

DCU Access Programme

Supporter Update 2025



Iontaobhas Oideachasúil
Educational Trust



We would like to thank you for your ongoing support, which helps talented students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds to overcome the obstacles and excel in university. Supported by our Excellence and Opportunity fund, the DCU Access Programme enables students to fulfil their potential and make an impact as future leaders, teachers, scientists and entrepreneurs.



**Opening Doors to
Higher Education**

25

linked schools in North Dublin engage with our Access Outreach Programme

10%

of places on all undergraduate courses are reserved for Access students

65%

of Access students enter with a reduced points offer through the national Higher Education Access Route (HEAR)



**Empowering Access Students
to Reach Their Potential**

1000+

Access students enrolled in 2024/2025

100%

of Access students receive a post-entry package of financial, personal and academic supports

98%

of recent Access graduates received a higher honours degree

“I came into college from a DEIS school, but I still get to follow my dreams. The world is mine now because of the Access Programme. Everything that happens from here is because of that support and I’m eternally grateful for it.”

Heather Campbell,
Bachelor of Education



Ketsia's Story

An inspirational mother and a desire to help others inspired Ketsia Matondo to pursue a BSc in Health and Society at DCU. Here, she shares how the Access Programme has supported that journey.



"I was born in Galway, but I grew up in Blanchardstown as the middle child of four siblings, with two brothers and a sister. Although my parents are originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Dublin is where I've always felt rooted.

I have a strong bond with my mother, who works as a carer for the elderly. Her job is so demanding, and she's been an incredible role model for me. After moving to Ireland from DR Congo, she balanced part-time study with work, and that's something I truly admire.

Thanks to her, going to college was something we always believed we could achieve. Although my older brother didn't go to college, my sister and I are both in higher education now.

When it came to financing my education, I initially had concerns, but the Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) grant eased a lot of that pressure. I chose Health and Society at DCU to keep my options open while following my passion for helping others.

"I'm particularly interested in healthcare and have been exploring potential careers in physiotherapy, occupational therapy, or speech and language therapy."

The flexibility of my course has been great because it allows me to explore my interests further before I have to commit to a specific career path in my final year. Within my studies, I'm fascinated by subjects like physiology, biochemistry, and child and adolescent health. I really enjoy the scientific aspects of my degree, and I'm excited to dive deeper into my interests as I progress through the programme.

Outside of academics, I love reading and trying new experiences with my friends, whether we're cooking together or spending time in Dublin's parks. The support I've received through the DCU Access Programme has been crucial in my transition to higher education. A recommendation from my guidance counsellor led me to apply, and the resources they've provided — academic skills support, mentorship, and financial support — have made all the difference.

"I'm truly grateful for the assistance I've received through the Access Programme, and I hope to pass on the encouragement I've received to others in my community."

To the Access Programme supporters, I want to say thank you. Your support is allowing me to work toward a future where I can make a tangible difference in people's lives."



Adam's Story

Adam Daly is an Access graduate and a PhD student in DCU School of Psychology whose research focuses on cancer survivorship, health and culture. Here, he shares how philanthropic initiatives have supported his educational journey.

"My mam saw college as a way to have a better life, and it was important to her that we get the best education we could. It hasn't always been easy, with cancer heavily affecting my family over the years – but now my siblings and I all have a college education.

I went to a DEIS secondary school in North Dublin, where I took part in initiatives with the DCU Access Outreach Programme. They made college a real possibility for me.

I chose Psychology in DCU because I wanted to help people and facilitate change. This year, I was awarded an Access PhD scholarship, which will help me to continue building a career researching cancer survivorship, health, and culture.

My most recent study looks at tattoo artists' perspectives on therapeutic tattoos for cancer survivors, and the impact on them of doing this work. Many cancer treatments can lead to a disrupted body image and identity. There's a wide practice of therapeutic tattooing for cancer survivors, yet it's an under researched area.

"This has all only been possible because of the support of DCU and the Access Programme. I really believe DCU is a place where anyone can succeed with enough ambition and hard work."

Keep in Touch

We are extremely grateful for your continued support for the DCU Access Programme. We love to hear from our supporters, so please get in touch with any questions or feedback by emailing edtrust@dcu.ie.

To update your contact details or preferences, please visit dcuedtrust.ie/contact/lets-keep-in-touch.

To discover the many other ways alumni can stay involved with DCU, from events and class reunions to guest lectures and student mentoring, visit dcu.ie/alumni.

Contact

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DCU Educational Trust is a registered charity (CHY 8960) established in 1988 to advance the development of Dublin City University.



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Promoting Trust