

## **The Honorary Graduand: John Steven Laycock**

The Orator: William Marshall

### **John Laycock is to be awarded the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Education.**

John Laycock was born in Lancashire and moved to Bristol in 1960 at the age of twelve, attending Chipping Sodbury Grammar school. He is not quite Bristolian but is nevertheless very proud of this great city of ours.

After leaving school he obtained a degree in Sociology and after returning to Bristol, started his first business, Jay Fasteners Ltd. The company was a distributor of nuts and bolts and, starting from scratch, the business eventually grew to eleven branches and was sold to Brown and Tawse Plc in 1989 for a pricey sum.

John still runs a number of private companies which include Jongor Catering Hire Ltd, a company that hires out crockery and cutlery to facilitate corporate events and weddings. He also co-owns two fledgling tool hire companies; London tool hire and South Coast tool hire, both of which are rapidly expanding. He is also a non-executive director of Stage Electrics Ltd.

A keen sports enthusiast John 'almost' made it with Bristol Rovers. Despite this, John's allegiance is on the other side of the city as a supporter and shareholder of Bristol City Football Club where he served on the Board for 8 years and was Chairman between 2000 and 2002. Also a keen rugby fan, John was Vice-Chairman of Bristol Rugby Club.

John has a passion for education and worked with UWE Bristol to sponsor and create one of the first Academies in the country and the first in the South West. This formed The City Academy, Bristol which was formally St George Community School in Lawrence Hill. The success of this pioneering school contributed to the Academy movement in the UK and led to further Academies (there are now over 2,300). This idea of a partnership between Universities and schools has subsequently been repeated across the UK.

The City Academy, Bristol has continued to improve delivery and John has continued to contribute through the development of education in Bristol; becoming a Governor of other schools and being appointed to the UWE Board of Governors in 2009. He is also a Trustee of the South Bristol Sports Centre which is a charity promoting the use of the former Imperial Ground in South Bristol for schools and the local community.

The Honorary Degree is awarded in recognition of John Laycock's significant contribution to education.