

July 13, 2017

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**Salk Institute statement on lawsuits
filed by Katherine Jones, Ph.D. and Victoria Lundblad, Ph.D.**

It has come to attention of the Salk Institute that Katherine Jones, Ph.D. and Victoria Lundblad, Ph.D. have filed suit against the Institute in San Diego Superior Court alleging gender discrimination.

Salk is committed to providing equal employment opportunities to all. Institute policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender, race, age, disability and sexual orientation or any other protected classification. The Institute will vigorously defend itself through the legal system against any allegations of gender discrimination with full confidence in prevailing.

Drs. Jones and Lundblad, whose laboratories have received over \$5 million in support from the Institute over the past 10 fiscal years, have been treated generously by the Institute, including relative to their male peers. Each scientist's lucrative compensation package is consistent with well-recognized metrics that have been applied to all Salk faculty in a nondiscriminatory manner. Additionally, the Institute has always strived in partnership with faculty, and within a very competitive environment, to secure the government and foundation grants that are the cornerstone of our funding and which support the research pursued by Drs. Jones and Lundblad and other faculty members.

Female scientists at Salk have conducted acclaimed research programs since the Institute's founding, and in the past ten years Salk has appointed an additional eight women scientists to its elite faculty. The Institute is headed by a female President, Dr. Elizabeth Blackburn, and the majority of the executive leadership team is female. Salk's Women & Science program, currently in its fifth year, provides a stimulating forum for community leaders to engage with Salk scientists and has raised over \$450,000 to support the advancement of women in science. Salk denies that Dr. Jones or Dr. Lundblad have suffered any harm or adverse employment action based on their gender.

Throughout its 57-year history, the Salk Institute's collaborative work environment has enabled Salk scientists to conduct innovative and daring research into the most serious biological questions of our time. The Salk Institute takes pride in a culture driven by a shared passion for tackling some of the most challenging problems facing humanity. Salk employees hail from 46 countries around the globe, speak numerous languages and possess a wide range of perspectives, skills, experience and knowledge. As Dr. Blackburn notes, "We must draw on the whole of humanity for the best ideas." That includes and will always include talented female scientists.

At this time, the Institute will provide no further comment on this matter.

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Statement from Dr. Joanne Chory, professor and director of Salk's Plant Molecular and Cellular Biology Laboratory

This marks my 29th year at the Salk Institute, and I feel fortunate to have spent most of my scientific career here. While there are always opportunities to increase access for women scientists, I've always thought that the Salk has provided me with the facilities and resources that I needed to flourish as a scientist. I have enjoyed collaborations and made discoveries that would not have been possible anywhere else.

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Statement from Dr. Edward Callaway, a professor in Salk's Systems Neurobiology Laboratory and past faculty chair of the Institute, on the regarding lawsuits filed by Katherine Jones, Ph.D. and Victoria Lundblad, Ph.D.

I have tremendous respect for Dr. Lundblad and Dr. Jones for their efforts to promote gender equality in the sciences and their commitment to science. It is thus particularly disappointing that they have chosen to pursue this suit against the Institute, a non-profit that works for the betterment of humanity. I am not aware of any factual basis for their claims. The Salk Institute goes to great lengths to ensure all faculty, regardless of gender, are treated fairly, and have equal opportunity to pursue their research.

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Issues Regarding Victoria Lundblad's Career

After enjoying the benefits of a lucrative full professor position for more than a decade at the Salk Institute, a nonprofit research organization, Victoria Lundblad, PhD, has now decided, near the end of her contract, to charge the Institute with gender discrimination. The Institute invested millions of dollars in Dr. Lundblad, despite her consistently ranking below her peers in producing high quality research and attracting the grants that could advance that research.

The Salk Institute, which is headed by a female president and governed by an executive team that is primarily female, views this issue with gravity. We have undertaken a rigorous analysis in order to fully understand the situation and we find the following to be true:

* Dr. Lundblad **failed to obtain the grants** that support laboratory staff and top scientific investigation, thus relying on the Institute to provide supplemental funding. She rarely took advantage of Salk's Innovation Grants, applying only four times out of 19 opportunities. Her applications for non-government have been below the number for other faculty members. Her government funding ranks in the bottom quartile.

* Under widely accepted industry measures of productivity, Dr. Lundblad's compensation has been generous. In the past ten years alone, her laboratory received \$2.5 million, a sum **\$600,000 higher than her male peers at the Institute.**

* Her salary is well above the median for Salk full professors (\$250,000) and more than double the salary of the average biological sciences professor at an educational institution (\$103,879), yet her performance has long remained within the **bottom quartile of her peers.**

* In the past ten years **she failed to publish a single paper in any of the most respected scientific publications** (*Cell*, *Nature* and *Science*). And her 15 published papers during this ten-year period fell far short of the median 28 papers published by her peer professors at Salk.

* Dr. Lundblad benefited from **more than equitable lab space** at Salk (as measured by industry benchmarks) and remains well above the norm for the size of her research program.

The Salk Institute takes pride in its 50-year history of scientific discoveries that improve everyone's lives. Salk employees hail from 46 countries, speak numerous languages and possess a wide range of talent. Despite intense competition, Salk has been highly successful in attracting female scientists and over the last five years has appointed six new female professors, including its president, Elizabeth Blackburn. As Dr. Blackburn notes, "We must draw on the whole of humanity for the best ideas." That includes anyone with the skills to succeed.

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Issues Regarding Katherine Jones' Career

After enjoying a 30-year career at the Salk Institute, a nonprofit research organization, and proceeding through the full cycle of promotions to attain a lucrative full professor position, Katherine Jones, PhD, has now decided, near the end of her contract, to charge the Institute with gender discrimination. The Institute has invested millions of dollars in Dr. Jones, despite her consistently ranking below her peers in producing high quality research and attracting the grants that could advance that research.

The Salk Institute, which is headed by a female president and governed by an executive team that is primarily female, views this issue with gravity. We have undertaken a rigorous analysis in order to fully understand the situation and we find the following to be true:

* Dr. Jones **failed to obtain adequate grants** funding to support laboratory staff and top scientific investigation, thus relying on the Institute to provide supplemental funding. She rarely took advantage of Salk's Innovation Grants, applying only twice out of 19 opportunities. Her applications for non-government grants have been below the number for other faculty members. Her government funding ranks in the bottom quartile.

* Under widely accepted industry measures of productivity, Dr. Jones' compensation has been generous. In the past ten years alone, her laboratory received over \$2.65 million, a sum **\$600,000 higher than her male peers at the Institute**.

* Her salary aligns with those of professors at such prestigious institutions as Stanford University (\$227,000) and Columbia University (\$209,000), yet her performance has long remained within the **bottom quartile of her peers**.

* In the past ten years **she failed to publish a single paper in any of the most respected scientific publications** (*Cell*, *Nature* and *Science*). And her 14 published papers during this ten-year period fell far short of the median 29 papers published by Salk's other full professors.

* Dr. Jones benefited from **more than equitable lab space** at Salk (as measured by industry benchmarks). Despite her allegations that she was pressured to downsize her laboratory, she was never asked to do so.

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