

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,
dear guests,
dear Professor Kruse,
dear Professor Paus,

As the director of the GEMEINNÜTZIGE, I warmly welcome you in our house today.

I'm very happy that your symposium with the topic "Frontiers in Skin Wound Healing" will be held here in the facilities of our GEMEINNÜTZIGEN.

You – out of all – know best that we have a small but mighty University. We fought for it! We retained it! And also Lübeck received the "City of Science Award" of the year 2012. I personally stood on the stage at this moment and know what I'm talking about. The entire population and community of Lübeck is pleased with this success. Look forward with us.

I want to introduce the corporation I preside over with a few sentences:

The GEMEINNÜTZIGE was founded 222 years ago in 1789 by a group of 26 well-suited men under the leadership of Dr. Ludwig Suhl, priest in Saint Petri, as a reading society. These men were led by the interest in cognition and knowledge. A few years later it turned into the corporation of supporting charitable action that it is until today.

We are thus supporting cultural and social advancements for more than 200 years now. Since we also founded the Sparkasse of Lübeck in 1817, today carrying the second-biggest charity foundation in Schleswig-Holstein, our work is a little easier.

We have a total of 2000 members. Our 38 affiliates however have about 8000 members and they are approaching about 25.000 people with their events.

Additionally we operate 20 more institutions including an art-, a music- and an acting school; also a site for family education, a concert hall including 500 seats, a public library, a major offer on lectures, a magazine and miscellaneous social facilities. Several hundred people assist us in form of full-time and temporary employees.

Everybody knows the GEMEINNÜTZIGE as a hall for family festivities and other activities. The location I am talking about is exactly this room, the room we find ourselves right now. My antecessors are found on the walls. To act for common good is not the worst goal for a person from Lübeck. For that we are constantly working.

I wish you a successful symposium. In fact I have no doubt, thanks to fantastic Charli Kruse. Feel comfortable in Lübeck. I'm happy to offer help and advice. Please visit our beautiful churches as well. One of the most beautiful is located directly across from the GEMEINNÜTZIGE. And the oldest hospital and bedhouse foundation – together with Beaune – in Europe, the Heiligen-Geist-Hospital, an architectural jewel, is also located next door. Take some time to explore Lübeck – a beautiful old hanseatic city!

I wish you all the best. Thank you very much.