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Ed Balls and Ruth Owen inspires resilience at Patron Greatness Lecture

Patron Capital, the pan-European institutional investor focused on property-backed investments, welcomed Ed Balls, former UK Shadow Chancellor, and Ruth Owen, Chief Executive of disabled children's charity, Whizz-Kids at this month's Greatness Lecture. The lecture was a powerful illustration of the way in which disability can be overcome and a lesson in being confident in one's own skin.

Whizz-Kids is the biggest provider of powered and lightweight manual wheelchairs for disabled children outside of the NHS, and one of the leading campaigning organisations in the sector assisting the next generation in finding work and leading meaningful lives.

Ed, a patron of the charity, spoke about how he has overcome his own disability to continue working in politics. As a cabinet minister at the age of 41, he discovered he had an interiorised stammer resulting in awkward interviews on TV and criticism in parliament by his peers. Feeling embarrassed and considering it a weakness, he reluctantly saw a therapist who helped him develop a set of strategies to make his life easier and convinced him to open up about his condition.

Ruth shared her experiences as a wheelchair user from the age of seven and how she was discriminated in the workplace by both employers and clients. Ruth forged a successful career in the private sector, in technologies, eventually setting up and running her own IT company for ten years. She realised that the wheelchair was an accessory and that she was able to do everything others could but slightly differently. Most importantly, she recognised that her mind was the biggest tool and if she could apply that, she could achieve anything.

Keith Breslauer, Managing Director of Patron Capital, said:

"Having met Ruth last year, I was overwhelmed by her tenacity and drive and what prompted me to invite her to speak at a greatness lecture. Not only has she overcome her own difficulties as a wheelchair user, she is inspiring future generations ensuring that these kids can lead successful and meaningful lives."

"When we think of Ed Balls we think about his valiant battles at the dispatch box in parliament and his chases across the dancefloor but this evening he shared with us his own struggles of dealing with a stammer. Talking openly about something which affects your day-to-day life isn't easy but he is a prime example of the success of resilience."

"Our minds really are the tools to our success and another reminder that we should learn how to be confident in who we are – something we are passionate about at Patron in everything we do. Bringing your personality and being confident in your abilities is the recipe to your own success."

The Patron Greatness Lectures are a series of talks from inspirational individuals. They are not part of a fundraising exercise; instead, they are intended to motivate, educate, inspire and enrich for the Patron team, its friends and partners.

Each evening consists of an early evening talk followed by a Q&A session and an opportunity for informal conversation over drinks and light refreshments. For more information about The Greatness Lectures, e-mail Denise Goodwin on denise@patroncapital.com.

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Media Enquiries to:

Henry Columbine/Rishi Banerjee
Redleaf Communications

t: +44 (0) 20 3757 6890
e: patron@redleafpr.com

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 74 investments and programs involving over 65 million square feet (6 million square metres) in 16 countries and a significant focus in France, 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 76 people, including a 43-person investment team.

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



