Dr. Joseph L. Taylor

April 7, 1941 ~ July 28, 2016

Dr. Joseph L. Taylor, a mathematician and professor at the University of Utah, who was awarded the prestigious Steele Prize for his advances in mathematical analysis, died on July 28 in Salt Lake City. He was 75.

Dr. Taylor graduated from Olympus High School in 1959. The following year he began taking math classes at the University of Utah, before enrolling directly in the Louisiana State University graduate education program in 1961. Dr. Taylor received his Bachelor of Science degree in 1963, his doctorate only a year later. Dr. Taylor then became a Benjamin Peirce Instructor at Harvard University.

Dr. Taylor returned to the University of Utah in 1965, where he taught and later became chair of the department from 1979 to 1982. Dr. Taylor recruited top mathematicians, helping to lead the university's math department to national prominence.

Dr. Taylor also served as Dean of the College of Science at the University of Utah from 1985 to 1987, and as Vice President for Academic Affairs from 1987 to 1990. He retired from the university in 2012.

As a young mathematician, Dr. Taylor gave a week-long series of lectures for the Conference Board of Mathematical Sciences. Those 1972 lectures included his own research, which advanced central mathematical analysis by taking seminal work by the renowned mathematician Dr. Paul Cohen to bring it to a conclusion, while at the same time opening up a whole new area of research. Those leading-edge efforts won Dr. Taylor the American Mathematical Society's highest research award, The Steele Prize for Mathematical Exposition.

Dr. Hugo Rossi was a colleague of Dr. Taylor's: "Joe's fearless insights, exceptional clarity of thought, and tirelessness while on the hunt, led him to tackle some of the most significant mathematical problems of his era, and if not resolve them, to bring new ideas and tools to the task."

Among Dr. Taylor numerous distinctions, he was an invited speaker at the International Congress of Mathematicians in 1974. He also served as a visiting professor at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne in 1975; in the same capacity, he taught at the University of New South Wales, Australia, in 1983.

Dr. Taylor's unpublished notes from the classes he taught were widely appropriated and appreciated. He perfected those specific course notes and turned them into three books: Several Complex Variables with Connections to Algebraic Geometry and Lie Groups, Complex Variables,and Foundations of Analysis.

Among his colleagues, friends, and family, Dr. Taylor was renowned for his sharp sense of humor and love of the outdoors. An avid hunter, hiker, and camper, he explored much of Utah's wilderness. He also trained bird dogs, including one national field champion.

Dr. Taylor was born on April 7, 1941. As the oldest of six children in a hard-pressed family, he willingly became a caregiver at a young age. He remained a loyal and supportive man throughout his life, providing help and guidance

to his immediate and extended family, as well as to his many friends and colleagues.

Dr. Taylor is survived by his wife of 58 years, the former Ulla Wallin; two daughters, Lucinda Taylor, and Christina Taylor; a son, James Taylor; and eight grandchildren. Dr. Taylor is also survived by three brothers, Steven, Thomas, and Daniel; and a sister, Rosemary Defa.

In conjunction with the University of Utah Math Department, Dr. Taylor's family will hold a memorial service for him on Wednesday, August 3, at 4:00 p.m. in the loft of the Leroy Cowles Building on Presidents Circle on the university campus. The service is open to Dr. Taylor's friends, colleagues, and former students.