



**PRESS RELEASE VLERICK AWARD 2010
ANNOUNCING NOMINEES**

On **Thursday, 29 April 2010** during the **10th festive anniversary edition** of the **Vlerick Award** in Kinepolis Brussels a new name will be added to the honour roll in the presence of many former winners and former nominees. The winner will be chosen based on the following criteria:

"a business leader who guided his company to the international top with sustainable results".

The nominees are (in alphabetical order):

- **Michaël Bremans (Ecover),**
- **Thomas Leysen (Umicore),**
- **Jean Stéphane (GSK),**
- **Vic Swerts (Soudal).**

The winner will be chosen by the public, voting online through Vlerick Alumni's website (starting 1 March 2010) and through live voting in the hall during the evening itself.

In this press release:

- a. Vlerick Award: setup and honour roll
- b. Profiles of the nominees
- c. Vlerick Alumni

Contact:

- Martine Dykmans, general manager Vlerick Alumni:
> Tel.: +32 9 210 98 17, martine.dykmans@staff.vlerickalumni.com
- Dominique Soetaert, brand manager Vlerick Alumni:
> Tel.: +32 9 210 98 79, dominique.soetaert@staff.vlerickalumni.com

Website: www.vlerickalumni.com



A. Vlerick Award: setup and honour roll

The Vlerick Award is being held for the tenth time on Thursday 29 April 2010. This year the ceremony takes place in Kinopolis Brussels.

> What are the conditions to become a nominee?

The selection criteria for choosing nominees are closely linked to the basic values used by the Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School in offering high-quality management education with an international dimension.

A nominee for the Vlerick Award must meet the following criteria:

- He/she is a multi-faceted Belgian **business leader** with excellent management skills;
- He/she achieved, from an **international** perspective, **sustainable results** which grew the organization / company into a **leader in its market segment**.

> How are nominations made for the Vlerick Award?

Based on the above-mentioned criteria, the Board of Directors of Vlerick Alumni together with the professors of the Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School, will put together a long list of possible candidates. Through a secret ballot each of the members of the Vlerick Alumni Board of Directors then puts together a top three list, which eventually leads to a short list. Next, the candidates are contacted and they either accept or reject their nomination.

> Vlerick Award winners:

2001: Karel Van Miert
2002: Baron Paul De Keersmaecker
2003: Jean-Luc Dehaene
2004: Dr Peter Piot
2005: Dr Catherine Verfaillie
2006: Sister Jeanne Devos
2007: Baron Patrick De Maeseneire
2008: Hein Deprez & Gabriel Fehervari
2009: Herman Van de Velde



B. Profiles of the nominees (in alphabetical order)

MICHAËL BREMANS – ECOVER

Michaël Bremans graduated as a Licentiate in Applied Economics (RUCA Antwerp). He earned his first stripes in the tourism and service industry. Bremans has been leading Ecover, founded in Belgium in 1980, as its CEO since 1993. Under Bremans' guidance, the company has since grown into a global market leader in environmentally-friendly laundry and cleaning products for consumers and for professional and industrial cleaners. In addition to its headquarters in Malle, Ecover currently has offices in the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany and Switzerland. Its products are sold in more than 26 countries.

Bremans' consistent integration of the principles of sustainable entrepreneurship in its business strategy has been shown to be a hit. Under externally-audited ISO 14001 standard, Ecover extended its environmental policy to include all of its departments, from production to marketing. In October 2008 TIME Magazine, published in the US, honoured Michaël Bremans, together with 29 other eco-pioneers as "Hero of the Environment". Earlier this year, managing director Bremans published the book "Eco Logica" in which he describes his personal involvement and also the concern he has wrestled with for sixteen years at Ecover. At the same time the book shows how a company can survive in a very competitive market, also when one doesn't want to follow the classic and hard laws of economics.

JEAN STEPHENNE – GLAXOSMITHKLINE

Jean Stéphane graduated as a Chemistry and Bio-Industry Engineer (University of Gembloux) and later obtained an MBA (University of Louvain-La-Neuve). Stéphane started his career in 1974 at SmithKline-Rit, now GlaxoSmithKline Biologicals. He is still making important contributions to the expansion of the pharmacy giant, which has a 25 percent market share, making it one of the largest vaccine producers in the world. Stéphane started his career as head of the bacteria and viral vaccines production unit and moved through almost all possible levels. Today he is the chairman and general director of GlaxoSmithKline Biologicals, the worldwide centre of GlaxoSmithKline's research, development and production activities in Wallonia.

In addition he is a member of the board of various organisations, including the VBO (Federation of Enterprises in Belgium) and Groupe Bruxelles Lambert (GBL). Stéphane's efforts didn't go unnoticed. Nine years ago he was made a baron by King Albert II, recognition for his contribution to R&D and Belgian industry. In 2007 the group of Vaccine Industry CEOs chose him as their representative at the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation, a position that lasts three years.

THOMAS LEYSEN – UMICORE

Thomas Leysen graduated as a Licentiate in Law (Catholic University Leuven). He started his career in the maritime industry in Hamburg, London and Tokyo. From 1983 to 1988 he lead



the Transcor Group which he built into an international oil and coal trading company, active in Europe, the United States and Asia. In 1989 he became a director at the "Generale Maatschappij van België" and in 1993 he joined the management committee of one of its subsidiaries, at the time the Union Minière. He became its managing director in 2000. He carried out an extensive reorganisation of the material technology group, which grew from a non-ferro group with a troubled environmental past to a 'clean' materials specialist. That metamorphosis included a name change: in 2001 Umicore was born.

At the end of 2008 Leysen handed over his tasks as a managing director to Marc Grynberg, while he took over the position of chairman of the Board of Directors from Karel Vinck. That step created more room for being the chairman of the VBO, a position Leysen has occupied since the start of 2008. Leysen is also chairman of the Board of Directors of the Flemish publishing and holding company Corelio. In addition, he is a member of the board of a number of companies, including Compagnie Maritime Belge and IMEC. He is also very active in the cultural arena. For example, he is a member of the Board of Directors of the Rubens House in Antwerp and chairman of the Fund for Cultural Heritage Buildings of the King Baudouin Foundation.

VIC SWERTS – SOUDAL

For Vic Swerts it all started in 1966 at the Ossenmarkt in Antwerp. Swerts was 26 at the time and he bought a little company specialising in welding materials and the manufacture of polyester repair pastes used to repair damaged car body parts. The small factory soon couldn't keep up with demand and it moved first to his parents' horticulture operation in Turnhout and later to the Turnhout industry park, where Soudal NV was founded in 1981. Soudal expanded, its export activities grew systematically and in 1992 it made the first of a series of acquisitions.

Vic Swerts not only focuses on growth, but also quality, as proven by the ISO 9002 certificate Soudal received that same year. The Polish building industry named the brand "brand of the year" no less than three times. Today, Soudal is an international export company famous for its pointing kits, glues and PU foam. The company employs more than 1000 people in some thirty offices and it is active in more than 120 countries. As a reward for his unremitting vitality and ambition, Vic Swerts was awarded the decoration of Officer in the Order of Leopold by the governor of Antwerp, Camiel Paulus, in 2006. According to self-made man Swerts, his company's success resulted from a combination of quality, customer-oriented solutions and the best possible after-sale service.



C. Vlerick Alumni

Vlerick Leuven Gent Alumni, a non-profit organisation, is the **official alumni organisation** of the Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School. The organisation represents **14,000 alumni** in almost **100 countries** worldwide. The alumni are almost all active at management and director levels within international and national companies and organisations. Well-known alumni of the Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School include **Paul Bulcke** (Nestlé), **Kris Peeters** (Flemish Minister-President), **Marc Coucke** (Omega Pharma), etc. Vlerick Alumni's mission is to **encourage** Vlerick's former students **in their growth**, both personally and in companies and in society through **professional networking** and **lifelong learning**.

The **Vlerick Award** is the **showpiece event** of Vlerick Alumni. Vlerick Alumni annually gives the Vlerick Award to a business leader who meets the role model of the kind of manager and entrepreneur that Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School wants to turn out. Last year the award was given to Herman Van de Velde (Van de Velde Group).

Chairman: Jean-Luc Deleersnyder, COO Sibelco Group

General Manager: Martine Dykmans