London Professional Network - 24 March 2011

For the third year running, the spectacular views from the 34th floor of the BT Tower were the setting for the seventh annual London Professional Network. 68 alumni from the fields of business, corporate finance, investment banking, insurance, law, property and commercial ventures came together to network whilst enjoying wine and canapés.

This year's Network was once again hosted by Douglas Johnson-Poensgen, alumnus and Managing Director, Global Defence & Security at BT Global Services UK. Due to Doug and BT's generosity, we were able to ask alumni to support the HoneyPot internship scheme in lieu of a ticket price and gifts made in support of the Network raised just under £2000 towards the scheme. The HoneyPot scheme supports first and second year students undertaking an unpaid or low-paid internship which they have independently organised, helping them to gain work-based experience and giving them that all important edge as they enter the workplace. Alumni support means that we will be able to fund at least two additional internships next summer.

Alumni were joined by Vida Simpeh, final year Law, and Michael Archer, first year Law. Vida was awarded HoneyPot funding to undertake a three-day mini pupillage at Young Street Chambers in Manchester last summer. She had the chance to shadow both family and criminal law barristers and the internship gave her the confidence to apply for a further placement in Birmingham. She hopes to apply to the Bar once she graduates this summer. Michael is a member of the Development and Alumni Office's student society, *Birmingham. For life*., which aims to increase the number of opportunities for alumni and students to interact with one another. Michael has already had experience of the corporate world as he undertook an internship at a law firm in Hong Kong before starting his degree.

Professor Edward Peck, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College of Social Sciences, welcomed alumni to the event and spoke of the University's commitment to producing high quality professionals. Alumni can support the employability ambitions of our students by committing a few hours each month to: mentor students; speak at a careers afternoon about your employment path; provide business advice to our talented entrepreneurially minded students; offer internships or work experience or placements; or simply write a career profile for use on our website.

If you feel that you could share your career expertise with current students at the University then please do let us know by emailing **alumnievents@contacts.bham.ac.uk (mailto:alumnievents@contacts.bham.ac.uk)**. Your experience and ongoing contribution to University life will help our students to differentiate themselves in the workplace.

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