

3. Speech to the honoured alumnus – Aarhus University Annual Celebration 2010

Ladies and gentlemen,

Aarhus University has more than 38,000 students. We are proud of this and we hope that when they leave the university as bachelors, masters or PhD's, these many students will act as ambassadors for the university. As a university we borrow many of the country's best minds for a while and do what we can to provide them with knowledge and ballast for their lives after their time at university. To make visible the fact that the university acknowledges the crucial contributions made by its alumnus in society in general, we established a new prize on the occasion of Aarhus University's 80th anniversary in 2008: Aarhus University's Honored Alumnus prize (*Aarhus Universitets Æres-alumnepris*).

In addition to the honour of receiving the prize the recipient is also presented with a sculpture by the sculptor Hanne Varming. This presentation is made during the annual celebration to a graduate of Aarhus University who has made an exceptional contribution to the development of society and who is thereby a symbol of the significance of the university. The first prize winner was His Royal Highness Crown Prince Frederik, while last year the prize went to NATO's Secretary General and former Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen.

I now take great pleasure in revealing Aarhus University's third honored alumnus: Managing Director of A.P. Møller-Mærsk Nils Smedegaard Andersen.

Dear Nils Smedegaard Andersen,

I take great pleasure in naming you as an honored alumnus of Aarhus University. You are an outstanding role model for Aarhus University's students. You graduated as Master of Science in Economics in 1982, and your unique career in the Danish corporate world is an outstanding example of how there are no limitations when the right foundation, diligence, hard-work and capability are the driving forces – perhaps mixed with a little stubbornness, something for which natives of Jutland are known.

As Managing Director of Denmark's largest company you have certainly been a worthy representative for the concept of "due care". You have guided A.P.Møller-Mærsk through one of the most extensive global crises ever experienced, a crisis that we cannot even be certain is over yet, and I know that you have earned substantial – and deserved – respect for this achievement. As Managing Director of A.P. Møller-Mærsk and previously as Managing Director of Carlsberg, who have been involved in companies where you have applied quality, consequence, innovation and foresight to strengthen the position of these companies on the global scene. These are qualities that Aarhus University also places great emphasis on.

It is no exaggeration to say that as one of Denmark's most talented and most important business executives, you bring great credit to Aarhus University.

For all of these reasons, it is my great pleasure to appoint you as honored alumnus of Aarhus University.