

BU Honorary Graduate Citation - Martin Edwards

Pro-Chancellor,

Martin Edwards is the Chief Executive of Julia's House children's hospice, which supports families caring for children with life-limiting conditions across Dorset and Wiltshire. Since joining Julia's House in 2005, Martin has led a significant expansion and attracted national awards both for the quality of the charity's care and its support for staff.

Martin cites the 1985 Live Aid campaign as a pivotal factor in his decision to forge a career in the charity sector. He recalls being deeply struck by the way that Bob Geldolf and other pop stars devoted their time, talents and energies to the cause of famine relief. Martin, who was studying Law at the University of Oxford at the time, completed his degree and embarked on a short stint in commercial marketing before taking up his first charity role with Save the Children. In this position he led a project to mark the 10th anniversary of Live Aid and travelled to Ethiopia to see the impact of its work first hand.

Martin went on to become Director of Fundraising at two national charities before joining Highland Hospice and then Julia's House. In this role he has overseen the opening of two hospices and has taken the charity's turnover from £500,000 to £10m a year. He has also helped shape national policy by drawing on research, carried out in partnership with Bournemouth University, on the positive impact of respite breaks on reducing parental stress and break-ups for families with a seriously ill child.

While Julia's House hospices provide an uplifting environment for the children and families who depend on them for care, Martin recognises the emotional impact of regular bereavement on the staff delivering essential services. This has prompted a focus on staff wellbeing that has led to the charity being regularly listed as one of The Sunday Times Best Companies to Work For.

Martin regularly shares his insights on leadership through talks and in publications. As a natural introvert, he promotes the value of diverse leadership styles and encourages organisations to challenge recruitment practices that overstate the importance of extrovert character traits.

Pro-Chancellor, I have the honour to present Martin Edwards, and I ask you to confer upon him the degree of Doctor of Business Administration, *honoris causa*.