

My name is Aaron Negru, and I am a senior student at The Hazeley Academy. My generation has overcome the many setbacks of COVID, ranging from mental and physical wellbeing challenges, to staying academic during this time. We accomplished this through our strength as a community, and resilience. We live in a period where a priority is being placed on mental wellbeing but we still have a long way to go to ensure every student feels supported at school. 85% of students report having exam stress according to save my exams, and even though I do not strive for perfection, improvement is very much tangible. This is a clear sign that we are missing out on ways to empower and support pupils during times of intense learning periods. By implementing safe spaces throughout the city where students can decompress and manage stress effectively, I hope to minimise academic stress, raising the standard for mental wellbeing and make Milton Keynes the happiest place to study. Furthermore, buddy programmes within schools can provide an accessible way for students to vent their stresses, and regular check-ups on students under typical high stress periods can allow teachers to implement proper support for students.

As someone who has experienced many exam periods, as all students will, I personally know how mentally challenging and rigorous it can be to revise and study all day, every day. Moreover, this means I have also seen the effects of positive reinforcement from the community around me, and how something so simple can turn your day from monotonous and melancholy, to something you do to make others, and yourself, proud. Through my earliest experiences of starting and running a club, I was quick to learn crucial skills like organisation and interpersonal skills. Nevertheless, its not just the basics I excel at, having had the opportunity to engage with many programmes such as STEMSMART, CAIUS12, and UNIQ, I have understood the role of powerful leadership qualities and responsibility, which in turn have lead me to think fast, and act fast. Balancing academics, socials, work, super and extra curricular activities has lead me to lead a busy lifestyle, teaching me the value of having a high quality, effective work ethic. Together we can be proactive rather than reactive, and turn challenges into opportunity. If you're ready for a city that prioritises your wellbeing: vote for action, vote for Aaron.