

Mr Chancellor,

Paul Marshall, whom we are honouring today, is an award-winning and highly successful entrepreneur and philanthropist. He is the co-founder and Chairman of Marshall Wace LLP, one of Europe's largest and most prestigious hedge funds. A graduate of St John's College, Oxford, and the INSEAD Business School, he has longstanding interests in politics and has worked with and for the Liberal Democrats. He chairs the liberal think tank, CentreForum, which was re-launched and reinvigorated under his leadership. Paul is passionately committed to the rights of children to have an excellent education, regardless of their background, and has written widely and persuasively on this subject. In 2006, he co-authored with Jennifer Moses and Edward Seed, "Aiming Higher: a better future for England's schools", which highlighted where reforms were needed to address the ways in which schools were failing disadvantaged children.

Paul Marshall does more than simply write fine words, he delivers on them. He gives substance to the sentiment, "deeds not words". This is amply illustrated by his commitment to the charity ARK - Absolute Return for Kids, of which he is both a trustee and major donor. ARK is an international organisation focussing on health, education and child protection, running projects both in the UK and across the world. It was set up to help transform children's lives, and that is exactly what it does. The statistics speak for themselves. To date, more than 430,000 children have benefitted from ARK projects. It has generated over £180 million pounds worth of funding, augmented by a further £460 million pounds leveraged from government and investment partners. And as the name suggests – absolutely everything it raises goes directly into ARK projects.

The work ARK undertakes is both practical and innovative. It trains inspirational teachers to help children succeed and here in the UK, boosts children's learning through affordable outdoor school challenges such as Mathematics Mastery. It was the first UK not-for-profit organisation to operate schools for public benefit in the UK which not only improve children's life chances but focus on turning around what were hitherto failing schools. Many of these schools are in socially disadvantaged areas. Here in the North of England, where we have many communities that have struggled to recover from the loss of traditional heavy industry, and where there are some of the lowest participation rates in higher education; we can admire and empathise with the work that ARK undertakes. We share similar concerns. As a leading civic university, we aim to deliver excellent learning, teaching and research, but we also have a parallel commitment to ensure that our research benefits the wider civil society in which we live and operate. We focus this through the lens of our three societal challenge themes; Ageing, Sustainability and Social Renewal. Our widening participation scheme, Partners, is widely lauded as an exemplar in the sector and our School of Education, Communication and Language Studies has researchers focussing on supporting children's literacy in Asia and Africa, as well as world-leading experiments in self-organised learning environments for children.

To date, more than 100,000 children in the UK, India and United States of America have had their lives transformed through participation in ARK funded educational initiatives. But there is always more to do. Over the next ten years, ARK plans to educate over 20,000 children through ARK-funded schools in Uganda.

## PAUL MARSHALL: DCL

ARK also engages in pioneering health programmes, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, where the statistics of mother and child mortality paint an extremely bleak picture. More children die here before the age of five than anywhere else in the world. One third of these infant deaths occur before the child is one month old. Equally shocking is the fact that a quarter of a million women will die in childbirth in this region every year. Saddest of all, many of these deaths could be prevented if families had access to effective medical care. Once again, this is where ARK provides practical solutions by focussing on scaleable, effective interventions that deliver positive and lasting benefit to some of the poorest members of society.

To deliver such conspicuously successful programmes in diverse and demanding fields of activity requires more than just drive and commitment. Baroness Sally Morgan, an advisor to the ARK Board succinctly highlights why Paul Marshall makes such a difference: “He has a single minded obsession on every child achieving...broad brush averages will never be good enough. His passion is that education can really change the life chances of poor children. He commits brain, time and money to making that happen.”

Paul’s partner, Ian, tells me that not only is he kind, capable, generous and loyal, but he is never afraid of being the one dissenting voice, or of arguing his point in a principled and impassioned manner. He is deeply engaged with the charities he supports. As a trustee, Paul Marshall is very “hands on” – he visits programmes personally and deploys his professional skills to ensure funds are appropriately monitored and evaluated so that they always deliver what they promise.

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His sister, Penny, describes him as incredibly modest, and notes that he is so discreet about his professional and philanthropic achievements, his family are often unaware of what he has done until they read about it in the newspapers. She proudly observes that he does more in a day than most people achieve in a week; yet he always has time for his family and has a great sense of fun. Music is a great love, and his tastes are described as eclectic, ranging from Schumann to Fleetwood Mac. Both of his children have chosen to pursue musical careers. His other great passion is Manchester United, whom he has supported since he was a boy. We also love our football here in Newcastle, although when the Red Devils play at St James' Park, we seldom have much cause to celebrate!

Paul is influenced in all that he does by his deep Christian faith, which informs his decisions and shapes the way he leads his life. He believes that access to a first class education can transform people's lives and enable them to fulfil their potential. More importantly, he has the vision, skills and generosity of spirit to create an environment in which this can happen.

Mr Chancellor, in recognition of his outstanding philanthropic activity, particularly through his funding and support for Absolute Return for Kids, I present to you Paul Roderick Clucas Marshall for the award of Doctor of Civil Law, *honoris causa*.

*Citation by Jill Taylor-Roe, 3 December 2014*