

May 5, 1950

Dr. Joshua Lederberg  
Dept. of Genetics  
University of Wisconsin  
Madison 6, Wisconsin

Dear Joshua:

I am in need of a full-time research assistant and wonder whether you know of anyone whom you could recommend strongly for such a job. I will give you some idea of what the job involves.

The assistant would participate in our researches on genetics of *Paramecium*. At present our chief emphasis is on an analysis of antigenic traits and this is likely to be our main project for some years, but the focus of attention may shift at any time. The central problems are the interrelations of genes, cytoplasm and environment in the control of hereditary traits and the mechanism of shifts from one to another alternative hereditary trait (especially in the absence of gene changes).

The assistant would be given an intensive training during the first month or two and would then be expected to acquire sufficient grasp of the methods and materials to be able to carry out experiments with a minimum of supervision. That is to say, I will indicate the problems that need to be solved and suggest experiments, perhaps indicating the special materials and methods to be used. The assistant would then make the detailed plans, carry out the experiments, and turn over to me for analysis the full records of procedures and observations. The worker will share authorship in publications of the research.

Much of the assistant's work will be done alone, though sometimes—especially in the larger experiments—the work would be shared by another assistant or myself. Initiative, resourcefulness, independence, recognition of clues and leads are all strongly encouraged and desired.

For this work, personal qualities are more important than specific training. While some training in biology (zoology, botany, bacteriology or protozoology), immunology or chemistry is all to the good, it is not essential. I place more stress on finding a person with a genuine interest in research, high intelligence, initiative, resourcefulness, drive, willingness to take and ability to profit by suggestions, thoroughness, carefulness, keen powers of observation, dependability, and the grace to work

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pleasantly with others.

The job is on a 12-month basis, with two weeks vacation; we do not work on an academic schedule. The "official" work hours are 8:30 A.M. until 5:00 P.M., with an hour and a half for lunch and half time on Saturdays. The work requires a few hours on Sunday, and four of us take turns for the Sunday work. When one's Sunday comes up, no work is required on the preceding Saturday. As experimental work on microorganisms sometimes requires work at off-hours, the assistant must also be prepared for this; but we try to arrange compensatory time off.

As you see, this work does not allow time for course work, though occasionally arrangements can be made to permit taking one lecture course during a semester.

The starting salary is \$1800 to \$2400 depending upon qualifications. Good work is of course rewarded by salary increases, with eventual promotion to rank of Research Associate.

Because of the time consumed in training and in becoming familiar with the work (and therefore valuable), I am unwilling to engage a person unless there is an agreement to stay with the job for at least two years. A longer commitment is preferred. The training period is considered probationary with the privilege of discontinuing at the end of that period if either the worker or I so desire.

If you know of someone whom you can enthusiastically recommend in view of the requirements of the job, I should greatly appreciate having your frank appraisal of the candidate along with a letter from the candidate stating her interest in the position, her training and qualifications, and her willingness to undertake the job under the conditions I have outlined.

The position is available for July 1, 1950, and must be filled no later than September 1, 1950.

With much thanks for your cooperation and best wishes,

Cordially yours,

T.M. Sonneborn

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