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Department of Epidemiology and Prevention
Wake Forest University
School of Medicine
475 Vine Street
Winston-Salem, NC 27101

Dear Ms. Bridgette Harris Blackwell and Dr. Elizabeth Jensen,

I am writing to apply for the tenure-track Assistant Professor position at Wake Forest's Department of Epidemiology and Prevention. Within your department, I would look forward to developing a productive research program in epidemiology and leveraging real word data to support the departmental strategic goals. I also am excited about the opportunity to affiliate with the Centers at Wake Forest School of Medicine listed in your posting.

At the Biostatistics and Computational Biology Branch in the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), I am a postdoctoral fellow in Dr. Clarice R. Weinberg's research group. My primary focus is on cancer epidemiology, biomarkers, and epidemiologic methods. This advanced training at NIEHS, combined with my earlier experience as an academic biostatistician, doctoral training in epidemiology, provides an excellent fit for this faculty position.

Throughout my training in epidemiologic research, I have formed the foundation to establish a productive research portfolio:

- When I was a graduate student in epidemiology with Dr. Kari North's research group at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, I independently obtained a predoctoral fellowship award from the American Heart Association to fund my dissertation. My dissertation work included both longitudinal and latent class methods to explain the relationships between early infant growth and lipid levels in adolescence. Based on this work, I published three first-author manuscripts in high impact epidemiologic journals and further solidified my passion for population health research.
- I continue along this track at my current postdoctoral fellowship at NIEHS with a focus on cancer epidemiology and time-to-event analyses. A recent example of my research is work we published on familial correlation of age at breast cancer onset, using a combination of survival models and time-dependent covariates (Von Holle, et al. 2020).

- My graduate and postdoctoral research dovetail with my future research plans, which include efforts to better understand the role of modifiable lifestyle change as people age to examine breast cancer and mortality outcomes in women after menopause.

My training in epidemiological methods has enabled me to conduct high quality and state-of-the-art analyses with large-scale data to inform public health goals, including the reduction of mortality and prevention of disease. Given my future research plans and background, two examples of centers that I would be very excited to collaborate with are the Comprehensive Cancer Center and the Sticht Center for Healthy Aging and Alzheimer's Prevention.

Another area of opportunity at the Department of Epidemiology and Prevention will be to teach and mentor while drawing on my experience in epidemiologic methods and biostatistics. My first teaching experiences were through my role as a biostatistician at the Center of Excellence for Eating Disorders at UNC. In this position, I developed strong collaborative skills with and provided statistical guidance to undergraduate students, graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and professors at UNC Hospitals to develop and apply statistical methods for over 40 peer-reviewed manuscripts. Following my work as a biostatistician, and as part of my doctoral training in epidemiology at UNC, I was a teaching assistant for an advanced epidemiologic methods class. Being able to provide a foundation of knowledge for students preparing to launch their careers in public health was a rewarding experience, and I hope to extend as faculty in your department.

In my most recent experience as a postdoctoral fellow, I have taught an introductory statistics short-course and mentored master-level summer interns at NIEHS. I enjoyed my day-to-day mentoring of students for the past two summers while developing, analyzing, and presenting their epidemiologic research at the National Institutes of Health. Starting this summer and extending through the upcoming academic year, as part of the NIEHS Scholars Connect Program to support people who are underrepresented in science, I am mentoring an undergraduate student intern, and I plan to continue to do so as a faculty member. As faculty, I look forward to expanding this role as a teacher of public health-based research methods and mentoring students in population health research.

The potential for research, collaboration, and teaching in the Department of Epidemiology and Prevention at Wake Forest University provides a welcome and exciting opportunity for me to establish an independent research program while collaborating with the exceptional faculty both in the Department and within the Wake Forest University School of Medicine Centers.

Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Ann Von Holle, Ph.D.