On October 23rd and November 1st, our alumni in Switzerland met for the first time in Zurich and Geneva respectively, at our Alumni receptions. These meetings present opportunities for our alumni to network with each other, get updates on new developments in Groningen, and help the university to trace its alumni abroad and reconnect with them.

> Zurich <

More than 35 alumni of the University of Groningen gathered in the Dozentenfoyer of ETH Zurich, with a magnificent view of Zurich, on Tuesday October 23rd. Professor Jan-Egbert Sturm, Director of the KOF Swiss Economic Institute was the host of our premier event in bringing our alumni together from all over Zurich and cities as far as Bern and Geneva. He shared his story on his strong connections to Groningen that touched on his student days as well as his first job at the university. His Excellency Ambassador Bart Twaalfhoven (NL) was the keynote speaker. He proudly explained the envious positions of Dutch universities in the world and was quick to add that no single country in the world has all its universities listed in the top 150 of best universities in the world.

Ambassador Bart Twaalfhoven giving a speech to the Zurich Alumni

> Geneva <

On Thursday, November 1, a small number of our alumni in Geneva and its surrounding cities, gathered in the Swissotel Metropole. Present that evening were alumni from Biology, Economics & Business, as well as Law, representing the diversity of the programs offered in Groningen. As the evening progressed with bits to chew on and some drinks, it became clear that what our alumni lacked in number they made up for it in a quality gezellig time.

The Geneva Alumni gathered around for a group picture

The alumni, representing more than 4 nationalities (Netherlands, Swiss, British and Germans) were excited to meet and mingle at our Zurich event. Curious to know new developments in Groningen, Mrs. Tienke Koning, Director of the Ubbo Emmius Fonds, informed them of recent success stories in Groningen. She told them that they are part of a force of 110,000 alumni scattered around the world, with about 27,000 students (current enrollment) anxious to join the alumni ranks. Touching on the universities recent position of 89th on the Times World Top university rankings, she invited our alumni to continually engage with the university wherever they are in the world.

Ambassador Bart Twaalfhoven giving a speech to the Zurich Alumni

> Alumni Chapter <

Mrs. Koning talked about Groningen’s Alumnikringen being formed around the world to ensure active engagement first among our alumni and between our alumni and the university. This Alumni chapter concept was recognized with a Bronze award from the Council of Advancement and Support of Education. She further explained the interest of the Ubbo Emmius Fonds of establishing a Zurich Alumni chapter by calling on our alumni to be involved as founding members.

The Geneva Alumni gathered around for a group picture

> Alumni Chapter <

Our International Alumni Officer, Prince Ralph Osei, shared with our attendees newer developments in Groningen including ground-breaking research. He also spoke on the current student enrollment which stands at 27,000, the number of alumni around the world, totaled to be 110,000, plus new Alumni chapters being formed around the world including Washington DC, New York and soon to be Zurich and Geneva. Alumni expressed the hope that there will be a follow up in 2013 to bring a bigger turnout of Groningen alumni.

As the night wore on past 11pm, our alumni gathered behind the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen banner for a group picture.
Most old students from the University of Groningen have fond memories of their time as a student in Groningen. The university has played a large part in the career of her alumni. To give alumni the chance to give back to their Alma mater, the Ubbo Emmius Fund started Alumni Chapters in four different cities and regions in the Netherlands. Twice a year, or more, members of these chapters come together for a trip down memory lane. At the same time special networks are built through supporting a research project by a scientist of international distinction.

The concept of Alumni Chapters was first adopted by the Gooische Groningers: old students of de university who now live in ‘t Gooi. A small group of founding alumni started the chapter by inviting their study friends to join the chapter and to support a special project or research from the RUG. These invitees, in turn, ask their alumni friends to join the chapter and subsequently the chapter grows. In this way, each meeting presents an opportunity for new members to join the network and for both younger and veteran alumni to mingle.

Because of the tremendous enthusiasm and success of the Dutch chapters, the university would now like to expand this concept and provide the same opportunity for our international alumni. Currently, our international chapters include New York city and Washington DC. Yearly, all members would donate through a specific scheme to a scientific project and pay a small fee to cover for catering expenses. There will be a few different ways to donate, customized to different tax laws. What could be better than supporting a talented scientist or special project, while reminiscing about your time as a student in the presence of old and new friends? Meanwhile a network of people that can support and coach each other broadens. An opportunity you don’t want to miss!

> Follow up <

We have created an LinkedIn group for Zurich. You can click the icon on the right. And be sure to listen to our Alumni song, just click the image below!

> Attendees <

> Zurich <

Piet Spaak
Rakesh Chand
Marjan Kraak
Jan van Beijen
Henk Moorlag
Bregtje Andela
Bastiaan Veenendaal
Rene Spigt
Sjoukje Posthuma
Suzan van de Kerk
Robert Trienen
Marijke van der Klis
Roel Vandevel
Peter Paul Bloemsma
Jeroen van ‘t Kloof
Fausta Geelhoed
Marnix Mol
Andreas Kyriacou
Harry Lunenburg
Ivo Stuijzen
Marc Wethmar
Nico Sonneveld
Jaap Swansenburg
Jos Braaksma
Mariaan Vanfloorop
Jeroen Bruggeman
Karsten Bloch
Robbert Bloem
Jan van Zon
Jelena Noll
Bart Twaalfhoven (Ambassador)
Prof. Jan-Egbert Sturm
Saskia Harthoorn
Hendrik Blanken Blijdenstein
Richard van Beueningen
Zhe Nie
Anna Samarina
Anneke Hosang

> Geneva <

Cees Faber
Arnout van Es
Valentijn Van den Brink
Michelle Ayu Chinta Kristy
Tijmen Essers
Richard Roemers
Kathryn Hine

> Up-coming International Events <

Hong Kong Nov 22
Paris Sinterklaas Nov 29
Germany events Dec 4 - 8
Beijing Dec 8

> International Alumni Officer <

Prince Ralph Osei
Stichting Ubbo Emmius Fonds
Postbus 72, 9700 AB Groningen
T: +31 (0)50 363 7821
E: internationalalumni@rug.nl
www.rug.nl/alumni

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Text >

Prince Osei
Layout >

Freddy Fahmawi