

Annual Report 2006

The alumni association of Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School has established a sound reputation throughout the years. The networking provided by the alumni association constitutes an indispensable supplement to the Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School programs: it offers a platform to nearly 12,000 alumni that are active in over 80 countries.

2006 was mainly a year of transition after the departure of Geert van Coillie, who has headed the department as General Manager for ten years. Although we immediately started our search, involving external professionals as well, our company has continued its activities for eight months without a replacement. Despite this depleted team, the alumni association managed to provide a calendar packed with valuable events to its members.

At the end of the year, our association was confronted with another challenge, namely the departure of Kristien Verhaeghe. She decided to continue her career closer to home, after having worked four years as Senior Project Manager and interim General Manager.

A replacement was eventually found with Martine Dykmans, who assumed her duties as the new General Manager from January 2007. Our current team is again working at full speed on the further development and renewal of our activities.

2006 saw the local organisation of 42 events on Belgian level. One of the many highlights was without question the Vlerick Award on Friday 21 April, where sister Jeanne Devos was rewarded for her development aid in India. The Winter Reunion with Carlos Brito experienced a record turnout of 1,185 alumni. Other events such as the New Year's Reception (728 participants), the Easter Reunion (490 participants) and the Marketing Colloquium (289 participants) also attracted a large audience. The smaller events put more focus on the personal contact between the alumni and proved to be a enormous success as well. In addition, we also ensured the continuity of our services. The eleventh edition of the members' directory was presented at the Winter Reunion and the bimonthly magazine Connexis kept the alumni informed about the activities of the School and the other alumni.

Within the framework of the School's strategy, we also tried to further elaborate the international operations in 2006. As a result, 13 international alumni events took place that year in six different countries: China, the Netherlands, Russia, Spain, the

United States of America and the United Kingdom. A continued fast grow on international scale is not free of difficulties, as the number of alumni in the countries is not yet large enough. Through the bimonthly International Newsletter – a joint initiative with the School – we communicated the relevant international news about our School and alumni to our internationals.

Another initiative in this respect was the second edition of the mentorship program, which links about 70 international full-time MBA and Masters students to Belgian alumni during their education. We have made a special effort this year to match the mentors' profiles with those of the students to the extent possible. Their first contact was made during a mentorship welcome event, after which the students were proactively invited by their mentors to all the important Vlerick Alumni events.

In 2006, we also made some structural efforts to address a number of blind spots in our alumni activities. Hence, we established a new section for the alumni of the 'post experience program'. After all, they represent one third of the entire alumni population. Due to a valuable section program for 2006 (five activities with an average of 44 participants), this innovation experienced a successful opening year. A second blind spot was broached through a new cluster on EMBA, which has united the MBA alumni of both Leuven and Ghent. Particularly the integration of the previous MBA program of the KU Leuven in EMBA has been a positive influence for the alumni, who did not receive any section operation from this program.

In conclusion, we are dealing with the extension of our services within the framework of our strategy. As a result, Vlerick Alumni will assume the communicative and logistical section from Flanders ID, which is a recently subsidised initiative from two alumni in order to promote entrepreneurship. Vlerick Alumni will also support the communication of Managers Without Frontiers (Managers Zonder Grenzen), which intends to offer management expertise to deprived entrepreneurs.