Rector Professor Dr.-Ing. Gerhard Sagerer’s laudation on the occasion of conferral of the Alexander von Humboldt-Professorship to Professor William Crawley-Boevey, Telekom AG Representative Office, Berlin, Mai, 3 2016, 17:30.

Dear Bill [Professor Crawley-Boevey],

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Describing Bielefeld University’s strategy and vision and at the same time honoring you, Bill, in not more than five minutes is truly a challenge which I hope I will meet. Let’s keep it quick and easy and start with our vision:

Bielefeld University aims at being excellent and internationally visible in a few distinguished research areas. Within these areas we want to attract internationally renowned scientists and ambitious students. “Theoretical Sciences” is the label for one of these research areas and within the “Theoretical Sciences” our Faculty of Mathematics clearly plays a major role.

Bielefeld’s Faculty of Mathematics has for decades been very strong in research and enjoys an excellent reputation within the international scientific community. I want to name but two indicators which demonstrate Bielefeld’s Mathematics strengths: it has achieved the 2nd place in the 2014 Humboldt Ranking and is ranked 3rd in the current DFG Förderatlas!

Since 1989 our Faculty of Mathematics has continuously run huge collaborative projects. Within these projects 15 Humboldt awardees, 22 Humboldt fellows as well as several Field medalists have (most of them repeatedly!) visited our university. Every year our Faculty of Mathematics welcomes more than 100 international scientists and organizes around 15 international conferences.

A research area Bielefeld’s Mathematics is internationally well known for and THE PLACE to be is Representation Theory which is also your field Bill!

Bielefeld wants to hold its top position within the area of Representation Theory and even further develop its scope. Your specific profile provides a unique opportunity for us to build new bridges to other research areas and thus significantly broaden the range of Representation Theory’s applications.

You are a leading expert in Representation Theory and are internationally the most distinguished scholar in this field. Briefly speaking: You will complement and strengthen our Representation Theory group in an excellent way:

Bill - we are very pleased to welcome you at our university and our colleagues at the Faculty of Mathematics are excited and cannot wait to collaborate with you – having intriguing and fruitful discussions on Representation Theory all night long!