About 25 alumni of the University of Groningen gathered in the beautiful and stylish Restaurant Zum Grünen Glas in the old center of Zurich, on May 15th, 2013. It is the second meeting of the Zurich chapter. Suzan van de Kerk, opened the party by welcoming all alumni, guests and the delegation from the University. Some of our alumni travelled from great distances for the meeting. For instance Rakesh Chand, whose home base is in New York, but works partly in Zurich and in India. Others travelled to Zurich from different parts of Switzerland such as Interlaken, St. Gallen and Bern, to be part of the Alumni evening.

Suzan van de Kerk discussed the plans of the Swiss/Zurich Chapter. She is touched by all the RUG alumni who, like herself, feel connected with their Alma Mater and want to be an Ambassador. Her aim is that our alumni will meet a few times a year in Zurich. Suzan plans to invite those interested in shaping the RUG Alumni Chapter in Zurich to meet in a working session to find out how the chapter in Switzerland and the Ambassadorship can become more concrete. All meetings of RUG alumni are open to alumni and friends of the RUG. Invitations will be sent with support of the Alumni Office in Groningen, in announcing the program, date and place. Prominent alumni of RUG, board members of the university and professors and faculty deans from Groningen visiting Switzerland will speak about the university, their research, their cooperation with international scientists, for instance with ETH and the University of Zurich.

Prof. Sibrandus Poppema was very pleased to meet the Switzerland based Alumni. He reached out to his audience by telling them where the University of Groningen is heading for. “Improved quality of research and results are key in obtaining a better reputation”, he said. Such reputation is important for cooperation with top scientists from other research institutes in the world. Besides quality education at the university, prof. Poppema also gave insights into the changes in our student body. For a highly ranked university it is crucial to show the groundbreaking results of its students. In general, but specifically in times of economic crisis students should not spend more than 5 years on their university education working towards a single degree. Poppema touched on new initiatives in Groningen, such as the RUG Honours College, the University College Groningen and astonished the audience by telling them how many international students and scientific staff members are calling Groningen home. Almost all master programs are currently taught in English and a good percentage of the Bachelors programs are English spoken.

Prof. Poppema explained the highlights of the Lustrum Program. The celebrations will take place from May 14th until June 14, 2014. (see http://tinyurl.com/pk8mskl) He especially drew everyone’s attention to the Alumni Weekend in Groningen, that will commence with Honorary doctorates and parties in all student corps, on June 13th 2014. Saturday, June 14th, will form the climax of all festivities. Many different events especially for alumni are held throughout the day in the city center of Groningen. The weekend ends at sports clubs, in the Groninger Schouwburg with a musical around the life of Aletta Jacobs, city tours around the campus of the university and the hospital. All alumni are cordially invited to participate. The university board hopes to see more than 10,000 alumni return home for the celebration!
> Cooperation <

Two Dutch Professors, Jan-Egbert Sturm (KOF, ETH) and Piet Spaak (University of Zurich) offered internships to students of RUG. Suzan van de Kerk offered board and housing. A great gesture to stimulate the new cooperation between Switzerland-based alumni and the University of Groningen. Qualified students will be selected at the end of the summer to undertake their research internships in Zurich. We hope to organize a meeting between the first student and the alumni in the Swiss Chapter in the fall of 2013. We are grateful to Professor Sturm and Professor Spaak for this wonderful opportunity!

> Next meetings <

Working session in Zurich October 24, 2013.
Zurich New Years Apero January, 2014.

> International Meetings <

Singapore Alumni Chapter kick-off event with Prof. Sibrand Poppema August 23, 2013 @ Hollandse Club.
Cologne Alumni Summer Gathering September 7, 2013.

> Important links <


*Alumni Worldwide newsletter RUG:* http://www.rug.nl/news-and-events/newsletters/international/


> Attendees <

Piet Spaak
Peter Paul Bloemsma
Rakesh Chand
Suzan van de Kerk
Marc Wethmar
Aster Struik-Buter
Paul Smith
Karsten Bloch
Jaap Swanenburg
Marian Vanloorop
Zhiva Skachokova
René Spigt
Nynke Nijkamp
Paul Boskma
Ronald Bosman
Jeroen van ‘t Hooft
Ronald Holtkamp
Fausta Geelhoed
Jan van Zon
Tienke Koning
Sibrand Poppema
Bert Verveld
Thom Palstra

> International Alumni Officer <

Prince Ralph Osei
Stichting Ubbo Emmius Fonds
Postbus 72, 9700 AB Groningen
T: +31 (0)50 363 7621
E: internationalalumni@rug.nl
www.rug.nl/alumni