

UCD Champions *'Opening Doors'* Alumni Fund

IMPACT REPORT 2025 - 2026



FOUNDATION





Thank you

It is a privilege to share the UCD Champions Impact Report 2025–2026. This report reflects the incredible transformations you make possible. Your kindness is at the heart of every story in these pages, turning our students' ambitions into reality.

This year, your commitment supported 101 new scholarships, opening doors for students who once viewed university as an impossible dream. Together with fellow alumni, you are redefining what is achievable for the next generation.



The true weight of your impact is best seen through the individual lives you have touched. Because of you, David doesn't have to choose between an International Commerce degree and his dedication to competitive boxing; he is excelling in both. Your belief in Tia has granted her the freedom to focus on her studies, bringing her one step closer to her dream of making a meaningful impact on her patients' lives. Similarly, Jonah is navigating his first year at UCD with confidence and joy, simply because you chose to invest in his potential.

As we look towards the future, your partnership remains the cornerstone of our mission. Together, we are ensuring that UCD continues to be a place where talent is the only requirement for entry, and where the pursuit of excellence is accessible to all.

On behalf of our students, faculty, and the entire team at UCD Foundation, thank you for your kindness and your trust. You are the reason UCD is a university defined by access, a place where every student truly belongs.

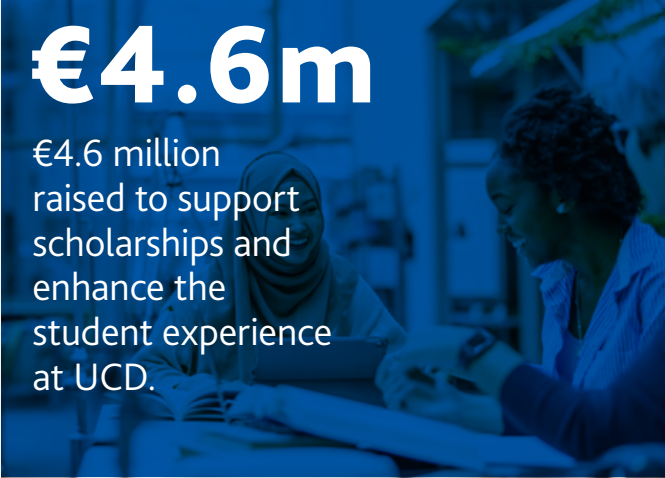
A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patrick Clarke". The signature is stylized with a large, flowing 'P' and 'C'.

Patrick Clarke

Head of Annual Giving - UCD Foundation

Your impact in numbers

Your generosity is an investment in the future of our students, their families, and their communities. Because of you and your fellow UCD Champions, the dream of a university education is now a reality for those who once faced the greatest barriers to entry. The figures here reflect the courage and potential of 533 students currently pursuing their ambitions at UCD. By removing the burden of financial hardship and helping to provide the modern facilities and safe spaces they need to flourish, you are empowering these scholars to succeed, graduate, and bring their talents back into the world.



€4.6m

€4.6 million raised to support scholarships and enhance the student experience at UCD.



101

101 new *Cothrom na Féinne* scholarships awarded in addition to the 432 *Cothrom na Féinne* scholars already being supported.



22

22 humanitarian scholarships enabled Palestinian students from Gaza to escape war and come to UCD.

3,759

3,759 UCD Champions,
like you are directly
transforming students' lives.

€670,000

€670,000 was allocated to improve
the student experience at UCD through
targeted donor support for:

- ▲ Improved access for all students to the UCD James Joyce Library and sports and performing arts facilities, ensuring all students have a safe and inviting place to study
- ▲ The UCD Brian Mullins Ambassador Award for Gaelic Games
- ▲ The Classical Museum and UCD School of Classics



50

18 new UCD Sanctuary
Scholarships funded
through dedicated
donor support and UCD
partnership, bringing
the total number of
Sanctuary Scholars to 50.



Meet our UCD *Cothrom na Féinne* scholarship students

A university education is transformative. It opens doors, broadens horizons, and allows students to pursue dreams they might never have thought possible.

Cothrom na Féinne scholarships, supported by UCD Champions, ensure that students have the support they need not just to access university, but to excel at UCD.

Tia, Jonah and David are three students who overcame significant adversity to earn their place at UCD.

Each of our student scholars is deeply grateful for your support, and we are equally grateful to them for sharing their experiences. Their stories demonstrate the life-changing impact of your generosity.

Thank you so much for being a UCD Champion.



Tia

Stage 4, General Nursing

"I was worried about my finances as I came from a single parent household and would have no financial support from my family throughout my university studies. I had been trying to save up as much as possible from my part-time job throughout my Leaving Cert year. I knew that was not nearly enough to support me, and I was very anxious about how I would afford to put myself through university.

“

You have made my higher education journey not only possible, but the best it could be.

”

I was delighted to have been awarded the scholarship. **I felt seen by my university, as my background and financial situation was a huge barrier to the possibility of pursuing higher education. I was honoured to be supported by UCD alumni, and was greatly appreciative of the support the scholarship would provide throughout my studies.**

I was able to fully focus on my studies and engage in clubs and societies, as well as the Students' Union, as I was not as worried about my finances.

Thank you so much for your contributions and support. **You have made my higher education journey not only possible, but the best it could be.** Without your support, I might have had to leave university, and would not have had the opportunity to have such a well-rounded education in UCD.

I now have the opportunity to learn about myself, my interests and passions, as well as the space to develop both personally and professionally. I'm able to blossom into the person I know I can be, instead of always worrying and being held back by financial stress.

I hope to make a positive impact on society through working with the healthcare system and government to improve service user experience and outcomes. My studies have been in General Nursing, however, I look forward to pivoting into my graduate role in consulting in autumn 2026. **This scholarship has allowed me to develop both personally and professionally, and to find a career path and find my calling."**



Jonah

Stage 1, Bachelor of Arts

"My biggest worry starting university was how I would manage the day-to-day financial pressures alongside my studies, especially being able to afford meals or even something as simple as meeting friends for a coffee.

When I received the email about the scholarship, it felt like a huge weight had been lifted from my shoulders. I was actually on the beach in Bray when I opened it, not expecting anything. I immediately called my mum to share the good news.

The background of the entire page is a faded, high-angle photograph of a modern library or study area. Several students are visible, some sitting at long tables and others standing, all engaged in study or work. The lighting is bright and even, creating a clean, academic atmosphere.

“ *Your generosity has given me a much better start to college and has already made a real difference in my life.* **”**

Even though I only recently received the scholarship, it has already brought me an enormous sense of relief and motivation. Being chosen for this support, despite coming from a difficult financial situation, has given me a real sense of opportunity and encouragement. It feels like someone has given me a helping hand when I needed it most.

Because of this support, I no longer have to constantly worry about the small things like being able to afford lunch on campus or saying yes to a coffee with a friend. Those simple moments make such a difference to the overall college experience.

I am incredibly grateful to everyone who contributes to the UCD Champions fund. Your generosity has not gone unnoticed. It has given me a much better start to college and has already made a real difference in my life. I hope that one day I will be in a position to support others in the same way.

Having some of the financial stress lifted has also helped me focus more on my studies and enjoy my time at university. While I am still exploring what career path I want to take, I am determined to grow both personally and academically. This scholarship has given me the space and confidence to focus on my future and take the next steps forward."

David

Stage 2, Bachelor of Commerce

The scholarship enables students to explore hobbies and interests beyond the classroom, helping them to fully experience university life. David, a second-year Commerce International with Mandarin student, has been able to pursue his passion for boxing alongside his studies.

Thanks to the generosity of alumni like you, students like David can focus on their studies, take part in extracurricular activities, and make the most of the opportunities available to them at university.

"I found out I had received the scholarship while sitting on the bus home after a long day of lectures. I had previously been shortlisted and assumed that was as far as it would go, so when I checked my phone and saw the email, I was honestly bewildered before feeling completely ecstatic. At that moment, a huge weight lifted off my shoulders.

I am currently in my second year studying Commerce International with Mandarin. As part of my degree, I will spend my third year studying abroad in Beijing. While it's an incredibly exciting opportunity, the financial side of preparing for a year overseas has always been something I worried about.

Receiving this scholarship has allowed me to focus fully on my studies and make the most of university life. It has taken away a lot of the pressure I felt about the year abroad and given me the freedom to engage in activities outside the classroom.

“ I’m incredibly grateful to the donors who make scholarships possible. I hope to make the most of the opportunity and one day give back in the same way. ”

One of those is boxing, which I began in 2024. I now compete with both my university club and an external club, and I’m currently working towards winning my first amateur title. The discipline and commitment boxing requires has been a huge part of my university experience, and the scholarship has made it much easier to continue pursuing it alongside my degree.

I’m incredibly grateful to the donors who make scholarships like this possible. Your generosity has genuinely changed my university experience, and I hope to make the most of the opportunity and one day give back in the same way.”

Rebuilding futures Through the UCD Humanitarian Fund

The UCD Humanitarian Fund at UCD Foundation was established to help evacuate students from war-torn regions and enable them to continue their education at UCD. Forced to leave behind their homes, families, and communities, these students have arrived in Ireland determined to rebuild their lives through learning.

This is Tala's story:

“

Life before coming here was just ... horrible in regards to everything. When I arrived here I really felt the value of every blessing we have, even the smallest things like opening a window or having clean water to drink and use.

Facing death every moment wasn't easy at all. But it also showed me how vulnerable life is and how it can be taken away in just one second.

UCD's support, resources and community helped us a lot and gave us the confidence to continue.

What I really want to say to the people who donated is that this is not only about the money or the degree. This opportunity is a life-changing turning point for all of us. It is a life-opening path.

They made it possible for us. It wasn't just a degree, it was the chance for another life.

I am grateful to be here. I am grateful for every single donation that made this possible. One day I will tell my children that I had the chance to live this life because of them.

”



Tala, 1 of 22 students evacuated from Gaza now studying at UCD

Conversations that count

“

Working as a student caller has given me the opportunity to connect with UCD alumni and learn from their experiences, while discovering the many opportunities available to students and graduates alike. Through these conversations, I've gained valuable advice that has helped me grow in confidence and communication skills.

Hearing graduates reflect on how their time in UCD shaped their careers and seeing their genuine desire to give back reminds me of the powerful impact of the scholarships we fundraise for. I have learned how big a difference we can make together and I hope it inspires more of our alumni to join us in supporting this cause.

”

Leah, BSc Politics and International Relations



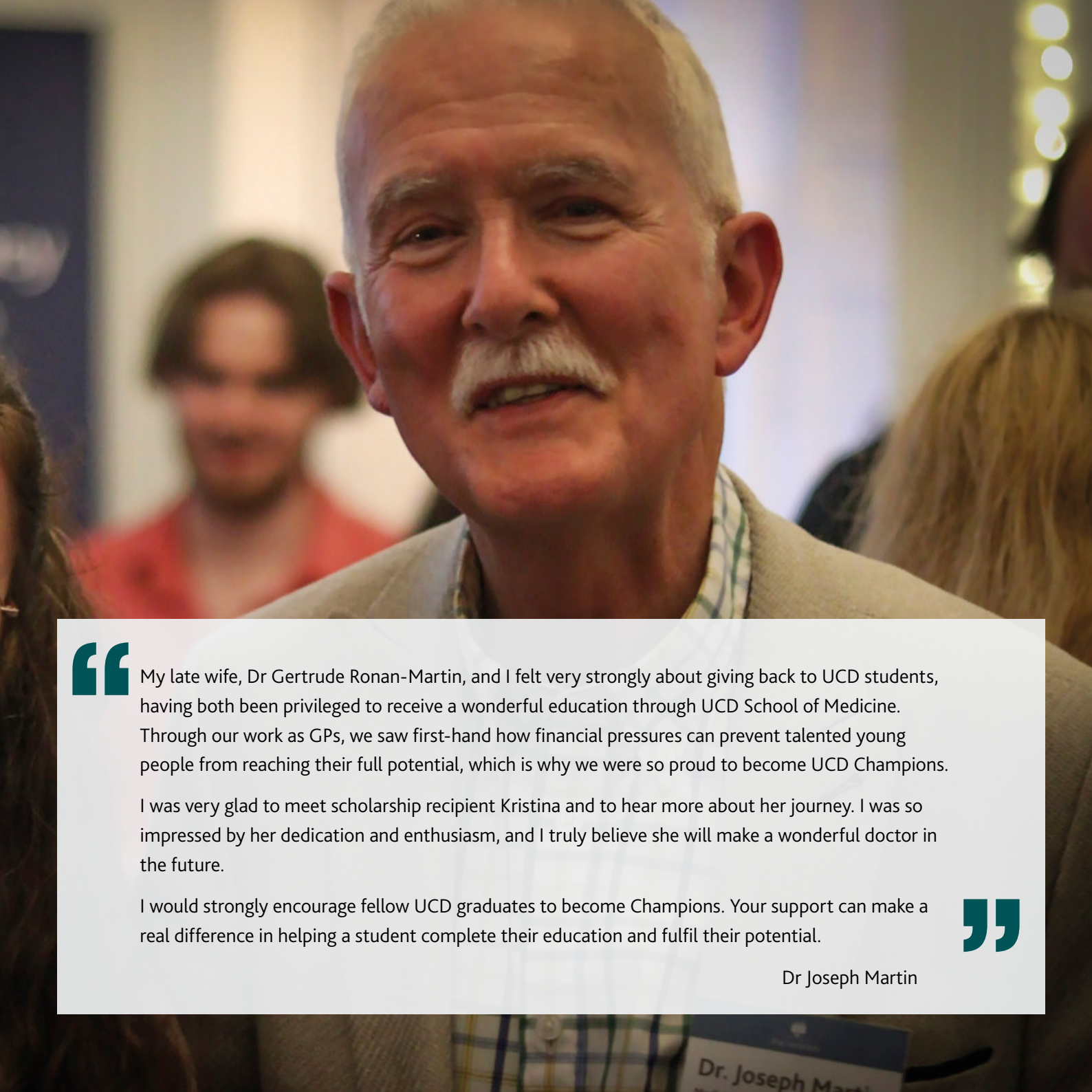
The power of your support

Milestone by milestone, your collective support is changing lives

As the cost of living continues to place real pressure on students and families, the minimum value of the UCD *Cothroma na Féinne* scholarship was increased from €1,500 to €2,500 per year.

Thank you so much for being a champion of the cause. As part of the UCD Champions community, your support along with that of other UCD Champions is helping us hit milestones. Each time another **€10,000** target is hit, we are able to help one more student to benefit from the life-changing opportunities that a scholarship provides, as well as ensuring that students have adequate access to the UCD Library and other essential resources during their time at UCD.





“

My late wife, Dr Gertrude Ronan-Martin, and I felt very strongly about giving back to UCD students, having both been privileged to receive a wonderful education through UCD School of Medicine. Through our work as GPs, we saw first-hand how financial pressures can prevent talented young people from reaching their full potential, which is why we were so proud to become UCD Champions.

I was very glad to meet scholarship recipient Kristina and to hear more about her journey. I was so impressed by her dedication and enthusiasm, and I truly believe she will make a wonderful doctor in the future.

I would strongly encourage fellow UCD graduates to become Champions. Your support can make a real difference in helping a student complete their education and fulfil their potential.

”

Dr Joseph Martin

Dr. Joseph Martin

A special way to honour a loved one

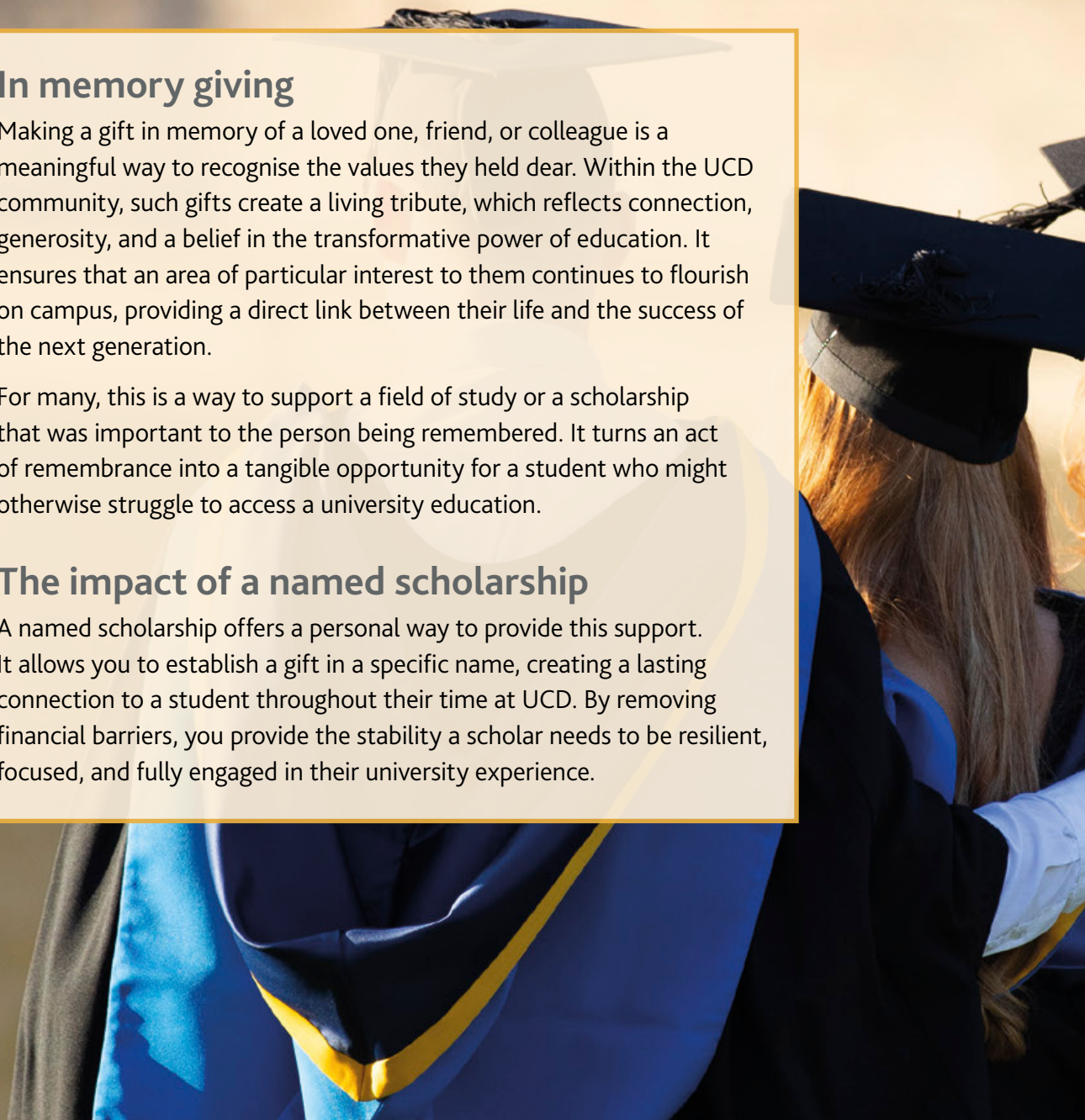
In memory giving

Making a gift in memory of a loved one, friend, or colleague is a meaningful way to recognise the values they held dear. Within the UCD community, such gifts create a living tribute, which reflects connection, generosity, and a belief in the transformative power of education. It ensures that an area of particular interest to them continues to flourish on campus, providing a direct link between their life and the success of the next generation.

For many, this is a way to support a field of study or a scholarship that was important to the person being remembered. It turns an act of remembrance into a tangible opportunity for a student who might otherwise struggle to access a university education.

The impact of a named scholarship

A named scholarship offers a personal way to provide this support. It allows you to establish a gift in a specific name, creating a lasting connection to a student throughout their time at UCD. By removing financial barriers, you provide the stability a scholar needs to be resilient, focused, and fully engaged in their university experience.





You can choose to support a specific School or College, or provide assistance to a student facing financial hardship.

A named UCD *Cothrom na Féinne* scholarship provides €7,000 annually (€28,000 over four years) to the student. This commitment ensures they are supported from their first day until graduation.

Whether through a one-time gift or a multi-year scholarship, your kindness ensures that the spirit of those we cherish continues to inspire excellence at UCD.

Thank you to our current named scholarship donors. Your impact endures from a student's first day to graduation and beyond.

If you would like to learn more about in memory giving at UCD, or to make your own in memory gift, please get in touch with Gracy Nasralla.

Phone: +353 1 716 1406 Email: gracy.nasralla@ucdfoundation.ie



Leaving a gift in your will



As a UCD Champion, you are already helping to shape the future of UCD and our students. However, the need for long-term, sustainable support for our students has never been more vital. By including UCD in your will, you will ensure that your impact and values endure for generations to come.

Prioritising future-focused giving is the most effective way to protect the next generation of students. A legacy gift is a powerful promise; it

doesn't change your life today, but it can change everything for a student tomorrow.

Every legacy is personal, and every gift, no matter the size, has the potential to create extraordinary impact. We invite you to take the next step by joining our legacy community, playing an essential role in ensuring that opportunity and access to education remain open to all, far into the future.



Why I chose a legacy gift

“

Looking around at today's world we see nothing but problems — actual or looming. Tomorrow and the future are even more threatening. As I thought about it, it occurred to me that the future for them could be, to some degree, in my hands through education and I could assist that through legacy giving.

”

David, Legacy Pledger and UCD Alumnus, BComm

If you would like to learn more about legacy giving at UCD or have any questions, please contact Patrick or Gracy. Email: patrick.clarke@ucdfoundation.ie or gracy.nasralla@ucdfoundation.ie Phone: +353 1 716 1406

You can also find out more at ucdfoundation.ie/ways-to-give/legacy/



Campus

Since 1973, the UCD James Joyce Library has stood at the heart of UCD, supporting generations of students in their academic journeys. Since the University's student population has tripled over the past few years, the Library remains an essential part of student life.

development

The increasing demand within the student community calls for a necessary transformation of their formative study spaces.

The redevelopment of the **UCD James Joyce Library** will create a dynamic, modern space that meets the diverse needs of today's students. With modern technology, flexible study areas, and inclusive facilities, the Library will continue to provide the essential resources to allow students to advance in their studies, while offering a safe and comfortable sanctuary, from early until late, to those who commute long distances to university.

This collective vision for a better, more accessible library is a testament to the strength of UCD's student community. It will ensure that all students, regardless of circumstance, have the opportunity to thrive in their place of learning.

The new **Sports and Amenities Precinct** at UCD is designed to meet the evolving needs of students. The development will include a multi-sport hall, a performance arts building and a tennis centre, with the flexibility and space to accommodate an examination centre. Eliminating the need for off-campus travel during busy exam periods will save time and reduce stress for students.

Crucially, this development is a student-driven initiative, supported primarily through the UCD Student Centre Levy. The students' support signals a great commitment to improving their campus environment and ensuring they receive the holistic university experience they deserve.

We are very thankful to everyone who has supported the development of UCD James Joyce Library and the Sports and Amenities Precinct. If you wish to learn more about these projects, please contact us at +353 1 716 1406

Help us keep in touch

UCD Alumni hosts a wide range of events throughout the year, including reunions, networking opportunities, lectures, and special celebrations. To ensure we can keep you informed about upcoming events and opportunities relevant to you, we encourage you to update your contact details if they have changed.

Simply scan the QR code below to update your information.



Multiply your

IMPACT UNLOCKED

Funding from enduring certificates returned so far for 2025 could potentially provide an additional 12 scholarships. However, if everyone who qualifies returns their form, that number could rise to 42.

impact Tax-efficient giving

Republic of Ireland charitable donation scheme

**Make your gift go 45% further
at no extra cost to you!**

If you've donated €250 within a calendar year between 2022 and 2026, we can apply to Revenue for a tax relief on your gift. Fill out the **Enduring Certificate (CHY3)** once and it will last or can be backdated for up to 5 years.

It only takes about a minute.

+45%

Scan the QR code or visit our website at ucdfoundation.ie.



Alternatively, feel free to get in touch with us for a physical copy of the form.

If you would like help filling out your form or have any questions, please get in touch with Ranier Abengana.

Phone +353 1 716 1065 Email: ranier.abengana@ucdfoundation.ie





Your support can help us to ensure that equal access to education is available to all, regardless of background.

Donate today by scanning the QR code, or online by visiting ucdfoundation.ie/donate



FOUNDATION

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Sustainability remains a core pillar of UCD's values. This report is printed on FSC certified paper, coming from sustainably managed forests. This report contains recycled materials and is also fully recyclable.