

For a Campaigning National Union

Vote **SEAN** **Rillo Raczka** **#1 for VP Welfare**



I am standing for VP Welfare because I want NUS to stand up as our National Union, defending and campaigning for our interests, as we face a privatised, consumer orientated education. I am standing as Vice President Welfare to challenge the NUS leadership to do more, including calling a national demonstration on education issues in autumn 2012. On welfare issues, where have the high profile NUS campaigns on living grants, against the racist Prevent agenda, for a public NHS been? I want to help put an alternative vision of an organisation committed to grassroots mobilisation, free education and campaigns. As education continues to face swinging cuts & course closures, with lecturers and support staff required to work longer for less, we must take concerted national action to defend education and demand access for all. The student movement and trades unions have helped postpone the HE White Paper, for now, but if the government is allowed to destroy public services with impunity, education will soon be the target again - not to mention the cuts to FE, and the continuing lack of grants for poor students in FE. We must campaign with others facing cuts to defeat the whole of the austerity agenda of this dangerous government.

Welfare is central to that. Benefits and housing are at the forefront of the changes being implemented by the Tories, and students are suffering from those cuts. We as students cannot stand aside and let this illegitimate government smash the welfare state, slash benefits, privatise the NHS, raise rents, abandon social housing and axe community groups. With youth unemployment at a record high, the future for many looks bleak, and the unity of student and others challenging the cuts is crucial. We demand real jobs, not unpaid placements for benefit claimants. I'd like the NUS to be working with young unemployed people, raising a voice for ex-students and those not lucky enough to have been able to afford an education.

"In the face of the Tories' austerity agenda, Sean has led London students in fighting fees, cuts, racism and all discrimination. Vote Sean #1 for VP Welfare!"

Kanja Sesay
NUS Black Students' Officer

"Sean consistently fights for the liberation of students and understands their welfare needs. He absolutely has what it takes to radically challenge both the government and NUS!"

Vicki Baars
NUS LGBT Officer

My experience includes:

Welfare Zone Committee 2011/12
Birkbeck College SU Chair & Executive 09/12
Birkbeck College Governor, 2009/12
University of London Union VP 2011/12
NCAFC National C'ttee & EAN Steering C'ttee
NUS NEC Mature & PT Students Rep 2010/11
NUS LGBT Steering Committee 2009/11
NUS Trustee 2009/10

I believe in free education and living grants for all, and I believe that this should be the default position of any Union representing students. As a disabled and LGBT student, I also understand the importance of liberation; time and time again LGBT and disabled students are marginalised and we must ensure our structures are open to all students. I believe in putting liberation at the forefront of NUS, an integral part of our Union; the Black Students, LGBT, Disabled and Women's campaigns must not be marginalised, they must lead. As a mature and part time student, I also hope to increase visibility of a large proportion of NUS membership currently massively underrepresented in our Union.

We should see our crisis in a global perspective, standing in solidarity with those around the world fighting for freedom and equality. We should demand troops out of Afghanistan, no war with Iran, and freedom for Palestine. I stand for no platform for fascists on campuses and on our streets, and believe NUS should be pursuing this nationally.

I have been a student since 2008/9, having left school at 16 to work, when I became a degree student at Birkbeck College, a widening participation institution in Central London for mature and part time evening students. Since then I have been active in the student movement, helping organise the 2010 student demonstrations, organising marches, meetings and protests, as well as helping run Birkbeck Student Union as Union Chair, and now as ULU Vice President and President elect. I have helped win the London Living Wage for all staff at Birkbeck College, including the SU and bar, I have stood with staff on picket lines at every strike since I have been a student including visiting 11 institutions on N30 then leading a feeder march of several thousand from ULU to the Trade Union march. I have hosted a range of events from Black Panther political prisoners to coordinating student refugees, not to mention been chief steward on the NCAFC 9th November demo. I have axed fascists from my Union, and put myself physically on the line for the politics I believe in, from being pushed down stairs by the Metropolitan Police to organising and seeing through demonstrations despite my disability. I have been a regular at demonstrations, from Palestine to ending Britain's outdated and dangerous nuclear deterrent.

Because of my experience I know what education means, I know that the opportunity to study is not given to all, and I'm committed to changing that. From increasing opportunities for disadvantaged students, to benefits, disabled students, standing up with our medical/nursing members to oppose NHS Privatisation and fighting fascism on campus, I have a record of experience second to none.



My priorities

- Free education
- Living Grants for all
- National Demonstration Autumn 2012
- Fighting against all cuts and fees
- Support direct action and occupations across the country
- Bring back EMA and demand more support for FE students
- Support UCU and Unison in fighting and striking against cuts and job losses. Their battle is ours too.
- Support and work closely with the liberation campaigns
- Support no platform for fascists countrywide, and help mobilise against fascists
- Oppose housing and student services privatisation, regulate rouge landlords
- Oppose benefit changes, demand dignity for all
- Fight NHS Privatisation, mobilising medical and nursing students too
- Work harder for student parents, mature and part-time students. They are NUS members too.
- Stand in solidarity with oppressed groups across the world, and those fighting for equality
- Freedom for Palestine, troops out of Afghanistan and no war with Iran

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I am supporting left anti-cuts candidates in the full time elections:

Kanja Sesay for President

Vicki Baars for VP UD

Jamil Keating for VP FE

Jamie Woodcock for VP Soc/Cit

Michael Chessum for VP HE