

*This material is part of a collection that documents the harassment, discrimination, and retaliation perpetrated against Alaska's women research scientists by their supervisor, with full knowledge (and arguably, "tacit approval") of their federal employer, the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS)*

**From:** Cindy Bower <Cindy.Bower@ars.usda.gov>  
**Subject:** **FW: Justification for technician co-authorship**  
**Date:** December 5, 2009 4:01:39 AM AKST  
**To:** "Pantoja, Alberto" <Alberto.Pantoja@ars.usda.gov>  
**Cc:** <Andrew.Hammond@ars.usda.gov>, <Robert.Matteri@ars.usda.gov>, <Maureen.Whalen@ars.usda.gov>

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Alberto,

On Friday (Dec 04, 2009) you presented your case against technician co-authorship as a nationwide ARS rule that would impact your career credibility and promotion potential if you failed to uphold the policy. I (correctly) pointed out that other ARS labs were allowing technicians to be included as co-authors. As proof, I invite you to review recent ARIS entries from Tara McHugh's lab and Bill Ort's lab. You also indicated that my meeting abstracts would not be approved unless I removed the name of my technician, even though that would be a direct violation of ARS's Code of Scientific Ethics ( P&P 129.0), which prohibits me from accepting unwarranted credit for the accomplishment of others.

With this email I would like to establish for the record that I resent your efforts to force me to engage in unethical conduct in order to conform to your interpretation of ARS rules.

I am also appalled at your attempts to bully my technician, first into changing her IDP (that I had already approved) and now into recanting her desire to legitimately serve as a co-author on publications in which she makes a significant contribution. Her "expressions during the meeting" (which you refer to in your email) were probably of shock and dismay, since she should never have been present to witness our continuing conflict. I consider that meeting to be another example of retaliation against me for engaging in the protected activity of opposing discrimination. My recent performance appraisal also qualifies as retaliation, as will my upcoming performance plan if you insist on including the extra burden you place on me (but not the men) every year despite my objections.

I request that you approve my meeting abstracts so that my career will not suffer further damage.

Thank you.

Cindy

Cindy Bower  
USDA Agricultural Research Service  
PO Box 757200  
Fairbanks, AK 99775-7200  
Phone: (907) 474-6732

----- Forwarded Message

**From:** "Pantoja, Alberto" <[Alberto.Pantoja@ARS.USDA.GOV](mailto:Alberto.Pantoja@ARS.USDA.GOV)>

**Date:** Fri, 4 Dec 2009 16:56:49 -0700

**To:** "Hietala, Katie" <[Katie.Hietala@ARS.USDA.GOV](mailto:Katie.Hietala@ARS.USDA.GOV)>

**Cc:** "Pantoja, Alberto" <[Alberto.Pantoja@ARS.USDA.GOV](mailto:Alberto.Pantoja@ARS.USDA.GOV)>, "Contento, Janis" <[Janis.Contento@ARS.USDA.GOV](mailto:Janis.Contento@ARS.USDA.GOV)>, <[Cindy.Bower@ars.usda.gov](mailto:Cindy.Bower@ars.usda.gov)>

**Subject:** FW: Justification for technician co-authorship

Katie

This is the justification for technician authorship referred by Cindy during the meeting today. The language on the request and your expressions during the meeting today are not aligned, please confirm your request to perform research at a level to justify authorship as stated below- see areas in red.

# Thanks

## alberto

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**From:** Bower, Cindy  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 12, 2009 3:25 PM  
**To:** Pantoja, Alberto  
**Cc:** Contento, Janis  
**Subject:** Justification for technician co-authorship

Alberto,

As required by P&P 152.2-ARS Section 5 (Summary of Responsibilities), I am requesting approval of co-authorship for Katie Hietala on the following two projects. Both projects are still in the preliminary phase, but data from each will be summarized into a meeting abstract and submitted in December. I anticipate that Katie will participate sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for the content of the abstracts as well as future manuscripts. I have provided a justification for each project:

1.) Enhancing the strength of fish-skin gelatin films without additives

- Katie will be participating in the design, analysis and interpretation of data by evaluating protein content at each stage of the experimental procedure, while simultaneously suggesting changes in the pollock-skin treatment protocol to increase yields of specific protein fractions.

- Katie has requested the opportunity to perform her work at the level needed to justify authorship, and she was given the chance to refuse this (optional) assignment.

2.) Low temperature stabilization technologies to preserve salmon discards in cool climates

- Katie will be participating in the analysis and interpretation of data through her microbiological studies with a different, more promising strain of bacteria. She is a

highly skilled microbiologist and will serve as my eyes and ears in the lab, since I cannot do all of the experimental work myself. A simple technician could not perform at the level I need for this project.

- Katie has requested the opportunity to perform this work at the level needed to justify authorship, and she was given the chance to refuse this (optional) assignment.

Thanks for considering my request to include Katie Hietala as a co-author on my two abstracts (and corresponding manuscripts).

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Cindy

Cindy Bower

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----- End of Forwarded Message