**USI National Council – 22/09/2012**

Comhairle Náisiúnta AMLÉ – UCC NC

**Report of the President**

Tuairisc an Uachtarán

**National Campaign**

Following discussions and consultation with Member Organisations at Campaigns Working Group in GMIT, USI Officer Board and staff spent a considerable about of time researching and preparing a proposed campaign strategy. Based on political affiliation, previous statements, electoral performance and proximity to Labour and Fine Gael Ministers I compiled a list of the most influential and strategically important members of the Oireachtas which will be the focus of our lobbying strategy leading up to Budget 2013.

I also researched the non-government sector to assess our allies leading up to the Budget. I pinpointed a number of organisations who have a kinship to the message of protecting and enhancing higher education. Following this I met with the President of the Irish Farmers Association to discuss our respective pre-Budget strategies. We discussed the synchronisation of messages and working together on town hall meetings across the country.

Officer Board debated at length the merits of each phase of the pre-Budget strategy and carried out a risk assessment strategy to pinpoint any potential weaknesses in the campaign. We discussed campaigning methods used by other movements across the world that have been effective and attempted to adopt a tailored approach to our own strategy.

We discussed the merits of involving the business community, both multinational and local, by highlighting the need for highly skilled graduates and the total loss to the local economy that four years of increases to the Student Contribution would bring. I have also prepared a strategy on informing and engaging both students and parents on the issues facing them over the years ahead. I feel this will be an invaluable tool when mobilising these respect groups over the weeks ahead.

**Website**

It was clear that the Union of Students in Ireland’s website was not fit for purpose so Officer Board discussed the structure for a new website that meets the needs of the student movement while looking professional and aesthetically pleasing. It was decided that given the need for consultation with National Council and the wider student body, a professional template would be purchased and content added by the Media and Communications Executive through the relevant officer.

Much credit is owed to the General Manager for the success of the initial stages of this project. He provided great insights into the content and design requirements of the site. I am very pleased to say that the website is now functional and cost the organisation a mere €50.00 from purchase to launch. I would encourage all officers to engage with the website and offer feedback on how we can improve it.

**USI Task Force on the Funding of Higher Education**

The Task Force on the Funding of Higher Education has met three times since the creation of the group and I am very pleased with the progress made thus far. We have had lengthy and well-informed discussions relating to the Recurrent Grant Allocation Model, the level of salaries in higher education, the Croke Park Agreement, the provision of distance and flexible learning and expenditure reduction measures from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The level of commitment shown by the group to date has been outstanding and I wish to commend the members for their efforts. I would encourage all members of National Council to submit their views to the group for discussion. I have also be in talks with the Higher Education Authority regarding the funding of a USI/HEA Conference on Higher Education Funding. This would be held in the early 2013 and allow students to engage with the wider sector to come up with solutions to the challenges facing higher education.

**Postgraduate Loan Scheme**

A seminar on Postgraduate loans was convened in UCD after the announcement of the Bank of Ireland Postgraduate Loan Product supported by the Department of Education and Skills. I chaired this seminar. It was agreed at the meeting that research into other schemes would be helpful in proposing a more equitable alternative. I engaged a researcher to discuss the scope of the research project and the concerns expressed in the postgraduate seminar. This research has recently been presented to USI and will form the discussion for the next prong of the campaign.

**Marriage Equality Campaign**

Following the success of the Dublin City Council motion of support for marriage equality, I worked with the Equality Officer in NUI Galway Students’ Union and the VP for Equality & Citizenship on a motion that is to be put to Donegal County Council. Being familiar with the Councillors has been an asset in this regard and I have contacted a majority to voice the support of students for marriage equality. A majority of those contacted would appear to be in support of the motion and I am hopeful it will be carried.

**Commercial & Operational**

A considerable period of time was apportioned to the office move and the numerous operational issues that followed. Thankfully, after the first initial attempt fifteen months ago, the Union of Students in Ireland has a new headquarters in Portview House, Thorncastle St., Dublin 4. The new USI HQ is 20 minutes walk from Leinster House and easily accessible by local and national transport links. I’d like to thank the USI Staff who were particularly helpful during the transition period and a minimum of interruption was suffered by USI officers in their respective roles.

In terms of commercial activity, USI is currently working on a deal to provide student possession and contents insurance at very competitive prices. As an added bonus, if the deal goes ahead the company partnering with USI have agreed to fund a competition where one student will win their rent for the year.

We are also engaging with a large retail company in relation to the provision of a one-stop-solution for essential appliances (kettles, toasters, irons, etc) for students living away from home for the first time. The company is currently reviewing USI’s proposal and, if successful, will lead to considerable discounts for families having to get students prepared for college. We are also drawing up a strategy on the provision of national student discounts without the need to purchase a card.

**Appendix**

**USI Meetings/Events Attended:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Meeting/Event** | **Details** |
| 12th August | March for Marriage | USI supported the LGBT Noise March for Marriage. I spoke at the culmination of the event outside the Department of Justice. |
| 13th August | Officer Board Conference Call | Monitoring and evaluation meeting. |
| 14th August | Finance Committee | Discussed the financial matters of the organisation. |
| 16th August | Professor Áine Hyland | Discussion about open, distance and flexible learning provision in Ireland. |
| 20th August | Officer Board Conference Call | Monitoring and evaluation meeting. |
| 20th August | USI Taskforce Meeting | Researching and preparing a policy about funding in higher education. |
| 20th August | Dr. Richard Thorn | Discussion about open, distance and flexible learning provision in Ireland. |
| 27th August | Officer Board Conference Call | Monitoring and evaluation meeting. |
| 29th August | Officer Board Meeting | All officers met to plan campaigns and events for the coming month. Monitoring and evaluation meeting. |
| 3rd September | Operations Meeting | Discussion and planning meeting dealing with the operational aspects of the organisation. |
| 7th September | EC Regulations Briefing, TCD | Re: TCD Referendum Regulations |
| 10th September | OB Conference Call | Monitoring and evaluation meeting. |
| 13th September | Meeting with President of the Irish Farmers’ Association | Meeting with Mr. John Bryan regarding third level maintenance grants and co-ordinating organisational messages on the issue prior to the Budget. |
| 14th September | Meeting of the Task Force on Higher Education Funding | Researching and preparing a policy re: funding of higher education. |

**Media Engagement:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Description** | **Topic** |
| 16/8 | Prime Time | Third Level Grants |
| 20/8 | Irish Examiner | DAFT.ie Rental Report |
| 20/8 | TV3 News at 5.30 | CAO Offers |
| 21/8 | Ireland AM | Starting College |
| 21/8 | Waterford News & Star | Rent Book |
| 21/8 | Evening Echo | Rent Book |
| 21/8 | Herald | Rent Book |
| 21/8 | Irish Independent | Rent Book |
| 21/8 | Irish Examiner | Rent Book |
| 21/8 | The Dundalk Democrat | Rent Book |
| 23/8 | Cork Independent | Daft.ie Rent Report |
| 23/8 | Hot Press | Higher Education, Social Issues |
| 30/8 | RTE News at One | Spending in Higher Education |
| 1/9 | Irish Times | Opinion Piece by Stephen Collins |
| 4/9 | Michael Reade Show | Croke Park Agreement |
| 10/9 | Pat Kenny, RTE Radio 1 | Voting Age |
| 11/9 | Newstalk w/ Jonathan Healy | Salaries in HE |
| 11/9 | FM104 | Croke Park Agreement |
| 16/9 | The Sunday Times | Funding of Higher Education |

**Expenses Claimed – Own Transport:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | To | From | Purpose | Rate | Distance | Cost |
| N/A |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Annual Leave**

20th August, 2012- 26th August, 2012

Purpose: Out of Country

4th September, 2012 – 5th September, 2012

Purpose: Graduation

**Report of the Deputy President/Campaigns Officer**

Tuairisc an Leas-Uachtarán do Feachtais

1. **USI Booklet**

I have produced a booklet that covers a lot of key areas about the Union of Students in Ireland. Topics in the booklet include; ‘What is USI?’, Member Organisations, History of USI, USI Structures, Committees Officer Board sit on, Organisations USI work with, Campaigns USI run and Training and Support we provide. The booklet will be available on our website for all to see, along with copies being made available for those who request it. I also will be presenting this booklet to non-affiliated Students’ Union for their executive committees and Class Reps.

1. **Ents Training**

In preparation for the Ents Training day I assisted the President with the organisation and contacting presenters for the event. I facilitated the day in conjunction with the VP for the Southern Region. During the day we collected this year’s Ents Contact List, ran an Ents Forum and assisted any officers that attended.

1. **USI Rent Book Launch**

I assisted the VP for Welfare with the initial preparation for the national launch of the USI Rent Book that was held in IADT Students’ Union. I attended the event and conducted an interview with TV3 News at the event.

1. **USI Video**

In conjunction with the Media and Communications Executive we have set out an idea and plans for this year’s USI Video. It was agreed that the video needed to be short, engage students and allow them to comprehend how USI operates and work for them on a weekly basis while they are in their respective colleges obtaining their degree/qualification. We have mapped out various colleges in Ireland that we will film in, simple images of students getting going about their daily lives and merge into one production, to represent that we are all I this together, and that they are all under the one umbrella in terms of USI fighting to protect and striving to enhance the student experience.

1. **USI Task Force Meeting**

To date, I have attended three of the USI Task Force meetings on funding for third level education. I have compiled comprehensive notes on the opinions and ideas from the group, drawn up the reading list and created the Drop Box Folder for the committee members.

1. **SUSI Forum with QA&AA Officer**

USI lobbied the Department of Education and Skills and the members of SUSI (Student Universal Service Ireland) to create a SUSI forum that would see members of IoT’s and Universities across around sit on the board along with USI Officer Board members. The Academic Affairs Officer and I wrote the Terms and Conditions for the group, contacted the relevant officers in the Member Organisations that were chosen by SUSI to sit on this forum. We aim to hold the first sitting of this forum in October were we will obtain all forms of feedback on the new Grant System from everything to how it was launched, rolled out and the accessibility to it along with the support service within the new system.

1. **National Campaign**

Following National Council at GMIT and the discussions held at Campaigns Working group on this year’s National Campaign, officer board and staff spent a considerable about of time brainstorming, researching and preparing a proposal that will be brought to this national council at UCC. With the challenges were are facing ahead of Budget 2013 we are recommending that the officers across the country join us in focusing in on the key and important people that we need to put strong and constant pressure on. As September is the preparation month, October and November will see a well-run, organised and effective campaign with officer board supporting member organisations in any way that we can. I have been working with the President on the Presentation and documents that will be up for discussion this weekend.

1. **Dublin Region Grant and Accommodation Information Evening**

Following the second Dublin Region Council it was decided that we would hold a joint Dublin Region Grant and Accommodation Information Evening. The Students’ Union present at the council agreed to run one centrally and on the one night. The Academic Affairs and Quality Assurance Officer and I prepared the venue, checklist and publicity for the event with the assistance of the Media and Communications Exec.

1. **Postgraduate Loan Scheme Campaign/Postgrad Seminar**

I attended the Postgraduate Seminar in UCD and liaised with officers in the BMW Region ahead of the seminar to ensure their attendance.

Following the Postgraduate Seminar I conducted research into new proposed Postgrad Loan Scheme from Bank of Ireland that was supported by the Department of Education and Skills in preparation for the press release USI was issuing condemning the Loan Scheme. I participated in numerous radio interviews (all listed below) following the take up of our Press Release. I also prepared a campaign on the loan scheme where I pin pointed the key areas Officer Board had to research/conduct, the areas Member Organisations had to complete on their campus in terms of on the ground research with their respective Postgraduate Students. I also looked into how we would pitch the press release to the media and most importantly the message we wanted to get out to the Postgrad Students across the country. I sent the 4 page document out to all member sabbatical officers and liaised with the VP Regional Officers for the roll out of the campaign.

Along with the Academic Affairs and Quality Assurance Officer I met the researcher that the President hired to conduct into Postgrad Loan Scheme internationally.

1. **Website**

I had an initial meeting with our Media and Communications Exec to discuss the areas I felt were essential to be incorporated into our new website. Following that meeting, I met with the General Manager to discuss the new website and we arranged a meeting that was attended by the policy officers, the Media Exec and I. We are all still in the process of completing articles and content for the website. Feedback is very much welcome.

1. **Activist Academy/Part-Time Officer/Equality Training**

We have decided to merge the three training events listed above into one invite to cut down on travel costs and time for our members. The Activist Academy will be aimed at student activists and class reps with modules that will assist them in their specific roles in their college. The VP for Academic Affairs and Quality Assurance is looking after the Part Time officer Training and the VP for Equality and Citizenship is co-ordinating the Equality Training. We will be delving more into this Training and Support events in our respective working groups.

1. **Office Move**

A short period of time was taken up with the packing up of my old office space, clearing out the old offices and assistance in the final stages of the move into the new office space.

1. **NUS-USI Rebranding Workshop**

Along with the General Manager I attended the NUS-USI Rebranding Workshop in their office space in Belfast. I found the exercise to be fascinating and historical as they delved into the routes of the names and the purpose of their Students’ Union in Northern Ireland. They had a professional from London running the workshop and examining all areas of the student market to identify the areas that we focus on, on a year to year basis.

1. **CO Engagement:**

**TCD Students’ Union –** Date Protection Policy Document

**Red Bull Distribution** – I liaised with and assisted the member organisations with the updates on the Red Bull availability, delivery and any further queries they had.

**Appendix**

**USI Meetings/Events Attended:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Meeting/Event** | **Details** |
| 12th August | LBGT Noise March for Marriage | USI Supported the LGBT Noise March for Marriage, met at TCD. |
| 14th August | March for Marriage |  |
| 13th August | OB Conference Call | To plan for the week ahead |
| 20th August | OB Conference Call | To plan for the week ahead |
| 20th August | USI Taskforce Meeting | Brainstorming, researching and preparing a policy about funding in third level Education. |
| 21st August | USI Rent Book Launch | IADT Students’ Union hosted the USI National Rent Book Launch. |
| 27th August | OB Conference Call | To plan for the week ahead. |
| 29th August | Officer Board Meeting | All officers met to plan campaigns and events for the coming month. |
| 29th August | Dublin Region Grant & Accommodation Information Evening |  |
| 3rd September | Operations Meeting | USI President and USI GM. |
| 4th September | NUS-USI Rebranding Workshop | Rebranding of NUS-USI Workshop. |
| 5th August | USI Taskforce Meeting | Brainstorming, researching and preparing a policy about funding in third level Education. |
| 10th September | OB Conference Call | To plan for the week ahead |

**Membership Engagement**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **MO** | **Details** |
| 21st August | IADT SU | Rent Book Launch |
| 29th August | Mater Dei SU | USI Intro, Class Rep System Prep. |
| 31st August | NCI SU | Red Bull Delivery |
| 5th September | IADT SU | Red Bull Delivery |
| 6th September | MDI SU | Red Bull Delivery |

**Media Engagement:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Description** | **Topic** |
| 20/8/12 | East Coast FM | Accommodation Guide |
| 20/8/12 | WLR FM | CAO Offers/Accommodation Guide |
| 21/8/12 | TV3 News | CAO System Replacement |
| 22/8/12 | CRC FM | Student Life |
| 28/8/12 | Newstalk | Postgrad Campaign |
| 28/8/12 | Inisowen FM | Postgrad Campaign |
| 28/8/12 | UTV Radio | Postgrad Campaign |
| 28/8/12 | Northern Sound FM | Postgrad Campaign |
| 28/8/12 | Shannonside | Postgrad Campaign |
| 28/8/12 | WLR Fm | Postgrad Campaign |
| 28/8/12 | FM 104 | Postgrad Campaign |
| 28/8/12 | 98 FM | Postgrad Campaign |
| 28/8/12 | LMFM | Postgrad Campaign |

**Expenses Claimed – Own Transport:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | To | From | Purpose | Rate | Distance | Cost |
| 21st August | IADT + Return | Crumlin | Rent Book Launch | 35c | 38km | 13.30 |
| 29th August | MDI | Crumlin | MO Visit | 35c | 9.2km | 3.22 |
| 31st August | Blanchardstown | Crumlin | Red Bull Storage House | 35c | 19km | 6.65 |
| 31st August | NCI | Blanchardstown | Red Bull Distribution | 35c | 21.3km | 7.45 |
| 31st August | Crumlin | NCI | Return Journey | 35c | 8.4km | 2.94 |
| 4th September | NUS-USI Offices + return | Crumlin | Rebranding Workshop | 35c | 360km | 126.00 |
|  |  |  |  |  | Total: €159.56 |  |

**Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Description** | **Purchaser** |
| 15th August | Cadburys Diary Milk | LIT SU |
| 20th August | Loop the Loop | LIT SU |
| 14th August | Beverage | LYIT SU |
| 17th August | Beverage | UCD SU |
| 17th August | Beverage | IT Sligo SU |

**Weekend Work Allowance (Note 5)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Purpose** | **Cost €** |
| 12th August | March for Marriage | 20 |
| 18th August | GMIT National Council | 20 |

**Report of the VP Academic Affairs and Quality Assurance**

1. **USI Website**
2. **Grant Information Evenings**
3. **Postgraduate Loans**
4. **Entry Mechanisms & Leaving Cert Reform**
5. **National Student Survey**
6. **3rd Level Funding Taskforce**
7. **Casework**
8. **Part Time Officer Training**
9. **SUSI Forum**
10. **Teacher Education Report**
11. **USI Website**

I have assisted with the populating of the new USI website composing information pages on CAO, Grants, the Irish 3rd Level Education System, the NFQ, National Student Survey and Quality Assurance.

1. **Grant Information Evenings**

Athlone IT SU and Letterkenny IT SU both held Grant Information evenings for students and parents. I composed a checklist to assist officers in their preparations and a sample press release to publicise the event in the local media. I also attended the evenings to help with student and parent queries.

The MO’s of the Dublin region decided to host a single centralised information on Grants and Accommodation in TCD. Unfortunately the proposed room in TCD was unavailable so I sourced another venue for the event. Working with the Deputy President and Media Executive a press release was sent out and social media was used to promote the event.

1. **Postgraduate Loans**

A seminar on Postgraduate loans was convened in UCD after the announcement of the Bank of Ireland Postgraduate Loan Product supported by the Department of Education and Skills. I attended this seminar, minuted the discussions and finalised the conversation document which has been distributed. It was agreed research into other schemes would be helpful in proposing a more equitable alternative. I met with the researcher selected by the President to discuss the scope of the research project and the concerns expressed in the postgraduate seminar.

1. **Entry Mechanisms & Leaving Cert Reform**

In response to the IUA Proposal on changing entry mechanisms I contacted the IUA to get the details. There is to be taskforce set up and chaired by Prof Philip Nolan. I contacted him about the inclusion of student reps on the taskforce and he informed the make up of the group had yet to be finalised and my proposal would be considered when establishing the group.

I spoke about the report on RTE Radio 1s Drivetime programme with the General Secretary of the ASTI. The issue was also discussed when I was on the Talking Point panel on Newstalk fm.

1. **National Student Survey**

Mark Glynn has taken up the Project Manager position for the project and I have met him a number of times. We are developing a communications strategy as well as a plan for the October pilot. The pilot will involve small groups in each college filling out the survey. This will test the technology and to some extent the questions which have been included. Focus groups will be held in a number of MO’s with students involved in the pilot.

1. **3rd Level Funding Taskforce**

The Taskforce had met twice. The first meeting defined the scope of the project and a reading list was put together. With the Deputy President I took notes on the discussions and populated the dropbox set up with relevant reports and publications.

1. **Casework**

Most of the Casework I have dealt with recently is in relation to changing courses after CAO acceptance and Grant questions. I have contacted SUSI with a list of the urgent and serious issues. When the SUSI forum meets many of these issues will be addressed.

1. **Part Time Officer Training**

The Deputy President, VP Welfare, VP Irish, VP Equality and Citizenship and I met to plan out a combined training event in October. I have been following up on the results of the survey completed by officers to determine the most suitable modules and schedule. I have also started contacting potential speakers to check their availability and interest. Each module will have specific learning outcomes which I hope to have completed be the end of September allowing part time officers the opportunity decide which to attend.

1. **SUSI Forum**

The Forum will be meeting in the second week of October. To enable them to discuss as many of the issues arising as possible I compiled a feedback sheet and sent it out to all officers. I am working with SUSI and it is hoped one of their representatives will be attending the first meeting.

1. **Teacher Education Report**

The Department issued the report from the international expert review panel on ‘The Structure of Initial Teacher Education Provision in Ireland’ recently. Many of the recommendations effect Member Organisations including the merging of smaller colleges with larger colleges. I sent out the report to the MO’s involved and asked for feedback within seven days.

**Appendix**

**USI Meetings/Events Attended:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Meeting/Event** | **Details** |
| 12/8/12 | LGBT Noise March for Marriage | March through Dublin City. |
| 15/8/12 | Postgraduate Seminar | Meeting on Postgraduate Loan Scheme. |
| 16/8/12 | Part Time Officer Training Meeting | Planning meeting for the training event combining Equality, Activist and Part Time Officer Training. |
| 17/8/12 | National Council | GMIT |
| 20/8/12 | Funding Taskforce | First meeting of the Funding Taskforce |
| 29/8/12 | Officer Board | Review of work and USI Activities |
| 5/9/12 | Funding Taskforce | Second Meeting of the Funding Taskforce |

**Meetings/Events Attended:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Meeting/Event** | **Details** |
| 14/8/12 | Mark Glynn | Irish National Student Survey Planning |
| 23/8/12 | Gerladine Pulman | Briefing for Postgrad Loan Research |
| 31/8/12 | Mark Glynn | Irish National Student Survey IT details |

**Membership Engagement**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **MO** | **Details** |
| 14/8/12 | AIT | Grant Information Evening |
| 21/8/12 | LYIT | Grant Information Evening |
| 28/8/12 | IT Carlow | Executive Officers Training |
| 29/8/12 | Dublin Region | Grant & Accomodation Evening |
| 30/8/12 | TCD | Meeting with Education Officer re; Entry Mechanisms |

**Media Engagement**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Description** | **Topic** |
| 21/8/12 | RTE Radio 1 Drivetime | Leaving Cert reform |
| 25/8/12 | Newstalk fm Talking Point Panel | Leaving Cert reform and Entry Mechanisms |
| 29/8/12 | Spin Southwest | Grants & Accommodation |
| 12/9/12 | Newstalk fm Colman at Large Panel | Education System & Fees |

**Expenses Claimed – Public Transport**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **To** | **From** | **Purpose** | **Cost €** |
| 14/8/12 | Athlone | Dublin | Grant Info Evening | 14.50 |
| 14/8/12 | Dublin | Athlone | Grant Info Evening | 11.00 |
| 21/8/12 | Letterkenny | Dublin (return) | Grant Info Evening | 27.50 |
| 28/8/12 | Carlow | Dublin (return) | Exec Officer Training | 17.20 |
| 14/8/12 | Athlone Station | AIT | Grant Info Evening | 6.10 |
| 20/8/12 | City Centre | HQ | Taskforce | 17.25 |
| **Total** |  |  |  | **93.55** |

**Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Description** | **Purchaser** |
| 14/8/12 | Icecream | AITSU |
| 21/8/12 | Tea & Jellies | LYITSU |
| 28/8/12 | Lunch | ITCSU |
| 5/9/12 | Dinner | UCDSU |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Leave** | **Date** |
| Annual Leave | Friday September 7th |

**Tuairisc an Leas-Uachtarán don Leas / Report of the VP for Welfare**

1. **Accommodation/Settling into college:**

On August 21st we launched the USI Rent Book & Accommodation Guide in NUIG, LIT & IADT. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all officers in these three MOs and other members on USI Officer Board in assisting the launches. I would also like to thank Ronan Costello for all his help with the media and achieving great coverage of the launch. I was interviewed on many radio stations and Beat 102103 in Waterford did a piece on Flying the Nest and going to college which I assisted with and got students to take part in. I also assisted Headsup with their ‘Life after Secondary School’ webcast. I was on the panel with representatives from the Institute of Guidance Counsellors, Irish Association of University and College Counsellors, the National Learning Network and a clinical psychologist. This was a great success and we are hoping to do a similar webcast for students before exams.  

1. **Mental Health:**

I have met with ReachOut and Headsup to collect feedback from last year’s campaign and build on it. It is important we engage students in the campaign, through social media, videos or something on campus for students. It is important we spread the messages of what is mental health, how it affects us all, what supports are available and positive mental health. ReachOut & Headsup have confirmed their involvement in the campaign and we are now looking for sponsorship. We have an idea of a theme and we are working on that and then this will be sent to the Welfare Campaign Sub Group.

1. **Sexual Health:**

National Condom Week:

I have been in touch with Dublin Aids Alliance & Durex in getting involved with National Condom Week. The second date of the Sexual Health Education Roadshow is set for the October 17th which is during National Condom Week. I have been successful in securing over 5,000 condoms that will be divided between the 4 host colleges of the roadshow and MOs interested in doing something on campus during National Condom Week. Durex will also supplying us with posters for MOs.

Sexual Health Education Roadshow:

I have been in contact with Crisis Pregnancy Programme, IFPA, Durex, Dublin Aids Alliance, Gay Health Network and Dublin Lesbian Line, Siobhan o Higgins and Shane Quilty from June to organise the Sexual Health Education Roadshow. The dates have been set and all officers have been contacted if they are interested in hosting one. There will be 4 host colleges and it will run from September to December. There will be a cost incurred by the host MO however I have made every effort to keep this cost acceptably low and discounted. The overall cost will be half of what it should be. The overall cost would be €1000 however to each MO it will be €650.

SHAG WEEK 2013:

I met with Durex and have secured 45,000 pleaseuremax condoms and playh lube for the SHAG packs. I have also had meetings in relation to changing the format of the SHAG packs and a three year plan for sponsorship and content.

1. **Finance:**

I met with the National Consumer Agency and secured €3400 in sponsorship to produce Money Matters: Student Finance Guide. I also contacted MABS in relation to content and advice for students. The Finance Guide is full of useful information and tips for saving, budgeting, managing debt and financial supports available to students. The guide will be launched Monday September 24th.

1. **Exam Success:**I met with John Buckley in SpunOut to discuss the Exam Success campaign and expanding it to December and May. We are looking at campaign similar to last year but focusing on providing students with tips to get to exam success and highlighting the stress associated to exams. We are hoping to get first year students, student union officers and some well known Irish faces to get involved with the campaign. I will have on update on this in my next report.
2. **USI National Charity- Acquires Brain Injury Ireland:**I met with Karen O'Boyle fromAcquired Brain Injury Ireland and discussed aplan for this year’s National Charity. Karen briefed me on all work being done by ABI and how we can get involved. USI Officer Board have signed up for their ‘Run a Muc’ challenge in a bid to raise awareness and money for the charity. I also met with Karen and organised her presentation to Area Councils for National Council.
3. **Casework:**I have been dealing with a lot of casework covering a variety of subjects but the most common is accommodation queries. Many of the cases I have dealt with are students unsure of the rights and worried about settling into college.
4. **Training:**

I have worked alongside the Budgetary Advisor in UCC to run a Money Management Module on Friday 21st.

**Appendix:**

**Membership Engagement**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **MO** | **Details** |
| 20/08 | Mater Dei SU | Meeting the team and discussing welfare campaigns |
| 04/09 | Carlow College | Delivered Welfare materials |
| 11/9 | NCI SU | Met with welfare officer to help with Sexual Health Day planning and welfare campaigns |

**Meetings/Events Attended:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Meeting/Event** | **Purpose** |
| 14/08 | Please Talk Steering Committee | PleaseTalk Materials, feedback on forum |
| 16/08 | SpunOut | Exam Success Campaign |
| 16/08 | Amnesty International Ireland | Seeking representation on youth network group |
| 20/08 | Dublin Aids Alliance | Sexual Health Road Show & SHAG packs |
| 22/08 | Irish cancer society | Information for Welfare officers- health promotion/advocacy |
| 24/08 | Acquired Brain Injury Ireland | Discuss Plans with ABI Ireland as USI National Charity |
| 24/08 | Shane Quilty | Sexual Health Education Roadshow plans |
| 27/08 | HeadsUp Webcast | Webcast for students leaving secondary school & coming to college |
| 28/08 | RSA Phone Conference | Road Safety Expo |
| 29/08 | National Consumer Agency | Finance Guide Sponsorship |
| 04/09 | Waterford Co Comhairle na nÓg launch , “Mind Matters” | Launch of Mind Matters video asking young people to mind the mental health |
| 05/09 | NCA Phone Conference | Finance Guide Content |
| 06/09 | Dublin Aids Alliance | National Condom Week & Sexual Health Road Show |
| 06/09 | Myriad PR Phone conference | Securing condoms for roadshow & National condom week |
| 10/09 | RSA Phone Conference | Road Safety Expo |
| 11/09 | Siobhan O Higgins | Sexual Health Education Roadshow |
| 11/09 | Pre Budget Planning | Pre Budget Planning with OB |
| 12/09 | Pre Budget Planning | Pre Budget Planning with OB |
| 13/09 | Durex | Securing 51,000 condoms for 2012/2013, SHAG Week, sexual health website, sexual health roadshow |
| 13/09 | MSD- Merck Sharp and Dohme | Sponsorship and involvement in SHAG Week 2013 |

**USI Meetings/Events Attended:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Meeting/Event** | **Details** |
| 12/08 | March for Marriage | March for Marriage with MOs |
| 16/08 | Training Discussion with some of OB | Part Time Officer, Equality training & Activist Academy |
| 21/08 | Rent Book Launch | IADT Rent Book Launch |
| 22/08 | Website meeting with OB | Content of website |
| 29/08 | Officer Board Meeting |  |
| 07/09 | Mental Health Reform No Cuts to mental health protest | Protest against cuts to mental health outside Dept of Taoiseach |

**Expenses:**

**Own Car Transport (Note 2)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | To | From | Purpose | Rate | Distance | Cost | Tolls | Total |
| 17/08 | GMIT | Crumlin | NC | B1 | 408km | 142.80 |  | €142.80 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Total | €142.80 |

**Parking (Note 4)**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Location | Purpose | | Cost |
| 12/08 | Q park Setanta | March for Marriage | | €18.30 |
|  |  |  | Total | €18.30 |

**Other**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Purpose | |  | Cost € |
| 15/08 | Post- welfare materials to Mater Dei Welfare Officer | |  | €7.50 |
| 28/08 | Post- welfare info to all welfare officers- North | |  | €10.50 |
|  |  | Total | | €18 |

**Weekend Work Allowance (Note 5)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Purpose | Approved By | Cost € |
| 17/18 Aug | National Council GMIT |  | €20 |

**Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Description** | **Purchaser** |
| 21/08 | Tea | IADTSU |
| 20/08 | Confectionary | LITSU |
| 12/09 | Tea | Siobhan O’Higgins |
| 13/09 | Tea | Durex |

**Annual Leave:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date** | |
| 31/08/2012 | 03/09/2012 |

**Report of the Vice President for Equality and Citizenship**

**Tuairisc an Leas- Uachtarán do Chomhionannais agus Saoránacht**

**Citizenship**

I had a meeting with Volunteer Ireland on the 6th of September to discuss forming a strategic partnership with them on promoting and encouraging student volunteering. This was a very productive meeting and it was apparent that there is a large scope for collaboration between USI and Volunteer Ireland. We are hoping to launch this partnership in early November, pending the approval of the rest of Volunteer Ireland’s board. Other items discussed included volunteering awards and showcasing the excellent work being done by students during Raising and Giving weeks.

Prior to my meeting with Volunteer Ireland, I approached the regional volunteering centres and gauged the level of student volunteering which occurs aready and their thoughts on how this can be maximised and encouraged. The feedback I received from throughout the country was that USI has the potential to play a huge role in encouraging and promoting student volunteering in Ireland by working with the existing structures.

I attended a volunteer fair organised by Dublin City South’s Volunteer Centre on 29th of August to familarise myself with the volunteering opportunities that exist for students. I engaged with a range of volunteering organisations about their student involvement and the potential to link up more with students.

I met with the communications officer in SUAS on the 29th of August to discuss their Global citizenship initiatives and how USI could collaborate with them in promoting volunteering opportunities to students.

**International Students**

I had a meeting with the Irish Council for International Students on the 31st of August to discuss the joint international students’ forum we are organising in Dublin on the 14th of November. We discussed the running order of the evening and the reception for the event. I booked the Mansion House and requested use of their Oak Room for the event.

I have been working on a guide on how Students’ Unions can be inclusive of international students. I am also working on a presentation to accompany this guide.

**Students with Disabilities**

I met with the Association for Higher Education Access and Disability (AHEAD) on the 4th of September in their offices. Topics discussed included working together to make students aware of their entitlements in relation to disability supports and financial assistance. I also received a short briefing on the Fund for Students with Disabilities from their Director. We discussed organising a forum for students with disabilities to enable us to ascertain what their needs are and also to provide a networking opportunity for them.

**Meeting with the Equality Authority**

I met with the Head of Development in the Equality Authority on the 21st of August. Items discussed included applying for funding for projects and the different training opportunities the Equality Authority can provide for student representatives. It was agreed that a member of the Equality Authority will give a presentation on equality legislation to sabbatical officers at the October National Council.

**Pink Training**

I had a meeting with the UCC Societies Guild on 27th of August to discuss their potential involvement in assisting with the organisation of Pink Training in November. We also discussed UCC Film Society’s interest in filming the video for our LGBT Ally initiative.

I engaged with the Straight But Not Narrow oganisation from the U.S. on the 9th of September, after having being introduced to one of their co-founders via the President of IT Carlow SU. They have agreed to be part of our LGBT Ally video. They are also looking into coming to Pink Training to deliver a workshop if we can secure a grant to cover some of their travel costs.

I researched hostels in Cork for this event and worked with our General Manager by provisionally booking these hostels.

I compiled a checklist for the event which I circulated to UCC Students’ Union. We discussed ideas for entertainment during the weekend. I have the timetable of Pink Training almost finalised and have been in contact with a range of speakers for the weekend.

**Representation**

I took up the USI seat on the Advisory Group on Equity of Access to the Higher Education Authority

**Mature Students**

I confirmed NUI Maynooth as the venue for this year’s conference. I engaged with Mature Students Ireland for feedback on the last conference. I also engaged with the Mature Students Society in TCD on possible speakers for the event on October 13th.

**Gender Equality**

I met with the President of the Trinity Gender Equality Society on the 12th of September. We discussed the potential of holding a national conference for students on gender equality issues in January. We also discussed the female participation forums that USI are holding in the new year and the potential speakers for these events.

**Environment**

I had a meeting about Green Training with two members of Young Friends of the Earth on the 5th of September. We are holding Green Training in Dublin on the 6th of October. USI is helping with the promotion and organisation of this event. During our meeting we discussed the timetable for the event and the speaker line-up.

**Transgender**

I attended the Transgender EU Conference in Dublin City University on the weekend of the 7th to the 9th of September. During this weekend, I participated in a range on workshops on transgender issues and met activists from all over Europe.

On the 29th of August, I contributed to the welcome video for delegates of this conference along with the VP for the Irish Language.

I drafted the USI statement on gender recognition legislation and our support for Ireland’s first rally for gender recognition. This statement was distributed to the media on the 7th of September. I participated in a Newstalk interview on this issue later that day.

I attended the ‘Rally for Recognition’ on the Friday evening of the conference.

I met with Trans Education and Advocacy on the 21st of August. Thay are a new group for Trans advocacy in Ireland. We discussed how we could work together and how they might get involved with Pink Training.

**Marriage Equality**

On the 11th of August, I prepared all of the signs and banners that USI used for the March for Marriage.

On the 12th of August, I attended the March for Marriage with the rest of Officer Board and member organisations from across the country.

I participated in a UCD Law Society debate on the 11th of September against the motion ‘Civil Partnership is Enough.’ I debated against this motion with the UCD Campaigns and Communications Officer and members of the UCD LGBT Society.

I lobbied city councillors on the issues of marriage equality prior to their vote on the issue and I attended the Dublin City Council meeting where the council voted in favour of marriage equality on 2ND of September.

**Training**

I prepared a presentation and delivered training on running inclusive events and campaigns to IT Carlow Students’ Union Executive on the 28th of August.

**Part-time Officer Training**

I participated in a planning meeting on the 16th of August for our training day in relation to equality training, part-time officer training and activist training with the USI Deputy President, VP Welfare and VP for Academic Affairs and Quality Assurance.

**Violence in intimate youth relationships and sexual assault**

I met with Cosc on the 14th of August to discuss preparations and methodolgy for our survey on violence in youth relationships and assault. I have been in contact with NUS in relation to the Hidden Marks survey which they conducted in 2010. I am awaiting further information from NUS on the methodology they used in their survey. In conjunction with Cosc, I hope to create a survey that is directed specifically to the Irish context but that will be similar enough to the UK survey that we can compare findings in both countries. The USI survey intends to also include the level of intimate relationship violence experienced by males and by different sexualities.

I participated in my first PASC meeting (public awareness sub committee on sexual and gender based violence under COSC) on the 4th of September. I got feedback from the group on the survey USI are conducting and we discussed potential ways we can effectively promote awareness of these issues to students.

**LGBT Ally Campaign**

I arranged for UCC Film Society to film our LGBT Ally video at UCC National Council. I have made contact with speakers for the regional launchs for this campaign. I worked with our General Manager in sourcing suitable wristbands for this campaign. I wrote the text for the inlay card which will come with the Ally wristbands and have begun creating the content for the online page for the campaign on our USI website. I met with our Media and Communications Executive on the 3rd of September to discuss the messaging of the campaign, design and the online aspect to it.

**Financial supports for students, including students with disabilities and mature students**

I have been preparing briefing documents on the financial supports available to students along with the VP Welfare and VP Academic Affairs and Quality Assurance.

**USI Equality Policy**

I drafted a proposed equality policy for USI based on guidelines by the Equality Authority and samples from policies used by other Students’ Unions. This policy is being reviewed by the Equality Authority.

**Campaign for Children**

I met with Spun Out in their offices on the 29th of August to discuss promoting the upcoming children’s rights campaign to students. It was agreed that Spun Out would distribute a limited amount of voter registration packs to USI.

**Media Engagement**

I wrote a summary of my role for a Daily Star supplement on going to college. I also responded to questions from a journalist from Metro Eireann magazine on issues relating to migrant students and students from ethnic minory backgrounds. I contributed to a Hotpress article on advice for LGBT students starting first year of college.

1. The

**Appendix**

**Meetings/Events Attended:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Meeting/Event** | **Purpose (unless stated, all details of meetings are outlined above)** |
| 06.09.12 | Volunteer Ireland meeting |  |
| 29.08.12 | Volunteer Fair |  |
| 29.08.12 | Suas Meeting |  |
| 31.08.12 | Meeting with ICOS |  |
| 04.09.12 | Meeting with AHEAD |  |
| 21.08.12 | Meeting with the Equality Authority |  |
| 27.08.12 | Meeting with UCC Societies Guild |  |
| 27.08.12 | Meeting with UCC SU’s Equality Officer |  |
| 12.09.12 | Meeting with TCD’s Gender Equality Society |  |
| 05.09.12 | Meeting with Young Friends of the Earth |  |
| 07.09.12 – 09.09.12 | TGEU Council in DCU |  |
| 21.08.12 | Meeting with Trans Education and Advocacy |  |
| 12.08.12 | March for Marriage |  |
| 11.09.12 | UCD Law Society Debate |  |
| 02.09.12 | Dublin Ciy Council |  |
| 28.08.12 | Training in IT Carlow |  |
| 14.08.12 | COSC Meeting |  |
| 03.09.12 | Meeting with USI Media & Communications Exec |  |
| 29.08.12 | Meeting with Spun Out |  |
| 16.08.12 | Planning meeting for part-time officer training |  |
| 04.09.12 | PASC Meeting | Meeting on sexual and gender based violence |
| 22.08.12 | DCU meeting | Viewed the DCU student movement archive in relation to equality materials and met briefly with DCU Students Union |
| 11.09.12 & 12.09.12 | National Campaign Planning with USI Officer Board | We participated in a day and half of planning for our national campagn leading up to Budget 2013 |
|  |  |  |

**USI Meetings/Events Attended:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Meeting/Event** | **Details** |
|  |  |  |
|  | USI Officer Board Meeting |  |
| 13.08.12 | Weekly planning meeting | Monday morning meeting outlining our plans and schedules for the week ahead |
| 03.09.12 | Weekly planning meeting |  |
| 27.08.12 | Weekly planning meeting |  |
| 10.09.12 | Weekly planning meeting |  |
|  |  |  |

**Expenses Claimed – Public Transport**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Transport** | **To** | **From** | **Purpose** | **Cost** |
| 28/08/12 | Train return | Carlow | Dublin | MO engagement | 17 euro |

**Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Description** | **Purchaser** |
| 28/08/12 | Lunch and Tea | IT Carlow Students’ Union |
| 28/08/12 | Post -Exec Training Activity | IT Carlow Students’ Union |
|  | Confectionary | President of LIT SU |

**Annual Leave:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 23/09/12 |  |  |  |  |
| 24/09/12 |  |  |  |  |
| Total |  |  |  | 2 Days |

**Tuairisc an Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge**

1. **Traenáil na gCumann**

Following further discussions with Conradh na Gaeilge regarding Traenáil na gCumann next month, it has been agreed to hold it on 12-13, October.

The training will have a new format this year and will take place over a weekend rather just a Friday and Saturday morning. We have amended the clár so that it gives an enhanced training to students attending. We have also introduced role-specific modules for officers in the same vain as SUT.

As well as thsi there will also be a new part of the training aimed at cultivating a better working relationship between SU’s and cumainn.

I will in clude a full report / evaluation on the traenáil next month along with my officer report.

1. **Seachtain na Gaeilge – AMLÉ**
   1. **Seachtain Náisiúnta (National Week)**

I have continued to stay in touch with Seachtain na Gaeilge regarding our week and what kind of mutual benefit we can serve to each other.

I am hoping that USI and MO weeks will be included in any literature from SnaG and that in turn we will publicise the national festival at our events. Discussions are continuing but I hope to come to final agreement by the middle of next month.

* 1. **Féiltí Áitiúla (Local Events)**

In relation to MO weeks now that the majority of Cumann Gaelach auditors have returned after the summer break I look forward to discussing their plans for the events later in the year. However I do not envisage these metings taking place until towards the beginning of October as their focus will currently be on Fresher’s Fayres and start-of-year events.

I hope that I will be able to help with cumainn as much as I can, and also I propose to have a theme running through the weeks, if that is agreeable.

* 1. **Féile AMLÉ**

I have provisionally decided upon the week 4-8 Feb for SnaG AMLÉ. I have also spoken to some of the MO’s that I hope will be partaking in events during the week. The idea is to encourage MO’s an cumainn to organise events – if even just one or two – in conjunction with the week, in order to get a broad buy-in.

I am also aware that some MO’s will be having their own weeks around that time and I am hoping that SnaG AMLÉ can act as a spark for them, or vice versa.

1. **Poiblíocht**

I had number of engagements with the media during the month, and have gotten the chance to publicise USI campaigns to the listenership of Raidió na Gaeltachta, TG4, Raidió na Life and Gaelscéal.

I have also had contact from the Irish Post in London, enquiring if we wanted to have a monthly article in Irish relating to student affairs in Ireland.

1. **Feachtais (Campaigns)**

I have continued preparation for the Labhair Amach campaign in the first term. The aim of the campaign is to highlight services in Irish where they are available, and encourage the use of them.

In Mo’s where they are not available I will be hoping to work with the Oifigeach na Gaeilge / SU on campus to rectify that situation.

1. **Bliain na Gaeilge**

The monthly meeting of Bliain na Gaeilge was held recently and a workshop took place dealing with participation of young people specifically students.

A number of different proposals were mooted and I hope pending approval from an Comhairle Náisiúnta, that I will be encouragaing Oifigigh na Gaeilge and Cumainn to take an active part in the year. Bliain na Gaeilge offers a great chance for inter-varsity co-operation and I will be encouraging Cumainn to atake advantage of that especially this year. I will be putting particular emphasis on Dublin, Galway, Sligo / Castlebar, and Belfast will take advantage of this opportunity.

In areas where this is not as feasible I will be working with those MO’s and their area officers to ensure they are not left out notably in the South and the North-West.

1. **An Siopa Leabhar**

Unfortunately I have heard nothing back from an Siopa Leabhar as yet. Their board had a meeting yesterday so I hope that they will be able to present me with a plan going forward. As soon as I am made aware of their intentions I will be in touch with MO’s (SU, OnaG, and cumann) in order to make students aware of the offers.

1. **An t-Oireachtas**

Following a number of lengthy discussions with Conradh na Gaeilge’s student co-ordinator, it has been agreed that we will not be organising accommodation for travelling students. Cumainn Gaelaigh will be tasked with organising their own accommodation at the event. It was felt that following our experience in 2009, organising and allocating beds was an unnecessary endeavour.

We will still be organising an event on the Friday night as well as the USI/Gael-Linn/Conradh na Gaeilge 3rd level debate on Saturday, but no beds. We will be available beforehand and at the event to provide help and assistance.

1. **Coiste na Gaeilge**

The first meeting of Coiste na Gaeilge was held in TCDSU, at the end of August and was very successful. All present were agreed on the need to work closer together – as a unit – in order to achieve more for the campaign.

Also the prospect of being more involved in USI activities, and planning campaigns was received very well. The overwhelming feeling from the room was that in order to ensure that Irish remained an integral part of USI, the Irish Language campaign would need to stand up and make itself counted even more so than before. All those present were more than happy to accept the challenge.

1. **Comhdháil Gaeilge AMLÉ**

I have been reviewing plans for the Irish Language Conference that I intend to hold at the end of November, in Galway. My aim is to hold a day-long clár of events inviting students to come and discuss, what is happening within, the Irish Language movement, what is holding it back, and what way is best to go forward.

I have raised the event with a number of people, and they have expressed interest, but also have expressed reservations around the timing, as it is during exam period, and comes during a very busy period for cumainn around the country. In spite of this I still intend to keep to this date as I do not want to limit it to cumann students, and as such I will be aiming for a broader base of people at that time.

1. **Raidió Rí-Rá**

Raidió Rí-Rá is back on FM and as in the past, USI students represent the vast majority of the presenters taking to the airwaves during the fortnight. I have been working with Raidió Rí-Rá to ensure that students get the best experience while taking part in Rí-Rá.

Also I have endeavoured to ensure that students who clearly benefit from radio experience, like those in Acadamh na hOllscolaíoachta Gaeilge be encouraged to take part.

1. **Díospóireacht Gael-Linn**

I have been working with Gael-Linn to organise this year’s 3rd level debate at an t-Oireachtas. I hope to begin qualifing rounds of the debate in early September and have the teams decided by mid-October, allowing teams ample time to prepare for the final in November.

1. **Polasaí Gaeilge**

In the coming month I intend to meet with members of officer-board and staff to establish what is the best way to uphold adhere to USI’s Irish Language policy.

I intend to prepare a report on my work for Comhairle Náisiúnta DIT, in October.

**Appendix**

**Meetings/Events Attended:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Meeting/Event** | **Purpose** |
| 20/8/12 | Raidió Rí-Rá | Student Participation |
| 21/8/12 | Meeting with Comhordaitheoir na ML CnaG | Planning meeting |
| 29/8/12 | Meeting with Foras na Gaeilge | Application for funding |
| 7/9/12 | Seachtain na Gaeilge | Student Representation |
| 11/9/12 | Rith 2014 | Student Participation |
| 14/9/12 | Oireachtas na Gaeilge | Student Representation |

**USI Meetings/Events Attended:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Meeting/Event** | **Details** |
| 20/8/12 | Cruinniú Oifige | Office Meeting |
| 27/8/12 | Cruinniú Oifige | Office Meeting |
| 21/8/12 | Seoladh Leabhar Cíosa | Rent Book Launch LIT |
| 29/8/12 | Bord na n-Oifigeach | OB Meeting |
| 30/8/12 | Coiste na Gaeilge | Meeting of USI Irish Language Committee |
| 3/9/12 | Cruinniú Oifige | Office Meeting |
| 29/8/12 | Oíche Deontas | Grant info evening |

**Membership Engagement**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **CO** | **Details** |
| 27/8/12 | DIT | SnaG - AMLÉ |
| 28/8/12 | STACS | Forbairt Cumann Gaelach |
| 28/8/12 | IT Sligo | Ócáidí Gaeilge tríd an bhliain |
| 28/8/12 | NUIG | Comhdháil Gaeilge |
| 28/8/12 | GMIT | Comhdháil Gaeilge |
| 4-5/9/12 | NUIG | Céad lá, Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge |

**Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Description** | **Purchaser** |
| 20/8/12 | Accomodation | LIT |
| 21/8/12 | Taxi | LIT |

**Expenses**

**Public Transport (Note 3)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | To | From |  | | Cost |
| 16/8/12 | An Lár | Ceann Áras | Travel to Office / MO visits | | €86 |
| 17/8/12 | Galway | Heuston | NC Galway | | €20 |
| 21/8/12 | Heuston | Limerick | Rent Book Launch | | €20 |
| 17/8/12 | Heuston | Harcourt st. | Taxi to Heuston (NC) | | €17.90 |
| 21/8/12 | Ceann Áras | Heuston | Bringing materials back to Ceann Áras | | €10.90 |
| 17/8/12 | GMIT | Ceannt Stn. | Taxi to NC | | €8.65 |
| 27/8/12 | Connolly | Ceann Áras | Transporting goods to Connolly | | €12 |
| 27/8/12 | Sligo | Connolly | MO visits | | €20 |
| 27/8/12 | Accommodation | Sligo (Mac Diarmada) | Transporting materials | | €4.45 |
| 28/8/12 | STACS | Sligo | MO Visit | | €11.50 |
| 28/8/12 | IT Sligo | STACS | MO Visit | | €9.90 |
| 28/8/12 | Mac Diarmada | IT Sligo | MO Visit | | €5.70 |
| 28/8/12 | Galway | Sligo | MO Visit | | €13.50 |
| 28/8/12 | NUIG | Ceannt (Galway) | MO Visit + Planning Comhdháil Gaeilge | | €6.10 |
| 28/8/12 | GMIT | NUIG | MO Visit | | €11.30 |
| 28/8/12 | Dublin | GMIT | Return to Dublin | | €12 |
|  |  |  |  | Total | **€269.90** |

**Weekend Work Allowance (Note 5)**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Purpose | Approved By | | Cost € |
| 17-18/8/12 | National Council |  | | €40 |
|  |  |  | Total | **€40** |

**Out of Office Meal Expense (Note 6)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Location | Purpose | Rate | | Cost € |
| 21/8/12 | LIT | Rent Book Launch | Lunch | | €10.00 |
| 27/8/12 | Sligo | MO Visit | Dinner | | €12.50 |
| 28/8/12 | Galway | MO Visit | Lunch | | €10.00 |
|  |  |  |  | |  |
|  |  |  |  | Total | **€32.50** |

**Report of the Vice President of the BMW Region**

1. **Rent book launch**

I attended the rent book launch of the BMW region in NUIG. We had a speaker along on the day from Threshold in Galway and SU President Paul spoke to the students on the day. Thank you to NUIG for hosting the event.

1. **CO engagement**
   1. **NUIG August 21st**

I was on the NUIG campus for the rent book launch.

* 1. **NUI Maynooth August 23rd**

I was on Maynooth campus for the day and I met with each of the officers about the year so far and the year ahead. I found this day extremely productive and came away with lots of ideas for the year ahead. The other members of officerboard and I will be competing in their Freshers fun 5km on September 27th to raise awareness of USI on campus.

* 1. **AIT August 27th**

I was in AIT to discuss their upcoming constitutional referendum and I met with the welfare officer and the President about the year ahead. The President and I then went and spoke to TD Robert Troy in relation to the post graduate loan scheme and he has contacted the minister in relation to this matter. There has been correspondence since this meeting.

* 1. **LYIT August 28th, September 13th**

I met with the welfare officer in relation to the upcoming campaigns for the year and how I could help out. We discussed Please Talk and as a result of this I have contacted someone who will hopefully be giving a presentation to LYIT SU along with Denise so they can establish it in their college. I have also been helping them with their class rep training and also their recruitment drive.

I was on campus another day with a USI promotion stand. I gave out USI ret books, pens and wrist bands to students and spoke to them about becoming involved with USI this year and making use of their membership. I spoke to a lot of students on the day and found that no students I spoke to were aware of the post grad problems or the under grad loan scheme. I will raise this with OB and make sure we address this issue.

* 1. **ITS August 30th, September 3rd, September 10th.**

I was on campus for two days in ITS helping with the packing of their Freshers pack. I also met with the President and Education officer to see if I could help with any upcoming events. I have been dealing with little bits of education case work here for two students.

* 1. **DKIT September 4th**

I met with the President and the welfare officer to update them on the work ongoing in USI and also to plan for the upcoming weeks ahead.

* 1. **GMIT Castlebar September 6th**

I attended the college freshers week and spoke to first years. I set up a stand and asked people to like the USI Facebook page and I gave out rent books and USI bangles on safe sex. As a lot of their student population was mature I felt as though I was under equipped to give them something physically to take away and remember USI as most owned their own houses and were married. I think this gap will be filled once we release the finance guide and I believe this will go a bit of the way with bridging the gap with this segment of our student population. I am also going to approach this with Laura.

* 1. **GMIT Galway August 21st**

I went onto the GMIT campus after the NUIG rent book launch to talk to their campus liaison officer and plan the year ahead and visiting their satellite campuses. I want to ensure I reach out to all students in my region and talking to students that maybe isolated from their main campus is something I want to do.

1. **Lobbying**

I have been contacting TDs in relation to the post graduate loan issue. I met with Robert Troy along with the President of AIT. Meetings with Michael Colreavy are also on the cards over the next two weeks.

1. **Freshers packs**

Some of the colleges in the region were let down by the failure of USI to provide packs to them so to make up for this I helped to ensure everyone had themselves covered and I offered to help with the packing. I was due to help two colleges pack but only managed to help one as I was called to Dublin for officerboard.

1. **Fresher stands**

As part of the USI student engagement strategy I have been trying to dedicate one day where I am present on each campus in the region with rent books, USI wristbands, pens etc. I have been speaking to students asking them to like our Facebook page and explaining what we are about. I am hoping to have had stands at most colleges by mid October. I have been trying to come up with ways that USI can promote itself on campuses to promote grass roots engagement. To kick it off myself and the other members of OB will be competing in the NUI Maynooth fun 5km. If any colleges have any other suggestions I am open to them.

1. **Class rep training**

I was asked by two colleges to help organise their rep training. I spent some time looking into what speakers were about and what they provided and then I gave a list of the best training about I had seen. I also drew up a checklist of things people needed to do when organising rep training and I gave a report back on where I seen their training could improve on from last year.

1. **Pre-Budget Planning**

Along with the other members of officer board I attended a two day planning session in Dublin about the national campaign. We set out our strategy for the budget and how each of us fed into this strategy. This strategy will be presented to National Council.

1. **Articles and reports**

I wrote a piece about myself and my job for the new website which is currently under construction. I also wrote a piece on USI for the LYIT and GMIT Castlebar Freshers handbook.

1. **Setting up SU crews**

Two colleges asked me about the best way to go about setting up crews to help them throughout the year. I looked at the other colleges and how they did this and then wrote up a guide for the colleges and sent it out.

**Meetings attended**

* Officerboard August 9th
* National Council August 18th
* Maynooth meeting with welfare officer and president 23rd August
* AIT meeting with Robert Troy 27th August
* DKIT meeting with the welfare officer and president 4th September
* LYIT meeting with the welfare officer and President 5th September
* GMIT Castlebar meeting with the welfare officer and president 6th September
* Officerboard teleconference August 7th
* Officerboard teleconference August 20th
* Officerboard teleconference August 27th
* Area officer teleconference August 30th
* Officerboard teleconference September 3rd
* Officerboard teleconference September 10th
* Officerboard budget meeting 11th and 12th September

**Own Car Transport (Note 2)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | To | From | Purpose | Rate | Distance | Cost | Tolls | Total |
| 21.08.12 | Galway | Sligo | CO visit NUIG and GMIT. Rent book launch NUIG | .45c | 277.12 | 124.70 | None | 124.70 |
| 27.08.12 | AIT | Sligo | CO visit and lobby | .45c | 229.5km | 103.26 | None | 103.26 |
| 04.08.12 | DKIT | Sligo | CO planning visit | .45c | 393.72km | 177.17 | none | 177.17 |

**Parking (Note 4)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Location | Purpose | Cost |
| 21.08.12 | NUIG | Parking CO visit and rent book lauch | 3.00 |
| 21.08.12 | GMIT | Parking CO visit | 2.00 |
| 04.09.12 | DKIT | Parking CO visit | 2.00 |

**Public transport**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Location | Purpose | Rate | Cost € |
| 09.08.12 | Train | OB Sligo to Dublin train | Adult single | 21.99 |
| 09.08.12 | Dublin bus | Fleet street to Crumlin | day | 2.15 |
| 23.08.12 | Train | CO Planning day in Maynooth | Adult return | 30.00 |
| 29.08.12 | Train | OB Sligo to Dublin | Student return | 20.00 |
| 29.08.12 | Taxi | Connolly to Crumlin |  | 11.90 |

**Weekend Work Allowance (Note 5)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Purpose | Approved By | Cost € |
| 18.08.12 | National council |  | 20 |

**Out of Office Meal Expense (Note 6)**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Location | Purpose | Rate | Cost € |
| 21.08.12 | GMIT | Lunch on CO visit | lunch | 10.00 |
| 27.08.12 | AIT | CO Planning day and evening lobby | Lunch | 10.00 |
| 04.09.12 | DKIT | CO planning day | lunch | 10.00 |

**Annual leave:** August 10th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th.

**Gifts:** Tea (NUIG, MSU), Foodstuffs (MSU, LYIT, GMIT Castlebar, IT Sligo)

**Report of the Vice President for the Southern Region**

1. **Individual MO Work**

Since the last National Council I have travelled extensively throughout the colleges in the Southern Region. I travelled with a list of approximately 10-15 items for discussion which the MO’s and I would discuss in detail. The aim of these visits was to ensure each Officer was adequately prepared for the return of their Students which was only a few weeks around the corner. The dates I visited the various MO’s are as follows:

August 28 – LITSU (All Officers from Moylish, LSAD, Tipperary and Clare)

August 29 – LITSU (President Niamh Kavanagh)

August 30 – ITTSU (Sabbatical Officers and Administrator)

August 31 – UCCSU (Sabbatical Officers)

September 3 - CCSU (President Joe Farelley)

September 4 – CCSU (President and two part-time Officers)

September 7 – WITSU (Sabbatical and Part-Time Officers)

September 10 & 11 - ITTSU (Sabbatical and Part-Time Officers)

1. **Freshers Induction Talks/USI on Campus**

Over the course of my travels I was given the opportunity to briefly speak with Incoming Freshers about the importance of USI and how we, as an organisation can assist them throughout their time in college. I explained our main objectives for the year and outlined the Importance of their involvement with both their own SU and USI.

Prior to the talks I had assembled a USI stand from which I encouraged students to come and speak with me about the organisation. USI Rent Books, Student Survival Guides and Pens were all on hand and proved to be quite popular.

1. **Increase in Capitation for MO’s**

At the beginning of my term I had spoke to each MO in my region in relation to funding and how much Capitation they receive from their college. Many MO’s felt that they were underfunded and had asked me for assistance. Having previously fought for a capitation increase the previous year the necessary steps were fresh in my memory. The relevant figures were gathered from colleges of a similar size and the average wage from across the country was accumulated. I assisted these colleges in devising a proposed expenditure document in which they would present to their respective Governing Bodies. Some of these are currently pending and others have yet to be submitted.

1. **Campaigns**

As induction weeks drew closer many colleges in the Southern Region were putting provisional plans in place for their 2012/2013 campaigns. Over the past number of weeks I have been assisting MO’s in choosing which campaigns to run, its content and of the relevant people to contact to ensure its success. I have been actively encouraging both the use of the USI social media pages and each Officers counterpart on Officer Board as an integral part of preparation for every campaign. Both proved extremely beneficial to me over my two years as a Sabbatical Officer.

Upon receiving the Campaign dates from the South I then input them to the online USI Officer Board Calendar. This will ensure no campaign in the Southern Region goes unnoticed by any member of Officer Board throughout the year.

1. **Class Representative Training**

Class Representative Training is many MO’s largest training event. Since the last National Council I have been assisting MO’s plan and prepare for their Class Rep’ Training days. Venue, content, guest speakers, meals on the day and entertainment have all been researched and many MO’s are fully prepared and ready to go. Most MO’s have requested for a USI representative to be present on the day, some of which have requested presentations. These are currently being devised and prepared for by Officer Board.

1. **Freshers**

Over the past number of weeks I have been working with various colleges to ensure their Freshers Week/Fortnight runs smoothly and successfully. I have assisted numerous MO’s in sourcing cheaper prices for many of their events and helped others plan their week off profit alone.

**Meetings/Events Attended**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| September 6 | Tour of Trinity College Dublin |
| September 10 & 11 | ITTSU First Year Induction |

**USI Meetings/Events Attended**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| September 12 | Officer Board Meeting |

**Declaration of Gifts/Hospitality**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Lunch | LITSU |
| Home Cooked Meal | ITTSU |
| Lunch | ITTSU |
| Lunch | UCCSU |
| Taxi | LITSU |
| Korean Gift Pack | WITSU |
| Lunch | WITSU |

**Annual Leave**

|  |
| --- |
| Aug’ 15-17 |
| Aug’ 20-22 |

**Expenses**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| July 13 | Dublin | Carlow | Train, HEA Meeting | | €17.20 |
| August 9 | Dublin | Carlow | Train, Officer Board Meeting | | €12.00 |
| August 9 | Ceann Aras | Heuston Station | Taxi, Officer Board Meeting | | €11.90 |
| August 28 | Dublin | Carlow | Train, LITSU Regional Visit | | €12.00 |
| August 28 | Limerick | Dublin | Train, LITSU Regional Visit | | €20.00 |
| August 28 | LIT | Limerick Train Station | Taxi, LITSU Regional Visit | | €7.30 |
| August 29 | Tralee | Limerick | Bus, ITTSU Regional Visit | | €15.30 |
| August 29 | Benners Hotel | Train Station | Taxi, ITTSU Regional Visit | | €6.10 |
| August 31 | Kent Train Station | UCC | Taxi, UCCSU Regional Visit | | €8.10 |
| August 31 | Carlow | Cork | Train, UCCSU Regional Visit | | €30.00 |
|  |  |  |  | Total | **€139.90** |

**Out of Office Meal Expense (Note 6)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Location | Purpose | Rate | | Cost € |
| August 1 | Dublin | Lunch, Officer Board Meeting |  | | €4.50 |
| August 9 | Dublin | Lunch, Officer Board Meeting |  | | €10.00 |
| August 28 | Dublin | Breakfast, LITSU Regional Visit |  | | €5.90 |
| August 28 | Limerick | Dinner, LITSU Regional Visit |  | | €12.00 |
|  |  |  |  | Total | **€32.40** |