
Honoring
Jennifer Doudna, Ph.D.
Distinguished Alumnus



Jennifer Anne Doudna was born in Washington, D.C. and grew up in Hilo, where her father taught literature at UH Hilo and her mother taught history at Hawaii Community College.

Jennifer's calling became apparent early in her life when, as a student, she was completely fascinated by the book, *The Double Helix*, about the discovery of the structure of DNA. While attending Hilo High School, Jennifer took chemistry from Jeanette Wong, attended an educational conference at the cancer center on Oahu, and was exposed to the laboratory of Don Hemmes at UH Hilo.

After graduating from Hilo High in 1981, Jennifer went on to earn her Bachelor's degree in chemistry from Pomona College and her Ph.D. in biochemistry from Harvard. While much too extensive to list here, Jennifer's academic resumé is an illustrious one, including serving as Henry Ford II Professor of Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry, Center for Structural Biology, Department of Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry, Yale University (1994-2002) as well as the R. B. Woodward Visiting Professor, Harvard University (2000-2001). She is currently a Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at the University of California at Berkeley, as well as an investigator with the Howard Hughes Medical Institute.

In 2015, Jennifer was named one of *Time Magazine's* most influential people in the world for her work in modifying DNA by using what is called the CRISPR-Cas9 technique. CRISPR is the acronym for "clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeats." Cas9 is a protein. Jennifer, working with others, discovered how the CRISPR-Cas9 technique can provide a relatively simple technique for modifying DNA.

For her groundbreaking work, Jennifer has received numerous prestigious awards, including the Gruber Prize in Genetics (2015), Princess of Asturias Awards (2015), Lurie Prize in Biomedical Sciences from the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health (2014), Dr. Paul Jannsen Award for Biomedical Research (2014), and the Breakthrough Prize (2015), which came with a \$3 million prize.

In the wake of her worldwide acclaim, Jennifer also understands that with great science comes great social responsibility. Rather than seeking to immediately benefit commercially from the CRISPR-Cas 9 technique, she is supporting a "global pause" to discuss the ramifications of its use before its further clinical application.

Jennifer is married to James Cate, Ph.D, a professor of biochemistry at UC-Berkeley and they have a son named Andrew.
