



Free Legal Advice Centre Comes to NUI Galway

The official launch of the Free Legal Advice Centre (FLAC), in conjunction with the NUI Galway Law Society, will be held on Monday the 18th of January in the Colm O h'Eocha Theatre, Arts Millennium Building, NUI Galway at 8pm with a reception to follow on campus.

The launch marks the beginning of the FLAC clinics which will be held every Tuesday evening from 6pm until 7.30pm in the university's newly renovated Áras na Mac Léinn.

The clinics are aimed at students who require information on any legal matter of concern including disputes with landlords, criminal offences and employment rights to name but a few. Students requiring legal information can avail of it from trained law students working under the supervision of a qualified solicitor. Information exchanged within the FLAC clinics will be strictly confidential in nature.

NUI Galway FLAC is affiliated with the national Free Legal Advice Centre, otherwise known as FLAC. This is an independent human rights organisation dedicated to the realisation of equal access to justice for all. It campaigns on a range of legal issues and offers legal services to the general public.

"FLAC has been successfully running clinics for a number of years in other Irish universities such as UCC and Trinity College Dublin. It is with great anticipation that NUI Galway FLAC, in conjunction with the Law Society, will also be able to offer free legal advice clinics to our students. It is now more so than ever in these economically harsh times that student's rights and entitlements need to be protected", said Aisling Dillon, NUI Galway student and auditor of the University's Law Society..

2009 marked the 40th anniversary of FLAC's founding by four law students in 1969. In the four decades since then, the organisation has often struggled financially to keep its doors open, but has always strived to promote equal access to justice for all and to achieve a more socially just society. The volunteers who offer legal advice and information in FLAC centres in communities all over Ireland form the backbone of the organisation.

“Is access to justice in Ireland in 2010 under threat?” This question is of genuine concern to many who are finding it difficult to access legal information in the midst of the recession. This will be discussed by Professor Gerry Whyte, constitutional law lecturer in Trinity College Dublin and Noeline Blackwell Director General of FLAC as part of the official launch on Monday .

Noeline Blackwell, Director General of FLAC, expressed her delight at the re-establishment of FLAC in NUI Galway: "FLAC is particularly pleased about the re-launch of the centre in NUI Galway, as it marks the rebirth of a tradition in providing basic legal information and advice on the campus that dates back to the late 1970s. The present-day students who are doing such great and valuable work on the NUI GalwayFLAC initiative deserve huge congratulations and thanks for their efforts, as do the volunteer lawyers who support them."