

School hears vision of 2012 games in London

In the final countdown to the announcement of the successful bid city for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the School community had the opportunity to hear vice-chairman of the London bid, Barbara Cassani, speak about how staging the Games would transform the United Kingdom.



Discussing the business of staging the Olympics, in an event sponsored by Citigroup Foundation, Ms Cassani likened the bid to beginning a start-up enterprise. Both experiences required managing a huge project with audacious goals and time frames.

"Bringing the Games to the UK would enhance the lives of millions of people," she said.

As well as her role as Vice-Chairman of the London 2012 bid, Ms Cassani is most well known as the founder and Chief Executive of the low cost airline Go - which began flying in 1998 with £25m of capital and became profitable in less than three years. She drew parallels between her experience with the Olympic bid and her time with Go – both were risk taking exercises where tough decisions had to be made often under the scrutiny of the media, she said.

Her work with London 2012 has seen the city accepted as an official candidate city for the final stage of the bidding process. The winning city will be announced on 6 July and with London seen as a strong contender it is an exciting time for the capital.

The Games would leave a "legacy for sport but also for the community" she said. Among a number of initiatives the east end of London would be transformed with a massive programme of public works if the city succeeds on 6 July, Ms Cassani said.

Speaking about the approaching deadline of 6 July Ms Cassani said, "There is only one winner. There is no silver medal only gold in this race."

Ms Cassani spoke as part of the School's Distinguished Speaker Series – which has featured prominent global business people and public figures such as Al Gore and Rose Marie Bravo.

Created 21 June 2005