

The Honorands of The 2008 Commencement

Yvon Chouinard Doctor of Humane Letters

Yvon Chouinard is the founder, president, and CEO of Patagonia, Inc., a leader in the field of outdoor clothing and gear. A native of Lisbon, Maine, he is a pioneering climber and manufacturer of climbing equipment who participated in a number of first ascents, including the North American Wall on El Capitan in Yosemite without the use of fixed ropes. His book *Climbing Ice* (1978) and his climbing tools are credited with starting the modern sport of ice climbing. Launched in 1972, Patagonia reflects Chouinard's environmental and social activism. The company continually seeks ways to minimize the environmental impacts associated with the manufacture, packaging, use, and discard of its products. In 2001 he co-founded One Percent for the Planet to support grassroots organizations committed to environmental protection. He is the author of *Let My People Go Surfing: The Education of a Reluctant Businessman* (2005), which outlines Patagonia's business philosophy of encouraging creativity and healthy lifestyles among its employees.