

ilLUUminator

LUU Staff Newsletter | April 2009

Leeds University Union.

HR & Admin
volunteer for a day!

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JOSH



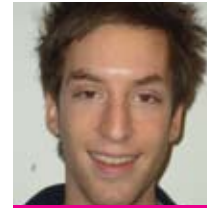
HANNAH



SOPHIA



JAK



MIKE



MADELEINE

Meet the new Student Executive

Following the exciting vote count in February, the results of the Student Executive Elections were announced. Introducing...the new officers for 2009 to 2010:

"I am delighted to have been elected. We have excellent societies at LUU but I feel they could, and should, be engaging with more students and the Union can help with their promotion."

Josh Landy
Activities Officer

"I still can't believe that I got the job! I can't wait to start doing all the things I talked about during my campaign."

Hannah Greenslade
Community Officer

"Being elected was one of the best moments of my life. Next year I intend to ensure LUU actively reflects its student body by increasing minority representation in activity groups and ensuring international issues are discussed in an inclusive and non-confrontational way."

Sophia James
Equality and Diversity Officer

"I am really looking forward to making LUU the most affordable, transparent and democratic students' union in the country!"

Jak Codd
Communications and Internal Affairs Officer

"I'm excited to get started next year. Academic feedback is the first thing I will hopefully tackle - I'd like to see the University taking steps to improve the feedback they give to students."

Mike Gladstone
Education Officer

"I'm really excited to have been elected. We've got a great exec team with some great ideas."

Madeleine Harris-Smith
Welfare Officer



Red Nose Day: Tony from Reception

Dates For Your Diary:

Monday 27th April to Friday 1st May

Celebrate Week

Friday 1st May

*Union Council Election
Vote Count*

Monday 4th May

May Bank Holiday

Monday 18th May

Exams Start

Monday 25th May

Spring Bank Holiday

Friday 5th June

Summer Ball 2009

Friday 19th June

End of Term

Tuesday 23rd June

Summer Staff Meeting



A typical day for Antonia, HR Manager.

Watch out, the HR and Admin team are about!

In February, the HR and Admin team were let loose for their team away day. This year, in aid of being green, giving something back, and being cheap(!), they decided to work with the BTCV Hollybush volunteer group for a day of tree felling!

"We met at the BTCV offices in Bramley early in the morning and piled into a mini-bus with other volunteers. On arrival at 'site' on Sugar Hill, near Meanwood Valley Farm, we were equipped with some scary looking saws and spent the day chopping and sawing oak sapling trees to clear the area to allow younger trees to grow through. We all took a packed

lunch, Antonia brought cake, and the sun even came out. All in all, it was a great day; the work was rewarding and it was a real team bonding experience!"

George Holt, HR & Admin

If your team fancies taking part in a volunteering project for an away day please contact the HR and Admin office for further info about the BTCV. Alternatively, contact **Isabel Swift, Volunteering Development Co-ordinator, on ext. 326 or email i.swift@leeds.ac.uk** for details of other volunteering projects to get stuck into.

Staff Survey:

Thank you for completing the annual Staff Survey in February; the results will provide us with valuable info for discussion and improvements to the way we work at LUU.

As promised, for each survey completed, £2 will be donated to a charity of your choice. This year 153 people completed a survey, so we have a fantastic £306 to donate! Do you have a charity that you believe should receive this year's donation? If so, please contact George Holt, HR & Admin, on ext 202 or email g.c.holt@leeds.ac.uk.

News in brief

This month on the Intranet...

Visit the LUU intranet for news and further info on:

Joblink in the news!

Gail Hardwick, Joblink and Reception Manager, was interviewed by the BBC. View the story on the LUU intranet.

Customer Services Group Update

The new customer services disability awareness training leaflet is available now to download.

luuintranet.leeds.ac.uk

Looking for a change?

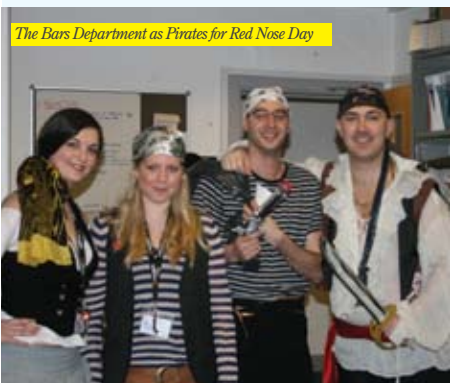
The 'change board' is a dedicated space where internal and other students' union job vacancies will be advertised. It is located on the ground floor staff noticeboard, near the venues department.

Well-being Zone

Do you have a lunchtime escape? Lunch breaks are vital to recharge the mind and body. HR and Admin are running a lunchtime walk programme on the last Monday of every month. Meet in reception just before 1.00pm.

Red Nose Day

A whopping grand total of £516 raised! Well done and thanks to everyone who got involved.



The Bars Department as Pirates for Red Nose Day

LUU Wins GOLD!



L-R: Susan Nash, Laura Macfartlane-Shopes, Alan Hill, Alison Dumphy, Aidan Grills and Hardeep Singh Kohli

For the second year running LUU was awarded Gold in the Sound Impact Awards at the NUS Services Annual Dinner on 7th April. **Aidan Grills**, Membership Services and Development Director, said:

"The achievement is down to our people changing and adapting the way we work to improve our environmental practices. Special thanks should be given to Alan Hill, as our Facilities Manager, for introducing new initiatives

and Alison Dumphy who pulled together all the evidence for the submission".

Four other unions were awarded the Gold standard: Loughborough, Edinburgh, Reading and Newcastle. At the same event it was also announced that LUU had achieved Best Bar None accreditation. This is another great achievement for our Bars/Venues teams.

Spotlight on... The Student Advice Centre

On the back of the Student Advice Centre's 'Open Day' for LUU staff (thanks to those who popped along!) we thought we'd give those of you who were unable to make it a brief insight into our work!

What we do: We provide information, advice, support and representation with any problems students have at university. Our staff are professionally trained, and the help we provide is free, confidential and independent of the University. We specialise in housing problems (such as landlords unfairly withholding deposits), money problems (such as debt negotiation), and academic problems (such as accusations of plagiarism).

How we work: The service runs in a number of different ways. Firstly, there is basic information, which may involve just picking up a leaflet. Next up, there is our daily first-come, first-served drop-in advice service, where students can pop in for a chat. Finally, there is our casework system, which is used when the adviser needs to do work on the students' behalf - such as

writing to landlords or formulating court cases.

There is also a team of specialists, for the three main problem areas, that oversee and assist the work of the advisers, as well as working on various campaigns such as house-hunting and contract-checking.

"Since 2001 we've negotiated back well over £125,000 worth of unfair deposit deductions and compensation from landlords."

Some numbers and facts: Casework takes up the majority of the advisers' time. We had around 400 cases open over the last academic year. The average academic case can vary from 4.5 to 24 hours of work to resolve. The longest money case was upwards of 45 hours! In the last academic year alone we recorded over 12,000 individual queries!

Our impact: We help students every year appeal against their

degree classifications, restructure their finances so they can stay at university, and offer the guidance and support necessary so students can complete their degrees. Since 2001 we've negotiated back well over £125,000 worth of unfair deposit deductions and compensation from landlords and this is still, relatively speaking, this is still a drop in the ocean.

And finally, to round off: Here are couple of comments left by one of our clients at the resolution of their case:

"The help I received in the Advice Centre was one of the best student experiences I have had since coming to Leeds."

"There are people around me that care about my situation and are willing to provide assistance. I feel so grateful."

So, basically, that's what we do and how we do it. We are just another part of the great work LUU does for its members!



Tomato Seedlings



Bardon Grange Volunteers at work

The Bardon Grange Project



**Volunteering
& Community**

This pilot project, run by Volunteering and Community, aims to increase involvement in local organic food production in Leeds. A site is being developed where volunteer staff, students and community members will grow vegetables.

Get involved! The group to Bardon Grange leaves the Union building every Wednesday at 4.00pm until around 7.00pm. If your job is flexible, have a word with your manager about leaving early to

go along or pop along after work. **Bardon Grange** is the University's nursery, off Weetwood Lane, near Oxley Hall.

They sessions also run every fourth Saturday of the month, from 10.30am to 3.30pm. The next **Saturday session is 16th May**. So if you're an experienced gardener, want to learn how to grow veg, or just to be out in the fresh air and meet new people, come along! For more info and directions contact

Isabel Swift,
Volunteering and Community, at
email: i.swift@leeds.ac.uk

In the future, V&C will also be holding workshops in the Union about food growing in containers, helping local schools, and hopefully selling some produce too!

NEW!



**Handmade Ethical
Products from Oakwood
Aromatics in store now!**



James Robertson, CDS Manager on... *the G20 Summit:*

Protesting is a bit like going on a roller coaster. Before it starts you feel a little bit nervous. You tell bad jokes to help create the illusion of being calm. Then it's time to begin and that overwhelming feeling of 'oh s!t, what have I let myself in for?' takes hold. Next comes that moment, those crucial seconds, of mass metamorphosis as the roller coaster heaves a heavy sigh at the top of the first big drop. Everyone holds their breath and then it's away. Go, go, go, go! Cheering, running, screaming and laughing – everyone races in the same direction. Suddenly all those feelings of anxiety are replaced with an amazing sense of freedom and joy, and even though you have no idea who the people around you are, your happy sharing something brilliant with them.

The moment that 4,000 climate activists and I 'swooped' on the European Climate Exchange, on Bishopsgate in central London,

was one of these moments. We descended from all over the City in protest against the G20's plans to use deeply flawed carbon trading mechanisms to tackle climate change. No one knew whether it was going to work, but an obligation to try and prevent the greatest threat to all mankind (yes, even more than terrorism!) meant we were all willing to try. It was because we were willing that this, the 4th Camp for Climate Action, was a massive success. LUU was well represented with at least 40 Leeds students taking part. And so, just like getting off a roller coaster, everyone walked away feeling a bit shook up and battered but better for it and so very glad they took the ride.

- CDS will be organising the second **LUU Social Forum** for the w/c 28th September 2009. Visit www.luuonline.com/iwantchange for more details.

Notes & Notices

Hellos & Goodbyes!

Hello to...

(Or welcome back!) to Kath Owen who starts 5th May in the Student Advice Centre as Academic and Money Specialist. Kath was previously LUU's Women's Officer during 2001/2.

Goodbye to...

To Vicky Kirby, Guidance Worker, who is leaving us to work for the NHS in Bradford.

To Rob Spring, Events Manager who leaves at the end of April to work for the BBC in London.

They'll both be sadly missed by their teams.

Summer Ball: *Friday 5th June*

The 2009 Leeds Universities Summer Ball is almost upon us and preparations are almost in place. Having sold over 7,000 tickets, and with headline acts such as Katy Perry, this year's event is going to be outstanding. You can be part of the action! As LUU staff, you can get involved with what is undoubtedly the highlight of LUU's calendar. If you would like to volunteer your services, please contact Simone in Events at simone@leedstickets.com.

You Said, We Did

You Said...

Verity Clawson, Venues, suggested installing a T-loop system in the building.

We Did...

We are going to implement a portable induction loop for all our reception areas.

Other staff suggestions made over the last few months, from **Peter Russell (IT)**, **Alison Dumphy (HR)**, **Ged Savva (Marketing)**, and **Ian Whitehead (IT)**, can be viewed on the LUU intranet. Submit your suggestions via our Staff Suggestion Scheme.



Have you seen the new lines in Essentials? Check out the new bowls & cups range!

essentials✓

who's who? Anne Marie Robinson



Anne Marie Robinson

Name: Anne Marie Robinson
Job Title: Cleaning Team Leader
Roles & Responsibilities: Supervising, organising and monitoring cleaning staff.
Favourite social venue/ setting? Bingo

What would your specialist subject be on Mastermind? Star Trek
If you were an animal what would you be? Lion
Who is the most embarrassing famous person that you fancy either now or when you were younger? Donny Osmond
What's your favourite place in the world ever? Dales
What did you get up to this weekend? Just chilled out
What five things couldn't you live without? My children, bingo, music, cigarettes, and male strippers!
Finally, what's your life's motto? Think positive.