**Meeting:** Presidents’ Working Group
**Date & Time:** Friday 15th February, 8pm

**Clár**

(i) SU Smartphone Applications
(ii) DCU Referendum
(iii) SU Communication Channels
(iv) A.O.B.

**Meeting:** Campaigns Working Group
**Date & Time:** Saturday 16th February, 10am

**Clár**
(i) Matters Arising
(ii) INMO Graduate Nurses and Midwives Campaign
(iii) Next Step with Towards Budget 2014
(iv) A.O.B.

**Meeting:** BMW Regional Council

**Date & Time:** Saturday 16th February, 11.30am

**Clár**
(i) Upcoming events on campus
(ii) Congress
(iii) A.O.B.

**Meeting:** Welfare Working Group
**Date & Time:** Friday 15th February, 8pm

**Clár**
(i) Minutes
(ii) Matters Arising
(iii) PleaseTalk Forum
(iv) Local Welfare Campaigns
(v) Reflective Support Session
(vi) AOB

**Meeting:** Equality and Citizenship Working Group
**Date & Time:** Friday 15th February, 6pm

**Clár**
(i) Minutes
(ii) Matters Arising
(iii) USI ‘Say Something’ survey
(iv) Constitutional Convention
(v) Treatment of Arab/Palestinian Students (DITSU)
(vi) Student Workers (NUIG SU)
(vi) AOB

**Meeting:** Entertainments Working Group
**Date & Time:** Friday 15th February, 7pm

**Clár**

(i) Presentation and open discussion from Sonix Entertainment
(ii) National Event
(iii) Update on ents.usi.ie
(iv) A.O.B.

**Meeting:** Southern Regional Council
**Date & Time:** Saturday 16th February, 11.30am

**Clár**

(i) Last week of Say Something Survey
(ii) DCU Referendum
(iii) CIT Referendum
(iv) European Student Convention
(v) Congress Theme
(vi) A.O.B.

**Meeting:** Education Working Group
**Date & Time:** Friday 15th February, 7pm

**Clár**

(i) SUSI Developments
(ii)Postgraduate Forum
(iii) National Student Survey Campaign
(iv)A.O.B.

**USI National Council – 16/2/2013**

**Comhairle Náisiúnta AMLÉ – STACS NC**

**Report of the President**

**Tuairisc an Uachtarán**

1. **Referenda Preparations**
2. **SUSI**
3. **Higher Education Authority**
4. **USI Student Finances Survey**
5. **Media Engagement**

1.       **Referenda Preparations**

In conjunction with the Deputy President, I have been preparing the strategy for the three referenda taking place over the next fourteen days. This planning has incorporated significant research into the student demographics on each campus, tours of each campus to familiarise Officer Board with heavy footfall areas, creation of campaign materials, recruiting and organising campaign teams on each campus.

The Deputy President and I have also met with the UCDSU and MSU Executive as well as the UCDSU Council ahead of the USI referenda on campus to answer their queries and address any issues they had. I participated in a UCD Literary & Historical Debate Society debate on the issue of USI affiliation.

The DCU Students’ Union Council passed a motion to hold a USI re-affiliation referendum on 26th and 27th February. Along with the Deputy President I have also begun the strategic planning process needed to prepare for this referendum. I also attended a meeting with members of the pro-USI campaign team and a further meeting with DCU Students’ Union.

**2.**       **SUSI**

I have been in constant contact with the senior management team in City of Dublin VEC as well as the Head of Higher Education and the Head of Equity of Access in the Department of Education & Skills in relation to the closing out of the current grant scheme and the process of improving next year’s scheme in order to ensure that students receive their maintenance grants promptly. USI are one of the main stakeholder bodies involved in the external review of SUSI and will report back to National Council on all developments in this area.

**3.**      **Higher Education Authority**

In February 2012, as part of the implementation of the National Strategy

for Higher Education to 2030, the HEA published its document -Towards a future higher education landscape -and invited higher education institutions to engage with the HEA in respect of the future position of each institution in the higher education landscape. The HEA intends to provide advice to the Minister for Education and Skills in March on its view of a future configuration of the Irish higher education system. Prior to reaching conclusions further consultations will be held with the higher education institutions in February.

The landscape document has received mixed reactions in the sector where there is a clear wish that the HEA proceed as quickly as possible to final conclusions.  The CEO outlined at our last meeting that it is intended that the document that will be tabled for the March meeting, preparatory to advising the Minister, will contain more detail around the particular configurations proposed.  In particular it is intended that the document will address the issue of regional clusters, their structure, outcomes expected and governance issues.

A further meeting of the Authority took place on Tuesday January 29th. I will provide a verbal update on this progress at National Council as more information will have come to light since writing this report.

**4.**   **USI Student Finances Survey**

USI engaged Amarách Research in relation to a joint research project with USI and Member Organisations on students’ financial wellbeing, impact of the Budget on students’ funds, impact on their family, job prospects, likelihood to emigrate, etc. Amarách Research agreed to script and host this as an online survey which you can be e-mailed to students following which Amarách will write a report on the findings. These findings can then be used reliably in blogs, reports, media interviews, etc.

Amarách Research is a highly respected research organisation and has been in the public eye recently following the publishing of recent reports for the CPSMA and another for UPC. I met with Senior Executives at Amarách Research and discussed the options for moving forward with the project. Amarách are continuing to develop the questionnaire based on reports supplied by USI and are scheduled to have a draft ready by the end of the week.

A potential issue arose in relation to multiple accesses from a single IP address.Amarách assured USI they can set the survey up to avoid the issue of only one response being recorded from a single IP address which would run the risk of blocking students from answering the survey from college libraries, etc. To get around this Amarách will put a note in the email asking students to answer the survey only once and warn them that multiple responses may be deleted from the system.

**Appendix**

**USI Meetings/Events Attended:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Meeting/Event** | **Details** |
| 28.1.13 | John Conroy, SUSI | Systemic Issues w/ SUSI |
| 29.1.13 | HEA | Board Meeting |
| 29.1.13 | UCDSU Executive | Meeting to discuss USI |
| 1.2.13 | INMO Protest | Grad Nursing/Midwifery Salaries |
| 1.2.13 | Meeting w/ Eugene McKenna | DCS Ltd. |
| 5.2.13 | Maynooth SU Exec | Discussed USI Benefits |
| 6.2.13 | L&H Debate | USI Referendum |
| 7.2.13 | Meeting w/ NUS Services Ltd. | Commercial Development |
| 11.2.13 | SHAG Fortnight Launch | UCD |
| 12.3.13 | Meeting with Chair, HEA | Discussion of Landscape |

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| 21.1.13 | Officer Board | Planning and Preparing |
| 21.1.13 | Towards Budget 2014 | Campaigns Sub Group |
| 25.1.13 | National Council | IT Tralee |
| 28.1.13 | Officer Board | Planning and Preparing |
| 1.2.13 | INMO Rally | HSE, Dublin |
| 4.2.13 | Officer Board | Planning and Preparing |
| 8.2.13 | Officer Board | Top-Up Training |

**Media Engagement**

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| --- | --- |
| **Description** | **Topic** |
| Waterford News & Star | Student Fees Recovery |
| Ocean FM | Student Fees Recovery |
| Wexford Echo | Student Fees Recovery |
| Roscommon Herald | Student Finances |

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| Waterford News & Star | Student Fees Recovery |
| Ocean FM | Student Finances |
| Newstalk | Student Fees Recovery |
| Irish Examiner | Student Fees Recovery |

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| Evening Echo | Student Finances |
| Western People | Student Fees Recovery |
| Q102 | Student Finances |
| Radio Kerry | Student Fees Recovery |

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| Spin 103.8 | Student Fees Recovery |
| Sunshine FM | Student Finances |
| South East Radio FM | Student Finances |
| Red FM | Student Fees Recovery |

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| Midlands 103 | Student Finances |
| FM104 | Student Fees Recovery |
| East Coast Radio | Student Fees Recovery |
| Cork 96FM | Student Fees Recovery |

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**Expenses Claimed – Parking**

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| **Date** | **Where** | **Purpose** | **Cost €** |
| 29.1.13 | HEA | HEA Meeting | 7.00 |

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

**Tuairisc an Leas-Uachtarán do Feachtais**

**1.**      **USI Student Achievement Awards (Formally USI Awards)**

**2.**      **USI Referenda**

**3.**    **Older & Bolder Presentation**

**4.**      **INMO Rally**

**5.**      **Guide to Being a Students’ Union Officer**

**1.**      **USI Student Achievement Awards**

Preparation for the Student Achievement Awards is on going. The Project group behind the awards consists for the VP for the BMW Region, the VP for the Southern Region, the Media & Communications Executive and myself. We will be bringing a update to National Council that will include the 20 categories, the date of the event and the entry process. We have been researching venues, MCs, Judges and categories extensively.

The USI Student Achievement Awards (formally USI Awards) was held at USI Congress 2012 where i created and ran the event as Southern Area Officer in conjunction with the Western Area Officer. We are delighted to bring it as a stand alone event this year that will be open to all students, part-time officers, convenors and sabbatical Officers of USI member organisations where they will be recognised and awarded for their contribution to the student experience in many categories.

**2. USI Referenda**

Within the space of 2 weeks, USI will have 3 different referenda to prepare for.

I have been planning the campaign for the UCD referendum which will take place first. The planning consists of UCD Research, UCD Campus Tour, campaign materials, organising the Campaign Team.

The USI President and i have also met with the UCDSU Executive Committee and the UCDSU Council ahead of the USI referendum on campus to answer their queries and address any issues they had. I liaised with the UCD Literary & Historical Debate Society Convenor in the run up to the debate to organise the USI Team and I attended the debate also.

I have been liaising with the VP for the BMW Region on the preparation for the Maynooth Students’ Union referendum that will be taking place in February also. The USI President, VP for the BMW and i have met with the MSU Executive Committee ahead of the USI referendum on campus to answer their queries and address any issues they have.

The DCU Students’ Union Council passed a motion to hold a USI re-affiliation referendum on 26th and 27th February. As the Campaigns Officers and the Dublin Region Liaison Officer i have started to plan, organise and prepare for this important referendum. I have commenced extensive research and organised a meeting with the DCU Students’ Union that the USI President and i will attend.

**3. Older & Bolder Presentation**

The VP for Equality & Citizenship invited me to present at an Older & Bolder Event in Dublin. I prepared a presentation that would give an overview on the USI Fed Up? Stand Up! campaign that would allow attendees have an insight into the student movement and the angle we took on the campaign. I presented to a group of Older & Bolder members along with Member Organisations officers and students. I engaged in a group discussion afterward where we discussed the methods of campaigning used by the Older & Bolder Members and the USI members.

**4. INMO Rally**

In the run up to the second rally  held by the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation I liaised with the President and the regional VPs to inform MOs and pass on the full facts and inform on the INMO Boycott of the Graduate Scheme. I attended the INMO Rally with the President.

**5.** **Guide to Being a Students’ Union Officer**

I have been working with the VP for the Southern Region on the layout and content for the Guide to being a Students’ Union Officer. We are currently seeking input and contributions from members of Officerboard and past MO and Officerboard officers.

**Appendix**

**USI Meetings/Events Attended:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Meeting/Event** | **Details** |
| 21/1/13 | Officer Board | Planning and Preparing |
| 21/1/13 | Towards Budget 2014 | Campaigns Sub Group |
| 22/1/13 | Student Achievement Awards | Preparation |
| 23/1/13 | Older & Bolder Event | Presented Overview of National Campaign |
| 25/1/113 | National Council | IT Tralee |
| 28/1/13 | Officer Board | Planning and Preparing |
| 30/1/13 | Student Achievement Awards | Preparation |
| 1/2/13 | INMO Rally | At the HSE HQ, Dublin |
| 4/2/13 | Officer Board | Planning and Preparing |
| 7/2/13 | Student Achievement Awards | Preparation |
| 8/2/13 | Officer Board | Top-Up Training |

**Membership Engagement**

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| **Date** | **MO** | **Details** |
| 31/1/13 | UCDSU | UCDSU Council |
| 5/2/13 | MSU | MSU Executive Meeting |
| 5/2/13 | UCDSU | UCDSU Executive Meeting |
| 6/2/13 | UCDSU | USI Debate |
| 7/2/13 | UCDSU | USI Women in Society Seminar |

**Media Engagement**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Description** | **Topic** |
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**Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality:**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Description** | **Purchaser** |
| 26/1/13 | Cupcakes, Tea, Sandwiches, Water | IT Tralee SU |
| 6/2/13 | Beverage | UCD L&H Society |

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| **Leave** | **Date** |
| Annual Leave | n/a |

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

**Tuairisc an Leas-Uachtarán do Ghnóthaí Acadúla agus Dhearbhú Cáilíochta**

**1. SUSI**

**2.   Student Assistance Fund Study**

**3. Postgraduate Student Loans**

**4. National Student Survey**

**5. 25th European Student Convention**

**6.   Casework**

**1.   SUSI**

On January 29th the SUSI Forum meeting took place with the majority of the student union members and John Conroy (SUSI Head of Communications). The CEO and principal officers usually present did not attend. Based on the discussions from the Education Working Group and National Council meetings in IT Tralee a document was presented listing the various issues which had arose. Mr. Conroy gave a response to each issue, often citing shortcomings by SUSI, and a solution to tackle the 9,000+ outstanding cases was agreed upon.  With significant numbers of students still contacting their SU about SUSI the solution proposed would fast track these cases to a designated team for an assessment. The other suggestions were taken into account and will be looked into, these included the cost of calling the helpdesk and a single website for SUSI.

To ensure all MO’s had the opportunity to ‘fast track’ their casework by the route offered by SUSI, I circulated the plan for the week beginning Feb 3rd, circulated a template to be used when submitting casework information, had a poster designed and sent out to MO’s and contacted officers.

 I have also been dealing with a large number of student experiencing very complex issues.

**2.   Student Assistance Fund Study**

Based on the information gathered over the previous months I met with the VP for Welfare to begin the final stages of the harmonisation study. Though we did not get information from as many colleges as we had hoped the quality of what we did receive was enough to inform a comprehensive study. We began by studying the application procedures in place across the colleges looking first at the application form layout and content before examining the way in which the scheme is promoted and how the application form is made available. In doing so we compiled an application form which covered all of the items requested in the forms we had available to us and were able to assess what information is most useful to both the committees awarding the funds and the HEA/EU bodies who support the fund. We also set out the report structure and began to write up our findings. We plan to have the first draft of the report completed in time for consultation at the National Council hosted by St. Angelas SU.

**3. Postgraduate Student Loans**

In the run up tothe January National Council and with the assistance of the Regional VP’s I compiled the postgraduate representatives database. The next post graduate meeting will be determined by their availability over the next fortnight. As well as examining the postgraduate loan proposal this will also be an opportunity for postgraduate officers and reps to meet and discuss other issues affecting their constituents.

Unfortunately progress with setting up the expert panel has been hampered by the availability of those I have contacted over the last month. We have secured support from a small number of individuals including nominations from the HEA and Dept of Education. When a meeting of the postgraduate group is determined invitations will be issued to this list to attend part of the meeting dedicated to the loan proposal.

Both of the research institutes I have approached, Nevin Inst. and ESRI, have both expressed interest but due to other commitments cannot join the project for the foreseeable future. The ESRI have however agreed to give a presentation to the group on their most recent research and findings.

**4. National Student Survey**

The preparations for the survey roll out have been ongoing over the last few week. I assisted with setting up the George Kuh seminar on February 1st and presented to the Education Working Group an update being sent to all colleges. I have finalised the poster designs and materials with the Communications and Reporting Group and will have the final campaign plan set out in time for the next Education working group with key dates and activities for MO’s. There is still some tension over the report to be issued after the pilot, this will be discussed at the next plenary meeting prior to the February National Council and I will keep MO’s updated on the progress.

**5. 25th European Student Convention**

With most of the logistics in place the main tasks are now to finalise the agenda and the delegates registration. The speaker list has been divided between myself and ESU and invitations have been sent to all potential speakers. Registration has been open for a week and will close on the 11th of February. I have been assisting delegates with queries about visas and registration difficulties.

**6. Casework**

As well as a significant caseload of SUSI issues I have been dealing with a number of cases experiencing academic difficulties and erasmus issues.

**Appendix**

**USI Meetings/Events Attended:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Meeting/Event** | **Details** |
| 21/1 | Exam Campaign Meeting | Planning for April |
| 26/1 | National Council | IT Tralee |
| 4/2 | Officerboard | Planning & Evaluation  |
| 7/2 | Women in Society Seminar | Hosted by UCDSU |
| 8/2 | OB Media Training | Interview planning and skills |

**Meetings/Events Attended:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Meeting/Event** | **Details** |
| 19/1 | ESU Meeting | ESC Logistics & agenda  |
| 21/1 | ESC Meeting | USI Officers |
| 23/1 | NSS Plenary |  |
| 29/1 | SUSI Forum | Issues and solutions |
| 30-31/1 | HEA Conference  | Rankings - quality outcomes |
| 1/2 | NSS Survey Design  | Finalised survey questions |
| 1/2 | NSS Seminar | Prof George Kuh |
| 6/2 | UCD USI Affiliation Debate | Hosted by UCD L&H |

**Membership Engagement**

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| **Date** | **MO** | **Details** |
| 6/2 | MSU | Reorientation- SUSI |
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**Media Engagement**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Description**  | **Topic** |
| 30/1 | French Newspaper | Multirank |
| 4/2 | RTE Drive time | SUSI |

**Expenses Claimed – Public Transport**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **To** | **From** | **Purpose** |  | **Cost** |
| 12/12/12 | HEA | USI HQ | NSS Plenary |  | 7.90 |
| 12/12/12 | USI HQ | HEA | NSS Plenary |  | 8.90 |
| 16/1/13 | Heuston | City Centre | NSS Galway Focus Groups |  | 7.25 |
| 16/1/13 | NUIG | Galway Station | NSS Galway Focus Groups |  | 7.10 |
| 16/1/13 | City Centre | Heuston | Return from Galway |  | 8.05 |
| 17/1/13 | HEA | USI HQ | NSS Comms Meeting |  | 7.00 |
| 18/1/13 | Dept Education | USI HQ | ESC Site Visit |  | 10.10 |
| 18/1/13 | Carlton Hotel | Dept Education | ESC Site Visit |  | 26.10 |
| 18/1/13 | City Centre | Carlton Hotel | ESC Site Visit |  | 28.50 |
| 23/1/13 | IUA | USI HQ | NSS Plenary |  | 7.50 |
| 23/1/13 | USI HQ | IUA | NSS Plenary |  | 5.90 |
|  |  |  |  | Total | **124.30** |

**Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality:**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Description** | **Purchaser** |
| 26/1 | Lunch & Cupcakes | IT Tralee |

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| **Leave** | **Date** |
| None |  |

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**Report of the VP for Welfare**

**Tuairisc an Leas-Uachtarán do  Leas**

1. **Sexual Health**
2. **Exam Campaign**
3. **Student Assistance Fund**
4. **Welfare Motions**

**1. Sexual Health**

Since the last National Council I have been working on content and layout of SHAG.usi.ie with the USI General Manager. The sexual health website is a mandate from Congress 2012, and was of no cost to USI. All design was done in house and Think Contraception, Rape Crisis Network and I put together all the content for the site.

In relation to SHAG Packs, MOs began receiving them from Monday February 4th which was ahead of schedule. As mentioned in my previous report, this year we are coordinating SHAG Fortnight which will see a sexual health roadshow with various organisations across two weeks from February 11-22nd. USI’s SHAG campaign is being launched in UCD, February 11th and the roadshow will visit AIT (13th), GMIT (14th), DIT (18th) and LIT (20th).

I have engaged with a production company; Areaman Productions who are putting together a documentary that is looking into attitudes and experiences of sex and relationships in Ireland today, particularly looking at the younger 16-30 age groups. They will be taking part in SHAG week and I have organised for them to come to GMIT campus on February 14th to cover the activities on campus that day. The programme will be on RTE Two on March 4th.

I also assisted a number of welfare officers with their SHAG weeks and helped with ideas for activities on campus.

**2. Exam Campaign**

I have been investigating the possibility of producing materials for the exam campaign. I met with the VP for AA&QA and the General Manager for a campaign initiation meeting and a further meeting with the VP for Campaigns, VP for BMW and the Media and Communications Exec. We have been looking at various options for the campaign. I also have engaged with PleaseTalk and SpunOut about participating and supporting the campaign. We would welcome any suggestions on this. I hope to have more information on this in my next report.

**3. Student Assistance Fund Harmonisation Study  & Best Practice Framework report**

Since November I have been gathering information from Welfare Officers across the country on the Student Assistance Fund with the help of VP for BMW region, VP for Southern region, VP for Campaigns and VP for Academic Affairs & Quality Assurance. Based on this information, the VP for AA&QA and I met to put structure to the harmonisation study. Unfortunately we did not receive all requested information from all MOs, however the information we did receive  was enough to develop a comprehensive study of the SAF. We examined both the application procedures across MOs and a list of various questions we had requested from each Welfare Officer, relating to application process, promotion, awareness, processing etc. We then began putting together the structure to the best practise framework report that is to be approved at Congress. From this we will have conclusions from the Harmonisation Study and recommendation for USI, MOs and the HEA.

**4. Welfare Motions**

Following feedback from Welfare Officers I wrote Welfare motions to be decided by Welfare Working Group to be put forward as Welfare Working Group motions to Congress 2013. I also wrote motions to be put forward by myself. I assisted a number of officers in writing Welfare motions and I look forward to debating on them at Congress.

**Appendix**

**Media Engagement**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Media** | **Details** |
| 29/01 | iRadio | Alcohol Awareness Toolkit |
| 29/01 | Waterford Today | Alcohol Awareness Toolkit |
| 04/02 | Irish independent | USI Cyberbullying Campaign |

**USI Meetings/Events Attended:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Meeting/Event** | **Details** |
| 21/01 | Officer Board | Weekly Planning & Preparing |
| 21/01 | Exam Campaign Initiation Meeting | Planning for April/May |
| 25-26/02 | National Council  | IT Tralee NC |
| 28/1/13 | Officer Board | Weekly Planning & Evaluating |
| 4/2/13 | Officer Board | Weekly Planning & Evaluating |
| 08/01 | Officer Board | Top up training |

**Meetings/Events Attended:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Meeting/event** | **Details** |
| 21/01 | Drinkaware | **Finalise Alcohol Awareness Toolkit** |
| 23/01 | PleaseTalk | Update and Anniversary event |
| 23/01 | Reachout.com | Finalise Cyberbullying module |
| 05/01 | DITSU  | Run through for SHAG roadshow |
| 07/01 | PleaseTalk steering | 1st term review, anniversary, forum |

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**Own Car Transport**

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| **Date** | **To** | **From** | **Purpose** | **Rate** | **Distance** | **Cost** | **Tolls** | **Total** |
| **10/01** | **Newcastle** | **Ceann Aras** | **Team Refocus & planning (return)** | **.35** | **284km** | **€99.4** | **€3**€1.75€1.90€1.90 | **107.95** |
| **25/01** | **Tralee** | **Ceann Aras** | **National Council** | **.35** | **600km** | **€210** |  | **210** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Total** | **317.95** |

**Parking**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Location** | **Purpose** | **Cost** |
| **09/01** | **Stephen’ Green** | **PleaseTalk Update,  Cyber         bullying Module** | **10.20** |
| **16/01** | **Parliament Row** | **Cyberbullying Research Meeting** | **6.20** |
| **16/01** | **Clyde Hotel** | **Grasp       App Launch** | **3.00** |
| **23/01** | **Stephen’ Green** | **PleaseTalk anniversary,** **Cyber bullying Module** | **13.70** |

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**Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality:**

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| **Date** | **Description** | **Purchaser** |
| 25-26/01 | Tea, confectionary, water, lunch | IT Tralee SU |
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| --- | --- |
| **Annual Leave** | **Date** |
| Annual Leave | - |

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

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

**1.**   **Gender Equality**

**2.   Training**

**3.   USI ‘Say Something’ survey**

**4.   Intergenerational Campaigning**

**5.   International Students**

**6.   Abortion Rights Campaign**

**7.   Students with Disabilities**

**1. Gender Equality**

Since my last report USI has organised two ‘Women in Society’ seminars. The first took place in UCC on the 28th of January and the second in UCD on the 7th of February. Both seminars were successful and there was a mixture of males and females in attendance. Both seminars were hosted by the Gender Equality Officers on campus. I organised all of the speakers, the running order of the events, helped to compile the press releases, promoted the events online and acted as a facilitator for both seminars.

The UCC seminar speakers were: Deirdre O’ Shaughnesy, Editor of the Cork Independent; Fiona Buckley, lecturer in UCC Department of Government; Jennifer DeWan, Co-founder of Cork Feminista and Deirdre Waldron, President of Network Cork and founder of Fuzion PR.

The UCD seminar speakers were: Margaret Ward, founder of Women on Air and award winning journalist; Michelle O’ Donnell Keating, co-founder of Women for Election; Kathleen Lynch, Professor of Equality Studies in UCD; Rachel Breslin, UCD Students’ Union President and Grainne Healy, Chair of Marriage Equality.

Minutes were taken from each seminar and a document with issues raised around the country will be compiled when we complete the series.

   **2. Training**

Since my last report I prepared a presentation on the ‘Coming Out’ process and facilitated a workshop on this topic on the 22nd of January in NUIG with members of their LGBT Society. On the 28th of January, I delivered training to members of UCC Students’ Union’s Executive on request of their Equality Working Group on the USI equality campaign, with a focus on gender recognition legislation. I facilitated a session called ‘Campaigning for Social Change: Highs, Lows and Epiphanies’ for Social Entrepreneurs Ireland’s WaveChange bootcamp training day in the Wood Quay Venue in Dublin on Saturday, 19th of January.

**3. USI ‘Say Something’ Survey**

I was invited as a guest speaker to the UCC ‘Don’t Be That Guy’ campaign launch on the 23rd of January. I spoke about and promoted the USI ‘Say Something’ survey at this event. I had a meeting with PASC (Public Awareness Sub Committee) of Cosc on the 5th of February. The group were very impressed with the USI ‘Say Something’ survey and commended USI’s achievement in relation to the response rates so far. We also gained some limited coverage of the survey in the Irish Examiner and the Cork Independent. I oversaw the design of the promotional posters for the survey also.

  **4. Intergenerational Campaigning**

On the 23rd of January, I organised a joint event with Older and Bolder - an equality group for older people. The workshop was attended from students and sabbatical officers from many member organisations as well as members of Older and Bolder from around Ireland. The purpose of the event was to compare campaigning methods between both organisations. A presentation was made by the USI Deputy President and Campaigns Officer on the USI pre-budget campaign and a presentation was made also by Older and Bolder on their pre-budget campaign. The groups were then split into small discussion sessions to discuss similarities, differences, approaches to campaigning, results, stereotypes around age and potential collaborations. I facilitated one of these sessions on the day also. I also helped to write and approve a joint regional press release that was sent out after the event to local media.

 **5. International Students**

I had a board meeting with ICOS (Irish Council for International Students). The Director updated me in relation to last meeting of the High-Level Group (advisors to the Government on Internationalisation of Education strategy). The consensus is that USI should be able to obtain our own seat on the High-Level Group. USI and ICOS will now formally write to the group together to request this seat. This will ensure increased student representation on the High-Level Group. We also discussed the fact that members of the High-Level Group had mixed reactions to idea of an International Hardship Fund that would comprise 1% of each colleges income from international students going into this fund. However, the majority of the ICOS Board are favourable to this idea, which was proposed by USI. We agreed that we will pursue this issue and that having an International Hardship Fund should be included in a college’s criteria for obtaining a new ‘International Education Mark’, a quality mark that the QQI are currently working to develop.

Following this meeting, I had a project meeting with members of ICOS and and the video production team for the ICOS/USI video project. The video will be a training resource for staff. The first cut is 2.5 hours long. I watched this and made recommendations for edits to the project manager in ICOS and the video production team. The video should be complete within 6 weeks time and will be accompanied by a training manual.

 **6. Abortion Rights Campaign**

I have engaged with the new national Abortion Rights Campaign Group. We agreed that there is lots of potential for both USI and the group to work together. We agreed to create an online ‘Students for Choice’ Network to build links between student activists. We also discussed the possibility of holding a one-day networking event for students who are pro-choice to further develop our strategy in this area and to work towards USI’s pro-choice mandate.

 **7. Students with Disabilities**

Since my last report I discussed conducting a study into the experiences of students with disabilities with AHEAD. AHEAD have asked the HEA for funding for this project and are awaiting a reply. I have also discussed with AHEAD about USI getting more involved in promoting opportunities for graduates with disabilities.

**Appendix**

**USI Meetings/Events Attended:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Meeting/Event** | **Details** |
| 26/1 | National Council | IT Tralee |
| 4/2 | Officerboard | Planning & Evaluation  |
| 28/1 | Women in Society Seminar | Hosted by UCC SU |
| 7/2 | Women in Society Seminar | Hosted by UCDSU |
| 8/2 | OB Media Training | Media Interview planning  |
| 21/1 | European Student Convention  | Met with USI VP Academic Affairs and Quality Assurance to discus the convention schedule |
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**Meetings/Events Attended:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Meeting/Event** | **Details** |
| 19/1 | WaveChange Training event | Facilitated Workshop |
| 22/1 | NUIG ‘Coming Out Workshop’ | Delivered workshop |
| 21/1 | European Student Convention  | Met with USI VP Academic Affairs and Quality Assurance to discus the convention schedule |
| 23/1 | Older and Bolder/USI event | intergenerational campaigning workshop |
| 23/1 | UCC ‘Don’t Be That Guy’ Launch | Spoke at the event |
| 28/1 | UCC Women in Society event |  |
| 29/1 | Meeting with the Equality Budgeting Campaign | To discuss USI involvement |
| 30/1 | Meeting with AHEAD | Discussed joint-study into experiences of students with disabilities  |
| 1/2 | Y- Factor Launch (Evening) | Attended launch of this project to promote gender equality hosted by National Women’s Council of Ireland in Wood Quay Venue |
| 5/2 | Public Awareness Sub Committee of Cosc | Discussed USI ‘Say Something’ survey |
| 6/2 | UCD Literary and Historical Society debate that ‘This House Would Remain Affiliated to USI’  | Spoke on the proposition |
| 7/2 | ICOS Board meeting |  |
| 7/2 | UCD Women in Society Seminar |  |
| 8/2 | Discussion with Abortion Rights Campaign | Discussed working together |
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**Membership Engagement**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **MO** | **Details** |
| 22/1 | NUIG | Workshop with LGBT Society |
| 28/1 | UCC | Women in Society Seminar & Equality Training with SU |
| 6/2 | UCD | Women in Society Seminar |
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**Media Engagement**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Description** | **Topic** |
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**Expenses Claimed – Public Transport**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **To** | **From** | **Purpose** | **Cost €** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total** |  |  |  |  |

**Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Description** | **Purchaser** |
| 22/1 | Lunch | NUIG SU |
| 23/1 | Dinner | UCC SU |
| 26/1 | Lunch (National Council) | IT Tralee SU |
|  |  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Leave** | **Date** |
| Annual Leave | n/a |

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

1.   **USI awards**

**2.**    **Maynooth referendum**

**3.**    **Post budget campaign**

**4.**    **MO engagement; AIT, IT Sligo, St Angelas, GMIT.**

**5.**    **Women in society**

**1. USI awards**

Since the last national council I have spent significant time putting together the USI awards with the project team. We researched a lot of international awards to come up with the best awards night possible. The categories have been picked, the judges have been contacted, the venue is booked and the promotion. I will be speaking more about the awards at national council as we will be officially opening the nomination process.

**2. Maynooth referendum**

The dates for this referendum were discussed at the last regional council. Due to a mix up the dates have been moved forward a week and the voting will now take place on the 27th of February. I have met with the Maynooth executive along with the president and deputy president to address any concerns they have about their membership to USI. The meeting was very productive and helped towards creating a comprehensive campaign strategy. I have put a lot of time and effort into researching all the different aspects of the campaign and compiled a document for the campaign team and officer board.

**3. Post budget campaign**

I attended campaigns sub-committee to discuss the campaign strategy prior to the last national council to give feedback on the document. I think it’s a very comprehensive campaign plan and I am looking forward to being part of the team rolling it out.

**4. MO engagement:**

**STACS**

I met with the president of the SU to discuss motions that STACS were putting through for congress. We also set up a plan for the Sligo national council. I was invited to attend rainbow day in STACS but unfortunately I had to go to Dublin for media training so my apologies to the STACS crew for not being able to attend.

**IT Sligo**

I met with the president of the union to discuss congress and any issue they had coming up to the event. I was also in communication with their communications staff member to help with the promotion of the violence survey within the college.

**AIT**

I was asked by the welfare officer of AIT to prepare a training event for their Students’ Union and welfare crew. I attended the event and gave a presentation to the students on USI and gave them examples of projects happening around the country, for example the UCC health matters campaign. I would like to thank Dave Carey in UCC for his communication with me on their campaign. I also met with the president of the Students’ Union and proof read all their motions prior to them being submitted.

**GMIT**

I attended the campus of GMIT Castlebar for a morning long meeting with the Students’ Union site President. We met to discuss a number of items including upcoming events in the college that they needed the support of USI. There is an affiliation referendum happening in March in GMIT and I wanted to gain their initial thoughts before I started to prepare the document.

**5.**       **Women in society**

Along with some of the other female members of officer board I went to the women in society seminar in UCD. The meeting was extremely successful with a student there calling for more similar events in the future. The meeting lasted for about three hours and there were five guest speakers and  a discussion forum at the end.

**Meetings attended**

**USI Meetings/Events Attended:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Meeting/Event** | **Details** |
| 21.01.13 | Campaigns subcommittee | Dublin meeting to discuss post budget campaign |
| 21.01.13 | Officerboard | Weekly planning session |
| 22.01.13 | AIT crew training | Training event |
| 22.01.13 | AIT president meeting | Meeting with AITSU president |
| 23.01.13 | IT Sligo meeting | Meeting with ITSSU president |
| 23.01.13 | STACS meeting | Meeting with STACS SU president |
| 24.01.13 | GMIT meeting | Meeting with GMIT SU Castlebar president |
| 25.01.13 | Officer Board | National council prep meeting |
| 25.01.13 | MSU ref meeting | Meeting with VP of MSU to discuss referendum |
| 25.01.13 | Cyber bullying | Attended the training event on cyber bullying |
| 26.01.13 | Campaigns sub committee | Attended this planning meeting |
| 26.01.13 | Regional council | Planning and preparation |
| 26.01.13 | National council | National council |
| 28.01.13 | Officerboard | Weekly planning session |
| 30.01.13 | Student awards | Two hour meeting to discuss awards |
| 04.02.13 | Officerboard | Detailed planning session |
| 04.02.13 | Student awards | Meeting to update on progress |
| 05.02.13 | MSU exec meeting | Meeting with the MSU executive to discuss upcoming referendum. |
| 07.02.13 | Awards meeting | Progress meeting on student awards |
| 08.02.13 | Media training | Media training in USI HQ |

**Expenses**

**Own Car TransportPublic transport**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Location | Purpose | Rate | Cost € |
| 07.01.13 | Dublin train | Officerboard | return | 20 |
| 15.01.13 | Dublin train | above | return | 20 |
| 20.01.13 | Dublin train | Campaign sub committee | return | 20 |

**Public transport**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Location** | **Purpose** | **Rate** | **Cost €** |
| **07.01.13** | **Dublin train** | **Officerboard** | **return** | **20** |
| **15.01.13** | **Dublin train** | **above** | **return** | **20** |
| **20.01.13** | **Dublin train** | **Campaign sub committee** | **return** | **20** |

**Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality:**

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| --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Date** |
| Dinner IT Tralee | 25.01.13 |
| Tea GMIT | 24.01.13 |

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| --- | --- |
| **Leave** | **Date** |
| Annual Leave | N/A |

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

**1. ents.usi.ie**
**2. Students' Union Officer Guide**
**3. Class Rep' Refresher Day, ITTSU**
**4. USI Student Achievement Awards**
**5. Referenda**
**6. Media Training**

1. **ents.usi.ie**

Since my last officer report, ents.usi.ie has been successfully launched and is now fully functional. Over the past two weeks I have been working closely with the general manager and members of entertainments working group to finalise the text and overall content of the site. The general manager and I had set aside an hour or two of each day to work exclusively on the website in order to launch it before the majority of raise and give weeks. The design and layout options were also narrowed down and a final design was chosen last week. The launch officially took place on February 6 and was spearheaded by the MO sabbaticals and I. Whilst the MO sabbaticals raised awareness locally; I had the task of contacting the larger booking agencies, entertainment organisations and possible sponsors. The feedback since the launch has been fantastic so far as the acts are gradually flowing in and populating the site. Once registered I verify each act and I modify their details if needs be. Over the course of February I will be marketing and promoting the website to all major entertainment agencies to guarantee a successful development period.

1. **Students' Union Officer Guide**

The Students' Union Officer Guide has taken second preference to ents.usi.ie over the past two weeks but has still been making progress. The Deputy President and I have met on a number of occasions to discuss the guide and are both happy with the progress we have made so far. Contributors have been contacted, templates have been drawn up, research in various areas is on-going and a number of chapters have already been completed. Our deadline goal was to have the officer guide completed during May 2013 and we are still very much on track to do so.

1. **Class Rep' Refresher**

Between 23-25th January I spent my time in I.T. Tralee working with their Students' Union. The class rep refresher day took place on the second day and was a huge success. Spearheaded by I.T. Tralee SU I was given the opportunity to speak to the reps' and gain feedback on their Students' Union performance. We discussed what the SU are currently successful at and what they could improve on in 2013.

        The following day, I spent a number of hours with ITTSU running team evaluation and   team building exercises based on the feedback we had recieved.

1. **Student Achievement Awards**

A number of meetings have taken place regarding the student achievement awards since my last officer report. The project team and I devised a list of possible judges and have also been contacting possible presenters/MC's. We have also devised a list of award categories and attempted to match a suitable judge to each one. Progress has also been made on a number of other issues such as venue, sponsorship and equipment.

1. **Referenda**

A significant amount of preparation has taken place for the various upcoming referenda. The team and I have met on numerous occasions to prepare ourselves and specific tasks have been allocated to each individual officer. On February 28, John and I will meet with CITSU at their annual general meeting where we hope a motion will pass to hold a USI affiliation referendum. If this happens, the CIT referendum will become one of my top priorities for the weeks that follow.

1. **Media Training**

On February 8, Officer Board and I took part in a morning of media training. A number of areas were covered such as etiquette, sufficient preparation and effective use of the time you have on air. I found the training to be extremely beneficial and hope to put it to use in the near future.

**Appendix**

**USI Meetings/Events Attended:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Meeting/Event** | **Details** |
| January 28 | Officer Board | Weekly Plan of Action |
| January 30 | Awards Meeting | Discussed progress made and plan of action for the weeks ahead |
| February 1 | Ents.usi.ie, general manager | Building the website |
| February 4 | Officer Board | Weekly Plan of Action |
| February 5 | Ents.usi.ie, general manager | Building the website |
| February 6 | Website Launch | Launch of ents.usi.ie |
| February 7 | Awards Meeting | Discussed progress made and plan of action for the weeks ahead |
| February 8 | Media Training | Officer Board media training |

**Meetings/Events Attended:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Meeting/Event** | **Details** |
| January 28 | I.T. Carlow Welfare Officer | Discussion on elections |
| January 28 | I.T. Carlow Sports Officer | Discussion on  elections |
|  |  |  |

**Membership Engagement**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **MO** | **Details** |
| January 23-25 | I.T. Tralee | Class Rep' Refresher Day |
| January 28 | I.T. Carlow | Discussion on elections |
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**Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality:**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Description** | **Purchaser** |
| January 24 | Lunch & Dinner | I.T. Tralee |
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| --- | --- |
| **Leave** | **Date** |
| Annual Leave | None |