

**CAOIMHE WALSH  
FOR WELFARE  
MANIFESTO**



**VOTE WALSH FOR WELFARE**

**MARCH 29TH, 30TH & 31ST**

**#WALSH4WELFARE**



@walsh4welfare21



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# ABOUT ME



- My name is Caoimhe Walsh, I am 21 years old, from Kerry and currently a final year Arts Student studying Politics and Sociology and I am running to be your **Welfare Officer** for the upcoming academic year 2021/2022.
- Welfare is something that I have been very interested in from a young age. I have always had a huge passion for **helping people**.
- A Welfare Officer is someone who is **approachable, considerate, helpful, caring** and **non judgemental** and I believe that I would fit that role perfectly.
- I spent three years volunteering with the local Special Olympics Team which was an experience that led me to learn a lot about myself and the benefits of **caring for others**.
- I have also, from a young age, volunteered and raised money for many charities inside and outside Ireland.



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# WHY I WANT TO BE YOUR WELFARE OFFICER



- My own **personal experiences** through college have not been the easiest, in turn this has played a huge part in my decision to run for Welfare Officer this year.
- I have had **first hand experience** with the many difficulties that students' are facing and I think this is very beneficial to the role because I **understand** and I genuinely **care**.
- Having spent a long time, especially during my time in college **struggling** with multiple **mental illnesses** including suicidal ideation as well as grieving the loss of a family member and friend I eventually found the **courage** to seek help.
- After receiving supports from **UCC Student Health, Pieta House** and my amazing family and friends I was able to find the **light at the end of the tunnel**. I now want to give back and **help others find theirs** no matter what the issue.
- I hope that by telling my story it helps students realise that no matter how hard your situation is, it **does get better** and if elected, I will do whatever it takes to help those in need.



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# MENTAL HEALTH



- I want UCC to be a place that supports mental health in a positive way by promoting all the necessary services that are available to all students inside and outside UCC.
- **Loneliness and Isolation** is something many students are suffering from now more than ever due to the Global Pandemic leaving students isolated from friends due to college being online. I think this is a very serious issue and will have major knock on effects on students' mental health.
- I want to work with the incoming Entertainments Officer and Communications and Engagement Officer to help combat this by running in person events, if possible, as well as online events that cater for all students interests.
- I would also like to focus on **Student Integration** especially with this years first years who have been studying from home all year and have not yet met people in their course as well as incoming first years.
- I want there to be fun mindfulness activities to UCC students and help raise awareness around the importance of watching out for your friends as well as looking after yourself.
- Most Students are aware of UCC Student Health but I want to bring awareness to other services available in UCC such as UCC Chaplaincy and Niteline.



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# MENTAL HEALTH



- I, as well as the rest of UCC Students are hopeful that next year we will have an **on campus lifestyle** again. With college being back on campus I want to make students who study in satellite campuses, for example, Architecture and Med Health students, feel more **included**.
- I will work with the **Welfare Crew** to help me in dedicating one week every month to travelling to satellite campuses and interact with the students, hear their issues and make them feel included.
- This years Student Union brought **Counselling waiting list** from 7 weeks down to one week by introducing a new Mental Health Strategy. I would like to continue working on this and make the waiting time as short as possible.
- I want to get in contact with the heads of the college and ask them for more funding for the counselling services in Student Health. As we are currently living through a pandemic that will leave a massive impact on people's mental health, I believe that we can never have enough mental health services available to student.



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# MENTAL HEALTH



- It has been statistically proven that women are more likely to speak out about their mental health issues than men are. If elected Welfare Officer I want to promote **men's mental health**.
- I hope to do this by dedicating one day of **Mental Health and Well Being Week** specifically to men's mental health.
- During this week I want to bring awareness to mental illnesses that are 'not as common' such as Borderline Personality Disorder, Bipolar Disorder, Skitzophrenia and Eating Disorders.
- This last year the UCC Students' Union created the 'KeepWellUCC' Instagram page as well as 'UCC Talks' I plan to continue the work that they have done on these social media platforms and keep expanding on these pages.



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# SEXUAL HEALTH



- **Sexual Health** will be imperative to my role should you elect me as your Students' Union Welfare Officer '21/22.
- I want **SHAG Week** to have just as much of an impact on campus as RAG Week does.
- I will work with the incoming Entertainments Officer to run more events on campus, or online if government restrictions are still in place.
- During this week I will liaise with UCC Student Health and promote **STI Testing**. At the moment if you ring for an STI you end up having to wait a few weeks for an appointment I want students to be able to get an appointment way sooner than this.
- I want to link up with **Cork Sexual Violence Centre** to run **Consent Workshops** as well as **Safe Sex** talks. I believe that promoting Consent and Safe Sex is very important as the role of Welfare Officer.
- I want to break the stigma around sexual health and sexual violence and make all students feel as safe as possible. I plan to make students aware of all the services that are available to them should they run into trouble.
- I want to make **condoms** more available on UCC campus and satellite campuses. I want to do so by making them available at society events and at **Pop up Condom Shops** on campus.
- I think some students still feel uncomfortable buying condoms and hope that having them more available on campus makes students more comfortable getting them.



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# PHYSICAL HEALTH



- **Physical Health** is just As important as Mental and Sexual Health. If elected your Welfare Officer I want to dedicate 45 minutes - 1 hour a week on an **Instagram live** in which a free **Physical activity**, such as a workout, yoga would be livestreamed from the UCCSU page. This would hopefully be provided by the Mardyke or Sports Studies and PE students.
- Physical Activity is great for clearing the mind and de - stressing and I think it would be very beneficial to students.
- I believe that **First Aid Training** is an essential skill and I want to make it mandatory for first year students and have the training available for other students twice a year at the start of each semester.
- **Period poverty** is a huge issue for young people today and I want to comabat this.
- I would also like to make **Sanitary products** more freely available on campus. I would seek the financial support to be able to make these products free of charge and available in all bathrooms on campus and satellite campuses.



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# ACADEMIC ISSUES



- Due to the effects the pandemic has had on third level education, the **'COVID - 19 no academic disadvantage policy'** was brought in last year. This means students who have repeat exams would not have to pay fees or have their exams capped at 40%. It also gave students the opportunity to re sit exams if they felt they could do better free of charge.
- This policy received a great response from UCC students and I don't see why it can't be continued especially since nobody knows how long the after effects of the pandemic will last.
- Something I am very interested in bringing to UCC if elected Welfare Officer is **Welfare Reps** for classes as well as the Class and Ents Reps that are already in place.
- The Welfare Rep would be chosen at the start of the year and would be trained and in direct contact with me. I would have regular meetings and offer constant **support** to these Representatives throughout the year.
- The **Role of the Welfare Rep** would be for people to have someone in their class that they would feel comfortable speaking to. I think many students feel overwhelmed at the thought of contacting and going straight to the Welfare Officer and I hope that by speaking to their Welfare Rep it would give them the confidence to come and speak to me if needed.



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# ACADEMIC ISSUES



- This year when all Class Reps were trained they received **Active Listening** training. I want the Welfare Reps to also receive this training as well as **Bystander Intervention** and **Mindfulness** training.
- I want to organise and provide **Exam Stress Management** and **Burn Out Workshops** regularly throughout the academic year, especially in the run up to exam season.
- I would positively highlight the importance of having a **healthy balance** between a well structured **academic** and **social life** by carrying out these events.



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# ADDICTION



- If elected I want to make students aware of the potential risks surrounding alcohol and drug abuse. I would like to work with the **Students for Sensible Drug Policy (SSDP)** on the topic of **harm reduction** and **safe drug use**.
- There are currently regular **Alcoholics Anonymous** and **Narcotics Anonymous** meetings available through UCC I want these to continue and introduce **Gamblers Anonymous** meeting to the college. I truly believe that these meetings are beneficial to anyone struggling with addiction.
- I would work with other SU Officers to run some fun and informative events during **Addiction Awareness Week** to not just cover the usual types of addictions you would hear of, I want to really focus on addictions that are not as commonly spoke about such as Gambling, Sex and Porn Addiction etc.
- By making students more aware of these I would hope that more would come forward and seek help. I want students to know that there is currently an **Addiction Counsellor** available in UCC.
- I also want to make **drug testing kits** more available within the college.



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# FINANCIAL/



## ACCOMMODATION ISSUES

- Due to COVID - 19, many students are without jobs and have been left unable to afford accommodation due to high prices. I would contact the university's administration to provide more funding towards the **Students Assitance Fund** and **Hardship fund**.
- I want to promote the **UCC Food Bank** that runs weekly for students that are struggling financially.
- I think it is very important for students to know their **Tenant Rights** and let them know that the landlords are responsible for the standards of their houses prior to new tenants moving in.
- Many students are being exploited by their landlords, this can lead to students losing out on their deposits or even extra money unnecessarily.
- If elected, I would like to work with the **Free Legal Advice Centre** who are trained to facilitate Free Legal Advice sessions with legal professionals that they bring in to students.
- Some Lecturers make it mandatory for students to buy certain books, I want to work with the Education Officer to have lecturers make all books **available online as an E Book** rather than having the financial burden of having to purchase these books.



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# EQUALITY



- If elected, I will be working closely with the incoming Equality Officer and the **Equality Working Group** to Make UCC a safe space for all students. With the Equality Working Group I will help to stop racial, homophobic, bullying and transphobic abuse, along with promoting traveller and disability rights.
- As college has been online this year, most lecture recordings are available on **Canvas** and **Panopto**, I want to ensure that this system stays in place once college life returns to what it used to be.
- I want to work with the **Disability Support Service (DSS)** and the incoming Education and Communication and Engagement Officers to make sure that these **lecture recordings** remain as **easily accessible**.
- UCC Campus can be overwhelming when it is full of people, I want all students to know of the **sensory space** that is available on campus and I want this space to be kept at the highest standard possible.
- During the weeks that are busier than usual, like RAG, Freshers, Refreshers and Exam season I would like to see more **temporary sensory areas** available for students in need.



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# EQUALITY



- I will work with the **Equality, Diversion and Inclusion** and the **LGBTQ+ Rep** to help and properly assist LGBTQ+ students.
- I would like to work with the incoming Entertainments Officer to run a **UCC Pride** during **Equality Week**.
- The prices for **UCC Crèche Cois Laoi** is expensive for full time students I want to liaise with the Crèche to lower fees as well as making student parents aware of the **Childcare Assistance Fund** provided by the Students' Union.



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# CONCLUSION



- I would love to be elected as your Welfare Officer on the UCC Students' Union for the upcoming year 2021/2022. I genuinely believe that I am the best for the job due to my own personal experience as well as the experience I have looking after others.
- Thank you to everyone who has read my manifesto and if anyone has any questions feel free to contact me on my social media pages listed below.

Instagram: @walsh4welfare  
Facebook: @Walsh4welfare21

And please Vote **#1** Caoimhe **Walsh** for **Welfare** on **March 29th, 30th and 31st!**



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