

# NEWSREEL WORLD

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Programmanus av Alanna Leslie

**ALANNA LESLIE:** Hi, I'm Alanna Leslie and welcome to Newsreel World. Today, we're off to New Zealand, Australia, and Jamaica.

**ALANNA LESLIE:** But first, the Republic of Ireland.

The University of Limerick has confirmed that its graduation ceremonies will be completely virtual this year because of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

Here's Sarah Coleman in Limerick with more.

**Sarah Coleman:** Here in the city of Limerick, located in the Mid-West of the Republic of Ireland, one of the local colleges, the University of Limerick, has announced that all graduation ceremonies for 2021 will be held remotely due to current Level 5, Covid-19 restrictions.

Under this level, all college students across the Republic of Ireland are completing their studies from home for the remainder of the academic year.

The decision has been met with widespread criticism.

These students told me what they thought of the news.

**Aislinn:** I think it's wrong. I think there should have been more heed paid to the weight of a graduation and having an actual ceremony to mark it. I think that the students really should have been given an opportunity and a fair chance. It's like, I know a lot of people who are graduating who feel this real resentment towards the fact that it was called so soon.

**Sarah Coleman:** Despite all students studying online, there has been a surge in Covid-19 cases amongst the student population.

Recent figures showed that Limerick City East, where the University of Limerick is located, had the second highest rate of Covid-19 infection in the country.



And house parties are partly being blamed for this high infection rate.

A street party in a housing estate near the university gathered national media attention after video footage was widely circulated on social media.

Three men in their twenties were arrested at the housing estate and approximately fifty fines were issued to those in attendance.

Here's what some UL students think about house parties happening in the middle of a pandemic.

**Aislinn:** Oh, complete anger. And I think everyone knows there is a pandemic and there is a huge degree of personal responsibility when it comes to attending something like that.

But I do think that the house parties, like, no one really agrees with them and I don't think they should go ahead, but at the same time I think there should be recognition for the huge resentment that people are feeling at the moment; particularly college students towards being basically left alone.

**Katie:** Yeah, I wasn't happy to see it. We've been in this pandemic for a year. It's not like it's new. People know well enough by now what the rules are; that you can't go to parties, can't see people. They shouldn't have done it and I think, yeah, if you get caught and suspended or expelled, it's probably your own fault.

**Sarah Coleman:** The university has confirmed that an investigation in collaboration with local police to identify any UL students who took part in the gathering is underway.

In a statement by the college, it was stated that students who attended face suspension and possible expulsion.

This is Sarah Coleman reporting for Newsreel World from Limerick in the Republic of Ireland.

**ALANNA LESLIE:** Thanks, Sarah.

**Female contestant:** "What were your first impressions when you first laid eyes on me?"

**Male contestant:** "Heaven to Betsy, straight up! Yeah, beautiful. What about you doll?"

**Female contestant:** "Yeah... you are physically not really generally what I'd go for, but you're... you do have aspects of what I would be attracted to."



**ALANNA LESLIE:** That's a clip from reality TV show *Married at First Sight: Australia* from the Nine Network.

In the show, strangers are paired together by so-called relationship experts and have commitment ceremonies the first time they meet.

Contestants don't technically get married as it's not legal to marry someone you've never met before in Australia.

The idea behind the show is to see if matchmaking can become an exact science.

It's become a big hit during lockdown with millions of viewers across the world.

But the show has been criticised as some see the experiment as unethical, and former stars have claimed that some of the shows more dramatic moments were actually staged.

**ALANNA LESLIE:** Israel Adesanya is a mixed martial-arts fighter who was born in Nigeria.

Israel moved to New Zealand when he was ten and now carries both flags when he fights.

He says he was subjected to racist bullying during his high school years at Rotorua Boys' High School but used that as motivation to succeed in mixed martial arts, also known as MMA.

When he was eighteen, he decided to leave his computer science degree to take up kick-boxing after watching the martial-arts movie *Ong Bak*.

He then switched to MMA and is the reigning middleweight champion.

Israel recently suffered his first career defeat trying to win the championship in a heavier weight division, the light heavyweight category.

But he was very philosophical after the defeat, speaking to website The Mac Life.

**Israel Adesanya:** "Nah, losses are part of life and losses is [*sic*] something I deal with occasionally but, as I say, it is what it is."



**ALANNA LESLIE:** Now to the island of my birth, Jamaica.

The Concrete Jungle Foundation is a charity providing at-risk youth with a positive, constructive and healthy outlet to avoid getting caught up in crime and violence.

Last year they built the Freedom Skatepark. I went out to the park to find out more.

**Alanna:** I'm in an area called Eight Miles Bull Bay in the parish of St. Thomas, which is just on the outskirts of Jamaica's capital, Kingston.

I'm at the Freedom Skatepark, the first of its kind on the island.

You can see lots of ramps; there are about 15 young people here doing tricks and spins and a few have fallen over. They're also surrounded by fields with cows and egrets. So it's overall a beautiful, windy day.

**Jeff Crossley:** My name is Jeff Crossley and I'm the skatepark manager and media manager at Freedom Skatepark.

**Alanna:** In terms of the general socio-economic background of local youth. Could you talk to us a bit about that and how having an outlet of this nature is helpful to them?

**Jeff:** So where we are here in Bull Bay, it's not considered an uptown environment here in Jamaica. The youth that come to the park, they're from, some would say, a ghetto background.

For them having this here, it boosts their confidence, self-esteem. Seeing something that they've only seen on TV or seen uptown kids do in the films, TV shows. Seeing white people do it and to actually see that in their backyard. It has been boosting their confidence.

**Alanna:** The overall aim of this initiative is to provide Jamaican at-risk youth with a new alternative for positive, constructive and healthy physical activity to discourage the involvement and pull towards violence and crime amongst some of the programme participants. Jamaica currently has the fifth highest homicide rate in the world, and the vast majority of these deaths are related to criminal activity.

**Jeff:** So for mental and physical development the skatepark is absolutely great and it will definitely take them away from the violence because they come here, they don't have time for that. The kids are here from nine o'clock in the morning, straight back to whenever curfew time is.

**Jeff:** So the time that they're here, it's time well spent, or time well wasted. And it's away from violence.

**Ivah Wilmot:** My name is Ivah Wilmot, skater/surfer from Jamaica, Eight Miles Bull Bay.

**Alanna:** What are your personal hopes for skating, for yourself, and for Jamaica on a whole?



**Ivah:** I want it to be at a point where you can work in a skate shop and get a good income or you can be sponsored by a brand. Or you can have a brand in Jamaica that makes skateboards locally or they make apparel or shoes or things, you know, that have to do with skate industry. Maybe a magazine or a programme on the TV where it kind of highlights skateboarders.

**Elishama Beckford:** My name is Elishama Beckford, I've been skating since I was five years old.

**Alanna:** In terms of what you'd like to see for skating in Jamaica, I don't know if it could be a world championships, an Olympics thing or in general...

What is your hope for the long term advancement of skating in Jamaica?

**Elishama:** With the Freedom Skatepark existing, it now gives the option for kids to pursue a career in skateboarding a lot easier for kids to do. So when we were skating younger, we didn't really have the thought of being a professional skateboarder because that was just not an option at the time. With the skatepark existing, that's now an option. Skateboarding is now in the Olympics, so... My dream is to see kids from here, you know, having Olympic dreams. Yeah.

**Alanna:** One of the initial hopes of project founders of the Freedom Skatepark was to further develop the sport of skateboarding and propel Jamaica forward into one day competing in the Olympics.

This would, of course, rely heavily on additional funding and support, both locally and internationally.

The project continues to operate with the aid of international volunteers and local staff, and the love of skating continues to glide freely.

This is Alanna Leslie reporting for Newsreel World from the Freedom Skatepark in Jamaica.

**ALANNA LESLIE:** Thanks to everyone at the Freedom Skatepark for speaking to me.

*Gur Nalon by Hari and Sukhmani.*

**ALANNA LESLIE:** That's *Gur Nalon* by Hari and Sukhmani.

The duo are from Chandigarh in Northern India and play Punjabi folk, fused with ambient electronic music.

**ALANNA LESLIE:** That's all from me today. Speak to you soon, bye!