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Virginia Tech Staff Employee of the Week

June 27, 2005

Name: Patricia N. Caldwell

Job Title: Library Sepcialist 1

Employee's Home Department: Technical Services

Employee's College or VP Area: University Libraries

Nominated For: President's Award for Excellence

Nominated By: Carol Dallman, Library Assistant

Virginia Tech Hire Date: July 5, 1973



Summary

Patricia Caldwell is one of those quiet employees you seldom come into contact. Since she works on the 6th floor of the University Library, many people have never had contact with her, and yet her job has an impact on our students, faculty and staff at the University. When asking the University Libraries to purchase a new book, either a best seller or some unusual subject the majority of us never heard of, it is Ms. Caldwell that makes that purchase.

Ms. Caldwell is responsible for ordering and receiving the thousands of books that enter the University Libraries collection each year. The Job requires years of detailed training, complete understanding of the University Library's cataloging system, the ability to analyze and solve problems, and infinite patients with faculty, staff and vendors. Often Ms. Caldwell has been able to resolve a problem before others even know it was a potential problem. Ms. Caldwell knows how to locate publishers that are obscure. Ms. Caldwell's supervisor, Ladd Brown, said, "In coordinating the acquisitions workflow, Pat exhibits the tact of a diplomat, the savvy of a business person, the skills of a juggler, and often does it all at a NASCAR-Like pace." Even after the books are ordered, they must be received and accepted. Not every book we purchase comes to us in excellent condition. There are times the cover is damaged, pages or chapters are missing, or the book is not put together correctly. Ms. Caldwell works with the vendor or publisher to replace any book that has a flaw when it is shipped to the Library. She will not accept a book until it is in excellent condition.

Though Ms. Caldwell is behind the scenes doing a very important job, her efforts are found on the shelves of the University Libraries. Next time you browse or check out a book from the University Libraries, remember it is Ms. Caldwell that has helped to purchase that book and make sure it is in good condition when it is sent to the Library. Often those who work behind the scenes touch all our lives in some way.

About the ["Staff Employee of the Week"](#) Program

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