

Mr Charles Paul Curran AC

The honorary degree of Doctor of Letters was conferred upon Charles Paul Curran AC at the University of Sydney Business School graduation ceremony held in the Great Hall at 11.30am on Friday 6 June 2014.

Citation

Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present Charles Paul Curran AC to you for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters (honoris causa) for his exceptional contributions to business, the Catholic Church and the broader community as a philanthropist.

Charles Curran graduated from the University of Sydney with a Bachelor of Laws. He obtained an accountancy qualification and is a Fellow of C.P.A.

After graduating he first practised as a solicitor, then as a stockbroker and partner with the firm Bernard Curran McHugh. He also served as Vice Chairman of the Sydney Stock Exchange from 1973 to 1976.

Charles Curran has been a director of over twenty companies, many as Chair, across a range of sectors (including Perpetual Ltd, The Australian Wool Exchange, Capital TV Holdings, QBE Insurance Group, Ampol Ltd, Ampol Exploration Ltd, Pioneer International Ltd, Rank Xerox Australia Pty Ltd and Greater Union Organisation Pty Ltd). He is currently on the Board of International Advisors of Goldman Sachs and Chairman of Capital Investment Group P/L. He is a highly respected leader in Australian business whose expertise has also been sought by government, having chaired Commissions of Audit for New South Wales and Tasmania and other public inquiries. In 2005 he was appointed by the then Treasurer to the Federal Government's Financial Sector Advisory Council.

In parallel to a lifetime of work as a business leader Charles Curran has been a major contributor to and supporter of a variety of not for profit endeavours, his major achievement in this area being the Curran Foundation (renamed the St Vincent's Curran Foundation in 2013). The Foundation was established in 1984 in response to funding shortages for public health services at St Vincent's Hospital. At that time Charles Curran was chairman of the Hospital. On the establishment of the Foundation, he was appointed Chairman of Trustees of the Curran Foundation.

Under his leadership the Foundation, recognising how a shortage of discretionary funding compromised patient care, staff morale and clinical innovation, sought to create an endowment whereby financial support could be provided in perpetuity to the St Vincent's campus. In the period since its establishment the Foundation has, under Charles Curran's leadership, provided grants worth over \$21m to St Vincent's while building its endowment to over \$18m. These grants have supported research and treatment across a range of medical specialties including: cardiology, cancer and neuroscience.

Charles Curran's commitment to improving the community did not end with his critical role with the establishment and subsequent stewardship of the Curran Foundation. Concurrent with this role he was Vice President and Director of the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children (1981-2003), Chairman of the Sydney Health Service (1986-1988), Deputy Chairman of the East Sydney Health Service (1988-1989) and Chairman of the Garvan Institute of Medical Research (1988-1994), Australia's largest autonomous medical research institute and an internationally recognized leader in gene based medical research.

Beyond the health and medical sector, Charles Curran has generously contributed his time and talents to the conduct of numerous other not for profit causes and organisations, including: the Australia Ireland Fund which supports worthy Irish causes, particularly in the areas of education, community development, peace and reconciliation and arts and culture (as Chairman); the Australian Indigenous Education Fund which focuses empowering Indigenous children in financial need to build a future through quality education and careers (as Ambassador); the National Gallery of Australia (as Deputy Chair); and the National Gallery of Australia Foundation (as Chair).

Charles Curran's various contributions to business and the community were acknowledged with the award of an AO in 1987 and an AC in 2006 specifically acknowledging the dual nature of his 'service to business and commerce as a leader in promoting a dynamic and competitive financial sector and dialogue between business and government, and to the community in setting the strategic direction for many sporting, arts, not-for-profit and health care organisations.'

In February, 2013 his contributions were further recognised by the Catholic Church when he was conferred with the knighthood of the Grand Cross of the Order of St Gregory the Great by His Eminence Cardinal George Pell AC. The award acknowledged his contributions to the Catholic Church and the broader community as a philanthropist.

Chancellor, I present Charles Paul Curran AC for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters (honoris causa), and I invite you to confer the degree upon him.