

18 February 2021

My name is Allysen Allee and I am in full support of fertility fraud legislation. I am 27 years old and was born in Portland, Oregon in 1993. I was raised and currently still live in Vancouver, Washington. My mother conceived me with the help of a sperm donor from Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU) in Portland, Oregon. Fertility fraud has deeply impacted my life as well as the lives of my donor half siblings and my biological father.

At the age of 16, I began to question my mother about small things about me that didn't make sense. The man I called my dad had children from a previous marriage who looked just like him, while I looked completely different. It was not until the age of 20 that my mother finally revealed the truth to me—I was a product of donor conception. After taking a bit to process this information, I was anxious to see if I had any biological siblings. I visited OHSU and was given my donor number: 8928. Using this number I was able to find my sister Madi. Upon meeting Madi, we instantly connected and found many things in common.

One of those common things was the desire to find any other donor siblings that might be out there. We started this mission by visiting OHSU together. We sat with the director of the andrology clinic and asked as many questions as possible. It was at this time we learned that our donor had been “regionally capped” meaning he had met the maximum number allowed of live reported births in that region, which was 14 births at the time. Only a mother who had previously conceived a child with our donor would be allowed to use this donor to conceive another child. We next learned that once a donor was “regionally capped” the remaining samples would be sent out for use in other regions. The area OHSU defined as a region was never made clear to us.

The excitement of having a sibling or two, quickly shifted to a feeling of being overwhelmed. The idea of having so many other siblings in the area was concerning. Madi and I had been born at the same hospital only one year apart. At one point she was living in Portland approximately 15 minutes from my house. If this was happening with one sibling, how many crossovers could there have been with potentially 12 other siblings in my area. This made me even more determined to find as many siblings as possible. This drive was now not only to build relationships with these people, but also know of their identity to be aware of any interactions with them. Madi and I began the process of finding siblings by testing our DNA with multiple Databases.

Together we got our first match to a brother, (#3). Not too much longer after that we matched with two sisters who were raised by the same mother (#4 and #5). It felt like it was all happening so quickly. In January of 2019 we matched with another sister (#6), and only three days later again to yet another sister (#7). With each of these matches we would talk about ourselves and where we grew up. All of us were born in Portland or cities in southern Oregon. Some siblings stayed in the area while some had relocated to different places in the country. We quickly learned how close we all were to each other at different times in our lives. For example, one sister worked at the local coffee shop next to one of the brothers' houses. The idea of passing by, or even befriending someone who you shared half your DNA with and not knowing was extremely uncomfortable.

Our donor tested his DNA with one of the online databases and revealed his identity. One of the sisters decided to reach out to our donor, hoping for some medical information. Our

donor responded to her email with a kind and informative email of his own. It was in this email that our donor informed my sister of the agreement he was made with OHSU at the time of his donation. His agreement was there would be a maximum of 5 donor children born using his samples and that all of these samples would be given to mothers on the opposite coast from him to prevent any interaction with his own future family.

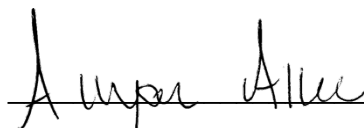
Once I learned our donor had no idea of the extent his samples were used, as well as the close proximity of these children, I was furious for him. I immediately reached out and gave him all of the information Madi and I had obtained from our visit to OHSU. I felt extremely guilty to unload all of this information on him, especially via email, but I felt he needed to know what had happened. Four months after my original email to our donor, I was contacted by my donor's attorney because he had decided to take legal action against the fertility clinic. I informed him I would support my donor in this and would be of any help that I could be.

The idea of being a donor child is an emotional thing. Learning you have over a dozen siblings, potentially close by, is another major emotional moment. But, learning that you are the product of fertility fraud is unimaginable. Knowing my donor was a kindhearted person who simply wanted to help families and was taken advantage of for financial purposes by a fertility clinic is sickening. This man eventually had a family and children of his own and raised them not too far from OHSU in Corvallis, Oregon. Thinking that there were potentially 5 of his donor offspring on the other side of the country gave him no reason to be concerned about possible interactions with his own children. Meanwhile at least 14 of us were born close to him, some still live close by, and even one in the same town as him.

Since our donor's lawsuit was filed, we have matched with two more brothers (#8 and #9). These brothers were born to separate families, but both were born outside of the state of Oregon. One of these brothers is the oldest of the group of siblings we have been identified and the other is somewhere in the middle of our ages. This means that even what OHSU told me and Madi about samples being sent outside of the region only after a donor had met their cap was also a lie. There were multiple children being conceived at the same time in multiple states. OHSU has yet to provide information on exactly how many children were born, and where.

I cannot speak to the feelings my donor has to this situation, though with the statements he's made, I can tell this is extremely hard on him in many ways. What I can speak to is the effect this has had on us—the offspring of his donation. I am a product of fertility fraud. There is nothing easy about this statement. There needs to be legislation and oversight of the fertility industry so this does not continue to happen to donors, donor recipients, and the children. The financial gain to fertility clinics provides them with an incentive to disregard ethical standards that should be implied when creating human life. Legislation to prevent this harm is needed immediately, before other families have to deal with the wrong that was done to my donor, me, my siblings, and our families.

Sincerely,



Allysen Allee