Update on the Jefferson Lab Users Organization

Will Brooks
Universidad Técnica Federico Santa María
JLUO BoD Chair 2019-2020
JLUO Business Meeting, 22 June 2020
JLUO Purposes

- Encourage, promote and assist user scientists and engineers
- Create effective communication channels
- Effective methods for giving feedback to the Lab Management
- Promote advancement of basic scientific knowledge
- Impact on society
Outline of this talk

• Non-governmental email list subscription
• Announcement of new JLUO BoD members
• New US visa developments affecting users
• Responses to recent societal events
• Revision of JLUO bylaws
• DNP executive committee nominations
• JSA Initiatives Fund Competition
• New Journal Club announcement
Non-governmental email list subscription

We stay in touch with you via email

We have two email lists

• cuga@jlab.org 1211 subscribers

• JLABUSERSORGANIZATION@sura.org 120 subscribers

We can serve you much better if you subscribe to both

For directions on how to subscribe, go to https://wiki.jlab.org/cugwiki/index.php/Main_Page and follow the directions at the bottom of the page.

(Google search on “JLUO wiki” finds that page)
Contact the appropriate person to share your concerns and relevant information, or contact the chairline/Lorelei
https://wiki.jlab.org/cugwiki/index.php/JLUO_BoD_Contact_Information
Election Results
New Members of JBoD for 2020-2021!

Congratulations to the new members!
A big thank-you to the members rotating off!
(Julie, Eric, Brad, Jordanka, Carlos)
The Jefferson Lab User Community

• 1691 active† users
• 476 Physics Letters + Physical Review Letters; 1,618 in other refereed journals (FY2019)
• 658 PhDs granted; 195 more in-progress
• More than 182,000 citations for work done at JLab

† active = 1+ badge swipes per year, authored a proposal, or maintained an active JLab computer account
The User Community is Growing

30% growth over the last 6 years!
The 2020 Annual Users Meeting
June 22-24, 2020

• Theme: Celebration of JLab at 12 GeV
• Important feature: virtual poster session!! please attend, it will be great! 2:30-4:30 TUESDAY
• EIC software tutorial during lunch break (12:30) on Wednesday
• EIC simulation Q&A session at 3:20 on Wednesday

Please join this Slack channel for communication during this meeting:
https://join.slack.com/t/jlab12gev/shared_invite/zt-f3pn67km-6Ne5OxfTaJTEbims019lSg

Organizing Committee

Important Contributors

Kent Lorelei Susan Ed Amy Julie Will Yordanka Wouter
Some areas of recent attention

• Difficulties with access to the lab for non-US citizens

• Ban on access for Russian citizens affiliated with Russian institutions

• Multiple types of problems with US visas affecting our community

• The evolving anti-racism movement and our own community
Visa issues

material collected by Kent Paschke and Ed Brash
US Visa Issues

There are several important issues related to visas for foreign graduate students, postdocs, and other junior scientists.

The JLUO Board of Directors seeks to:

- **raise awareness** on these issues;
- develop better awareness and **tracking** of these issues;
- **gather information** on any immediate effects of visa problems that have been experienced by our user community;
- **share** this information with Jefferson Lab leadership as part of a continuing dialog on this topic;
- encourage **advocacy** on these issues by members of our user community, including amplifying **APS efforts**, engaging home universities and institutions, and working with other N.P. community organizations.
Delays on visa documentation processing

Processing time for Petition for a Nonimmigrant work (I-129) at Vermont Service Center (Example from mid-May)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated time range</th>
<th>Form type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 Weeks to 4 Months</td>
<td>Blanket L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 Months to 6.5 Months</td>
<td>E3 - Certain specialty occupation professionals from Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.5 Months to 12 Months</td>
<td>H-1B - Specialty occupation - Visa to be issued abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.5 Months to 12 Months</td>
<td>H-1B - Specialty occupation - Change of status in the U.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5 Months to 8.5 Months</td>
<td>H-1B - Specialty occupation - Extension of stay in the U.S.</td>
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</table>

Now much improved (from June 20)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated time range</th>
<th>Form type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 Weeks to 4 Months</td>
<td>Blanket L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Months to 7 Months</td>
<td>E3 - Certain specialty occupation professionals from Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Months to 4 Months</td>
<td>H-1B - Specialty occupation - Visa to be issued abroad</td>
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You can check this here: https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-times/
Dear colleagues,

We are trying to assess the impact of the increasing restrictions of US immigration policies on our user community, especially on our young foreign users aiming for postdoctoral or tenure-track positions in the US.

As you may be aware, current visa processing times are up to 10-12 months.

If you are facing problems due to recent changes in visa or immigration policies, or you know someone who is, we would like to hear about it.

Please send the information to munoz@ipno.in2p3.fr
Feel free to forward this request to anyone who might be interested.

If you want to know more about the current situation, please let me know.

Carlos Muñoz,
for Jefferson Lab Users Organization Board
JLUO BoD Survey on JLab-related Visa Problems

- 12 responses within 48 hours
- Point of contact: Carlos Muñoz
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PhD student</td>
<td>Affected by restrictions on China</td>
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<td>Affected by restrictions on China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indian student cannot come to Jlab anymore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>He had B2 visa before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD student</td>
<td>Cannot get a visa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Iranian citizen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postdoc</td>
<td>Cannot renew visa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lawyer involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postdoc</td>
<td>Cannot renew visa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Several months waiting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Probably affected soon when visa renew is due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postdoc</td>
<td>Cannot get a visa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One from Italy, one from China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postdocs (2)</td>
<td>Cannot get a visa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postdoc/tenure-tracks</td>
<td>Reports several colleagues affected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure-track</td>
<td>Cannot get a visa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Heavy delays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PI</td>
<td>Worries about potential delays to send students to Jlab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Origin: Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PI</td>
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<td>Origin: Japan</td>
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Post-graduate non-immigrant visa programs under threat

OPT visa program may be cancelled or frozen


H1B visa program is threatened with 2-6 month suspension

https://www.npr.org/2020/06/20/881245867/trump-expected-to-suspend-h-1b-other-visas-until-end-of-year
https://www.mercurynews.com/2020/06/20/report-trump-administration-expect-to-suspend-h-1b-visas-for-the-rest-of-the-year/

Those executive actions have been formally or informally explored, but not yet implemented. H1B visa action may happen today.
Support for the Optional Practical Training (OPT) Visa Program

The APS Office of Government Affairs has sent an urgent appeal for advocacy in support of the OPT visa program. From that email:

As you might know, OPT is a vital program that allows students to partake in temporary employment to receive practical work training to complement their education and is crucial to maintaining our nation’s ability to attract and retain the best and the brightest students from around the world. If the rumored curtailment of OPT programs comes to fruition, we will lose a key segment of the US research enterprise and our nation’s pursuits of discovery and innovation will suffer.
Presidential proclamation on Chinese grad student visas

New restrictions on F and J visas for Chinese trainees. On May 29, the White House released a presidential proclamation revoking F and J visas for some Chinese national graduate students and postdoctoral researchers. The restrictions are conditioned on current or past connection to an “…entity in the PRC that implements or supports the PRC’s `military-civil fusion strategy’…”.

Some have suggested this may affect only about 3000-5000 Chinese graduate students in STEM fields in the US. An expanded interpretation of the language of the proclamation would have a much broader impact, and could affect nearly all Chinese graduate students and postdocs in the US.

The JLUO Board is concerned about the implementation of this policy, because of the non-specificity of the parameters which have been publicly released.
Chinese graduate student visas

The wording in the proclamation of who is impacted is vague. In a State Dept press conference on June 16, the Australian Strategic Policy Institute was described as useful guidance.

This page labels “seven sons of national defense” as universities closely aligned with Chinese defense industry. For example, the following graph:

Figure 1: The percentage of employed 2017 or 2018 graduates of the Seven Sons working in the defence system

Graduate students who had attended one of these universities may be at risk for visa revocation under the proclamation.

It is unclear whether this implies deportation, or just visa revocation (source: NAFSA.org).

This “think tank” rates a very extensive list of universities for their risk. It is unclear which of these universities will be affected, or if only specific STEM fields or subfields from selected universities. It is also unclear when the specific policy will be known.

Examples of nominal risk, and additional information on specific programs, etc., is also posted.
What you can do

We will all benefit if we can create an informed community.

1. Encourage your Jefferson Lab colleagues to join our mailing lists, and share this message with colleagues who may not have received it. **One important note: do not use any federally supported email addresses or equipment for forwarding related information, including but not limited to the jlab.org domain.**

2. Share this information also with interested colleagues in other fields at your universities, and help your universities to be active in tracking and responding to these issues.

3. Stay alert to **APS emails** connected to these topics.

4. Share your concerns and experiences with JLUO Board members. In particular, we are currently seeking to **catalog specific impacts of visa delays** or threats to the cancellation of programs.
Responses to Recent Societal Events

JLab issued a message on June 3, 2020 concerning the death of George Floyd.

Subsequently there were many national and international demonstrations and protests, and a one-day STEM strike.

CNBC: “More than 5,000 scientists and two prominent scientific journals shut down operations and pledged to use the day to address racial inequalities in science.”

Part of JLUO Chairline participated in the strike on 10 June. Julie Roche took the lead on developing a JLUO BoD position and action plan.

The JLUO BoD would like to implement lasting and impactful changes to combat systemic racism in our collaborations and in the institutions of our field.
Possible Anti-racism Actions

On safety and concerns about the local environment for users:
Write a letter to NN city to advocate for de-escalation techniques because our users are traveling to NN and are not familiar with the locale.

We have already met (Ed Brash) with NNPD training officer to learn how they approach training principles for interactions with the public, aspects of interactions in traffic stops, training of private security officers in NN.

Meet with JLab guards to ask about their training, and at what point they would choose to call the NNPD for backup.

On creating an inclusive and diverse community:
Gather anecdotes and testimonials on racist or related experiences within our collaborations. Post them on an allowed web server to raise awareness. Julie Roche proposal.

Gather thought-provoking information about anti-black racism in the US and in academia on an allowed web server. Julie Roche already has a list of links.

Your ideas…
Nuclear Physics on the Hill

• JLab, RHIC, FRIB and fundamental symmetry user groups/organizations meet with the offices of senators and representatives

• JLab participants (7th year):
  • 2013: 7 persons
  • 2017: 23 from 13 states
  • 2018: 27 from 13 states
  • 2019: 25 from 8 states
  • 2020: cancelled

➡️ YOU ARE INVITED!! 👈

Partial travel funds are available from JSA.
To receive information on outreach like this, send email to listserv@sura.org with this message: subscribe jlabusersorganization from a non-governmental email address
JSA Initiatives Fund

• Funds outreach and promotes S&T of JLab
• [http://www.jsallc.org/IF/IFIndex.html](http://www.jsallc.org/IF/IFIndex.html) has info
  ✔️ YOU can apply ❅

Twenty-eight projects were funded for 2020:
[http://www.jsallc.org/IF/IFProjects.html](http://www.jsallc.org/IF/IFProjects.html)
Award amounts from $2k to $125k USD
Total $449k USD

Thanks JSA!!
Minor **Revisions** to the JLUO **Bylaws**

- We plan to propose minor revisions to the JLUO bylaws, to better match our current needs and practices.

- Members of the JLUO (you) will be asked to vote on this at some point in the future. Previous votes on bylaw revisions were in 2014 and 2013.

- You can find the current bylaws on the JLUO wiki here: https://wiki.jlab.org/cugwiki/index.php/Current_Bylaws
DNP Executive Committee suggestions.

- Deadline for nominations is 1 July 2020
- https://www.aps.org/units/dnp/governance/officers/index.cfm
- You can email suggestions to C. Weiss, D. Armstrong, I. Niculescu, W. Boeglin, or make your own nomination.

Executive Committee
Krishna S. Kumar, Univ. of Mass. Amherst, Chair (2020)
Sherry J. Yennello, Texas A&M Univ., Chair-Elect (2020)
S. Victoria Greene, Vanderbilt, Vice-Chair (2020)
Robert V.F. Janssens, Univ. of N. Carolina, Past-Chair (2020)
Kenneth H. Hicks, Ohio U., Sec.-Treas. (2020)
A. Baha Balantekin, Univ. of Wis., Div. Coun. (2021)
Jeffery C. Blackmon, LSU (2020)
Evangeline J. Downie (2021)
Nadia Fomin, Univ. of Tennessee (2020)
Jeffrey S. Nico, NIST (2021)
Jacquelyn Noronha-Hostler (2021)
Julie Roche, Ohio University (2020)
Announcement from Amy Schertz and Felipe Ortega (W&M)

Journal Club
Jefferson Lab's Graduate Student and Post-Doc Association

Pick a scientific article, review, or white paper

People make a presentation
During two consecutive weeks

Discussion about the topic

*Interest form: bit.ly/JLabJC*

Who? Targeted to grad students and junior post-docs (but everyone is welcome).
When? Twice per month, beginning the week of July 6th-10th
Where? Virtually (for now).