James S. Marlen, it would appear, is living the American dream, a dream made possible by an athletic scholarship that enabled him to earn his engineering degree. In reality, as President, CEO and Chairman of the Board of Ameron International Corporation, he is ensuring that the dreams of millions become a reality.

At age 19, Jaime Musalem left his home and family in Chile to obtain a bachelor’s degree in chemical engineering from the University of Alabama. While his intention was to return home following his degree in 1965, this was not to be. Instead, he went on to pursue an M.B.A. degree at the University of Akron while working in the chemical and plastics group of GenCorp, Inc., a diversified corporation with interests in defense, aerospace, automotive, and plastics industries. In 1970, the year he completed his degree, Salvador Allende took Chile into Communism. Later that same year, Jaime Musalem became James S. Marlen, an American citizen.

Marlen remained with GenCorp for 28 years, initially holding various marketing and domestic and international general management posts. In 1988, he was named Vice President and officer of GenCorp, Inc., and President of GenCorp Polymer Products, the corporation’s primary consumer and industrial products segment. He remained with GenCorp until 1993, when the challenging position at Ameron was offered to him. Providing a management style based on teamwork, he assumed the role of coach and leader. Such a style has proved overwhelmingly successful for him and for Ameron. Under his leadership, the company has developed a strategy for controlled, sustained growth while penetrating new markets and developing new products.

Traded on the New York Stock Exchange, Ameron is a multinational manufacturer of highly engineered products for the building, construction, and industrial markets. It has operating divisions in 21 countries throughout North America, Latin America, Europe, and Asia. A leading producer of high-performance coatings and specialty chemical, fiberglass, concrete, and steel pipe systems, Ameron positively impacts on the lives of millions of people worldwide.

Marlen has an active role in civic affairs. Among his numerous memberships are governor, town hall of Los Angeles; director, Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce; director, Los Angeles Sports Council; and director, YMCA of Metropolitan Los Angeles. He is a Distinguished Engineering Fellow of the University of Alabama and a Chemical Engineering Departmental Fellow.

Marlen met his bride, the former Carolyn Shields of Thomasville, Alabama, while they were students in college. They enjoy three sons, Jim, Andrew, and John.