



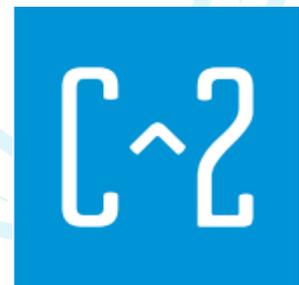
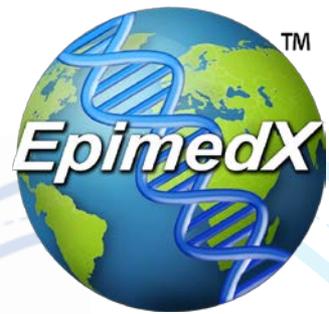
*Building a career through
networking*

Carol Curtis, PhD

Venture Advisor

Director of Academic Research Assessment

ccurtis@i2E.org



- Participated in career development workshops; met one-on-one with external speakers as much as possible
- Performed informational interviews – FDA, CROs, big pharma clinical trial coordinators and MSLs, patent attorneys, etc.
- Read articles and books on biotech and pharma industry job requirements and outlook
- Networking in anticipation of moving to South Florida – leveraged scientific connections and heavily used LinkedIn to connect with biotech industry reps – led to several interviews and 2 job offers
- When the plan shifted and I was propelled into Oklahoma, the ability to reach out to cold call researchers became critical



Associate Research Scientist (Postdoc)

Courtney Griffin's lab

2009-2013

- Took opportunities to network with scientific colleagues on OMRF/OUHSC campus and at conferences
- Performed informational interviews – tech transfer, local biotech startups, project management groups
- Subscribed to IP Watchdog to learn about patents and the patent prosecution path, and FierceBiotech/FiercePharma to learn about the biotech/pharma industry
- OMRF Postdoc Association planning committee member, then Co-Chair and Chair
- Volunteered to plan an Oklahoma-wide Postdoc conference with OKBio (introduced to Noble, OCAST, i2E etc)
- Led to relationships at OKBio and i2E
- Participated in Bioscience Roundtable by OKBio

Networking



**OMRF Tech Transfer Intern
& i2E Venture Fellow**
2012, Part-time

- Learned how to interpret and write legal documents including license agreements, sponsored research agreements, and general contracts
- Immersed in the “business of biotech” – learned how to evaluate a product, plan a development path, and chart the costs associated with critical activities
- Read books and articles on clinical trial management, preclinical models of disease, statistics, and venture deals
- Took the PMI project management course at OCU to enhance knowledge and understanding of project management
- Participated in several networking events throughout OKC – both scientific and business related – to continue building network
- Wrote an SBIR Phase I grant proposal for emerging biotech company, and i2E client, EpimedX



Associate Director of R&D
2013-2015

- High risk, low cash, start-up biotech company; limited funds to support operations; critical milestones must be met on time
- Company consisted of 2 part-time scientific founders and 1 full-time technician; had to have a “can do/will do anything” attitude
- Learned about non-dilutive and dilutive funding models and when/why certain investment tools are used
- Built and led relationships with investors and stakeholders
- Managed state and federal grant funds (OARS/SBIR); learned how to manage accounting and accurately model financial projections
- Continued to network within the OK bioscience community and at national conferences such as BIO



&



**Tech Transfer &
Commercialization Consultant**

2013, Part-time

2014, Full-time

2015 – Present, Part-time

- Through networking efforts, I met representatives of TreMonti and had a good group of bioscience contacts in OKC
- Lack of efficacy and funding concerns at EpimedX led me to start consulting with TreMonti on a part-time basis in 2013 and move to launch my own consulting practice in 2014
- To build my consulting practice, I had to leverage connections that had been made over years of networking in OKC (researchers, OMRF/OU tech transfer, i2E clients, etc)
- I had to be confident in my skill set to offer my services for a fee
- Continued to read extensively, follow industry newsletters, watch webinars, participate in networking events locally and at conferences such as the BIO Convention



Venture Advisor
Director of Academic Research Assessment
2015 - Present

- Review and evaluate innovative technologies
- Facilitate assessment of commercialization potential
- Provide guidance and resources to researchers to prepare for transition from bench to bedside
- Increase access to grant funding – OCAST, SBIR
- Review and provide input on the preclinical/clinical development plan and model the costs associated
- Make investments to help start new companies and grow existing companies
- Continue to network, make connections, seek opportunities to learn new things that might apply to positions in the future

How to network at an event...

- Before the event, educate yourself on the typical attendees
- If you find a name, Google it or look on LinkedIn to find an image so you know how to find him/her at the event
- Introduce yourself, shake hands and provide a sentence or two on why you're there and/or what you're looking to achieve
- Ask questions but allow conversation to happen organically
- Pay attention to body language
- Keep your interaction brief and end by providing your card and asking for one in exchange; ask if you can connect again



Local networking opportunities

On campus:

- Department seminars
- Invited speaker series

Follow on social media and/or sign up for event alerts:

- Bioscience Roundtable
- Oklahoma Bioscience Association
- Innovation District
- i2E
- OCAST
- OK Catalyst

For the local tech (includes biotech) scene:

- 1 Million Cups
- Startup Grind
- OK-WIT
- OK-WISE
- Greater OKC Chamber

How to connect 1-on-1...

Follow up with people you've met at networking events

Use your personal connections

Use LinkedIn and Google

Do not be afraid to connect with someone you admire

Perform Informational Interviews – early and often

Informational Interview - Suggested questions

- What does a typical day look like? What are your key responsibilities?
- What do you like best about your career? What is the worst/most tedious part of your job?
- What types of personality traits are essential for this career?
- **Do you have suggestions on how to get experience or make myself more desirable for a position like this in the future?**
- Can you suggest reading material and/or industry newsletters to learn more?

***Start local and in person, gain confidence, and then branch out:
connect with people at conferences or ask for a 30 minute phone call***

Oklahoma Bioscience At A Glance



RETINAL
CARE



moleculara labs



EXCITANT
therapeutics



PurMabiologics

HAUS™
BIOCEUTICALS

OTOLOGIC
PHARMACEUTICS



SIMERGENT



POLYSKOPE
LABS



DNASolutions®

LINEAR™
HEALTH SCIENCES

caisson



RxDeconstruct

TETHEREX
PHARMACEUTICALS



BIOLYTX
PHARMACEUTICALS CORP



ASCEND
BIOVENTURES

