

RICHARD C. ATKINSON

Richard C. Atkinson is president emeritus of the University of California and professor emeritus of cognitive science and psychology at the University of California, San Diego. He served as president of the UC system from 1995 to 2003; his tenure was marked by innovative approaches to admissions and outreach, research initiatives to accelerate the University's contributions to the state's economy, and a challenge to the country's most widely used admissions examination—the SAT—that paved the way to major changes in the way millions of America's youth are tested for college admissions. Before becoming president he served for fifteen years as chancellor of UC San Diego, where he led that campus's emergence as one of the leading research universities in the nation. He is a former director of the National Science Foundation, past president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and was a long-term member of the faculty at Stanford University. His research has been concerned with problems of memory and cognition. In the 1960s he published a series of papers with Richard Shiffrin describing a general theory of human memory that, five decades later, continues to be predominant in the field. He is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Medicine, the National Academy of Education, and the American Philosophical Society. He is the recipient of many honorary degrees, the Vannevar Bush Medal of the National Science Board, and a mountain in Antarctica has been named in his honor.