

November 1, 2018

By Email and Hand Delivery

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Dear Attorney General Underwood and Chief Sheehan:

This firm, along with attorney Paul Mones of Los Angeles, represents many dozens of individuals who were sexually abused when they were minors by Dr. Reginald Archibald during the course of their medical treatment by The Rockefeller University (“Rockefeller”), a New York Not-For-Profit Corporation. For the reasons that follow, we respectfully call upon your office to launch a thorough investigation into Archibald’s misconduct, whether Rockefeller was aware of and concealed it, the manner in which Rockefeller addressed reports it received from victims about the abuse over the years, and the extent to which Rockefeller has knowledge of the existence and whereabouts of photographs of our clients and other victims that may constitute child pornography under federal and state law.

Archibald was a pediatric endocrinologist who studied childhood growth and maturation, focusing on undersized children. He served on Rockefeller’s faculty from the 1940s until the 1980s. Notably, Rockefeller has represented publicly that Archibald took emeritus status in 1980, but we have received information that he may have continued to have regular office hours at Rockefeller until at least 1989. During that period, he “treated” thousands of vulnerable children at Rockefeller, and we now know that he systematically abused his patients on a widespread basis as a routine part of their “treatment.” Archibald “measured” most of his male patients’ genitalia as an ostensible part of their “treatment.” He photographed most of his patients naked, including close-ups,

often requiring male children to pose for photographs both while flaccid and erect. He fondled many of his male patients. He required them to masturbate to ejaculation and assisted many of them in doing so. He required his female patients to pose completely nude for photographs in humiliating and vulnerable positions. All of this occurred in his Rockefeller medical office and examination room through the use of Rockefeller equipment and with the assistance of Rockefeller staff. We have been told that Archibald “treated” approximately 9,000 children at Rockefeller. We believe there may be thousands of sex abuse victims, all of whom were children when abused.

By 2004 at the latest, Rockefeller received at least one credible report of Archibald’s sexual abuse of a minor, and it engaged the law firm of Debevoise & Plimpton LLP (“Debevoise”) to conduct an investigation. On October 5, 2018, Rockefeller issued a statement acknowledging that the Debevoise investigation concluded that Archibald “likely” engaged in “behavior” that was “inappropriate.” It is unclear what if anything Rockefeller did to determine whether any incidents of “inappropriate” behavior were part of a larger pattern, but there is reason to conclude that no meaningful additional investigation was conducted. Archibald died in 2007.

In 2018, more victims came forward, and Rockefeller re-engaged Debevoise to conduct a further investigation. Debevoise similarly concluded that the additional accusers were credible and, in its October 5, 2018 statement, similarly acknowledged that “some” of “Archibald’s behaviors involving these patients” were “inappropriate.” Our understanding is that Debevoise then began contacting Archibald patients by mail. We believe that Debevoise identified approximately 9,000 Rockefeller patients who were “treated” by Archibald’s office, and that it was able to find and contact at least 1,000 of them by letter.

This matter is extremely serious and merits a full investigation by your office for several reasons.

First, the potential magnitude of the abuse is staggering. We understand that your office recently commenced an investigation into sex abuse by Catholic priests in New York in the wake of a report by a Pennsylvania grand jury finding that 300 priests abused over 1,000 Pennsylvania children during a 70-year period. Here, there is a very real possibility – and we believe a likelihood – that *thousands* of children were abused by a single doctor at a single institution in Manhattan.

Second, the widespread abuse that took place at Rockefeller was *during the course* of the medical “treatment” that Rockefeller provided to the victim children. Given the large number of patients, and the methodical documentation by

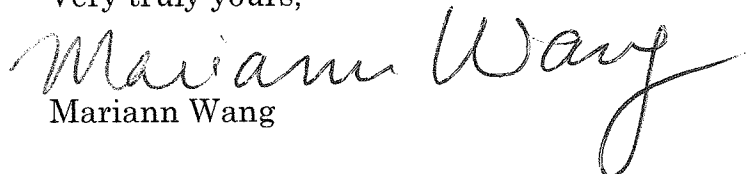
photography, there is reason to believe that Rockefeller was aware that Archibald was “measuring” its patients’ genitalia while flaccid and erect as part of the patients’ standard treatment protocol. It seems likely that Rockefeller was aware that close-up photographs of nude children were being taken with Rockefeller equipment in a Rockefeller office. And although Rockefeller may not have been aware that Archibald was directing and even assisting children to masturbate to ejaculation, all of this was occurring on its property during the course of “treatment” that it should have been supervising.

Third, it is deeply troubling that Rockefeller apparently made no effort to contact any of its former patients when it learned in 2004 that Archibald had abused multiple patients. Many of our clients never told a soul about what happened to them until they were belatedly contacted in 2018. For decades, many of our clients were plagued by self-doubt. Others of our clients repressed their memories of their unspeakable ordeals and were not aware that they had been abused until they were belatedly contacted in 2018. Why did these victims have to wait 14 more years to have the opportunity to confront, grapple with, and try to begin to process and recover from their traumas?

Fourth, and perhaps most importantly, nearly all of our clients vividly recall Archibald taking photographs of them when they were naked, with many of them specifically recalling disturbing and uncomfortable close-ups taken of their genitals. Many of our clients have already requested or received their medical files from Rockefeller, but none, to date, has received his or her photographs or been told where they are. There is reason to be concerned that there may be, in one or more places, a trove of photographs of Rockefeller patients that meet the definition of child pornography under federal and/or state law and may be contraband associated with serious crimes. Does Rockefeller or its lawyers have information about such photographs that is not being shared? Subpoenas issued by your office could answer these pressing questions of intense private as well as public concern.

We commend and applaud your decision of several weeks ago to investigate the sexual abuse of children in New York’s dioceses. We hope you agree that these similar issues involving vast numbers of children at Rockefeller University also merit a full investigation by your office. We remain available to meet with your office and share any information that we have obtained through our clients and our own independent investigation at any time.

Very truly yours,


Mariann Wang

cc: Paul Mones, Esq.