



## JASON DARROW ANNOUNCED AS THE WINNER OF THE 2006 EUROPEAN MBA ESSAY COMPETITION SPONSORED BY ASHRIDGE, EABIS AND MICROSOFT

*Darrow's Winning Essay Argues Business Schools Have Vital Role to Play in the Preparation of Future Business Leaders to Manage Sustainable Development and Corporate Responsibility Challenges*

**Brussels, Belgium, 31 October 2006** – The European Academy of Business in Society (EABIS), Ashridge Business School and Microsoft today announced the winner of the 2006 Ashridge Best European MBA Essay Award. The winning essay was written by Jason Darrow, a full-time MBA student at Ashridge and the first ever winner from the school since it created the Award eight years ago.

### The 2006 Ashridge Award

This year's Award, sponsored for the first time by EABIS founding partner Microsoft, challenged European MBA students to submit thought-provoking essays on the responsibilities of business within the broader context of a knowledge economy. Darrow's winning entry, titled "*How can I be expected to understand all this?*", argues that there has been a major change in the complexity of doing business and therefore business education must change to help managers develop new skills. According to Darrow, given the new complexity of global business, business education needs to help future leaders and managers develop the skills to meet contemporary challenges such as geo-political movements and global resource sustainability. The essay can be downloaded [here](#).

Darrow commented: "While it is up to individual managers to make decisions, business schools should drive the codes and methods of conduct just as medical schools do for doctors. Business schools could institute an oath (similar to the Hippocratic Oath) which provides consumers with the trust in business to do no harm. A shift from 'provide return to shareholders' to 'do no harm' would require a new focus for management development."

### An Essential Theme for Europe

The subject mirrors the European Commission's Growth and Jobs Partnerships Agenda (2005), launched by President José Manuel Barroso to reinvigorate the framework for European economic growth outlined in the 2000 Lisbon Agenda. As President Barroso remarked at the March 2006 ESC-BEE Conference in Brussels, "Europe needs the best-educated and best-trained people who possess the skills needed in a 'knowledge economy'. It also needs to stay ahead of the game by developing new products and services. Research and development in Europe needs to be more efficient and better coordinated, translating into innovative products and services."

Following the initiation of the Lisbon Agenda, EABIS was created in partnership with the European Commission to create a collaborative network of academics, business executives and practitioners to develop collaborative research, education and training projects on corporate responsibility to integrate it into mainstream business theory and practice.

### Microsoft Supporting the European Agenda

Elena Bonfiglioli, Director of Corporate Citizenship, Microsoft EMEA, is delighted with the initiative saying "We are very pleased to sponsor the Ashridge Award as a way to support research and knowledge development in fields that are at the frontier between technology and society. At Microsoft, we are very interested to hear MBA perspectives, analysis and research on how the combination of responsible business practices, creative ideas and multi-stakeholder partnerships can make a difference to the goals of long term sustainable economic growth and social development."

The award attracted 25 entries from across Europe with five essays being short-listed and anonymously read by the panel of independent judges. The runner up essay, '*The Clash of Cultures: Exploring the impasse between the Internet industry and human rights NGOs*' by Ian Gray, a student at Cranfield School of Management, looks at the action that Amnesty International and other human rights NGOs are taking against technology firms over internet censorship in China and examines the merits of different responses the industry could make.



**EABIS**  
European Academy  
of Business in Society

The 2006 MBA Essay Award was judged by a distinguished panel, including:

- **Viscount Etienne Davignon**, Chairman, EABIS and Vice-Chair, Suez-Tractebel
- **Odile Quintin**, Director General, EU Commission Directorate for Education
- **Jeanette Purcell**, CEO, Association of MBAs
- **Sir Paul Judge**, Benefactor of the Judge Institute, Cambridge University
- **Rachel Jackson**, Head of Social & Environmental Issues, Association of Chartered Certified Accountants
- **Eric Cornuel**, Director General, European Foundation for Management Development
- **Margaret Studer**, Vice-President, European HR, Cargill

#### **About The European Academy of Business in Society**

Established in 2002 by leading companies and business schools in partnership with the EU Commission, EABIS aims to integrate corporate responsibility into the mainstream of business theory and practice in Europe. EABIS funds collaborative research, education and training projects and hosts numerous events and workshops across Europe to develop more and better knowledge and learning on corporate responsibility. It also leads the EU Commission funded 'European Platform for Excellence on CSR' (CSR Platform) project as the designated centre for excellence on CSR Research under the Sixth Framework Programme. With a European focus, but a global outlook, EABIS' membership currently spans four continents and 19 countries and includes some of the world's largest global corporations including Shell, Unilever, IBM, Johnson & Johnson and Microsoft and Europe's top business schools such as Bocconi University, INSEAD, IMD and the London Business School. [www.eabis.org](http://www.eabis.org).

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