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Library Profile: Carmela Kinslow

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Library Profile: Carmela Kinslow

Carmela (“Carm”) Kinslow, a faculty member since 1990 and Associate Librarian with the Kresge Law Library since 2000, earned her B.S., M.L.S. and M.S.A degrees from Indiana University (Bloomington) and Notre Dame in 1987, 1989 and 1991 respectively.

As Head of Access Services her responsibilities include Circulation, Reserves, and Document delivery. Carm’s service to Notre Dame and the law library profession extend well beyond these duties, however. She also serves on the Administration Team determining policies and procedures for the law library, and over the years has been involved in many committees both at the Notre Dame Law School (including the Law Library Renovation Working Group, Law Library Web Page Committee, University Affirmative Action, and Juridical Review Committee) and through the American Association of Law Libraries (serving on the Diversity Committee, Mentor Committee, Awards Committee, as Chair of the Annual Meeting of the Ohio Regional Association of Law Libraries, and more). Carm has also authored articles entitled *Kathy Farmann: An Inspiring Woman Remembered*¹ and *Bridging the Gap: Electronic Document Delivery and Networked Information Sources*.²

Carm recalls being introduced to the world of libraries when she visited the Free Library of Philadelphia as a 6th grader to write a book report. Her concept of library patron service began with that experience; an introduction to the library as a place for accessing information, social interaction around desired materials, and being with friends all wrapped up in one. She continued to immerse herself in this environment during high school by volunteering in the school library, shelving books. At St. Joseph’s College in Philadelphia, Carm worked in the Library’s Technical Services Department as a student assistant processing materials, filing catalogue cards, and labeling, but it was at the Circulation Desk where Carm met Ken, her husband of 40 years.

Ken and Carm married in 1968. Right after their August honeymoon, they arrived at Notre Dame in their 1957 Chevy towing a brimming U-Haul truck behind them, in pursuit of Ken’s Ph.D in English-American Literature. Soon after, Carm was hired to



Carmela shortly after she first came to Notre Dame.



Carmela in front of the Hesburgh Library in the winter of 1969.

work for Angie Durso, the Notre Dame Life Sciences librarian. Carm left Notre Dame to teach fourth grade at St. Thomas grade school in Elkhart, Indiana from August 1969 to January 1970. Then life abruptly changed for the young couple when Ken was drafted just a few weeks before their son Kenny was born, in February 1970.

During Ken’s four year stint, the Kinslows were transferred to San Angelo, Texas; Monterey, California; and Berlin, Germany. After completing his tour, the family returned to Notre Dame in August 1974. Carm accepted a position in the Reference Department at the Hesburgh Library and worked there until 1979. It was during this time that her love for interlibrary loan work began.

With her outgoing personality coupled with a desire to serve, Public Services is Carm’s forte. To date, the most rewarding aspect of Carm’s current position as Head of Access Services is “the feeling of satisfaction and pride in providing patrons, whether students or faculty, with needed materials for their research, cite checking, or course work. I love working with people. I want the patrons to want to come back. In making the patron the focus of our attention and establishing rapport, a relationship is

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“I love working with people. I want the patrons to want to come back. In making the patron the focus of our attention and establishing rapport, a relationship is developed in giving them what they need ...”

Congratulations



Carmela Kinslow

Serving the academic needs of faculty and students
at Notre Dame for
35 years

developed in giving them what they need.” And that is what is most important.

One of her specialties and favorite aspects of public services is Inter-Library Loan (ILL), which she first began in 1974 at the Hesburgh Library. Since then, Carmela has experienced the evolution of ILL services, from manual searches to the present day electronic searching in OCLC. “Being a part of the evolution in ILL services, along with the explosion of technology and resources, has been truly amazing” she says.

When a position opened at the Kresge Law Library that addressed the need for ILL activities and broader patron service, Carmela applied. Kathy Farmann, the Law Library Director at the time, hired Carmela to provide those services. In 1979, when Carmela transferred to the Law Library, there were virtually no Inter-Library Services offered at the time. Prior to Carmela’s arrival ILL statistics amounted to: 7 items loaned and 2 items borrowed. That is, 7 items were loaned out to other libraries, and 2 items were borrowed from other libraries for patrons. When the Library directorship changed hands to Roger Jacobs in 1985, patron service became a primary focus, as did data collection. This change

“I look forward to stepping into my ‘June Cleaver role.’ I already have the pearl necklace and the apron!”

was reflected in the ongoing incremental growth in ILL service and statistics. In 2008-2009, the ILL statistics were 1,456 borrowing requests and 1,221 lending requests.

Carmela, a surviving twin of triplets at birth, grew up in South Philly, Pennsylvania where she was the only girl in an Italian family of boys. She is known to be tenacious, outspoken, direct, passionate, compassionate, sensitive, and a person born with the desire to get things done and to make people happy. Being 100% Italian, she says “I like people to be as direct with me as I am with them. I like people with a sense of humor and I love to make people laugh.” But her real passion, she says, is food: from shopping for it and cooking it to serving it to her family and friends. When asked about the future and her aspirations, Carmela’s face lit up with a broad smile as she said, “I look forward to stepping into my ‘June Cleaver’ role. I already have the pearl necklace and the apron!” On a more serious note, she reminisced about going back to her volunteer work with Hospice of Saint Joseph County. And more immediately, she is looking forward to raising the new black lab puppy she and Ken just adopted and will be bringing home in November!

What is Carmela most proud of? “Being married to a good man for 41 years, my son, and working here at Notre Dame for 35 years!! I love Notre Dame and I am always proud to say that I am a librarian at the University Of Notre Dame. Every fall, when I hear the marching band chant ‘We are ND’ or ‘Here come the Irish,’ I get teary eyed and I feel so very proud to be a part of it all.”

-Susan Hamilton

1. Kinslow, Carmela. [“Kathy Farmann: An Inspiring Woman Remembered.”](#) *Notre Dame Lawyer* (Spring 2002): 26.
2. Kinslow, Carmela. [“Bridging the Gap: Electronic Document Delivery and Networked Information Sources.”](#) *Notre Dame Lawyer* (Spring 1998): 21.