

## **1996 Doctor of Humane Letters**

### **Yale University**

#### **Stephan Ernst Schmidheiny Business Leader**

Stephan Schmidheiny is considered one of the world's most environmentally conscious business leaders. His belief that the cornerstone of sustainable, ecologically sound development is open, accessible markets and more streamlined regulatory systems is articulated in his international best-seller "Changing Course." As principal advisor for business and industry to the Secretary General of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, he established and chaired the Business Council for Sustainable Development BCSD, which last year became part of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, composed of the leaders of 120 global companies. A citizen of Switzerland, Mr. Schmidheiny holds a doctorate in law from the University of Zurich. He built a portion of his family's business into three private international holding companies. When he acquired a global company based on asbestos-reinforced concrete, he introduced a new technology to replace asbestos in all its products. In 1980, he reorganized his businesses, selling those that did not conform to his environmental principles.

"Not content to be a steward of a family business, you have used your corporate role to promote stewardship of the global environment. You have made company decisions based upon the health of the planet, introducing new technologies and ways of doing business that are environmentally friendly. By bringing your message to leading industrialists around the world, you have helped to create an attainable vision of a global economy based on sustainable, ecologically sound development. ..."