

Welcome

from **Fiona Sweeney,**
UCD New ERA Co-ordinator

Hello and welcome to the 2007/2008 Winter edition of the UCD New ERA News!

This edition features articles about the UCD New ERA Uni4U and 5th Year Summer Schools, and one of our student leaders describes participating as both a student in the past and as a leader this year.

Also, as we prepare for Shadowing Day in Spring 2008, one of our students reflects on their experiences when they came to UCD to shadow a UCD student.

We have features on two of our students who tell us about their interesting rewarding experiences volunteering abroad in China and Haiti.

Finally you can read about the UCD new Undergraduate Ambassadors Scheme offered by the School of Mathematical Sciences, describing how UCD students are offered an opportunity to work with maths teachers in local secondary schools.

If you would like any further information on any UCD New ERA activity, please contact us on 01- 716 2506 or check out our website

www.ucd.ie/access

Shadowing Day

Two years ago, in 5th Year, I took part in a programme UCD New ERA runs called "Shadowing Day". The idea of the day is that secondary school students get to meet a college student and hang around with them for the day, to get a feel for college from every angle. Open Days are grand for explaining all the course choices, but they leave a lot out. For instance, they don't tell you all the best clubs to join or what really goes on in a lecture.

On Shadowing Day, I went with the student I was shadowing to her lectures and so I got to see what they are really like. She also showed me where all the computer labs were, how the library works, the Sports Centre; all the stuff you hear about on an Open Day, but I got to see it on a normal college day, which I feel is better because it shows you what it's really like.

She showed me the Restaurant and many other eating spots, the bookshops, the Bar (well, she showed me where it is!) and talked to me about some of the services in UCD like campus accommodation and the Students Union. On top of all that, we had a pretty fun day. Simply put, Shadowing Day doesn't just tell you what college is like; it allows you to experience student life for yourself.
Richard Lelas – 1st Arts

This year Shadowing Day will take place on Thursday 28th February and Thursday 6th March 2008.



UCD New ERA Summer Schools 2007

Our annual summer school programmes took place in June 2007.

Read on to find out more about the fun packed activities enjoyed by over 250 students from UCD New ERA linked schools! We would love to see current 2nd Year, Transition and 5th Year students applying for our Summer programmes in 2008, so talk to your career guidance/UCD New ERA link teacher if you want to know more!

Uni4U



Students enjoying karaoke at Uni4U Summer School

90 2nd Year secondary school students participated in the week long Uni4U Summer School programme. The week kicked off with some games and a campus tour giving the students the opportunity to get to know each other a bit better and meet their UCD New ERA student leaders. Taster talks in Law, Marketing, Psychology, Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology and Geography took place over the week and gave the students an idea of what kind of subjects you can study in UCD. A trip to Lyons farm was unfortunately hindered by the June rain but students still got an idea of the Veterinary Medicine and Agricultural Science programmes! Sports activities included archery and the climbing wall and Uni4U students finished the week off with a karaoke session!

5th Year Summer School



Over 80 5th Year second level students attended the 5th Year Summer School programme. This is a residential Summer School with students staying at Merville campus accommodation. Each morning started off with revision classes in five leaving cert subjects chosen by the student. Afternoon activities were a mixture of taster talks, sport/art activities, student panel discussions and getting to know UCD campus facilities. We held social events each evening including bowling and a trip to the theatre, a disco, karaoke, table quiz and drama society night. UCD New ERA leaders accompanied students during the two weeks giving the second level students a real sense of college life.

5th Year Summer School 2005 A Student's View

In my school, Heywood, when I was in 5th Year the competition was fierce for a place on the UCD New ERA summer school. I was delighted when I found out I was going. To me it meant two weeks of extra tuition, free food and a chance to meet other students and have a laugh. It certainly didn't disappoint.

The morning classes were really helpful and gave me a head start on my study for the Leaving Cert. But it wasn't all about study. In the evening we went to lots of different places like bowling, a musical and of course the infamous karaoke. I went with four other students from my school which was comforting. But being divided into different groups for games and evening activities meant I got to meet other people too. People I met there are still my friends today students and leaders alike. It was great getting first hand experiences from the leaders who were UCD students. I was interested in studying Medicine so talking to one of the leaders who was a medical student was especially good.

So here I am, a UCD New ERA student in my second year of Medicine. I was even a leader on 5th Year Summer School 2007 which was as much fun as being on it. I would definitely recommend the Summer School to all 5th Years lucky enough to get the chance to go!

Gina Sheppard – 2nd Medicine



5th Year Summer School students and leader

"I met a lot of new people and got to do many new activities. It was brilliant"

"It gave me more confidence in all my studies"

"I got a lot of useful notes and met a lot of new people as well as experiencing college life"

"It was better than I expected! I loved the activities, the group was good and leaders were very friendly"

Volunteering at the 2007 Special Olympics in China



This is a picture of Aishling Beacom and Rachel O'Brien. Aishling is an athlete but is also a volunteer with Special Olympics and is on the current Board of Directors of Special Olympics Ireland.

In October last, I travelled alongside 200 volunteers, 143 athletes and 600 family members and media workers, to Shanghai for the Special Olympics World Summer Games.

I have been involved with Special Olympics since the Games were held in Ireland four years ago, so it was a dream come true for me to travel as a volunteer for these Games. It was the most amazing and unforgettable experience of my life. I witnessed hundreds of athletes from every corner of the world taking part in events and working hard to do themselves proud, while at the same time making new friends.

For some athletes it was the first time away from home. My proudest moment of the Games was watching Gary Diamond – an athlete I have coached in Bocce for 4 years, win a gold medal – the first of the entire games.

Special Olympics are an amazing organisation which highlights the ability of athletes not the disability. I would urge anybody looking for a new rewarding challenge, to volunteer with Special Olympics. It really is a life changing experience and who knows, you may even get to travel to Athens in four years time!

Rachel O'Brien – 2nd Arts

Volunteering in Haiti: UCD Volunteers Overseas

This Summer I went away to Haiti with UCD Volunteers Overseas and it is by far the best way I've spent a summer. A group of 27 students from UCD headed over. There were a few different types of projects that took place while we were over there. The ones I was involved with were the Children's Sports Camp and the Forestry Project.

Every morning the cock would crow at the compound where we stayed at around 5.30am. I usually got up around 6.30am, went and had breakfast, got my things together and jumped in the truck around 7.30am. Then we'd be at work for 8am, raring to go. The children's camp that I worked at was outside the village of Gros Morne, where we stayed. It was the first year that a camp took place there so the kids were a bit wierded out by us at first but they soon got used to things. We taught them songs and games and they taught us theirs. It was so much fun. I lost my voice quite a lot over the weeks because we sang a lot and in my case, shouted!

In the afternoons after lunch, I was involved with a different project -the Forestry Project. In Haiti a lot of flooding occurs, so this was a very important project. We planted trees at first, then we started clearing the way for other trees to grow. The good thing about all the work that took place over there is that the locals worked with us. This meant that we really interacted with the community during our stay and made great friends. This summer a new project is taking place in Haiti where we will be building houses for some of the locals. This is unbelievably needed. Being over there is a real eye opener to how lucky we are in Ireland and half the time we don't even realise it. UCDVO holds so many different events during the year and we are selling calendars and Christmas cards at the moment so please support a worthy cause.

This summer I am going back to Haiti and I am so glad of the opportunity to go back to such a cool place and meet some of the people I met last summer. I highly recommend volunteering to anyone who wants to spend a summer in a different way and not just look back at the end and think "What a waste". It's so much better than any J1!!

Tara Gilligan – Social Science Graduate 2007

UCD Undergraduate Ambassadors Scheme

School of Mathematical Sciences

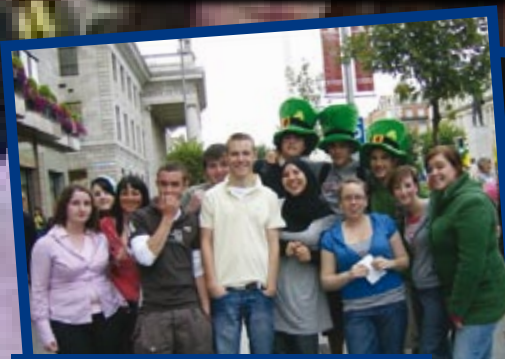
The UCD Undergraduate Ambassadors Scheme (UAS) module is an elective module offered by the School of Mathematical Sciences, University College Dublin. This module offers final-year mathematics undergraduates, or final-year undergraduates who have taken an appropriate level of mathematics, the chance to work with mathematics teachers and students in local secondary schools.

The aims of the module are to benefit all participants by:

- Providing undergraduates with key transferable skills.
- Providing teaching experience that encourages undergraduates to consider a career in teaching.
- Supplying role models for second-level students.
- Providing support and teaching assistance to second-level teachers.
- Encouraging a new generation of mathematicians.

For geographical reasons this scheme was only open to our Dublin schools. On this occasion the scheme was offered to the following six schools: Holy Child Community School, Killinarden Community School, St Dominic's Secondary School, St Laurence's College, St Killian's Community School and St Tiernan's Community School.

The UAS co-ordinator Dr Maria Meehan of the School of Mathematical Sciences is delighted with the response from the schools: "I was really pleasantly surprised by the positive response to the UAS Module from the UCD New ERA secondary schools. Fourteen out of eighteen schools were enthusiastic about hosting a UCD mathematics undergraduate, and each school outlined ways in which the undergraduate could help provide additional mathematics support to the second-level students. As this is the first time we are offering the module, we could only invite six schools to take part, but with the help and feedback from the teachers and students involved this year, we hope to be able to offer a bigger and better UAS module in 2008/09!"



Students on Dublin Treasure Hunt during New ERA Orientation



Enjoying the New ERA student Christmas Party

Congratulations!

Congratulations to all our graduates of 2007! This year 80 students were awarded degrees in a wide variety of disciplines. We wish them the best of luck in their future careers.

A big well done to Lisa Berry (3rd Year Arts student) who took part in the Rose of Tralee earlier this year, and did a beautiful job as the Wicklow Rose!

Finally, congratulations to Una Leacy (2nd Social Science) and Mary Leacy (Social Science, Graduate 2007) who were players on the winning All Ireland Wexford camogie team. Mary captained this team, while Una was awarded with player of the match!

Thanks a Million!

UCD New ERA could not operate without the support of private donors and State funders. Your contribution to UCD New ERA ensures that we can provide a high quality service to our link schools, as well as effective supports and financial assistance to our undergraduate students.

UCD New ERA receives significant State funding through the Higher Education Authority and the NDP/ESF Student Assistance Fund.

A number of key private donors also contributed to UCD New ERA. They include:

- * ARUP Consulting Engineers
- * UCD Alumni (through UCD/AIB Affinity Credit Card Scheme)
- * Citibank International (the Citigroup Foundation)
- * Women Graduates' Association
- * Boylan Sisters Limited
- * AIB Bank

If you would like to support any element of UCD New ERA, please contact Ronan Murphy, Interim Director of Access at 01-7168264.

Current & Upcoming Events

HEAR SCHEME

closing date for applications is March 8th 2008

VOLUNTARY TUTORING

Ongoing

SHADOWING DAY

Thursday February 28th
Thursday March 6th 2008

PRIMARY SCHOOL VISITS

Ongoing

Please contact UCD New ERA for information on events

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