



I grew up in the small, blue collar town of Luling, just outside of New Orleans. As a boy, my dream was always to attend LSU, that big school in Baton Rouge. I was exposed to the chemical industry through my father, who worked some 30 plus years at the local plant. I was fascinated by the big equipment and various unit operations that I didn't understand at the time, so my curiosity into the field of engineering started there.

My dad was a bit of a "jack of all trades" and could fix just about anything. He had great technical and problem solving skills, which also fueled my interest in engineering. The importance of getting an education and excelling at academics was instilled in me by my mother. She also loved mathematics, which rubbed off on me. As my academic studies advanced, my interest in mathematics and the sciences continued to grow. Chemistry particularly fascinated me, so off to LSU I went, hoping to be the first of my family to earn a

college degree.

Although I had finished near the top of my high school class, LSU was different and big, and my pre-engineering and engineering studies were tough. The more I learned and was challenged, the more determined I became. I learned as much from my failures as I did from my successes. The more challenging the work, the more I grew.

Our studies in the LSU College of Engineering not only taught us the fundamentals of chemical engineering, but the faculty taught us even more valuable skills — the ability to read, research for information/data and a strong logic process to solve problems and make good decisions.

I still remember some 35 years ago, during my sophomore year, going to Dr. Groves' office during his office hours to get help with a particular homework problem. I expected to walk out of there with the answer, but instead walked out very dissatisfied with the brief session. Instead of getting