimi-Oboyo
- Medium SU Team of The Year: **MSU**



April

No Labels: No Limits

Student Campaigns

This week celebrated all our student members who face challenges on a daily basis, but excel as Maynoothians nonetheless. The campaign's aim was for students to be informed that people all around you are everyday heroes, who might sometimes need some extra support.

A particular focus this year was on sharing the stories and experiences of those living with disabilities every day on campus. Events included a 'Speak Out' session in your Space, anxiety and academic learning styles workshops and the 'disability jar' interactive display

MU Clubs & Socs Awards

Recognition

Each year MSU organises the Maynooth University Clubs & Societies Awards Night. This is where the University's Clubs & Societies and their committee members are recognised for the tremendous work that they have done over the past year. Marking the applications for these awards is a collaborative effort between MSU and the University's student services and is no easy task.

This was no ordinary Awards night though, as 2019 was the 25th Anniversary of the Awards! We had some special guests on the night and there was even a very tasty cake.

USI Annual Congress

Representation

USI Congress is the governing body of the Union of Students in Ireland (USI) where hundreds of student representatives from across the country convene to elect the USI leadership, direct the policies and set the agenda for the moment for the years ahead.

MSU sent a delegation of sixteen students to USI Congress this year, held in NUI Galway, where each member addressed Congress floor on a range of student issues. Maynooth impressed and were winners of 'Best Medium Sized Delegation'. Well done all!

MSU Sports Day

Community & Events

A revival of an event that had disappeared for a few years- the MSU Sports Day saw a whole host of inflatables on the sports pitches. There were also plans to hold numerous sports activities, however inclement weather put a stop to some of these.

Hot dogs and an inflatable disco were laid on for those who took part, with all money raised donated to Barretstown. While the weather might have been to us we won't let it put us off and plan to bring the Sports Day back in 2020.



Board of Irish College Societies (BICS) Awards

Recognition, Student Engagement

Higher education is more than exams, coursework and lectures, and students who are involved in running college societies know this. The purpose of the National BICS Awards is to recognise the huge effort made by the many individuals who run student societies across Ireland.

The National Awards are a means of recognising this dedication and are an opportunity to celebrate the importance and value that societies contribute to college life. Maynooth sent 8 entries and while we didn't win any silverware, we learned so much and will be back next year to go one step further!

May

Summer Ball

Student Campaigns

An annual Maynooth institution, the MSU Beach Party sold out 1600 tickets in less than a day. A mammoth production effort gave us 3 stages, 10 tones of sand and 1600 very happy guests with the red hot Wild Youth headlining.

Other acts and attractions included; Quinton Campbell, Arthur, Just Like Us, DJ Monty, DJ Darcy, MU DJ Soc. and a Silent Disco.

Turning the front of the SU into a beach is no easy task, but it allows students to enjoy an experience like no other available in Maynooth!

DeStress 2

Representation

May saw the appointment of a design team for a new Student Centre, a home-from-home for students and a focal point for student life. The new building will open in early 2021 and serve as a hub for MSU, clubs, societies, events, and a variety of activities that help to create that special sense of belonging, so unique to the Maynooth student experience.

The new building will create an iconic destination on campus that is welcoming, vibrant, friendly and inclusive, built and operated to the highest sustainability standards.

Referenda Voting

Representation

Following proposals and debate at Student Senate the President of the Students' Union called three referenda.

- 1) "Do you approve the proposed MSU constitution?"
- 2) "Do you approve of MSU campaigning for, and supporting campaigns for, the decriminalisation of sex work in Ireland and encouraging the safety of those who engage in sex work?"
- 3) "Do you approve of MSU adopting a pro-decriminalisation of drugs and a harm reduction position?"

All 3 motions were carried by over 90% of the poll.



SPOTLIGHT: MU Clubs & Societies Awards

Recognition.



Each year MSU organises the Maynooth University Clubs & Societies Awards Night. This is where the University's Clubs & Societies and their committee members are recognised for the tremendous work that they have done over the past year. However, this was no usual year- this was it's 25th Anniversary!

- Best First Year Athlete :**
Isabella Hughes (MU Boxing Club)
- Best New Society :**
Philosophy
- Best Society First Year:**
Aoife Hynes, (Lit & Deb Society)
- Society Person of the Year:**
Rachel Beth McFadden, (Disney Soc.)



There were special speeches and events on the night and we even had a gorgeous cake to celebrate. As always though, marking the applications for these awards is a collaborative effort between MSU and the University's student services and is no easy task. The winners were as follows:

- Clubs League:**
Fencing
- Societies League:**
Games Society
- Club Executive of the Year:**
Davin Barrett (Fencing)
- Society Event of the Year:**
Dominicon LIVE (MU Games Society)



- Best Video:**
Purpose Movement
- The Civic & Charity Award:**
Mental Health Society
- Best Poster:**
Fencing Club
- Give A Little Do A Lot:**
Business Society

- Club Event of the Year:**
Road Relays, (MU Athletics)
- Athlete of the Year:**
Eimear Lafferty, (MU Ladies Soccer)
- Most Improved Society:**
Computer Science
- Most Improved Club:**
Basketball



- Best Society:**
MU Disney Society
- Best Club:**
Camogie





Charity Partner Selection

Student Campaigns

Every year Maynooth Students' Union and Maynooth University Clubs & Societies choose a charity and fundraise on their behalf for the whole college year. At the May meeting of Clubs & Societies Council, where a number of charities were nominated, students voted for Ataxia Foundation Ireland.

Friedreichs Ataxia is a genetic and progressive disorder of the central nervous system which usually manifests itself in children between the ages of two and sixteen years. We look forward to working with this fantastic charity to raise as much as possible to aid their work.

Darkness Into Light

Student Campaigns

Each year the Darkness Into Light walk provides an opportunity for people to connect with their local community and to show their support for those who have been bereaved by suicide. From small beginnings, the movement has grown year on year and in 2018 over 200,000 people took part in 150 locations, in 16 countries across 5 continents.

The walk in Maynooth begins right here on campus and our full Officer Team were joined by countless Maynooth students in showing support for the bereaved, especially remembering students from our own community who we have lost.

June

National Forum Participation

Representation

The European First Year Experience (EYFE) Conference 2019 took place in Cork Institute of Technology in June. This first time this forum has been held in Ireland. EFYE is a group of academics and support staff from across Europe who are interested in improving the experience of students as they enter and progress through higher education.

As part of the 'National Think Tank on Student Success in Higher Education' discussion our VP Education Katie represented the student view and spoke passionately on how the Government must adequately fund Third Level education.

Charity Cheque Presentation

Representation

Every year Maynooth Students' Union and Maynooth University Clubs & Societies nominate a charity and fundraise on their behalf for the whole college year- this year it was Barretstown. The Fundraising Total for the 2018-19 academic year stands at an amazing total of €30,190!

At the end of June Maynooth student representatives visited the Barretstown campus in Kildare to present them with a cheque that will help children living with serious illness to have some serious fun.



SPOTLIGHT: MSU Fundraising

Charity & Fundraising



Every year Maynooth Students' Union and Maynooth University Clubs & Societies nominate a charity and fundraise on their behalf for the whole college year. This year students voted for Barretstown.

Last year we raised €6,000 for our chosen charity over the course of a full year. This year we aimed to beat that total in one week, during Charity Week! Not only did we smash this aim but we went on to raise over €30,000 in total.

Traditional fundraising techniques alongside new initiatives such as the €100 Euro Challenge and MSU Charity Week combined to smash previous MSU fundraising records.

From games tournaments, to bake sales, to bounceathons, to tough mudder races, to black-tie events the Designer Dig and finally, our wonderful Charity Week, we were able to raise all this money for Barretstown- vital funds to help children living with serious illness.

At the end of June Maynooth student representatives visited the Barretstown campus in Kildare to present them with a cheque that will help children living with serious illness to have some serious fun.

Paul Kenny, MSU VP for Clubs, Societies and Student Engagement, said:
"I would like to thank everyone involved in MU Clubs & Societies, the Students' Union and all the fabulous students that have gone out and fundraised on our behalf. Barretstown make an incredible difference to children living with serious illnesses and it was inspirational to see Maynooth students dig deep and give so much."

MSU Clubs & Societies €100 Challenge Awards Gold:

Disney / Trampoline / Dance / Business / Music

Silver:

Games / Education

Bronze:

Musical / Mental Health / Purpose Movement
Computer Science / Africa / Tea / Access
Pokemon / Creative Writing / Aquatics / Judo
FLAC / Mature

MAYNOOTH STUDENTS' UNION: The Team 2018/19



MSU Executive Members

Leon Diop

- President

Katie Deegan

- VP Education / Deputy President

Kim Lockyer

- VP Welfare & Equality

Paul Kenny

- VP Clubs, Societies, & Student Engagement

Rob Rutledge

- Arts, Celtic Studies, & Philosophy Faculty Convenor

Stephen McConnell

- Social Sciences Faculty Convenor

Michael Butler

- Science & Engineering Faculty Convenor

Killian Brennan

- Postgraduate Representative

Laurie Doré

- Oifigeach na Gaeilge

Ciarán Watts

- Events & Promotions Officer

MSU Staff Members

Sandra Byrne

- Operations & Finance Manager

Dillon Grace

- Director of Democratic Affairs

Mary MacCourt

- Clubs & Societies Administrator

Mary Banahan

- Clubs & Societies Administrator

Ann Marie Cudden

- Front Desk Manager

Louise Kiernan

- Accounts Assistant

Colin Maher

- Events Manager

Louise Freaney

- Representation & Democracy Administrator

Eddie Corr

- Communications Manager

Services Staff

Brian Torley

- Shop Manager

Jackie Lyons

- Retail Assistant

Fiona Tierney

- Retail Supervisor

Declan Power

- Bar Manager

Conor Hassett

- Bar Manager

MSU Board of Trustees

Paddy Hennessy (Chair)

Richard Hammond (Deputy Chair)

Leon Diop

Dillon Grace (Secretary)

Tracey Flinter

Aengus Ó Maoláin

Síona Cahill

Sandra Byrne (In Attendance)

MAYNOOTH STUDENTS' UNION: Senate 2018/19

MSU Student Senate is comprised of the MSU Executive Members listed previously plus the Senate Members listed below. Chaired by Niamh Halpenny with Dillon Grace as Secretary.

Senator Positions

John Legard

Arts, Celtic Studies & Philosophy Faculty Council Member

Cillian Geohegan

Arts, Celtic Studies & Philosophy Faculty Council Member

Nicole Brady

Arts, Celtic Studies & Philosophy Faculty Council Member

Aindriu DeBuitleur

Social Sciences Faculty Council Member

Saoirse McGrath

Social Sciences Faculty Council Member

Yvana Dorcas Mpressa

Social Sciences Faculty Council Member

Amy McNeill

Science & Engineering Faculty Council Member

Bukky Adebowale

Science & Engineering Faculty Council Member

Eibhlin Fortune

Science & Engineering Faculty Council Member

Victoria Tobi Isa Daniel

Clubs & Societies Council Member (Club)

Jack Brophy

Clubs & Societies Council Member (Club)

Donnchadh Dolan

Clubs & Societies Council Member (Society)

Esther Adesemowo

Clubs & Societies Council Member (Society)

Johnny Gorman

Mature Student Senator

Ben King

St. Patricks College Senator

Grace Kenny

Froebel Senator

Sean Masterson

First Year Senator

Pablo Armas

Study Abroad & Erasmus+ Senator

Conor Doheny

Charity Senator

Liam Cosgrove

Community Senator

Gavan McLoughlin

Campus Life Senator

Mireia Guardino Ferran

Green Campus Senator

Fiona Young

Gender Equality Senator

Eoin Fitzsimons

LGBT+ Senator

Alannah Kenny

HEAR Senator

Gavin Fanning

DARE Senator

Favor Weyimi-Oboyo

Ethnic Diversity Senator

Robert O'Donnell

Accommodation Senator

Ryan Lynch

Commuter Senator

Rebecca Harte

Part-Time Course Senator

Cian Walsh

Independent Senator

Aine Keenan

Independent Senator

Taylor Leonard

Independent Senator

Ross Ward

Independent Senator

Jacquie Birkett

Postgraduate Academic Member

Leo Carroll

Postgraduate Academic Member



MSU Activity Report 2018/19

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