

Support Swells for Thunderbird's Bold Alliance with Laureate, Including Official Endorsement by Thunderbird Global Council

(Glendale, AZ) Oct. 21, 2013 – Public support has swelled in recent months for Thunderbird's [planned strategic alliance](#) with Laureate Education, Inc., which has now received a strong written endorsement from the Thunderbird Global Council (TGC), a volunteer advisory group comprised mostly of alumni business leaders from around the world. The endorsement came after the council's annual gathering on Oct. 1-2, 2013, where they learned more about Thunderbird's growth plans and interacted with senior leaders from both Thunderbird and Laureate.

Ekaterina Walter '08, one of 13 Thunderbird alumni added to the council at the start of the two-day event, said she is pleased to see Thunderbird taking bold action in a way that will allow the school to expand its global footprint without sacrificing its independence or academic control. "Now is the right time to decide whether you want to go bold or you want to stay where you are comfortable," she said.

By the end of the meeting, members of the TGC Steering Committee issued a [statement of support](#) on behalf of the full council. "Moving forward, the TGC is excited and galvanized around the positives that this partnership will bring Thunderbird and especially to our students," the statement reads, in part.

Overall, 53 council members attended the event from as far away as Hong Kong and as near as Scottsdale, Arizona. Alumni members of the council spanning six decades also filmed [video messages](#) to show their support for the alliance.

While the TGC has offered the most recent showing of support, many others have endorsed the schools plans as well. Since Thunderbird announced its decision to move forward with the alliance this summer, statements from faculty, alumni, board members, and past presidents have poured in and are posted on the school's [alliance website](#).

Several members of the Thunderbird Board of Trustees have also shared insight into the careful and thoughtful process they took when looking at alliance options. Trustee Sam Gavin '88 stated, "I have watched and observed Laureate over the last decade from afar and am impressed with their integrity and ethics. I participated fully in the rigorous and robust discussions with multiple parties over a six-month period and am convinced Laureate will be a terrific JV [Jointly owned service provider] partner for Thunderbird."

Fellow Board member and alumnus, Ken Seward '57, stated, "I feel that the jointly owned service provider will enable us to retain our independence and protect our brand while providing us with the financial wherewithal and critical mass which we need."

The school has also received statements of support from a large majority of tenured faculty, a group with an average of 15.5 years at Thunderbird. They have articulated their commitment to the school and the success of its transformation. "The Thunderbird community, as a whole, has exemplified "truly" global and "thriving on change" throughout its life," said Professor David Bowen, Ph.D. "Those two qualities can now once again be synergistically combined to grow the

school's global impact going forward in the dynamic and complex world of higher education - and our students and clients will be the biggest winners of all."

Past Thunderbird presidents are recognizing the boldness of this move in a changing business school landscape. "No board of any school of management can afford not to examine the Thunderbird-Laureate partnership for the unique advantages it offers for the future of global education," stated Thunderbird President Emeritus Roy Herberger.

Former Thunderbird President Barbara Barrett wrote, "Thunderbird's inherent strength is global excellence. Partnering with Laureate offers Thunderbird an opportunity to fortify our iconic brand with added resources and expanded reach."

Former U.S. Secretary of Education and former Governor of South Carolina Richard W. Riley also weighed in, saying, "I have followed closely the significant challenges and many disruptions that are transforming our nation's higher education landscape. It is my opinion that Thunderbird is fortunate to have found a partner who will enable their institution to remain independent yet provide them with the resources to expand and thrive."

Thunderbird's Board of Trustees announced its approval of the strategic alliance on July 3, 2013, pending approval from the school's institutional accreditor, the Higher Learning Commission. The deal will allow Thunderbird to pursue growth opportunities while preserving its independence and control over its brand, curriculum and degrees. It will also bring Thunderbird significant financial benefits, including \$30 million in campus improvements and an anticipated 10-year operating surplus of \$100 million from the parties' jointly owned service provider.

Learn more and read additional statements of support at www.thunderbird.edu/alliance.

MEDIA CONTACT:

Virginia Mungovan
Public Relations Specialist
Thunderbird School of Global Management
(602)978-7081
virginia.mungovan@thunderbird.edu

About Thunderbird School of Global Management

Thunderbird is the world's No.1-ranked school of international business with nearly 70 years of experience in developing leaders with the global mindset, business skills and social responsibility necessary to create real, sustainable value for their organizations, communities and the world.

Dedicated to preparing students to be global leaders and committed global citizens, Thunderbird was the first graduate business school to adopt a Professional Oath of Honor. Thunderbird's global network of alumni numbers 40,000 graduates in 148 nations worldwide. The school is sought out by graduate students, working professionals and companies seeking to gain the skills necessary for success in today's global economy. For more about Thunderbird, visit <http://www.thunderbird.edu>.