

## **J. Craig Venter**

J. Craig Venter, Ph.D., is regarded as one of the leading scientists of the 21st century for his invaluable contributions in genomic research and is one of the most frequently cited scientists in North America. He is Founder, Chairman and CEO of the J. Craig Venter Institute, a not-for-profit, research and support organization dedicated to human, Microbial, Plant and Environmental genomic research, the exploration of social and ethical issues in genomics, and to seeking alternative energy solutions through Genomics. The J. Craig Venter Institute has two divisions, the Institute for Genomic Research (TIGR), founded by Dr. Venter in 1992; and the Center for the Advancement of Genomics.

Dr. Venter began his formal education after a tour of duty as a Navy Corpsman, in Danang, Vietnam from 1967 to 1968. After earning both a Bachelor's degree in Biochemistry and a Ph.D. in Physiology and Pharmacology from the University of California at San Diego, he was appointed professor at the State University of New York at Buffalo and the Roswell Park Cancer Institute. In 1984, he moved to the National Institutes of Health campus where he pioneered a revolutionary new strategy for rapid gene discovery. At TIGR he and his team decoded the genome of the first free-living organism, the bacterium *Haemophilus influenzae*, using his new whole genome shotgun technique. TIGR has sequenced more than 50 genomes to date using Dr. Venter's techniques.

In 1998, Dr. Venter founded Celera Genomics to sequence the human genome. The successful completion of this research culminated with the February 2001 publication of the human genome in the journal, *Science*. He and his team at Celera also sequenced the fruit fly, mouse and rat genomes. Dr. Venter and his team at the Venter Institute continue to blaze new trails in genomics research and have recently published several important papers covering such areas as environmental genomics, synthetic genomics and the sequence and analysis of the dog genome.

Dr. Venter is the author of more than 200 research articles and is the recipient of numerous honorary degrees, public honors, and scientific awards. These include: the 2001 Paul Ehrlich and Ludwig Darmstaedter Prize, and the 2002 Gairdner Foundation International Award. Dr. Venter is a member of numerous prestigious scientific organizations including the National Academy of Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the American Society for Microbiology. In 2004 Dr. Venter was one of the first 38 people to be selected by Desmond Tutu's Foundation for Peace as part of the 'Hands that Shape Humanity' world exhibition.