

**VOTE**  
**SINEAD DOLAN #1**  
**FOR USI LGBT OFFICER**



- This year is very important for the civil marriage campaign. As you know, there is a civil partnership bill going through at the moment. If elected, I would campaign heavily for full marriage, and against this bill. I would organise protests, and work in conjunction with such groups as lgbtNOISE and marriageequality to this aim. I would also aim to educate students as to the differences between the two, and why civil partnership is not good enough. As part of this campaign, I would hope to run the 'Come out to your TD' campaign in every college, as it is very successful in getting the point across, and would be more so, I believe, if publicised by various unions.
- Currently there is a ban on gay men, or men who have engaged in oral or anal sex with another man, giving blood. I believe this to be discriminatory, and discovered recently that it is not very well known to exist at all. If elected, I would try to raise awareness of this, organise 'Give blood because we can't' protests at any blood drive held on campus [providing, of course, the union in place don't object] and campaign to have the ban lifted with the groups already in place.
- The government has said they will recognise Transgendered people as the gender they identify as in their program for government. While this is a huge step, many transgendered people still have issues during their transition. In NUIG, we have a group which meets once a month, anonymously, where transitioning men and women are shown how to wear make-up to cover up unwanted 'tells', how to deal with various aspects of transitioning, and generally to have someone to talk to about it. In the west of Ireland, this is currently the only such group, and I think that should change. Many people going through transition are in full time education, and if elected I would try to set up similar meetings in other rural colleges, and offer support to TENI in their campaigns. I think this is a very important issue that still has a lot of prejudice and misinformation surrounding it, and I would like to help break that myth, by holding talks with TENI about the subject at various times throughout the year, and aiming those talks at non- LGBT students, so as to target people who otherwise would never know the truth about it. I would also push the government into fulfilling their promise to the best of my ability, as gender recognition is a basic human right, in my opinion
- BeLonG To youth organisation does fantastic work with the young gay community all over the country, combating bullying and offering support services to people as they come out of the closet, or just being a safe space for people to go to. If elected, I would work with this group in their efforts, as many people entering third level education see that as their time to come out, for various reasons. The 'He/She's Gay, and we're Cool with That' poster campaign is very effective in secondary schools, but not so much in third level education. I would hope to have a new poster campaign aimed specifically at third level students, to combat homophobic bullying, and would hope to work against it in conjunction with various student unions, as well as regional LGBT youth groups.
- Gay and lesbian people in this country do not have adoptive rights. That is to say, they cannot as a couple have a baby. The repercussions of this are huge, as if something happens to the biological parent or adoptive parent of the child, their partner [the child's other parent] has no rights of paternity over it. I believe that this is outrageous, and goes directly against the rights of the child. What is more, the current civil partnership bill does not allow for 'gay adoption' either. If elected, I

would lobby the government heavily, in conjunction with various LGBT groups and with the support of USI to give equal rights to LGBT parents in this matter.

- The Gay Community News, or GCN, is Ireland's only free magazine for the LGBT community. For some people, it is their only link to the gay community, for example people who live in rural areas, where they may be 'the only gay in the village'. Unfortunately, this year GCN is in grave financial difficulty, and won't be able to continue into 2011 unless they raise enough money to keep afloat. If elected, I would run fundraising events to keep this valuable service going, for the LGBT students and non- students for whom it is their only connection to the wider gay community.
  - Many colleges and I.T.s in the country have equality or LGBT officer, who would deal with the day to day casework with regards LGBT students. However, not every college does. Even when there is one in place, I have found in my own position as equality officer in NUIG that there were several pieces of casework with regards LGBT students which I would have had great difficulty dealing with had I not been a member of the community myself. Thus, I would hope to make a pack for those officers who may not know how to deal with these problems, and distribute them to SUs around the country. They would include the numbers to help lines, posters, FAQs etc., basically a kit to help support regional officers in their jobs.
-