Birmingham Business School 2008 Advisory Board Meeting

The annual Advisory Board took place in mid November, with Lord Digby Jones making a welcome return to the Chair.

Lord Digby Jones, Sir Dominic Cadbury and Professor David Bailey

Rebecca Harding gave the Annual Advisory Board Address at the Business School on the afternoon prior to the main meeting. The address asked whether setting up and growing a business is possible in the current economic climate, which Rebecca approached from the perspective of her company’s survey of founders and entrepreneurs in the UK and her own experience as an entrepreneur. Sharing the results of discussions with members of the World Entrepreneur Society, Rebecca looked at some of the challenges faced by policy makers when trying to stimulate an entrepreneurially based economy against the background of economic and financial turmoil. The talk was extremely well received and provided some interesting revelations that questioned assumptions about serial entrepreneurs, ethnicity and gender in entrepreneurship and explored initial evidence, stemming from her survey, on what really motivates entrepreneurs and how they succeed. Advisory Board members, students, alumni, academic faculty and regional business figures, including representatives from Advantage West Midlands, Science City and the Chamber of Commerce were in attendance making for a very interesting networking opportunity at the drinks reception which followed. Rebecca also had chance to meet with members of faculty who teach on the Business School’s Small Business and Enterprise modules, which has spawned additional collaboration with Rebecca in this area and generated ideas to develop these programmes.

The following day’s Board meeting reflected upon Rebecca’s talk and agreed that the findings of Rebecca’s survey would have a valuable impact on the Business School’s Entrepreneurship and Innovation Centre which supports and nurtures student enterprise. Following on from this the Board looked at the Business School’s learning and teaching strategy and made comment in this area. Robert Popeo was able to feed back on recent developments in the American education system and make direct comparisons with a US Business School of which he is also an Advisory Board member. This provided some useful insight into where the Business School could develop its student services, taking into account the heightened expectations of applicants as a result of the constantly evolving competition amongst the world’s leading Business Schools. The Board went on to discuss new developments at the Business School including the Centre for Leadership, a proposal to
develop taught modules with a focus on franchise, put forward by Tony Sealey, and a review of the Business School’s strategic positioning and ongoing ventures looking ahead to 2009.

2008 Group Photograph

Front Row
L-R: Robert Popeo (Chairman, Mintz Levin USA), Renate Hornung-Draus (Managing Director, Confederation of German Employers), Tony Sealey OBE (Managing Director, Canefield Limited), Jane Lodge (Partner, Deloitte), Angela Maxwell (Director, Acuwomen), Dr Rebecca Harding (Managing Director, Delta Economics), Gisela Stuart (MP, Edgbaston)

Back Row
L-R: John Craner (BBS Deputy Director), Professor David Bailey (BBS Director), Lord Digby Jones, Sir Dominic Cadbury, Julie Moore (CEO, NHS University Hospital Birmingham), Dr Sarindar Sahota (Vice Chair, West Midlands Regional Assembly), Anji Hunter (former Director of Communications, BP)

Board Pictures
Julie Moore and Rebecca Harding meet before Rebecca’s talk on entrepreneurship

Anji Hunter and Gisela Stuart
Andrew Miles welcomes Robert Popeo, who flew in from the USA the night before

New Board members: Angela Maxwell, Tony Sealey OBE, and Julie Moore
Old friends, Sarindar Sahota and Digby Jones meet during the coffee break.