University of Birmingham celebrates the support of alumni and friends

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A display of hundreds of balloons was just one of the innovative ways the University of the Birmingham thanked alumni, friends and supporters for their generous contributions to its fundraising campaign during a special day of activity.

At the event on Thursday 27 February, balloons printed with '#4714UoB' were given to students across campus and displayed on a huge tree in front of the library.

The number represents the 4,714 individuals who have contributed so far this year to the University's Circles of Influence campaign. This group of supporters is made up of alumni, students, staff and the local community and has facilitated a huge range of projects. These range from capital developments, such as the new library and sports centre, to mentoring and internship opportunities for students. These projects would not have been possible without charitable support ranging from £2 to £15 million, and from a single hour to a whole month of time.

Last year, the University of Birmingham was one of the first UK institutions to join the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education's (CASE) global initiative to raise awareness of alumni support to higher education institutions. To engage with the inaugural event and raise awareness of capital developments supported through philanthropy, campus buildings from the Medical School to the Bramall Music Building were 'tagged' with giant thank you gift tags in February 2013.

To build on the awareness that the 'tag' campaign raised, this year's event focused on recognising the importance of charitable donations. Birmingham. More than 100 years ago, Joseph Chamberlain founded the University thanks to charitable contributions, and the continued patronage of supporters ensures that we continue to embody his vision for a civic university with a global impact.

On the day, students and staff wrote messages on gift tags and social media to thank the 4,714 supporters for the donations that have made a difference to their personal university experiences.

To find out more about the University's Circles of Influence Campaign or make a donation please visit **www.birmingham.ac.uk/alumni/giving (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/alumni/giving)** and to see more comments from current staff and students please check out our Storify of the day or visit the **webpage (/alumni/giving/Studentphilanthropy.aspx)** .

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