

FOR FRESH GRADUATES

Procter & Gamble University Roadshow in Pécs

Supporting its university program started in 2004 and on occasion of “2007-Equal Opportunities European Year” Procter & Gamble initiated a partnership program with Hungarian universities in order to promote gender equality and to provide graduate students with information on career opportunities in alliance with the Association for Women’s Career Development in Hungary (AWCDH).

The roadshow, which was held for the fourth time on **October 30**, was hosted by the **University of Pécs**, the oldest institution for higher education in Central –Eastern Europe.

What were the objectives of the Pecs roadshow? – we asked from Ms **Andrea Ferenczi**, the President of AWCDH.

-We wanted to draw the attention of university students to the challenges and requirements they have to meet and show them positive examples of the successful harmonization of work/career and private life. The meeting was also used for sharing the experience of Procter&Gamble regarding equal opportunities.

The chair of the roadshow, Ms **Andrea Ferenczi** emphasized in her introductory speech that earlier the city was publicly known for her uranium and coal mining and power stations, but now it has been replaced by places of passing on knowledge, schools. The jobs done by husbands and wives can be harmonized in a certain stage of life in a way that both of them can build their own future.

Ms Boglárka Szentpétery, regional HR manager of Procter&Gamble said that the 170-year-old P&G looks for fresh graduates with the same objective method all over the world and trains them to become future executives. P&G has more than 138 000 employees and they represent 140 different nations. As a result of the efforts for equal opportunities the proportion of women executives has risen from 36% to 47% during the last 4 years. P&G is continuously tightening her relationship with AWCDH.

Dr. Dénes Koltai, Dean of the university stressed that the majority of the 3000 students are women who meet the requirements of their workplaces and also of their families while participating in lifelong learning as well.

Dr. Róbert Gábor, the Rector of the University thought it was important to mention that the first step towards building a career is education, obtaining the elements of knowledge. One has to prepare for building a career, since only those who can accept both themselves and their career can be successful but a proper environment, a workplace is necessary for that.

According to Ms **Aliza Bin-Noun**, Ambassador of Israel the gender question points beyond itself, it is a question of the whole society.

Ms April H. Foley, Ambassador of the US informed the participants of the roadshow that the American government supports the realization of gender equality with legislation and concrete programs.

The invited guests in the panel discussion were all women executives, who helped the young with their personal experience in the field of business, politics, public administration and non-governmental sector and their pieces of advice showing good examples of the successful harmonization their careers and private lives.

Dr. Zita Gurmai supporting AWCDH actively for five years, **MEP** claimed that the labour force of women is necessary in Europe, since a family cannot live only on the man's salary. But the equal salary for equal work principle has not been realized yet, since women have to work 54 days more to get a man's salary. The lives of the members of a society can only be supported if there are more women in the labour market, where employers ensure flexibility and security to employees. Based on her opinion and the example of her own career the question of family and career can be harmonized.

As a mother of two, **Ms Gyöngyi Hidasi, External Relations Manager of P&G** said that she received all the help from her company to become an executive and to be able to harmonize her family obligations and her career with good organizational skills.

Dr. Judit Demeter, Chairwoman of the Equal Treatment Authority mentioned that they deal with 100 complaints every month, which number shows that women are in a disadvantageous situation both in the society and the family. She mentioned what things young people have to pay attention to at an interview to avoid discrimination.

The closing remarks of the conference were told by **Dr. Ella Álmos**.

Csaba Galánfi

