

Staff Employee of the Week

Carolyn Pratt

JOB TITLE: Benefits Manager

HOME DEPARTMENT: Human Resources

COLLEGE OR VP AREA: VP for Administrative Services

NOMINATED FOR: President's Award for Excellence and Governor's Award for Customer Services

NOMINATED BY: Douglas Martin, Benefits Director

VIRGINIA TECH HIRE DATE: June 16, 1970



SUMMARY

Carolyn has provided outstanding customer service in Human Resources during her tenure of over 38 ½ years. She personifies the Virginia Tech motto UT PROSIM - That I May Serve. During her tenure, she has mastered the ability to combine the "high tech" with the "high touch" as a highly effective administrator for the University benefits programs.

She administers the day-to-day retirement program including the retirement counseling and the retirement application process. She also designs, develops, schedules speakers, and makes presentations for pre-retirement and personal planning programs throughout the course of any year. These programs are in great demand and during the last several years 1,265 faculty and staff have attended these programs and provided excellent feedback.

Carolyn is the point person and the University contact for over 2,500 University retirees from diverse backgrounds. She provides ongoing and regular assistance in areas such as health care including claims issues, beneficiary changes, address changes, Social Security issues, and retirement issues. Retirees report absolute confidence in Carolyn's ability to serve their needs.

She is the primary contact for death claims and she successfully combines the ability to provide compassion, consolation, and needed sensitivity to individuals and families while providing the administrative detail and guidance to process the transitional paperwork that is part of a death claim.

Carolyn does the counseling and the administrative paperwork for individuals applying for disabilities. She coordinates the process often working with physicians, family members, attorneys, Social Security, other insurance carriers, and internal administration to manage that disability process to mesh individual needs and University needs. On many occasions, she actually makes home visits to assist individuals with the disability process.

Finally, Carolyn has the innate ability to recognize individual issues where counseling and/or inpatient treatment may be warranted and she has successfully identified such cases and assisted in obtaining needed treatment.

In summary, Carolyn's caring, compassion, and professionalism make her a role model for customer service.