Festo manager Wilfried Stoll named first Honorary Consul of WU

WU has awarded the title of Honorary Consul to Wilfried Stoll, managing shareholder of Festo Holding GmbH, in recognition of his long-standing support of WU.

In her words of welcome, WU Rector Edeltraud Hanappi-Egger thanked Wilfried Stoll for his strong commitment to supporting WU. “WU focuses on three main pillars in everything it does: To be a pioneer, to act responsibly, and to act internationally. A look at Dr. Stoll’s trajectory shows that these three aspects have also played an important role in his life. He has built an international career, and he has been a pioneer in many different respects. But above all, he has always lived up to his responsibility towards society, and also towards WU. He has retained very close ties to his alma mater over the years, supporting its research and teaching activities with outstanding commitment. This is the first time that WU has ever awarded the title of Honorary Consul, and I’m very pleased that we are presenting this distinction to Wilfried Stoll today,” said Rector Hanappi-Egger.

WU Honorary Consul Wilfried Stoll calls for lifelong learning

The laudatory speech was held by the well-known German business consultant Herbert Henzler. In his acceptance speech, Honorary Consul Wilfried Stoll emphasized the great importance of education. “Universities will play a crucial role in shaping our future. The members of the next generation, including the young people studying at WU today, have the privilege of creating new dynamics and shaping the future according to their needs, opportunities, and visions. In this sense, an autonomous WU that focuses on the international demands of students, researchers, and the business community can deliver valuable contributions for Austria and beyond,” said Wilfried Stoll. “In our age of digitalization, it is particularly important to encourage lifelong learning. The educational system has to be flexible and adapt to the changes we’re seeing in society and industry.”

About Wilfried Stoll

Wilfried Stoll, a native of Germany, has maintained close ties to WU for many decades. It was at WU that he completed his first degree and earned his doctorate. During his studies at WU, he was already working at the engineering company owned by his family, Festo Maschinenfabrik Esslingen. He then went on to establish the Austrian branch of Festo, where he initiated decisive developments that enabled Festo to become a market leader in the CEE region. Supporting research activities at his alma mater has always been important to Wilfried Stoll. Since 2004, he has supported research related to the CEE region, and in the last few years he has increasingly been involved in projects on the subject of learning and, most recently, on the future of the educational market in light of digital transformations.

The title of Honorary Consul

Apart from purely academic honors, the title of Honorary Consul is the highest distinction WU can bestow, and this is the first time it has ever been awarded. The title of Honorary Consul is reserved for individuals with particularly close ties to WU who have made outstanding contributions and provided long-term support to the university.