



Endowed Lectureship

in Memory of Joanne Chory
1955-2024

Salk Professor Joanne Chory, PhD, described herself not simply by a field, but by a way of thinking. She was a developmental biologist and geneticist who used plants as her lens to understand life itself. By studying how plants grow, adapt, and thrive, she uncovered fundamental biological principles that reach far beyond the plant world, with insights that continue to inform human biology, medicine, and our understanding of how life responds to its environment.

Joanne's discoveries reshaped modern biology. While she began her career with the joy of pursuing knowledge for its own sake, as Joanne's science progressed, she saw a chance to also have an immediate impact on the world. As the founding director of Salk's Harnessing Plants Initiative, she challenged scientists to think bigger and more boldly about their work. She pushed the idea that biology could help address one of humanity's greatest challenges: climate change. In doing so, she permanently changed how researchers across disciplines think about the power and responsibility of science.

Equally central to Joanne's legacy was how she worked and who she was. She challenged conventions, welcomed debate, and built deeply collaborative teams that crossed fields and hierarchies. She was vibrant, highly personable, funny, and known for making even the most intimidating ideas feel accessible. As a founding faculty member of Salk's Women & Science program, she was a tireless mentor and advocate, especially for women in STEM. She believed science was strongest when many voices were heard, and she lived that belief every day. Even after being diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 2004, Joanne continued to lead, mentor, and inspire with extraordinary determination and grace until her passing in 2024.

An endowed lectureship in Joanne's memory will carry forward what mattered most to her in perpetuity: fearless curiosity, collaboration across boundaries, and the belief that basic science can change the world. By supporting this fund, you help ensure that future generations of scientists are challenged, inspired, and empowered in the same way Joanne Chory inspired all who knew her.

To help honor Joanne and support this effort, please donate at www.salk.edu/joanne-chory-legacy or contact **Dacia Samilo** at (858) 453-4100 x2068 or dsamilo@salk.edu.



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