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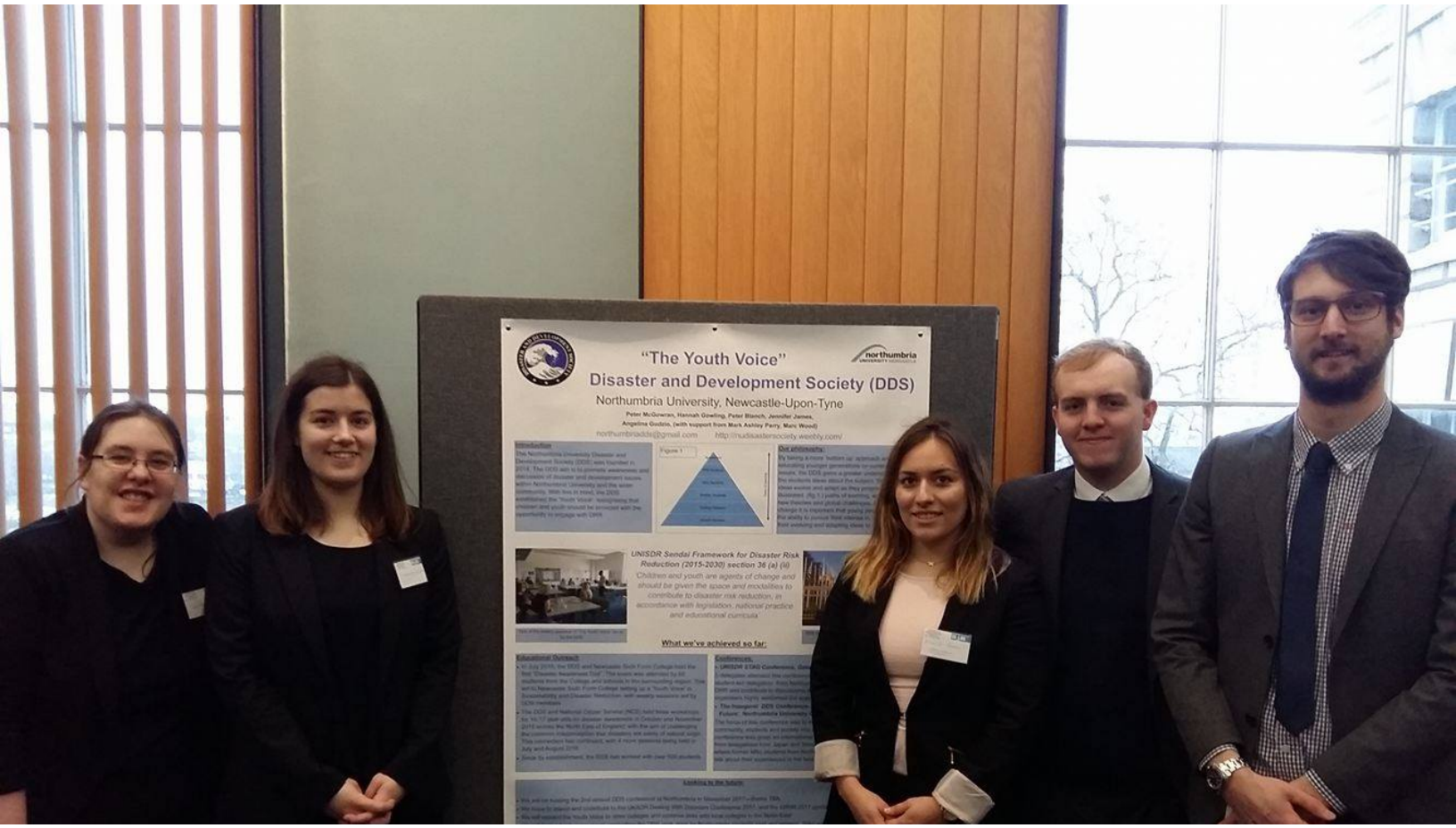

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Northumbria students return from UK disaster research conference

Students from Northumbria's Disaster and Development society recently attended the first UK Alliance for Disaster Research (UKADR) conference at Kings College, London.

The conference saw researchers and funders join government and policy makers from the across UK and overseas to discuss how they can influence thinking on UK policy and research funding. The overarching theme of the event was: 'What are the areas of data, knowledge and capacity that research funders should prioritise to maintain UK's international science leadership

and responsibility under the Sendai Framework?'

Northumbria's Disaster Development Society, comprised of students enrolled on the University's MSc Disaster Management and Sustainable Development degree, helped represent the views of young people on Disaster Risk Reduction. Vice-President Peter McGowran, Secretary Hannah Gowling, events coordinator Peter Blanch, and society members Angelina Gudzio and Jennifer James, all attended the conference in London.

Peter said: "The UKADR conference not only provided a fantastic opportunity for the Disaster Development Society to advocate for 'the youth voice' to be heard in the field of Disaster Risk Reduction, but also an opportunity for me personally, to gain experience of public speaking in an academic environment. The conference has sparked questions for me going forward which I hope to explore in my MSc dissertation."

Northumbria's Disaster Development Society will be hosting a number of social and informative events over the coming months, including film and quiz nights as well as attending and hosting public lectures and seminars. The society has also organised a fundraising event, 'What's all the buzz about?' for Northumbria's Relief Convoy and the Mama Buci Charity, with music from Northumbria's Gig Society.

The Relief Convoy are a charitable Northumbria Student Union society that raises money for aid contributions which they deliver and distribute to refugees throughout Europe. The Mama Buci Charity was founded by former MSc student Martin Zuch, and works with over 7000 trusted families in Zambia to build sustainable hives to produce honey.

Peter added: "The upcoming event 'Disaster and Development: What's all the buzz about?' will allow the society to engage a different type of audience to the UKADR conference, where we will look to raise awareness in the local community around the links between disaster and development, through showcasing the work done in the field by Northumbria students, past and present."

The event will take place on Wednesday 1 March at 6.30pm in the Student Union's Reds Bar. For more information about the DDS, events, or ways to get involved, visit: www.nudisastersociety.weebly.com/ For more information about UKADR, please visit: www.ukadr.org/conference.html

For more information about studying Disaster Management and Sustainable Development at Northumbria, or other fascinating courses from the University's Geography department go to: www.northumbria.ac.uk/geography

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Contacts

Rik Kendall
Press Contact
PR and Media Manager
Business and Law / Arts, Design & Social Sciences
rik.kendall@northumbria.ac.uk
07923 382339

Andrea Slowey
Press Contact
PR and Media Manager
Engineering and Environment / Health and Life Sciences
andrea.slowey@northumbria.ac.uk
07708 509436

James Fox
Press Contact
Student Communications Manager
james2.fox@northumbria.ac.uk

Kelly Elliott
Press Contact
PR and Media Officer
kelly2.elliott@northumbria.ac.uk

Rachael Barwick
Press Contact
PR and Media Manager
rachael.barwick@northumbria.ac.uk
07377422415

Ruth Lognonne
Press Contact
PR and Media Officer
ruth.lognonne@northumbria.ac.uk
07971274253

Gemma Brown
Press Contact
PR and Media Officer
gemma6.brown@northumbria.ac.uk