Executive tribute
By Allison Long, Associate Editor

At bioMérieux, a family’s history melds with microbiology’s future

The Mérieux mantle is again passed

The history of the Mérieux family business

1897: Marcel Mérieux, assistant to Louis Pasteur, founds the Institut Mérieux, which begins as a medical analysis laboratory.

1937: Dr. Charles Mérieux, Marcel’s son, takes over management of the Institute. He later forms a reagents division which evolves into BD-Mérieux.

1963: Alain Mérieux, Charles’ son, becomes head of BD-Mérieux, which is equally divided in ownership between Becton Dickinson and Institut Mérieux.

1967: Dr. Charles Mérieux founds the Fondation Mérieux, named in honor of his father, Marcel. Alain becomes head of Institut Mérieux.

1968: BD-Mérieux retains its independence when Becton Dickinson requests that Alain Mérieux buy out Institut Mérieux’s shares in response to Rhône-Poulenc’s acquisition of interest in the capital of Institut Mérieux.

1974: bioMérieux is formed and achieves international independence, subsequently evolving into a worldwide group specializing in the field of in vitro diagnostics for medical and industrial applications.

1987: bioMérieux acquires API System, a French company that serves as a world reference in identification and manual antibiotic susceptibility testing.


2001: bioMérieux acquires Organon Teknika, a diagnostic unit that was a division of the Akzo Nobel group.

2001: Dr. Charles Mérieux, founder and president of the Fondation Mérieux, dies at the age of 94.

2003: bioMérieux celebrates its 40-year anniversary.

2004: bioMérieux is listed on the stock market.

In memoriam

Vice president of bioMérieux’s Research and Development Christophe Mérieux died of cardiac failure on Friday, July 14, at the family home in Lyon, France, at the age of 39. He was also the head of Transgène, a Strasbourg holding of Mérieux Alliance. In 1996, his younger brother, Rodolphe Mérieux, died on TWA flight 800, which exploded shortly after takeoff from New York City. Alexandre Mérieux, the third of Alain Mérieux’s sons, remains as the logical successor in a chain of command that spans four generations.

Editor’s note: The long-planned interview for this month’s Executive Snapshot was with Christophe Mérieux, highlighting his family’s 100-year history with this industry and the future direction of bioMérieux. With respect for the Mérieux family and in recognition of the achievements of bioMérieux, we present this tribute in memory of Christophe Mérieux’s personal commitment to the cause of global health. □