

## ALUMNI PROFILE: DR. MILTON CORMIER '48

## Alum Makes Glowing Contribution to Science



Dr. Milton Cormier, '48, was a pioneer in the development of one of the most powerful tools in science: glow-in-the-dark genes. The bioluminescent proteins are used in genetic studies and medical research as markers in living cells. The glowing proteins can be taken from one organism and inserted into another. So, scientists can literally see how genes are expressed or perhaps detect tumor tissue without surgery.

After joining the University of Georgia faculty in 1958, Cormier established a research laboratory at UGA and was a founder of the school's Biochemistry Department. In 1985, Cormier published the first example of cloning a gene with coding for a bioluminescent protein.

Dr. J. David Puett, UGA's Regents Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, said Cormier influenced major research in his field. "Many of his trainees became professors in major universities ... his research has withstood the test of time, being at the forefront of a growing field that has continued to advance science."

One of Cormier's former colleagues, Dr. Douglas Prasher, was the first to clone green fluorescent protein using techniques developed in Cormier's lab. GFP is widely used in genetic studies and medical research. In 2008, three scientists, Drs. Osamu Shimomura, Roger Tsien and Martin Chalfie, earned the Nobel Prize in chemistry for the discovery and development of GFP.

Cormier holds a bachelor's degree in chemistry from UL Lafayette. He earned a master's degree in biochemistry from the University of Texas, Austin and a doctorate in microbiology from the University of Tennessee.

Cormier retired in 1993 and was named a distinguished research professor emeritus of biochemistry at UGA. In 2007, he published his autobiography, *My Journey*.

He and his wife, Dolores, live in Sun Lakes, Ariz. The couple have three children, Milton **Joseph Cormier Jr.**, '80; Wil Cormier; and Mark Cormier.

2001, the firm has specialized in new construction and historic preservation. Albert earned a bachelor's degree in architecture. He and his wife, Amanda, live in New Orleans.

After graduating with a bachelor's degree in sociology, **MARY I. HICKS** spent two years teaching English in Japan. She returned to the United States and earned a master's degree in education from the University of New Orleans. Hicks ran the Critical Languages Program at UNO, which included languages that were not commonly taught in the university's curricula. She has served as president, vice president and as a board member of the National Association of Self-Instructional Language Programs. She also has served on the board of the New Orleans Citizen Diplomacy Council. She is married to Scott Smith.

## 1994

**SHAWNE HUVAL TAYLOR** serves on the Louisiana Math Fellows Advisory Panel. The 21-member panel includes seven mathematics educators representing each



school level – elementary, middle and high school. They work with the Department of Education to increase students' readiness for college and careers. Taylor teaches seventh and eighth grade mathematics at Cecilia Junior High School. She holds a bachelor's degree in elementary education from USL. She earned a master's degree in education and post-master's 30 plus certification in education from UL Lafayette. She and her husband, Chad, have a son, Braelon.

## 1997

**KACEE SCHEXNAYDER THOMPSON** is vice president of business development at The Cartesian Company, a real estate and financial solutions business in Lafayette. She also serves on the board of the Lafayette Land Revitalization Authority, a non-profit organization that restores and redevelops abandoned property. She holds a

## 1982

**OWEN T. CHOATE** flies MD-88 planes for Delta Airlines. He is a check airman, qualified to certify other pilots. Choate flew military cargo planes during Opera-



tion Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm and has been a transport pilot in the U.S. Air Force for 21 years. He participated in humanitarian missions, delivering food and supplies and providing airlift rescues in Russia and Africa. Choate holds a bachelor's degree in business administration. He and his wife, **JULIE PINKERTON**, '82, live in Summerville, S.C. They have three sons: Adam, Thomas and Matthew.

## 1985

**RANDALL MANN** is director of mar-

keting and sales for Acadian Monitoring Service. He and his wife, **STEPHANIE ANN HANAGRIFF**, '86, created Advice Marketing in 1992. He is a private pilot who provides volunteer marketing services for charity events such as the Sertoma Cajun Air Festival and the Acadiana AirFest. He also has served as chairman of *Le Festival de Mardi Gras à Lafayette* for 17 years. He holds a bachelor's degree in public relations. Mann and his wife have a son, Michael Tyler, and a daughter, Emily. They live in Lafayette.

## 1987

**TROY D. TAYLOR** was recently promoted to colonel in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve and chosen as staff judge advocate for the 4th Marine Aircraft Wing at the U.S. Marine Forces Reserve in New Orleans. He is chief counsel for NASA Shared Services Center at the Stennis Space Center. Taylor received a bachelor's degree in business administration from

USL and *juris doctors* from the University of New Orleans and Loyola University. He also earned a master of laws from George Washington University National Law Center. He and his wife, Dawn, have two sons, Nicholas and Christian.

## 1989

**MICHELLE BACQUE WILSON**, who holds a bachelor's degree in mass communication, supervises 23 employees at Fox Sports Network Engineering and Operations in The Woodlands, Texas. She manages the production of commercials, programs and promotions for 20 national television networks. She and her husband, Jason, have a daughter, Ava Elise.

## 1990

**RICHARD P. ALBERT** is owner and principal of Albert Architecture and Urban Design, which is based in New Orleans. Since