

# 5

## Providing a High-Quality Student Experience

UCD has embarked on a wide array of exciting initiatives aimed at establishing the Belfield campus as a centre of teaching excellence, a world-renowned research environment and a vital hub of public engagement with extensive student facilities. The university environment is constantly changing, and so too must its physical infrastructure if it is to positively respond to the students' needs, the increasingly mobile staff members and the growing collaboration with industry, while also engaging the local community.

Alongside academic excellence, providing students at UCD with opportunities to understand the importance of community engagement, active citizenship and diversity is of paramount importance.

The university's excellent student facilities provide a perfect platform to enable students to foster friendships, develop interests and social skills and become active members of the UCD community. More than 50 sports clubs and 110 societies cover a wide spectrum of passions, skills and pursuits that can shape a more rounded academic experience for the UCD student.

Computer-generated  
view of the UCD Gateway  
Project



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## Facility Development

The student and staff experience is touched on by nearly every facet of the physical space of the campus, from buildings to landscape and from signage to space utilisation. Supporting campus life, learning, leisure and recreation, it is important that an enhanced infrastructure is carefully planned and implemented. Recent campus development captures the sentiment of the university, which is to create infrastructure that meets the needs and demands of the staff, students and adjacent neighbourhoods alike.

### UCD Gateway Project

The Gateway Project will establish an iconic signature for UCD that displays architectural excellence and environmental sustainability. The project will provide not only a gateway to the community, but will also promote learning activities, business ventures, improved cultural and heritage awareness and advances in knowledge links.

In providing facilities that are essential to leading universities, the UCD Gateway Project will underpin the development of an exceptional student experience at UCD. When fully developed, it will include almost 100,000m<sup>2</sup> of arts exhibition, culture, academic, office and retail space along with student residence accommodation with associated car parking, improved pedestrian linkages, a Gateway Plaza and a new bus terminus.

Designed by the award-winning firm Ingenhoven Architects, the Gateway Project masterplan provides the Belfield campus with a stunning architectural entrance from the N11 through the Gateway Plaza, which forms the vibrant heart of the Gateway Project. The plaza leads into the core of the campus, which will be remodelled as two figure-of-eight circles forming an oasis of green surrounded by the university buildings.

The remodelled centre will include improved pedestrian linkages, extensive open space and landscaping and visual continuity to develop Belfield as a green, sustainable and modern 21st-century university campus.

The main built structures will sit on 13 hectares, comprising three parallel rows of buildings, with the tallest curve fronting onto the N11. The sequence of buildings will share a common curved roof, which will provide continuity and enclosure for the Gateway Plaza and atrium spaces.

In April 2007, UCD launched a competition to select a commercial partner to help realise the Gateway Project. This generated a strong response from potential partners, from which a shortlist of bidding consortia has been selected to tender for the contract to design, build, finance, maintain and operate the project. Following the selection of a commercial partner, UCD will apply for planning permission in 2009.

The design of the UCD Gateway Project will place emphasis on environmental sensitivity and high performance, while allowing UCD to contribute to the social, economic and environmental development of the city.



*Computer image of the UCD Gateway Project upon completion*

## UCD Science Centre

UCD generates the highest number of science graduates among the third-level institutes in Ireland. It has doubled research enrolment since 1998, 70% of whom are in the field of Science, Engineering and Technology. UCD's capacity and the quality of its research and training, at both undergraduate and postgraduate level in science and engineering, is key to Ireland achieving the national goals outlined in the government's Strategy for Science Technology and Innovation.

The redevelopment of the UCD Science Centre aims to forge a community of scientific scholars, with shared facilities and instruments, in close proximity to each other. The brief is to develop a design that will transform the university's scientific core research and teaching facilities and generate substantial capacity for interdisciplinary activity.

The first phase of the redevelopment of the Science Centre South Building, which is adjacent to the UCD Centre for Synthesis and Chemical Biology, is now complete. This initial phase includes laboratories, write-up spaces, shared equipment rooms and a large number of fume-extraction hoods, which will support 60 researchers.

In March 2008, the HEA awarded UCD €8 million to implement the strategic refurbishment of existing Science Centre facilities. This Research Facilities Enhancement Scheme supports the overall plan for the transformation of Science at UCD.

A team led by RKD Architects has been appointed to design the overall Science Centre. The implementation of a series of workshops with the relevant Schools, Colleges, Institutes and senior management has been initiated to focus on strategies for improving the quality of teaching and learning infrastructure, strengthening research capacity, developing thematic research neighbourhoods and promoting links with government, industry and other third-level institutions.

The next phase of Science Centre development, which is due to be completed in 2010, will focus on the provision of state-of-the-art facilities for PRTL 4-funded programmes in Bionanoscience, Biopharmaceutical Sciences, and Food and Health.

## Newman Building

UCD specifically sets out to achieve excellence in teaching and learning and student life. Within the framework of the Newman redevelopment project, it was agreed to establish the UCD School of Education and Lifelong Learning in Roebuck on an interim basis. This relocation will enable the necessary improvements and changes to the accommodation in the Newman Building. High-quality refurbished office space at Roebuck has enabled the relocation of Human Resources from rented accommodation at Belfield Office Park.

Through the upgrade of audio-visual facilities in the Newman Building, UCD continues its commitment to improve teaching and learning experiences for students. The use of standardised

Architectural representation of the redeveloped UCD Science Centre





*The new Entrance Deck  
at the Newman Building*

teaching technology and common audio-visual equipment supports a multidisciplinary approach to education.

The completion of the new Entrance Deck at the Newman Building in late 2007 has generated an attractive meeting point for the campus. Complemented by the recent renovation of the Arts Café, this will contribute to increased vibrancy in the Newman Building. Reconfiguration of facilities now provides a friendly, welcoming atmosphere and will support an enhanced student and staff experience.

### **UCD Sutherland School of Law**

The UCD School of Law is the largest and most diverse law school in Ireland and is strongly committed to enriching the educational environment of its student body, to working in partnership with the practising legal profession and to establishing links with the international legal community.

In order to meet these objectives, the university proposes to develop a new building to support the related teaching and research activity. These new facilities involve a relocation of the School to a more central location on the campus and will enable it to foster a community environment.

The new 5,110m<sup>2</sup> building will be part-funded under the National Development Plan 2007–2013, a major gift from Peter Sutherland SC, as well as through resources from the university and other private funding. The new building will create modern and innovative space for the learning and practising of legal skills that does not currently exist in Ireland, and will benefit students,

academics and the legal profession. The UCD Sutherland School of Law will be situated within the precinct of the university's landmark Gateway development.

### **Student Learning, Leisure and Sports Facility**

While the main emphasis in a university is on the generation and dissemination of knowledge, UCD has long recognised that the extra-curricular activities in sport, clubs and societies contribute to developing the student experience. This in turn promotes student involvement and develops a sense of belonging that has been shown to have considerable positive impacts on student retention and academic performance.

Planning approval has been granted by Dún Laoghaire–Rathdown County Council for the development of a new world-class Student Learning, Leisure and Sports facility (SLLS) on the Belfield campus. This new facility will be located between the existing Student Centre and Sports Centre buildings.

Within this extended Student Centre it is intended to provide space for additional student support, leisure and a diverse range of cultural amenities. Facilities to be provided include a new swimming pool and fitness centre, a dance studio, debating chamber, drama theatre, multimedia and seminar rooms, a media centre, student health facilities and café space.

The project was launched this summer with an official sod turning. Enabling works commenced with the relocation of the Hockey Pitch facility. The main construction will start in April 2009, with completion expected in early 2011.

### **Charles Institute**

The Charles Institute will be a facility for research and training in dermatology that will become a national and European centre of excellence. It will attract world leaders in dermatology and will lead to better patient care through the discovery of new treatments and therapies.

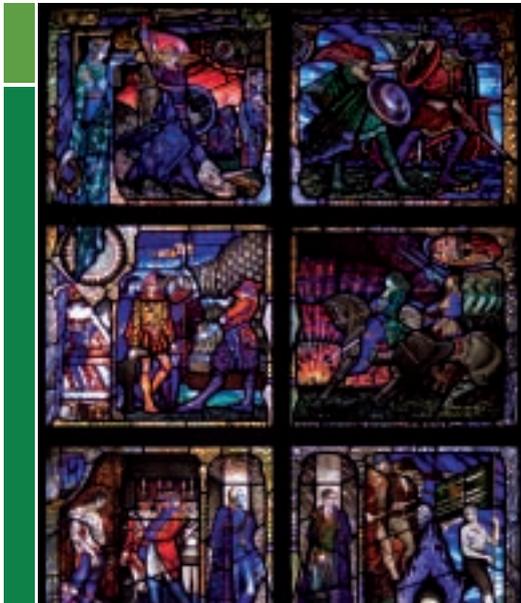
UCD proposes to develop a state-of-the-art research and training facility located between the new Health Sciences Centre and the UCD Conway Institute, integrated with the Clinical Dermatology Unit and UCD's Clinical Research Centre at Dublin Academic Health Care.

UCD and the City of Dublin Skin and Cancer Hospital Charity have provided €18 million to establish a 2,600m<sup>2</sup> building, which will be located between the UCD Conway Institute and the Health Sciences Centre. The building is projected to be complete in 2010.

### Farewell to Earlsfort Terrace

In a year when the Health Sciences Centre was highly commended by the RIAI Irish Architecture Awards, 2008 also heralded the official farewell to Earlsfort Terrace. UCD is keen to ensure that future generations are reminded of the significant role this former seat of education played in both the early establishment of the university and the subsequent development of many student generations.

*The Kevin Barry Window will be relocated from Earlsfort Terrace to the UCD Health Sciences Centre*



UCD has recently received planning approval for the relocation of the Kevin Barry Window to the Health Sciences Centre. Enhancement works were undertaken this summer in the Health Sciences Centre to generate the 'Terrace', a space that will provide a student-friendly atmosphere and improved communal area. The new social space shall accommodate some light furniture and will also be used as a temporary exhibition space.

### Campus boundary

Historically, UCD has prided itself on its rich parkland setting and mature landscaping. Much of this was provided for and planted during the development of the original estates of the 18th and 19th centuries. In more recent years, the physical development of the campus has been

at a more rapid pace. This makes protecting the tree and woodland resources on campus all the more important to ensure viable tree cover is maintained for future generations to enjoy.

Given the considerable development of the campus over the past 10 years, there has been a conscious decision to collectively increase the number of trees on campus. Thus, in tandem with the preservation of the existing trees and landscaping, UCD has actively enhanced tree avenues and wooded areas. This serves to improve the environment and boost the overall quality of life for all living and working on the campus.

UCD is currently expanding its woodlands to form a coherent campus perimeter, which will also be developed as a jogging, cycling and walking track. Once finished, this track will extend around the boundary of the campus, providing a 6.5km route and reasserting the presence of the woodland threshold.

### Sustainability on Belfield campus

The successful transition to a sustainable campus involves all aspects of the university community to act collectively. UCD is fortunate enough to have a full-time Energy Unit to champion energy efficiency on campus.

In light of this, in early 2008 the Governing Authority approved a comprehensive energy policy and strategy for UCD.

The university has reduced Belfield campus carbon-dioxide emissions by 9,000 tonnes per annum through a number of initiatives, including the installation of a 1MW wood-pellet biomass boiler, the procurement of green-energy supply and the implementation of various energy-efficient measures.

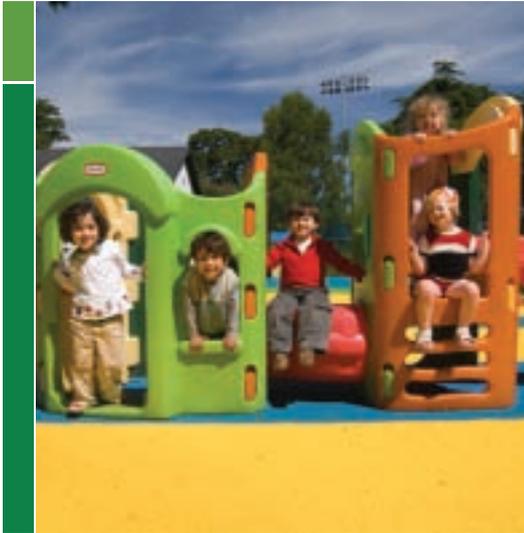
Currently, 30% of the Belfield total electricity requirement is produced on campus by using Combined Heat and Power (CHP); the remainder is provided by Airtricity, 89% of which is renewable.

Over a three-year period, the Energy Unit has successfully implemented a trial initiative to reduce energy consumption in 10 university buildings by 11%. This initiative is now being extended across all university buildings. The possibility of deep geothermal heating systems, which source natural energy from the ground, is also being explored.

In 2007, 2,675 tonnes of waste were collected from UCD, 83% of which was either recycled or used in the waste-energy industry. This illustrates not only UCD's proactive role in light of waste management, but also its commitment to the provision of an overall more sustainable campus.

### Other developments

Recent works at the university crèche included the installation of a new all-weather rubberised play-safe surface. The provision of new toys, climbing



A new all-weather rubberised play-safe surface was installed at the UCD crèche

frames and a bamboo maze has generated an exciting environment for children to play and learn.

Planning approval is now in place for the IDA-funded National Institute for Bioprocessing Research and Training (NIBRT), which will be developed near the Fosters Avenue entrance. Detailed building design and contract procurement is ongoing. It is envisaged that the new facility will be operational in 2010.

The university has just completed the exchange of lands at Thornfield (approx. three acres) for a similar size tract of land at the rear of the Belgrove Student Residences. The land previously formed part of the site of the nursing home operated by the Little Sisters of the Poor. This will present the university with the opportunity to further develop the Belgrove Student Residences. The university will maintain its operations at Thornfield until early 2010.

A planning application for the site at Whiteoaks will be issued shortly by Pamarette, with the support of the university. This former Smurfit headquarters site, which adjoins the Belfield campus at Beech Hill, was purchased by Pamarette in 2003. The university entered into this development project to fund the acquisition of the former Philips site.

## Sculpture developments at UCD



The university has recently added artwork by Jason Ellis and Edward Delaney to its growing collection. Ellis's *Figurehead* is a significant abstract stone sculpture, representative of the prow of a ship, and is believed by its creator to be the largest free-standing stone sculpture in Ireland.

It took more than 10 months to sculpt the blocks of stone that make up the sculpture. The honed finish, visible on the completed sculpture, was all applied by hand. *Figurehead* is located at the Owenstown entrance to Belfield, UCD.

*Celtic Twilight* (pictured left), a six-metre high steel rod and tubular stainless steel sculpture created by Delaney in 1974, was donated to UCD in September 2007 by developer David Arnold in memory of his father. The sculpture, which was originally located in the American Airlines Building on Baggot St, Dublin, is on permanent display in the courtyard of the UCD Conway Institute.

## UCD Library

UCD Library has drafted a new strategic plan following consultation with the teaching and learning, and research communities. The vision for the next five years is to develop the Library's services, resources and facilities in a dynamic and innovative manner to a standard appropriate to that of a leading research-intensive European university. It will support research by building research resources, delivering mediated and unmediated services to researchers at all levels and by enhancing the university's research enterprise by presenting and showcasing the university's research outputs in an institutional repository. The Library will support the teaching and learning experience by developing and improving services that support learning, and by providing a world-class learning environment that will support a diversity of research and learning needs. It also hopes to achieve this by developing a virtual library space with associated online services using Web 2.0 technologies.

### Progress to date

A benchmarking exercise was undertaken to compare the UCD Library to similar university libraries worldwide, following which the Library Strategic Plan 2009–2013 was drafted, taking on board the university's strategic direction with particular reference to teaching and learning, and research support.

An Operational Plan for 2008–09 was drawn up to begin to implement some of the recommendations in the draft Strategic Plan.

UCD Library continued to improve its position among academic libraries in Ireland and Great Britain as a leading innovator using Web 2.0 technologies, most recently by establishing a presence on Facebook. It hosted several visitors from *Universitas 21* universities who were interested in the Library's developments in Web 2.0 technology, its pilot implementation of radio frequency identification (RFID) technology in the short-loans collection and its work on Information Literacy support.

In support of research, work commenced on an institutional repository, initially gathering the work of UCD's economists as part of the Network of European Economists Online project. There are now approximately 450 items available in the repository. Also, the Library is participating in the IUA sectoral project, funded by SIF, to put in place a network of institutional repositories in the Irish university sector.

Additional reader spaces were created in the James Joyce Library for improved seating and workspace use, as low-use stock was moved to the new storage facility at Newstead.

The Library restructured its organisation into Library Academic Services Support where staff are linked more directly with UCD's five Colleges. Appointments to the new Deputy Head positions were also made.

### Notable achievements

- Sean Phillips retired in March 2008 after 30 years in the post of University Librarian;
- Opening of the *Beckett Country* Photographic Exhibition, 14 April 2008, based on the donation by Professor Eoin O'Brien of a series of 33 panels of photographs marking the life of Samuel Beckett;
- Professor Andrew Carpenter donated a series of Le Brocqy sketches prepared for the publication of his book *Eight Irish Writers*;
- A section of the Austin Clarke Library, on permanent loan from Poetry Ireland to UCD Library Special Collections, was displayed in custom-built oak cabinets on Level 2 in the James Joyce Library;
- Work has commenced on adding a significant donation of volumes from the Confucius Institute to the catalogue;
- Richview Library was completely recabled during summer 2008, bringing network connectivity and power to library users with laptops;
- Work has commenced on identifying the electronic 'face', which the library will develop over the next 12 months, to enhance use of library resources and access to online help and instruction;
- Testing and commitment to port the Library website in the new university content

management system was agreed during the year;

- Laptop lending was introduced in the Health Sciences and James Joyce libraries;
- Conversion of the James Joyce Library short-loan collection to RFID readable loans, which took place this summer, will provide a significant level of service improvement for library users, allowing fast and efficient access when service desks are closed.

### Future objectives

- Increase the number of monograph resources to support teaching, learning and research;
- Embed information literacy skills in all programmes as part of the university's graduate attributes objective in the draft Educational and Student Experience Strategy 2009–13;
- Include electronic theses in the institutional repository and integrate the Institutional Repository with the Research Content Management system for seamless updating of research publications;
- Implement state-of-the-art search tools (Metalib and SFX) to enhance seamless access to all library and information resources;
- Implement a pilot alerting service to university administrators in accordance with agreed relevant customised and tailored profiles;
- Develop a building development plan for the library to provide state-of-the-art reading, study and research facilities, with adequate provision for specialised uses and activities.

## Institutional Research Repository for UCD Library



*The project team (front row, from left): Liam Cleere, Gary Mahon, Carmel Norris and Jennifer Collery. Back row (from left): Gavin Henrick, Ros Pan, Lisa Ryan and David Gallagher*

In February 2008, UCD Library and Enovation Solutions completed the development of an open-access institutional repository to collect, preserve and disseminate the full-text research outputs of UCD researchers.

The repository was chosen by UCD Library because of its open source flexibility, successful use by other Irish universities and the availability of local support.

The Library is piloting the repository with the UCD Schools of Economics, Geography, Planning and Environmental Policy and the UCD Geary Institute. The innovative development is part of a three-year project initiated by the IUA Librarians' Group and part-funded through the Higher Education Authority Strategic Innovation Fund.

## UCD IT Services

UCD IT Services' strategic plan has five major themes designed to enhance the IT environment for students and staff, in support of the university's education and research objectives:

- **Student Mobility:** Developing and implementing student IT services that are accessible on and off campus in a fully mobile environment;
- **Research Infrastructure:** Implementing core services of storage, hosting and computing facilities for UCD research groups, with a specialised research IT training and support team;
- **Information Management:** Providing easy web-based access to information resources, with new systems interfaces to support key business processes;
- **Education Technology and e-Learning:** Developing new technology-enabled learning spaces with lecture capture and pilot services for innovative e-Learning initiatives;
- **UCD Web:** Implementing new web services and an enhanced portal environment, including UCD Intranet.

*Each incoming student received a mobile disk-key on completion of an induction course*

### Progress to date

During 2007, mobile services were greatly enhanced for students and staff with the introduction of a new Mobile Broadband service. The national service was introduced in August 2007 following trials with both UCD students and staff earlier in the year. In collaboration with HEAnet, a deal for students at 50% below typical market prices was negotiated. UCD IT Services provided a new UCD Connect interface with greatly enhanced services for students in the new mobile environment – 20 key applications are now available, email space has increased to 1GB, Web file storage of 2GB is available and there is a mobile disk-key for incoming students.

Research IT services have been expanded to meet the demands of major research projects, including greater hosting capacity in the Daedalus Data Centre. Large cluster-computing facilities have been hosted for the UCD School of Electrical,



Electronic and Mechanical Engineering, the UCD School of Computer Science and Informatics and the UCD Conway Institute. With the assistance of HEA equipment funding, the storage capacity has been increased to 430TB and a 'storage-on-demand' service introduced for research users. Management of the UCD website was improved with the introduction of a content-management system (CMS) and the provision of training and support services for staff and Schools to assist in converting existing web pages. Search tools were enhanced with the introduction of a Google search appliance that can index the entire UCD Web content. The UCD prospective student portal MyUCD was implemented and launched in October 2007. UCD Research, in collaboration with UCD IT Services, designed and implemented a portal for research users.

A technology survey of students was run for the second time in April 2008. Results showed UCD students are avid users of laptops (82%), wireless

*One of UCD IT Services' new enhanced learning spaces*



technology (56%), the university online library (81%) and e-Learning (82%).

The state-of-the-art Daedalus Data Centre was originally constructed in 2006 using water-cooled technology, which provides the capability to host high-end compute environments in a very efficient manner. Since its inception, there has been major take-up of the Data Centre by UCD research users and the installation of a national cluster is a key development for Research IT capabilities in UCD. The Research IT team supports UCD hosting,

storage and compute facilities in the Centre, while the Irish Centre for High-End Computing (ICHEC) will support and manage the national cluster.

### Future objectives

In 2008, UCD IT Services conducted a review of requirements for the next five years and completed its IT strategy as part of the university strategic planning process. Key objectives for the next phase of development include:

- Developing core infrastructure for Education and Research, including ICT facilities and classroom technology, Data Centre capacity and storage for research;
- Implementing e-content services to support teaching, while continuing to expand new learning spaces which are fully technology enabled;
- Developing data-management capabilities to support Research IT, expanding storage and high-performance compute capacity;
- Providing web-based user-oriented services to support administrative and student services;
- Ensuring UCD Web is easy to manage and improving search, content management and access to services in the portal environment and Intranet.

### UCD hosts National Compute Cluster in partnership with ICHEC

In June 2008, agreement was reached with the Irish Centre for High-End Computing (ICHEC) to host a new national compute cluster in the Daedalus Data Centre, Belfield. The Data Centre was expanded by 50% during the summer and the new facility brought live in July 2008. UCD will host the 2,560-core cluster for ICHEC and will also purchase dedicated capacity for UCD users.



*UCD IT Services provided a new UCD Connect interface with greatly enhanced services for students*

## Careers and Employment

Key points for the development of the UCD Careers and Appointments Office include:

- Rebranding the UCD Career Development Centre within the overall context of the UCD Strategic Plan, creating a first-class student-focused unit to support the development of the students of UCD and to provide timely and relevant career-related interventions;
- Enhancing electronic resources to more effectively provide a quality experience of UCD students in the 21st century;
- Restructuring the operational and physical environment, thus providing a conducive careers library and information service for students conducting careers research;
- Building external relations with national and international employers and professional bodies;
- Staff involvement with the professional body Graduate Careers Ireland on various committees and working groups.

### Progress to date

The in-house publications and marketing material has been redesigned and developed to encompass the recently rebranded Career Development Centre.

The introduction of stand-up-and-surf web units, along with the new Communication Room, has proved a popular and invaluable resource since inception.

More than 200 companies and prospective employers of graduates visited campus over two semesters and the development of relationships with leading Irish and UK industries have been further strengthened by recent onsite visits to 25 companies.

### Notable achievements

- UCD hosted 100-plus employers at two Careers Fairs in O'Reilly Hall with 4,000 students attending both events;
- In February 2008, 25 presentations were scheduled during an inaugural Careers Week which saw 50 speakers – many UCD alumni – delivering presentations on numerous UCD programmes;
- The development of a credit-based Careers Education Module to be implemented in academic year 2008/09;
- Sandra Walker, Careers Adviser at UCD Career Development Centre, had two careers-related publications published nationally: *Student Guide to Career Planning and Job Search* (co-author), and *Career Guide for Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences*;

- A comprehensive programme of careers seminars and workshops were offered during semester 1 and 2 to all students.

### Future objectives

- Be the university of choice for top Irish and international employers;
- Ensure all services are marketed effectively;
- Collaborate with UCD Alumni by establishing a database of alumni willing to present on career progression;
- A proposal is currently being drafted for a Career Development Advisory Service for fourth-level and postdoctoral fellows. This is in line with recommendations made to the UCD Senior Management Team from the HEA and Research Careers Paths projects. It is also in line with predicted growth of fourth-level students as outlined in the government's Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation;
- UCD Career Development Centre to project manage and produce an online Career Information resource to help career planning and career decision-making in collaboration with UCD Student Recruitment, UCD Programme Marketing Managers and IT Services;
- Staff to continue working with Graduate Careers Ireland at executive and committee level, attending a range of Continuing Professional Development Courses, including national and international conferences to mirror best-practice sharing and networking of ideas for UCD Career Development Centre.

## UCD Student Medical and Counselling Services

The mission statement of the UCD Student Medical Service is to provide an excellent standard of primary medical, psychological and psychiatric care to registered students of UCD, supplementary to their own general practitioner and other healthcare services.

The Student Counselling Service provides a confidential psychological support and individual counselling service to students. The service encompasses assessment, psychotherapy and referral service for students. It also provides a consultative service to university staff in respect of concerns they may have with regard to individual students.

### Progress to date

#### Medical Service

The UCD Student Medical Service continued its extended opening hours. During term, it opens during lunchtime, opens early two mornings a week and has two evening clinics. This means a significantly improved level of service to students.

The service has had a successful year of liaising with the Students' Union on Health Promotion. Special thanks go to Moira O'Loughlin in Administration; Nurse Geraldine McDermott; Student Welfare Officer Vivian Rath; Dr Fiona Thompson; and Caroline Ward, Student Counsellor.

Some examples of activities include:

- Vice-President's emails alerting students to relevant health issues on the web;
- Talk on sports and drugs;
- Distribution of contraceptive packs;
- Promotion of mumps and meningitis vaccine;
- Speaker series from doctors and alcohol counsellor;
- Sexual Health Awareness Drive.

The Medical Service continued with the services of the alcohol counsellor, Donal Kiernan, who works as part of the Student Health Service team. Seeing students in this way lessens the stigma associated with alcohol problems and makes it easier for students to take the first step.

Joe Conway provided a Sports Injury/Specialist Musculoskeletal Clinic. He has considerable expertise in the area of sports injury and sports medicine. This is a very valuable addition to the services for students in covering not just sports injuries but musculoskeletal problems in general.

Plans are ongoing to update the website, which is used as a health promotion tool and includes information of relevance to students, including

details about the MMR vaccination, meningitis awareness, stress and sexual health.

The Student Health Service, in co-operation with the UCD Library Service, has developed a Books on Prescription Scheme. Its aim is to help students manage their own physical and emotional health. It is a type of guided self-help using a list of books endorsed by doctors, nurses and psychologists. Students are prescribed a book by the medical team, a counsellor, the Students' Union or other welfare staff, which they can borrow from the UCD Library.

The Medical Service designed the Useful Numbers Leaflet, a credit card-sized leaflet with telephone numbers students may need, including emergency numbers, helplines and student welfare staff. It incorporates the Please Talk campaign logo and information on alcohol and the body. The aim of the project was to ensure students had access to information when they needed it.

#### Counselling Service

Two additional psychologists have been recruited to the service. They will begin in the academic year 2008/09.

Student Counselling presented at the President's Orientation for first-year students and participated in the other campus Orientations Programmes. It will expand this role to Orientations for Mature Students and New ERA and Access Students in 2008/09.

The Student Counselling Service, in conjunction with the Students' Union, expanded its on-campus *Mental Health and Well-Being* lunchtime talks for students, which were held weekly in the Student Centre and covered such areas as exam stress, procrastination, friendships and relationships, depression and time management. Supportive textual material relating to the talks was provided through the student newspaper, *The Observer*.

The Service linked with colleagues in other third-level sectors as well as with the IUA and College Counsellors to develop a database of problems presenting in student counselling.

The Student Counselling Service assisted in the development, implementation and evaluation of the Pilot Peer Mentoring Programme and supported the extension of this programme to other Schools in the university. It collaborated with the Students' Union in the Alumni Project Document on Staff Helping Students in Distress, to be completed in autumn 2008.

External networking was undertaken with such bodies as Aware, Grow, The Internet Advisory Board, Awareness Education and Bodywhys to inform students about these supportive organisations.

Links were made with the Association of Managers of Student Services in Higher Education whose function is to inform and support the directors of student services and to represent, advocate for and promote the student experience.

The Student Counselling Service in UCD was admitted to the British Heads of University Counselling Services (HUCS) and integrated onto its email system for ongoing dialogue and information with regard to student issues.

The Student Counselling Service was privileged to host the first HUCS Annual Summer Meeting and Management Seminar in June 2008 in the UCD Quinn School of Business, the theme of which was *Who's Afraid of Mental Health? Our Changing Roles*. The Director of Student Counselling in UCD gave the keynote address on *The Roles, Rights and Responsibilities of Student Counselling Services in Higher Education*.

## Future objectives

### Medical Service

- Develop Sports Injury Clinic;
- Continue to work with Students' Union on Health Promotion;
- Upgrade and develop practice software;
- Develop and promote Books on Prescription scheme;
- Develop Audit, Peer Review and on-site clinical meetings;
- Investigate various funding options to enhance the range of medical services offered to students.

### Counselling Service

- Continuation and expansion of core counselling service and psychoeducational programmes for students;
- Increase in opening hours from September 2008 to include some early morning and regular evening sessions;
- A clinical training placement is planned for September 2008, which will expand the core counselling service;
- Resumption and expansion in 2008/09 of the Academic Staff Seminar Series to assist staff dealing with students in distress;
- Expansion of the on-campus lunchtime talks to cover such areas as settling into college, depression, gambling, bereavement, time-management and exam stress;
- Publication of an additional range of psychoeducational brochures to inform and assist students with matters of student concern.

Results of a technology survey in April 2008 showed UCD students are avid laptop users, making the internet a key channel for communicating with students



## UCD Student Advisers and Chaplaincy

The Student Advisers continued in 2007/08 to build on the objective of providing a dynamic support service to UCD students. The recognition of the student advisers as a fundamental part of the new college structures and an essential ingredient for improving the student experience in UCD was further marked by the addition of two new student advisers in 2007/08, bringing the total to 12.

### Progress to date

During 2007/08, Student Advisers were involved in organising such events as Orientation, the Retention Forum, Peer Mentoring, the Community Musical and Cultural Diversity Week. They also participated in committees such as the Residences Committee, Health Promotions Committee, Symposiums on Community, Student Welfare Committee, Student Assistance Committee and Crèche Committee.

Some highlights of 2007/08 included:

- Peer Mentoring was rolled out to include all Science, New ERA and Agricultural Science students;
- Retention Forum: a HEA-sponsored project, reporting UCD retention statistics from the past two years, was managed by a Student Adviser and the Deputy Admissions Officer;
- Cultural Diversity Week: organised by a Student Adviser in conjunction with the Students' Union, an addition to the 2007/08 Week was an exhibition, brought to the campus by Suas Soc and Concern, entitled *1,000 Families*. These portraits of families from across the world by photographer Uwe Ommer are part of an international campaign called Building Unity Through Diversity;
- *West Side Story*: With a Student Adviser as producer and the Vice-President for Students as the originator of this first UCD Community Musical, the production was a huge success, with a cast and crew of both staff and students and sell-out performances each night;
- Student Advisers presented at the Third European First-Year Experience Conference in the UK and the Conference of the International Mentoring Association in the USA;
- Student Advisers in conjunction with the Students' Union and the Chinese Students and Scholars Association raised over €13,000 in the China Earthquake Appeal Fund, which was sent to the Red Cross Society of China.

### Future objectives

- Addition of the Disability Officer to the Student Advisers network, which will increase the number of Student Advisers to 13;
- Extension of the Peer Mentoring programme across Human Sciences, Veterinary Medicine, Law and some programmes in Health Sciences;
- Promotion of Student Advisers through participation in committees, event management and leaflet distribution in each of the first-year student-information packs and to members of staff;
- Building on the work of previous years in furthering the goal of enhancing the student experience in UCD.

### UCD 'Please Talk' student support campaign goes national



The 'Please Talk' student support campaign is to encourage students who are struggling with anxiety to begin to perceive seeking help as a sign of strength rather than one of weakness. The chaplains and student advisers in UCD initiated the original campaign when the GAA star Seán Óg Ó hAilpín launched it. Due to its success the campaign was launched on a national level in March 2008. At the official national launch in Newman House, Dr Hugh Brady, President of UCD, said the campaign is a hopeful message to young people and serves as a reminder that there is no shame in reaching out for help.

## Financial Assistance for Students

Monetary problems can arise for students as a result of difficulties due to ongoing low income, childcare costs or financial worries that may result from unforeseen events such as bereavement, accident or illness.

The university operates three schemes for students who find themselves in need of financial assistance. The schemes are funded largely by the European Social Fund (ESF) through the National Development Plan (NDP) 2006–2013. Additional funding comes from donations and student fines.

The **Student Welfare Fund** is a discretionary fund that offers support to students who encounter unexpected difficulties during their time of study in UCD. The scope of the fund also encompasses those students who, for various reasons, cannot avail of normal channels of assistance. Applications can be made at any time during the academic year and are considered by the Student Welfare Fund Committee, which meets regularly.

The **Student Assistance Fund** is designed to help disadvantaged students in most need. It is administered on behalf of the Student Assistance Committee by Ann O’Hanlon, Student Adviser, UCD School of Computer Science and Informatics. It is funded by the Department of Education and Science, with assistance from the ESF through the NDP.

The **UCD Student Childcare Assistance Fund** assists student parents most in need of financial

assistance and offers a contribution towards childcare costs. This can be for children in the UCD crèche or in off-campus childcare. All subsidies granted by UCD are based on individual need and assessed by the UCD Student Childcare Assistance Fund Committee, which meets regularly. The Chair is Anna Farrell, Student Adviser, based in the UCD Health Sciences Centre.

For the academic year 2007/08, UCD had available €745,000 to assist students who find themselves in financial difficulty. Of this sum, €157,000 was allocated to the Student Welfare Fund, €157,000 to the Student Assistance Fund and €117,000 to the UCD Student Childcare Assistance Fund Scheme. The remaining sum, €314,000, was allocated to the New ERA fund. These funds ensure that students receive financial support as they follow their dream at UCD.

## Student Complaints Office

UCD regards its students as full members of the university and, as such, entitled to be treated with fairness and equality. Recognising that students need a clear framework within which to tackle problems that they may encounter within the university, UCD has established a structure to ensure that students have accessible, consistent and efficient procedures for the resolution of legitimate student complaints, in accordance with the principles of natural justice, equity and fair treatment.

The Student Complaints Office was created by the Academic Council in February 2007 and set up in July 2007 with the appointment of a part-time UCD Student Complaints Officer. The main task for the Office during the year was to establish its procedures and consider appropriate approaches to complaint resolution. During the academic year 2007/08, the Office handled 30 complaints from the student body.

In the immediate future, the priority for the Office is to provide information to next year’s student body on the existence of the Office and of the scope of its services.

## UCD Sport

UCD Sport's strategic plan aspires to:

- Deliver a quality health and life wellness experience for all university students;
- Increase the numbers participating in sports, exercise and recreation. Current figures stand at 8,000;
- Provide excellent multi-purpose facilities that accommodate a wide range of sports;
- Provide a High-Performance Centre for elite-level athletes across numerous sports.

### Progress to date

- Completion of IRB-approved full-sized Rugby All-Weather Pitch in September 2007;
- Completion of Gaelic All-Weather Pitch (Devlin Park) in November 2007;
- Completion of stage one of the UCD Bowl development. The 1,500-seater stadium is the shared homeground facility for UCD AFC and UCD RFC. UCD held their first home game at UCD Bowl in March 2008;
- Relocation of the polygrass Hockey Pitch to a site beside the Rugby All-Weather Pitch;
- Further rollout of the Get in Gear Programme, heading into its fourth year. The programme introduced over 450 individuals in 2007/08 to exercise and health awareness through its innovative and individually tailored programme.

In a unique sporting venture, UCD Soccer Club joined its rugby counterparts in a ground-sharing arrangement in the UCD Bowl with the first game of the Eircom League on 7 March 2008. A late goal from Derry City's Peter Hutton denied UCD a point with a final score of 3–2. The Club departed their homeground in Belfield Park at the end of last season after 29 years.

The 56th Colours game at Donnybrook saw the UCD Rugby Team cruise to a 50–20 victory, beating All-Ireland League Division Two opponents TCD.

UCD Ladies Volleyball Team once again proved to be the best, winning their third title Student Cup in a row on 16 and 17 February 2008 at Leeds University and Leeds Metropolitan University.

The UCD Sports Centre, in conjunction with the UCD Students' Union and the Sport Section of the Irish Wheelchair Association, held the inaugural O2-sponsored Wheelchair Basketball Competition, the first of its kind in a third-level institute in Ireland.



*The UCD Ladies Volleyball Team won their third title Student Cup*

The UCD Boat Club and UCD Ladies' Boat Club have had a fantastic year, with a clean sweep in the 60th Colours Competition, wins in the Neptune Head, the Lagan Head, St Michael's Head, the Neptune Regatta and the Commercial Regatta. A win in the Dublin Head was a first in 35 years and a major achievement for the club. The squad also won the University Championships at Intermediate level and the Novice National Championship of Ireland in 2007.

Eight UCD Lacrosse players were selected to represent Ireland, while a number of UCD staff were selected to coach.

The UCD Table Tennis Club celebrated its Diamond Jubilee year in style, as the UCD first



*The UCD Boat Club won the Dublin Head, a first in 35 years*

team retained its team title with victory at the Intervarsities in DCU in February, winning the title for the ninth year in a row and, in the process, breaking the record set by TCD from 1949 to 1956.

At the All-Ireland Intervarsity Road Championship in March the UCD Ladies Cycling Team retained the title they captured in Belfast last year, winning the team race in the Phoenix Park. Louise Moriarty also won the individual title, creating history by being the first woman to retain the crown.

The UCD Men's Basketball first team successfully defended their University Championship title for the third year running in DCU when they beat UUU 65–48 in the final.

The UCD Senior Camogie Team retained the Ashbourne Cup, beating Waterford IT 5–9 to 0–9 at Casement Park. The team completed a fantastic season with victory in the O'Maolagain Cup, the All-Ireland Camogie Intervarsity sevens, after victory over Waterford IT.

The UCD Equestrian Club enjoyed much success at the National Intervarsities Tetrathlon Championships, which took place in QUB. The team secured the gold medal, beating 30 teams. The Prix Capprilli competition at the National Equestrian Intervarsities saw the club secure the gold medal, beating 59 competitors. In terms

of individual honours, UCD won the individual Dressage title, beating 80 other individuals.

At the UCD Budweiser Sports Achievement Awards ceremony on 24 April 2008 in the UCD Student Centre almost 300 students were honoured for their sporting achievements on behalf of the university over the past year. Equestrian club captain Dean Cobbe was named the Dr Tony O'Neill Sports person of the Year, while the UCD Men's Boat Club captain, Jason Brooke, was awarded the Gerry Horkan Club Administrator of the Year. Dublin County Championship winner for UCD and All-Ireland and National League Winner Paul Ormond was awarded the David O'Connor Memorial Medal Veterinary Sports Person of the Year.

In recognition of the achievements of the UCD Boat Club oarsmen, cox and coach in the 1948 Olympics, the UCD Boat Naming Ceremony on 29 June 2008 saw the new boat officially named *Olympian*. Also recognised were two participants at the 1976 Montreal Olympics and the Senior VIII crew that won the 1974 Ladies Challenge Plate, UCD's only win at Henley. The ceremony closed with the unveiling of a Captain's and President's Board. The board is now on permanent display in the Sports Centre.

Peter Lawrie, a former UCD golf scholarship student, came from five strokes behind overnight in the Spanish Open on 2 May 2008 to beat Spaniard Ignacio Garrido in a sudden-death playoff and claim his first European Tour title.

### Future objectives

The plans to position sport and health as a core activity at UCD continue to evolve for all of the student and staff populations, as well as the wider community. Significant resources are committed to enhance the effort to provide a 'best practice' university experience at Belfield with landmark additional sports infrastructure as evidenced by the development of the new Student Swimming, Leisure and Recreation Centre. UCD Sport intends to deliver a Regional Centre of Excellence as part of the government's national sports strategy. UCD Sport will continue to promote the Get in Gear Programme for inactive students, and the orientation programme for incoming first-year students includes a significant sport and recreation contribution as part of the experience.

Louise Moriarty of the UCD Ladies Cycling Team created history by being the first woman to retain the individual title crown



## UCD Music

UCD maintains a wide range of performing ensembles, offering students the chance to explore music of different ages and styles. The choirs and orchestras are open to anyone who has an interest in and talent for music and wants to pursue this passion. Their goal is to provide an opportunity for UCD students to engage in music-making of the highest order and to present the results of their hard work to a substantial and appreciative audience.

### Progress to date

Entering its 10th anniversary, UCD Choral Scholars is the university's award-winning vocal ensemble. Founded in 1998, it has become a cultural ambassador for UCD, achieving significant recognition on campus and in the wider music community for its standard of performance and versatility. It continues to perform for guests of the university at the prestigious UCD Foundation Day Dinner, at student events around campus and, increasingly, with professional performing ensembles outside the university.

UCD Choral Scholars is a choral ensemble of musically talented students from across UCD. The scheme provides a professional learning and performing environment for these students through a varied and challenging programme developed for the Scholars each academic year by artistic director Desmond Earley.

In order to further distinguish UCD Choral Scholars, a portfolio of customised material has been especially arranged and adapted for the ensemble to create a distinctiveness in sound character. These arrangements, and a commitment to new music, place UCD Choral Scholars in an unrivalled place at the frontier of music-making in Ireland.

The aim of the UCD Symphony Orchestra (founded by its current artistic director Ciarán Crilly in 2002 as the UCD Sinfonia) was to establish a large-scale music ensemble of which UCD could be proud. In 2007, it was relaunched as the UCD Symphony Orchestra (UCDSO) in order to reflect its increased size and status. The UCDSO made its fourth annual appearance at the National Concert Hall in April 2008 with its biggest ever audience (almost 1,000) and has now confirmed itself as one of the best non-professional orchestras in the country.

Among the UCDSO's greatest achievements are:

- Expanding from fewer than 20 members to 80 in the space of two and a half years;
- Becoming a regular part of the National Concert Hall schedule;



UCD Choral Scholars.  
Pictured (from left) are  
Ann McLaughlin, Cristina  
McGrath and Elizabeth  
McLaughlin

- Setting up scholarships for students to take part in the orchestra (up to 15 are now being awarded each year);
- Establishing the UCDSO as a recognised elective or programme module under the *UCD Horizons* scheme (presently being taken by over 30 students).

### Future objectives

In celebrating its Decennial Year, the RTÉ Concert Orchestra will present two concerts with the UCD Choral Scholars and Alumni, one at the National Concert Hall in December 2008 with Cara O'Sullivan (soprano), and the second, *Deutsches Requiem* by Brahms, at St Patrick's Cathedral (spring 2009). In addition, the Scholars will launch an Intervarsity Choral Festival at UCD, and the students will have an opportunity to work with one of Scotland's leading wind ensembles, The Giondar Ensemble.

The UCDSO aims to continue its rapid rate of growth, both in terms of numbers applying for membership and the quality of its players and performances. In the coming year, it is to perform a film concert with live screenings, an event it hopes to replicate in the future, as well as a 'Russian Spectacular' at the National Concert Hall. It is hoped that audience expansion shall continue apace until the UCDSO is in a position to sell out the National Concert Hall.

## Student Society Activity

The environment of UCD provides a vibrant social life to all members of the university. Each of UCD's student societies offers significant opportunity for personal development, particularly with regard to life skills such as people management, organisation and time management.

### Progress to date

Numbers participating in societies remain solid overall. The largest societies in the university now have in excess of 4,000 members enrolled. Several new societies are contributing to the student landscape, including the Russian Society and the Gaisce Society.

Over 2,000 second-level students visited the campus in January for the second year of the

Dramsoc Leaving Certificate production, which this year was *Othello*.

A new initiative this year was the Newman fund, which operated under the Office of the Vice-President for Students. The fund is designed to allow for one-off contributions towards student events and activities that otherwise don't fit under normal club and society activity.

The Literary and Historical Society (L&H) took the title of UCD Society of the Year 2008, while An Cumann Gaelach, celebrating its centenary year, took the Small Society of the Year award. The L&H also picked up the awards for Best Poster and Best Event. UCD Dramsoc once again topped the awards at the Irish Student Drama Festival, receiving the most nominations and the most awards, and taking the award for 'Best Overall Production' for the fourth year in a row.

The debating societies continued to enjoy national and international success, winning the Cork and Trinity Intervarsities and Irish Mace, as well as taking the Individual title at the *Irish Times* Final, held in Belfield. Three teams made it to the finals of the World Debating Championships in Thailand, while UCD reached fifth place in the World Debate rankings, moving ahead of Yale.

Guests to the societies in the past 12 months included actors Will Ferrell and Ralph Fiennes, authors JK Rowling and Jung Chang and comedian and travel presenter Michael Palin.

### Future objectives

The UCD Strategic Plan underlined the importance of societies and society activity in the development and the sustainment of plentiful and quality-driven extra-curricular educational, cultural and social activities for students. In conjunction with the UCD Centre for Service Learning, Community Engagement and Volunteering, the move towards the provision of accreditation for extra-curricular activity will continue.

Societies will continue to contribute to the Student Ambassador programme, and will take an active role in planning for the new Student Centre.

### Harry Potter author JK Rowling at UCD

JK Rowling visited UCD to receive the James Joyce Award from the UCD Literary and Historical Society on 12 February 2008. The author was greeted with a standing ovation from the 600-member audience. Rowling, who gave an intimate reading from the seventh and final book in the Harry Potter series, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, took part in a 30-minute Q&A session with the audience on her writing career and her fictional characters.



*Pictured at the event: Michael McGrath, Auditor of the Literary and Historical Society, with JK Rowling and Harry Potter fan Leonard Caprani, age 10, from Clonskeagh, Dublin*

## Community Engagement

The UCD Centre for Service Learning, Community Engagement and Volunteering (CSLCEV) was established in October 2007 to promote and encourage civic engagement. It is committed to providing UCD students with a rounded social education and a strong sense of citizenship, while concentrating on its three main activities to:

- Promote and encourage volunteering;
- Work with UCD staff to develop and promote academic modules that incorporate elements of community engagement;
- Foster links with the not-for-profit sector, especially in the local community.

UCD Volunteers Overseas (UCDVO) offers students at UCD the opportunity to engage in voluntary work in the developing world. UCDVO has grown in scale and complexity since it began when a small group of volunteers travelled to Delhi in 2003. As a registered charity and a signatory of the Comhlámh Code of Ethics, UCDVO adheres to the professional and moral framework of volunteering. To date, more than 350 UCD student and staff volunteers have travelled with UCDVO and approximately 90 places are now offered each year.

### Progress to date

Work continues to promote and encourage civic engagement in UCD, and to foster and build on existing links to local community organisations in the following ways:

- UCD is a founding member of Campus Engage, a national network established to promote civic engagement in higher education in Ireland. CSLCEV represents UCD in this network;
- An award, entitled Recognition of Voluntary Engagement (ROVE), sponsored by the UCD Alumni Fund, was launched for students. ROVE acknowledges and promotes volunteering through recognition of the voluntary contribution of UCD students to community life, both on and off campus;
- CSLCEV ran a workshop entitled *Community Engagement in an Academic Context* in May 2008 for UCD faculty and staff. The workshop focused on identifying the challenges and solutions to incorporating elements of community engagement into academic modules in UCD;
- A UCD Connect network group (CBL Group) was established to facilitate networking, information sharing and communication relating to civic engagement among UCD staff across campus;
- CSLCEV established a centre dedicated to promoting the concepts and ideas of civic engagement among UCD staff, students and local communities and organisations;
- CSLCEV actively engages with the UCD Quinn School of Business in the provision of their Level 2 Service Learning elective module;

- This year UCDVO developed a housing project in Gros Morne, Haiti, and in phase one it built nine houses for flood victims and socially disadvantaged members of the community;
- Two health centres have now been built in Nicaragua since UCDVO established the project in collaboration with the Nicaraguan Department of Health in 2007.

### Future objectives

The CSLCEV has identified a number of short- and medium-term objectives for academic year 2008/09, including:

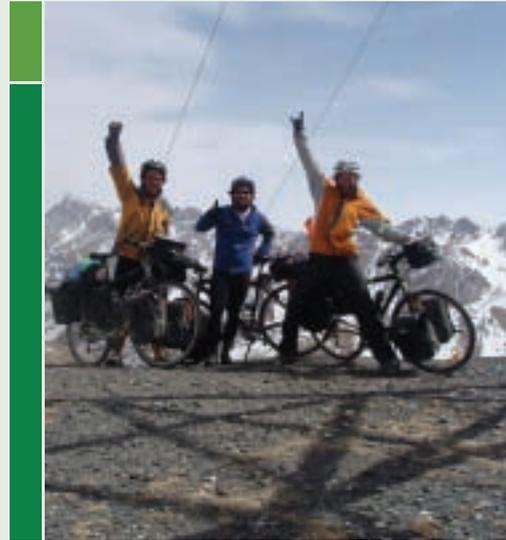
- Participation in Volunteer Centres Ireland 'Give it a Swirl' National Volunteering Day on 26 September 2008. Projects with a 'community makeover' theme are completed by groups of volunteers on the day;
- Development and provision for UCD staff of a range of workshops on community-based and service learning, and related topics;
- Facilitation of the development and provision of academic modules, with a focus on community engagement;
- Offer students a series of seminars and briefing sessions, with an emphasis on volunteering and related topics;
- Contribution through the Campus Engage network to the development of policy on civic engagement in the Irish higher-education sector;
- Continued identification and development of links and networking with local community organisations.

Under its current restructuring plans, UCDVO plans to introduce formal project applications and reviews with its host NGOs in India, Haiti and Nicaragua to ensure sustained performance of the projects and build a more equal relationship with the host organisations.

As a UCD society, UCDVO is increasing the input of UCD students at board level and intends to establish a number of action groups to streamline activity and increase student involvement in the day-to-day running of the organisation.

## Bike to Beijing 2008

In September 2007, a trio of cyclists (including two past UCDVO volunteers, Conor Rowan and Paul Ryan) set off for the Beijing Olympics. This journey over some 15,000km took 11 months as the intrepid three pedalled across France, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and finally China. This was an adventure but also a fundraising cycle in aid of UCDVO.



## UCDVO in Haiti 2008

This year UCDVO commissioned a house design in collaboration with the host organisation, the Sisters of Jesus and Mary, in Haiti. This design sets a new standard of housing in the region. Phase one was completed this summer and it is intended the template will be used by other organisations in the region and on other sites by UCDVO.