

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Bucks County's First Life Sciences Graduate Degree Now Offered at the Baruch S. Blumberg Institute**  
*Partnership with The Commonwealth Medical College establishes innovative way to deliver its Master of Biomedical Science degree at the Blumberg Institute*



*Standing L to R: Mr. Wayne Yetter, Founder CEO of AstraZeneca and Novartis, USA; Dr. John Kulp, BSBI Professor and Director of Academic Programs; Dr. W. Thomas London, BSBI Board Vice-Chairman; Dr. Timothy Block, BSBI Founder and President, and Dr. Steve Scheineman, TCMC President and Dean. (Jan. 14, 2016)*

**DOYLESTOWN** (Jan. 14, 2016) –The Baruch S. Blumberg Institute, established by the Hepatitis B Foundation, announced today it will partner with The Commonwealth Medical College (TCMC) to offer a 16-month life sciences graduate degree program for working professionals in Bucks County.

This innovative partnership offers the only life sciences master's degree that can be taken to completion in Bucks County. Classes will be offered evenings and weekends at the Blumberg Institute in Doylestown, PA.

TCMC will deliver its Master of Biomedical Sciences curriculum with the Blumberg Institute beginning in April 2016. The Blumberg Institute supports programs dedicated to drug discovery, biomarker discovery and translational biotechnology, a discipline that translates research into medicines, diagnostic tools and devices that can be used to improve health and quality of life. The Blumberg Institute is home to

one of the world's greatest natural products collection of microbial and botanical extracts that provide broad chemical diversity for research and scholarship.

The Blumberg Institute was established in 2003 as the research arm of the Hepatitis B Foundation, the nation's leading nonprofit research and disease advocacy organization solely dedicated to the global problem of hepatitis B. The affiliated organizations are headquartered at the Pennsylvania Biotechnology Center of Bucks County, a biotech incubator currently housing more than 40 life science start-up companies. The center was created by the foundation and is managed by the Blumberg Institute.

With proximity and access to both world-class research tools and world-class research minds, TCMC's Master of Biomedical Sciences Degree Program at the Blumberg Institute represents a major advance and a radical re-imagining of the MBS degree. Not only will the program connect students with researchers and entrepreneurs, it will also be offered in a way that opens a path to the MBS degree to working adults looking for a distinct learning environment to pursue life sciences graduate study.

“The curriculum is identical to that of our established MBS program, but will be delivered differently, after hours while leveraging the impressive scientific faculty of the Blumberg Institute in conjunction with TCMC’s own outstanding researchers and faculty. The program meets the needs of students by grounding them in the basic sciences for careers in biotechnology, pharmaceutical and life science companies or preparing them for further graduate study or professional programs in medicine. It is our hope to also create synergy with north central and northeastern Pennsylvania’s vast network of business incubators to encourage more biotech start-up firms,” said Steven J. Scheinman, M.D., president and dean of TCMC.

“We envision collaborations that travel the turnpike between Doylestown and northeastern and north central Pennsylvania and involve many different configurations of collaborators – faculty, scientists, students, entrepreneurs. We believe the possibilities are endless and are eager to once again take the lead in educational innovation,” Dr. Scheinman added.

“The Blumberg Institute is an ideal environment for graduate students to focus their career interests while gaining access to what may be an unprecedented learning ecosystem in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,” said Timothy Block, Ph.D., president and co-founder of the Blumberg Institute and the Pennsylvania Biotechnology Center of Bucks County.

“Imagine being a graduate student studying medical science and pharmacology with a world-class scientist in a lab or classroom and then walking down the hallway into the office of an entrepreneur leading the efforts to take new drugs to the marketplace,” Block added. “Then imagine closing the loop from mastering the science to developing new products to seeing the application of new drugs or treatments via the impact on public health -- this is the educational environment that we invite students to join with TCMC and the Blumberg Institute. To offer this degree in Bucks County is exciting and groundbreaking!”

#### **About the Baruch S. Blumberg Institute**

The Baruch S. Blumberg Institute was established as an independent, nonprofit research institute in 2003 by the Hepatitis B Foundation to fulfill its research mission and to conduct discovery research and nurture translational biotechnology in an environment conducive to interaction, collaboration and focus. The research center was renamed in 2013 to honor Baruch S. Blumberg, the man who won the Nobel Prize for his discovery of the hepatitis B virus and cofounded the Hepatitis B Foundation. To learn more, visit [www.blumberginstitute.org](http://www.blumberginstitute.org).

#### **About The Commonwealth Medical College**

The Commonwealth Medical College (TCMC) is one of the nation’s newest fully accredited medical colleges. TCMC offers a community-based model of medical education with campuses in Scranton, Sayre, Wilkes-Barre and Williamsport. TCMC offers a Doctor of Medicine (MD), Master of Biomedical Sciences (MBS), and MD/Master of Public Health (MPH) dual degree. The college’s innovative curriculum, focused on caring for people in the context of their lives and their community, attracts the next generation of physicians and scientists from within its 17-county region in northeast and north central Pennsylvania as well as from across the state and the nation. The Commonwealth Medical College is committed to non-discrimination in all employment and educational opportunities. To learn more, visit [tcmc.edu](http://tcmc.edu).