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Honorary Graduands Take Centre Stage at Birmingham

Posted on Wednesday 5th December 2007

More than 1500 students will graduate at degree congregations between Wednesday 12 and Friday 14 December, taking place in the University of Birmingham's Great Hall. As well as graduating students, the following people will receive honorary degrees:

Mr Desmond Kelly OBE, Doctor of Letters

Wednesday 12 December, 10.30am

Desmond Kelly is Assistant Director of Birmingham Royal Ballet. Born and trained in Zimbabwe, he began his professional career with London Festival Ballet (now English National Ballet). He joined the Royal Ballet Companies in 1970, dancing the principal role in all major classical repertoire and partnering many of the world's leading ballerinas.

Mr Steve Walker, Doctor of the University

Wednesday 12 December, 2pm

Steve Walker is Chief Executive of Aston Reinvestment Trust (the Community Development Finance Institution for Birmingham). ART has now lent over £6million to enterprises, creating or preserving 2,900 jobs. He is a member of the West Midlands Regional Finance Forum and also Co-Chairs the Birmingham and Solihull Social Economy Consortium.

Professor Hans-Paul Schwefel, Doctor of Science

Thursday 13 December, 10.30am

Hans-Paul Schwefel is the former Chair for Systems Analysis at the University of Dortmund. He was spokesman of the collaborative research centre on computational intelligence and from 1998 to 2000 as Pro-Rector for Research and Junior Scientists at the university. In 2007 he was made a Fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers. He also co-founded one of the most influential conference series, Parallel Problem Solving from Nature.

Dr Alan Folwell, Doctor of Science

Thursday 13 December, 2pm

Alan Folwell is a business man with a range of experience in manufacturing and technology-based industries where he has spent the bulk of the time in Chief Executive roles. Alan's particular interests are in fostering, growing and developing technology and knowledge-based activities. He advises management teams and sits on the Boards of several organisations – ranging from university spin outs to large organisations - in both the private and public sector. He was the first Chief Executive of the Central Technology Belt.

Dr Hany El Banna OBE, Doctor of the University

Friday 14 December, 10.30am

Dr Hany El Banna is co-founder and President of Islamic Relief Worldwide, an international relief and development organisation. Dr El Banna is a trustee of the Disasters Emergency Committee (UK) and a member of The Advisory Group to the International Department of The Charity Commission (UK). He was awarded an OBE in 2004, receiving the Ibn Khaldun Award for Excellence in Promoting Understanding between Global Cultures and Faiths in the same year.

Professor Bengt Saltin, Doctor of Science

Friday 14 December, 2pm

Bengt Saltin was Director of the Copenhagen Muscle Research Centre until 2003 where he is now a senior researcher. He is also a Professor at the August Krogh Institute and the Panum Institute. He is the Founder of the Danish Society for Physical Activity and Health and was its Chairman until 2004. He was awarded the Order of the Dannebrog, 1st degree, in 1995 and King Carl XVI Gustav's Gold Medal in 2002.

Notes to Editors:

There will be an opportunity to photograph the honorary graduands in the 15 minutes prior to each degree ceremony. Please telephone the Communications Office for accreditation.

Further Information:

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