

25 January 2018

Sir Paul Grant reveals how he transformed an inner-city school at Patron Greatness Lecture



Patron Capital, the pan-European institutional investor focused on property backed investments, last night welcomed Sir Paul Grant, the man credited for turning around Robert Clack School in Dagenham, for an inspiring talk as part of its Greatness Lecture series. Once a school suffering from serious social issues, Sir Paul shared, with an eager audience, his approach to changing the school's fortunes, leading to its recognition as an example of how schools can be turned around.

Sir Paul talked about the importance of establishing discipline, engaging staff, students and the local community and ensuring excellent teaching standards. He also used sport and other extra-curricular activities as a way to nurture and bring about change in students who had previously brought a culture of violence to the school, with this ultimately reflecting in the classroom.

After a decade at the school as headmaster, Sir Paul changed the school from where fewer than 15 per cent of the pupils achieved five A*-Es at GCSE, and no one went on to tertiary education, to one where 85 per cent get five A*-Es, and where more than 100 pupils progressed to university.

The school went on to be recognised by HRH Prince Charles, esteemed politicians and sportspeople and world-renowned institutions such as Oxford University and Harvard. The Robert Clack School has proven that comprehensive schools in difficult areas can become a driver for wider social change and provide inspiring environments where children can achieve their full potential.

Keith Breslauer, Managing Director of Patron Capital, commented:

“Having applied for the job of headmaster at the very last minute, Sir Paul was catapulted into the limelight into a very challenging situation. He faced a multitude of social issues and cynicism from those around him, but his story highlights how teamwork, discipline, having a strong vision and leading from the front can transform organisations and change people’s lives for the better.

“He is truly inspirational and we are delighted he could make the time to share his experience with us. Sir Paul’s story highlights the importance of education and the influence that teachers have to drive social change across the community and that’s why our work with the Princes Teaching Institute is so crucial.”

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Notes to Editors

About Patron Capital Partners

Patron represents approximately €3.4 billion of capital across several funds and related co-investments, investing in property, corporate operating entities whose value is primarily supported by property assets and distressed debt and credit related businesses.

Since it was established in 1999, Patron has invested in over 71 investments and programs involving over 65 million square feet (6 million square metres) in 16 countries, with many of these investments realised.

Investors represent a variety of sovereign wealth funds, prominent universities, major institutions, private foundations, and high net worth individuals located throughout North America, Europe, Asia and the Middle East. The main investment adviser to the Funds is Patron Capital Advisers LLP, which is based in London, and Patron has other offices across Europe including Barcelona, Milan and Luxembourg; the group is comprised of 74 people, including a 41-person investment team.

Further information about Patron Capital is available at www.patroncapital.com