

# Oak Crest Institute of Science: Where Excellence Is What We Do

By Nan Kuhlman



*Dr. Marc Baum, Founder of  
Oak Crest Institute of Science*

If you're interested in science and medical innovation, you'll be pleased to know that Monrovia is home to an internationally renowned biomedical and chemistry research organization currently focused on developing medical devices that can provide a long-acting delivery of therapeutic medications. Oak Crest Institute of Science, located at 132 West Chestnut Avenue, was

established in 1998 and moved to Monrovia in 2016. Oak Crest's scientists have a common passion for performing competitive research while passing on their fascination with research to the next generation of scientists. The founder, Marc M. Baum, PhD, came to the US to research environmental issues, studying the application of chemistry to environmental problems. "I set Oak Crest up to be a center of excellence for biomedical and chemical research but with an educational component. Each year we take students into our laboratories to discover science through hands-on research as I first did," he says.

Though Oak Crest is not a school and does not grant degrees, it offers students a chance to conduct applied research in chemistry, biology, and medical science. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, most of Oak Crest's funding comes in the form of competitive grants from federal funding sources. Oak Crest has worked closely with the City Manager to establish a local science and technology infrastructure. Baum says, "With the City, we run a Junior Researcher Academy [for students in grades 7-9] each summer, and we have been building an environment to attract biotech start-up companies, with four companies currently working in our incubator space."

Hands-on research is key to fueling students' interest, and Baum found this to be true for himself. "I took chemistry at the Imperial College in London, but I wasn't impressed by the lectures," he says. "However, once I was given a research project, I realized this was what I wanted to do."

Oak Crest works closely with community colleges, such as Pasadena City College and Citrus College. One example is the Cooperative Education Program with Citrus College, coordinated by senior faculty member Paul Webster, PhD which consists of either job shadowing in Oak Crest laboratories or short, mentored research projects in the laboratory where students learn how to design and develop experiments.

When asked what makes the workday fun, Baum says, "I wouldn't characterize what we do as fun, but research gives us new and fascinating puzzles to solve every day. We all look forward to coming into the lab each morning."

You can find out more about Oak Crest Institute of Science at the website [www.oak-crest.org](http://www.oak-crest.org). Monrovia Living is pleased to welcome Oak Crest to our growing list of contributors, and we look forward to featuring some of their students in upcoming ads!



Oak Crest Institute of Science (Oak Crest) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization established to teach and conduct cutting-edge science research. The institute provides an experience-giving role in education, where students work on authentic, funded research projects and develop a sense of belonging to the STEM community.

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