



Dr. Terry Thomas

Chief Scientific Officer,  
STEMCELL Technologies, Inc.

Hometown: Vancouver

*Terry Thomas is a leader and innovator in the development of technologies to advance the stem cell and regenerative medicine sector. Terry was instrumental in building STEMCELL Technologies, the largest biotech company in Canada, while also mentoring and empowering women in the science sector.*

#### **Who is your female role model in the science sector?**

By far, my most influential role model in science has been my maternal grandfather. He was a pioneer in material chemistry, inventing many compounds which have improved our lives including; shatterproof glass, metal plating, and the plastics used to make dentures and to cover burn wounds during World War II.

But as for the female who has had the biggest impact on me and my pursuit of science as a career, it has to be Marie Curie. My grandfather was very impressed with her and his comments prompted me to read about her in my late teens. She was an astonishing genius who focused not only on her particular field of science but also studied the world around her. What struck me most was the beauty that she found in science. I found the idea of experiencing beauty every day in my work extremely appealing!

#### **What has been your career highlight?**

Seeing the cell separation technology I invented, STEMCELL's cell separation products, enabling scientific breakthroughs in hundreds of labs around the world.

#### **What career advice do you have for the next generation?**

Great careers very rarely come along easily. Be patient. Know the difference between productive and non-productive work. To complicate matters further, great careers seldom follow their original plan. One needs to stay focused and dedicated to their goals while keeping an eye on the bigger picture. Stay

flexible and open to new opportunities and to change. How many times have you heard "set backs are often also opportunities?" Opportunities present themselves to those who are looking for them and don't underestimate your potential for change. After all, it was the pursuit of knowledge which drew us into a career in Science. Don't restrict yourself by placing boundaries on that knowledge, you are capable of so much more.