

Beyond Chicken Soup: Jews and Medicine in America Hometown Heroes

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Curt Civin earned his bachelor's degree *magna cum laude* in 1970 from Amherst College, which later awarded him an honorary ScD. Dr. Civin received his MD *cum laude* from Harvard Medical School in 1974, and trained in Pediatrics at Boston Children's Hospital and in Tumor Immunology and Pediatric Hematology-Oncology at the National Cancer Institute in Bethesda. In 1979, Dr. Civin moved to Baltimore where he began his 30-year career at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

Dr. Civin became internationally renowned for his research, earning the 1999 National Inventor of the Year Award for his groundbreaking scientific discovery in 1984 of a method for isolating blood-forming (hematopoietic) stem cells from other blood cells. His purification of hematopoietic stem cells electrified the field, and Dr. Civin's CD34 monoclonal antibodies were the key components of the technology he invented to purify these key cells for research, diagnosis, and therapy. Thousands of patients have since received CD34⁺ stem cell transplants. In addition, CD34 opened entirely new directions in research on stem cells, leukemias, and transplantation. Indeed, CD34 was the first and is still the best marker for hematopoietic stem cells, and CD34 and multiple other discoveries from his laboratory are used widely today in bone marrow stem cell transplantation and leukemia diagnosis.

Dr. Civin has received wide recognition for his research, including the 2006 Return of the Child Award, the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's highest honor, and the 2009 American Association of Blood Banks Karl Landsteiner Memorial Award. Today, Dr. Civin serves as Founding Director of the Center for Stem Cell Biology & Regenerative Medicine and Associate Dean for Research at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. Dr. Civin's current research focuses on the genes expressed in stem cells. By understanding the inner mechanics of how stem cells work, he hopes to learn how to modify the key properties of stem cells in order to increase their therapeutic potential, as well as to discover the workings and potential vulnerabilities of cancer stem cells.

In addition to his direct accomplishments as a researcher and his contributions to the care of many children with cancer as a Pediatric Oncologist, Dr. Civin made the time to advocate enthusiastically for cancer and stem cell research, at the local and federal levels. He helped his college friend, Maryland Delegate Samuel "Sandy" Rosenberg draft the bill that created the thriving Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund. This Fund has provided well over \$100M in stem cell research support to scientists in Maryland.

Finally, Dr. Civin is a renowned medical and scientific mentor, educator, and career advocate. From the start of his independent academic career, and continuing in his current role as the Associate Dean for Research of the University of Maryland School of Medicine, Dr. Civin has shaped the careers of a large number of outstanding scientists and physician-scientists, and he built remarkable academic medical programs, including the Johns Hopkins Division of Pediatric Oncology and the University of Maryland Center for Stem Cell Biology & Regenerative Medicine. Dr. Civin received the 2015 American Society for Hematology Mentor Award for training and inspiring so many of the next generation of leaders in medical science.