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MEMORANDUM

TO: Thomas Jeitschko, Interim Provost
426 Auditorium Rd., Room 430

CC: Ann Austin, Interim Asc. Provost & Asc. Vice-President
Kathy Charles, Director
Faculty and Academic Staff Affairs
426 Auditorium Road, Room 428

FROM: Birgit Puschner, Dean
College of Veterinary Medicine

Birgit Puschner

DATE: January 31, 2023

RE: Request for Emeritus Professor Status for Dr. Stephanie Valberg



**College of
Veterinary
Medicine**

Office of the Dean

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I am writing to support Dr. Stephanie Valberg's request for emeritus status following her resignation from Michigan State University (MSU) effective December 31, 2022. Dr. Valberg joined the Department of Large Animal Clinical Sciences in October of 2016 as an Endowed Chair after 22 years at the University of Minnesota where she was Professor and Director of the University of Minnesota Equine Center. Her position in the College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) was the Mary Anne McPhail Dressage Chair in Equine Sports Medicine. While at MSU, Dr. Valberg was a good steward of the College of Veterinary Medicine. She served on the Woman's Advisory Committee to the previous provost and served two terms on the Faculty Senate and University Council. Additionally, Dr. Valberg served on search committees for the Dean of the CVM, the Associate Dean of Research, Promotion and Tenure Committee and numerous searches for clinical faculty. She was a dedicated mentor to junior faculty. Dr. Valberg does not automatically qualify for emeritus status because she joined MSU in October 2016 and retired in 2022. Members of the Department of Large Animal Clinical Sciences Advisory Committee, Drs. Abuelo, Ruegg, Moeser, Contreras, Brester and Schott, unanimously support this recommendation as does the Chairperson of the Department of Large Animal Clinical Sciences, Dr. Annette O'Connor.

Dr. Valberg is a world-renowned clinician scientist in the field of equine sports medicine specializing in neuromuscular disease. Her research is dedicated to discovering the basis for neuromuscular disorders in horses and bringing basic research findings back to the patient with new diagnostic tests and novel treatments. This has involved a multidisciplinary approach combining astute clinical evaluation, epidemiologic studies, advanced histopathologic evaluations of muscle biopsies and

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central nervous system samples, as well as a host of molecular and genetic analyses. This unique integration of clinical skills, specialized neuromuscular diagnostics, and her database of over 6,000 muscle biopsies from horses with a wide variety of neuromuscular disorders has resulted in the identification of numerous new equine muscle diseases, identification of genetic mutations responsible for four of these, development of commercially available DNA and muscle testing and development of licensed products utilized to manage these disorders. The breadth of her research has come from strong collaborations within the medical and veterinary field.

No one has advanced the field of equine muscle disorders farther than Dr. Valberg. Most muscle diseases known to date have been her discovery. She currently authors chapters in equine muscle disease in the four major textbooks for horses, Large Animal Internal Medicine (editor B Smith), Equine Internal Medicine (editors S Reed and W Bayly), Adams Lameness in Horses (editor T Stashak) and Lameness in the Horse (editors M Ross and S Dyson). Further Dr. Valberg is a sought-after speaker at veterinary conferences providing over 400 keynote addresses or presentations to veterinarians around the world.

Dr. Valberg has been a prolific publisher of scientific information with 192 peer reviewed publications and an H-index of 38 in Web of Science and an H-index of 53 in Goggle Scholar. During the past 6 years at MSU she has 47 peer reviewed publications and discovered the first genetic mutation in myosin to cause an autoimmune myopathy in any species. Dr. Valberg garnered 108 funded grants in the field of equine research over the span of her career.

Dr. Valberg's most notable accomplishments include the first discovery of a cause for the most common muscle disease in horses tying up - polysaccharide storage myopathy. Her discovery of the cause of a toxin on pastures that killed hundreds of horses a year around the world for decades was recognized by the Equine Veterinary Journal as the best publication in 2014 and her discovery of the pathologic basis for Shivers in horses was awarded the best publication by the Veterinary Pathology journal in 2016. In 2012, Dr. Valberg was the first woman inducted into the Equine Research Hall of Fame. Her many awards include:

2019 Alumni Achievement Award, University of California Davis, School of Veterinary Medicine

2016 CL Davis Foundation Journal Award Veterinary Pathology Most outstanding publication for 2016

2014 British Equine Veterinary Association Richard Hartley Clinical Award for identifying cause of atypical myopathy

2013 University of Minnesota Outstanding Postdoctoral Mentor

2013 MVMA Outstanding Faculty Award

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2012 **Milne Lecture AAEP** one equine veterinary is selected annually to present a 4 hr state-of-the-art of lecture based on their lifelong contribution to equine medicine.

2012 **Equine Research Hall of Fame.** First female inducted into the equine research hall of fame

2012 **AHC Game Changer** University of Minnesota November

2011 **Hero in Internal Medicine. ACVIM Innovator Award**

2010 **Pfizer Award for Research Excellence**

2009 **Reg Thompson Memorial lecture** University of Prince Edward Island

2008 **Distinguished Women Scholar in Science and Engineering.** Awarded to one woman at the University of Minnesota annually

2007 **Distinguished Collaborator Award: Kansas State University.** In honor of commitment to productive research collaboration between clinical and basic sciences.

2007 **State of the Art Speaker** American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine Seattle

2006 **American Association of Equine Practitioners in Depth Lecture Series** at Convention (>3,000 equine veterinarians)

2004 **DLT Smith Distinguished Lecturer,** University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon CA

2001 **Pfizer Award for Research Excellence**

1998 **EquiSci International Award:** the most important scientific advance in equine exercise physiology over the last 4 years

Dr. Valberg was a dedicated mentor to undergraduates, interns, residents, and graduate students. She was awarded the Postdoctoral Mentor of the Year at the University of Minnesota in 2013. She trained 27 interns, 18 residents and was the primary advisor for 17 MS or PhD students. Her trainees hold positions at numerous universities including the University of California Davis, Director of Equine Health Center, Associate Dean of Research, University of Minnesota, Professor at Oregon State University and at the University of Minnesota amongst others. The students she mentored while at Michigan State won numerous awards including:

- 2016 and 2018 best undergraduate Research Presentation at Phi Zeta MSU
- 2018 AAEP Student Case Presentation Winner
- 2018 AAEP Merck Animal Health Scholarship
- 2018 AAEP and Race for Education Scholarship
- 2018 American Veterinary Medical Foundation- 2nd Opportunity Research Scholar
- 2019 Best graduate student presentation in genetics section Equine Sciences Society meeting
- 2019 Coyote Rock Ranch \$45, 000 Scholarship at AAEP

To advance her research and to provide optimal diagnostic support to equine veterinarians with cases of muscle disease, Dr. Valberg wishes to continue to

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provide diagnostic service. Her discoveries, which are now commercial, genetic tests include: type 1 polysaccharide storage myopathy; glycogen branching enzyme deficiency; Occipitoatlantoaxial Malformation; and Myosin-Heavy Chain Myopathies. She provided clinical advice on the interpretation and treatment of these disorders to veterinarians. In addition, Dr. Valberg ran a muscle biopsy diagnostic service through the Michigan State Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory which evaluated 300-400 muscle samples a year from across North America.

Dr. Valberg retired at the end of 2022 and would like to continue to support research projects with current faculty and to provide diagnostic service to the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory. To accomplish these goals, Dr. Valberg is seeking emeritus status.