

Petra Herz, Chair of the Executive Board of the Joachim Herz Stiftung

Graduation Ceremony for the Class of 2011 Bucerius / WHU Master of Law and Business – Joachim Herz Program at Bucerius Law School , Hamburg 2011/08/30

“As we are coming towards the end of this wonderful evening of celebrations – let me be brief and informal: Hello everybody!

Tonight is the third time that I have been attending this graduation ceremony and I am as impressed as I was during the first time. What a wonderful tradition, a truly impressive acknowledgement of things accomplished and the celebration of new beginnings.

Dear graduates:

I will remember last year at this time when most of you were a bit shy, a bit worried, wondering what to expect from the months ahead of you.

It makes me very happy to see your faces shining with pride tonight. Oh yes, you have every reason to take pride in your accomplishments. Over the past year you had a tough schedule and a heavy workload. The MLB program is competitive and you had to work hard to succeed. So, congratulations to the class of 2010/2011. Well done!

I see joy and happiness in your faces and detect maybe a trace of melancholy. At least I could imagine that you are of two minds tonight – or as we Germans put it “that two souls inhabit your breast right now”:

On the one hand you are thrilled and maybe relieved that you received your Master’s Degree and thus achieved the goal you set for yourself a year ago. On the other hand you might be sad that this one-year-adventure has come to an end. Over the past 12 months you formed new friendships and made many enlightening discoveries – including the Hamburg seasons with a brief summer around Easter and a grim autumn in July.... Above all, you will take with you much more than academic knowledge – it is a deeply rooted understanding you gathered over the past months - an awareness of different cultures and life-styles, tolerance and togetherness. Those might be the most life-changing and long-lasting aspects of the last months.

To put it in a nut-shell, I am convinced that you will have mostly fond memories of this year and the Master of Law and Business – Joachim Herz Program.

And now let’s move on to tonight’s curious and new faces: Dear current MLB-students: Welcome to a wonderful program and a wonderful city. Welcome to a year that will be filled with work but that will also offer you heaps and heaps of fun.

You will have to work hard over the coming months! You will reach higher and dig deeper than you ever imagined. But it’s worth it – as you have witnessed throughout the evening.

As the representative of the Joachim Herz Stiftung I especially welcome the new Joachim Herz Fellows.



My late husband Achim always liked to dare people, he liked to quiz and push in order to induce surprising results. He especially liked to challenge students and young talents: His goal was to make them question simple facts and common knowledge. Instead, he wanted them to choose the less-traveled road and to broaden their horizon. In short – he wanted them to do exactly what you will be doing over the coming months in the MLB - Joachim Herz Program.

Unfortunately, he can't be with us tonight. But I know he would have enjoyed this event and he would have been proud of all of you.

Enough words are said. I wish everybody here good luck and happiness.

Thank you for listening and let's get on with the ceremony.