

BOWDOIN COLLEGE
COMMENCEMENT 1994

William Farley, your alma mater honors you today for distinctive achievements in business and in philanthropy. A 1964 graduate of Bowdoin College, you received a law degree from Boston College in 1969 and are currently Chairman and CEO of Farley Industries, Inc., a multi-national conglomerate. The most celebrated component of your enterprise is Fruit of the Loom, an apparel manufacturer, which, under your management, tripled its number of employees and quadrupled its sales in less than ten years. Today this Fortune 500 company employs 34,000 people worldwide and boasts sales of two billion dollars annually. Writers who have followed your entrepreneurial career (and there are many) describe you as the embodiment of the American dream: a man of humble origins who realized his financial ambitions through hard work, daring and determination. Your own philosophy, "if you can conceive it, you can achieve it," suggests that you yourself define success more broadly. Indeed, while best known for your business accomplishments, you have participated actively and consistently in cultural and civic affairs. The Farley Foundation, which you direct, has supported organizations ranging from the Chicago Lyric Opera, to Big Brothers/ Big Sisters, to the AIDS Foundation. While your professional life has taken you around the globe, you have retained your loyalty to Bowdoin College and to Maine. For twelve years (1980-92) you served as overseer of the college; you are the principal donor of the Farley Field House -- an effort to keep all of us as fit as you are. As a summer resident of Maine, you are currently forming a collection of paintings by contemporary artists in this state. At a time when many individuals and organizations have turned their backs on the arts, you continue to demonstrate a commitment to your own distinctive vision.

President Edwards, I am honored to present to you WILLIAM FARLEY for the degree of DOCTOR OF LAWS, honoris causa.

Presented by Professor Linda J. Docherty