

**VOTE No. 1
CÓNÁN Ó BROIN
FOR USI DEPUTY PRESIDENT**



**VÓTÁIL UIMH. 1
CÓNÁN Ó BROIN
MAR LEAS UACHTARÁN AMLÉ**

So Who is this Cónán Ó Broin?

I'm glad you asked. He

- is 23 years old and from Clondalkin in Dublin;
- has just completed a degree in Economics and Political Science;
- is currently serving as President of Trinity Students' Union;
- is a keen GAA player and former Chairman of TCD GAA Club;
- has previously fundraised for Vincent De Paul, Simon Community, and along with students in other SUs, Bike2Belarus in aid of disabled orphans in Belarus;
- is on the "Most Wanted" list of the IUA, the HEA, and the Minister for Education.

What are the major issues that Cónán will work on?

1. The Grants System, the BTEA and the Student Support Bill

The delay in reforming the Grants system is nothing short of a national disgrace. Expecting students from disadvantaged backgrounds to survive on €40-50 per week should be a cause of national shame. The extensive delays which students have to endure for their grants to be given out adds insult to injury. The Student Support Bill is supposed to address this issue, but has been gathering dust at committee stage in the Oireachtas for over a year. Getting the Grants system reformed will be top priority if I am elected Deputy President.

Similarly, the disgraceful decision to cut grant eligibility from students who receive the Back to Education Allowance was completely unjustified and must be contested.

What Cónán will do: Cónán will lobby TDs on the Oireachtas Committee for Education and Science by using the contacts which he has built up this year to ensure that the Student Support Bill is passed promptly. He will lobby Government backbenchers to have the cuts to BTEA holders reversed.

2. The Student Services Charge (Registration Fee)

By working closely with TDs on the Oireachtas Education Committee, I exposed the €1500 Student Services Charge in the national media as a scam which was nothing other than Third Level Fees by the back door. The IUA were called before the Committee to answer questions on the matter, and the Minister is appearing before the committee shortly. Major progress has been made in forcing the Universities to admit that this is Third Level Fees by the back door. The pressure needs to be kept up to ensure that there are no increases in the Fee, and indeed to pressurise the Government to either lower the fee or to get Third Level Colleges deliver genuine student services to the value of what Students are paying.

VOTE CÓNÁN Ó BROIN

What Cónán will do: Cónán will continue the work he began this year to expose the Registration Fee as a scam. He will continue to pressurise the Government to come clean and admit that this is Third Level Fees by the back door, continue to lobby TDs from all parties on this issue, and to pressurise colleges to improve their student services.

3. The potential for a new attempt to Re-Introduce Full Tuition Fees

The Hunt Report on the Third Level Sector is due to be published shortly and is expected to recommend the reintroduction of full Third Level tuition fees. Given that the current government, which has ruled out the reintroduction of Third Level Fees in its lifetime, is unstable and could fall in the short term, we must make preparations for the battle which may be upon us sooner rather than later.

What Cónán will do: Cónán will make all preparations necessary for another round of a Fees Campaign, so that we are ready if it comes to pass. Cónán will also lobby the Education Spokespeople from every political party to ensure that, in the event of an election, they will support Free Third level Education.

4. Anti Social Behaviour

The problems which individual CO's face in relation to Anti Social behaviour have come to the fore in the last year or two. It is clear that while this is affecting colleges on a local level, this is a national issue, which needs a coordinated strategy using the best practice models throughout the country.

What Cónán will do: Cónán will develop a template for dealing with Anti-Social behaviour in individual SUs through taking best practice and experience from around the country and being on call for any SUs which are having difficulty with this issue.

5. The Re-Affiliation of UL, DCU and CIT

After the fantastic work done by the outgoing USI Deputy President and Officerboard, the reaffiliation of NUI Maynooth has sent out a message to other non affiliated colleges that the tide has turned and that affiliation to USI is their only option should they wish to have a voice at a national level.

What Cónán will do: Cónán will immediately begin negotiations with the newly elected officers in each of these colleges with a view to running affiliation referenda in each college next year.

6. FETAC Colleges

Our fellow students in FETAC colleges deserve to have their voices heard at a national level. These students may very well have very serious issues in their respective colleges that require representation at a national level.

VOTE CÓNÁN Ó BROIN

What Cónán will do: Should they become affiliated members, Cónán will make contact with and travel to each FETAC college to discuss how to develop their relationship with USI and how to assist them in any issues which they may be having.

7. **NUI Abolition**

The arbitrary and ill-advised decision by the Minister for Education to abolish the NUI could very well devalue the degree which students from the NUI have worked hard to earn. There was absolutely no justification for making the decision to abolish the NUI, and we must fight to have this decision reversed.

What Cónán will do: Cónán will lobby government backbenchers to have this arbitrary decision reversed, and should the Minister for Education be moved from his office, lobby any new Minister to reconsider this decision.

Cónán's Achievements

- While working closely with other SUs, helped drive forward the successful campaign against Fees at a national level, meeting over 40 TD's and Senators, and several Ministers, including the Ministers for Education, Environment, Health, Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, and the Chief Whip.
- Exposed the Registration Fee as an underhanded scam in the national media, through working closely with members of the Oireachtas Committee on Education and Science, a direct result of which was the appearance of the seven University heads before the committee on January 28 and the upcoming appearance of the Minister for Education of March 25 to answer questions about the Fee.
- Got GAA goalposts placed on the Cricket Pitch in Trinity for the first time in the college's history.
- Oversaw the successful revamping of TCDSU's branding and image.
- Raised the national profile of TCDSU, through appearances on Television, Radio and in print on issues relating to education and youth unemployment.
- Represented TCD at every USI national council during the year.

Experience

- 05/06 Elected Class Rep
- 06/07 Elected Oifigeach na Gaeilge, TCDSU
- 07/08 Elected Chairman, Trinity GAA Club
- 08/09 Re-Elected Chairman, Trinity GAA Club
- 09/10 Elected President, TCDSU
- 09/10 Member of the Board of Trinity College

VOTE CÓNÁN Ó BROIN