



Nadace  
Zdeňka Bakaly

September 2013

72%

## of students heading for universities abroad\* plan to return to the Czech Republic after graduation



Press meeting focused on future plans of young talented students



Pictured is our Bakala Scholar Josef Musil (standing the third from the right)



Pictured is Martin Výška (in the right)

### Students seek superior education abroad

Talented students tend to know what they want out of their study abroad. A July survey, conducted by Datank using the CAWI on-line interviewing method, found that, most of the 248 applicants for the Zdeňk Bakala Foundation's SCHOLARSHIP program\* plan to return to the Czech Republic.

The overwhelming majority of these talented students said that they were pursuing a degree abroad primarily because of the higher teaching standard and closer contact with professors at top foreign universities. These universities also offer more opportunities to forge valuable connections, which can enhance graduates' career prospects significantly.

While most of the students plan to work abroad after graduation, 72% plan to return to the Czech Republic, where they will use the experiences and contacts that they have gained elsewhere to build their careers.

### How can the reputation of Czech universities be improved?

A recent survey revealed that Czech students heading to foreign universities believe that the Czech education system focuses excessively on the memorization of facts, and fails to emphasize dialogue with professors. In order to improve the reputation of Czech universities, students suggested offering positions to distinguished foreign professors, increasing investment in education, and adopting Western teaching methods.

Respondents also proposed establishing masters-degree programs exclusively in English, raising professors' salaries, and aligning curricula more closely with their practical applications. Many even support the introduction of tuition fees at Czech universities, based on the belief that such fees could raise the standard of teaching by reducing the number of students in each class.

### Biology and Mathematics at Cambridge

Martin Výška is among the 60 scholars who have received financial support from the Zdeňk Bakala Foundation's SCHOLARSHIP program over the last four years.

Martin has spent three years studying Mathematics at the University of Cambridge. "Studying here is very different from studying at Czech schools," Martin explains. "Students attend fewer lectures, but have a lot of homework. Rather than receive a grade for such assignments, we meet with our tutors and another student for hour-long sessions, during which we discuss the work. This individual approach provides a great opportunity to grasp the topics or to just have an informal chat with the teachers about anything under the sun." Martin has recently been admitted to a doctoral program in mathematical modelling in epidemiology, which will combine mathematics with biology, at Cambridge.

Martin will join Michaela Bakala, Pepper de Callier, and Radek Špicar in the Selection Committee, which will conduct interviews with the most promising applicants this month. Next year's the SCHOLARSHIP program will be announced in 2014.