

West Chester University

Digital Commons @ West Chester University

University Libraries Personnel and Library
History

University Libraries

3-4-2020

A Library Legend: Corinthian Depte

Christian Sammartino

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.wcupa.edu/lib_plh



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

A Library Legend: Corinthian Depte



A Library Legend: Corinthian Depte

By Christian Sammartino

A Library Legend

Corinthian Depte was one of the first people I met on my first day at FHG Library. I was nervous about starting my new job and performing well. When he greeted me with such warmth and friendship at the Library Help Desk, I instantly felt like I belonged. Corinthian had a special way of building community and making people feel at home. He always took the time to ask how you were doing and get to know details about your life. We immediately connected about the fact that we both share Coatesville, PA as a hometown. What I experienced that day was Corinthian's gift of compassion. Corinthian made a career and a legacy using that gift to ensure that everyone he met was seen and valued.



Corinthian behind the Library Help Desk in FHG Library in 2005.

"What stood out to me the most is his willingness to help people and to always do it with a kind attitude," said Library Assistant 1 Zaharaa Davood. "You can tell he genuinely cared about his work, his co-workers, and other aspects of his life, especially his family. His personality reminded me of my own grandfather; funny, charming, and always kind. He never failed to bring a smile to my face or make me laugh."



Corinthian working with a student worker behind the Library Help Desk in FHG Library in 2006.

Corinthian was one of the most universally beloved people I have ever met in a professional setting. One reason for this is his legendary kindness, which was always on display in his words and actions. He was famous for his willingness to lend a helping hand to those in need. On my first day, he took time out of his schedule to walk a student to the Professional Testing Center so they knew the way. He took me with him so I could guide others in the future. Corinthian was a humble teacher and his classroom was the entirety of this campus. He had a rare gift for humbly teaching valuable life lessons in a way that made you feel empowered. Corinthian led by example, which helped make you the best possible version of yourself.

A Library Legend: Corinthian Depte

"He would bend over backwards to lend a helping hand to all who needed it," said Circulation Supervisor Dana McDonnell. "His strong work ethic would cause him to volunteer to take on extra duties in the library to help his coworkers as well as me. He also tried to make all who came to West Chester feel welcome and assisted them whenever he could with their assignments."



Corinthian with former Cataloging Technician Laura Hardy and former ILL Technician Tracie Meloy at a library celebration.

Corinthian built community through being inclusive and welcoming. He truly wanted to walk with you on your journey through life, no matter where you were in your story. One way he did this was taking time to learn different languages. He was renowned for speaking with international students in their primary languages. Corinthian truly desired to help FHG feel like home for students, no matter how far they were from their hometowns. During his three decade career, he learned how to greet patrons in over 30 languages.

"My favorite memory of Corinthian is him greeting people in the many languages he knows," Zaharaa said. "As a student, I was taking French classes, so I always loved talking to him in French."

Corinthian drew upon inspiration from his Christian faith to help guide his words and actions. Characteristics such as love, service, and humility defined his faith. He truly lived by the Golden Rule and embodied that standard of selflessness and dedication in every aspect of his life.

"For Corinthian, his devout Christian faith comes first, and it guides his actions towards others," Dana said. "He translates this into all aspects of his life: his relationship with his family, his church, his coworkers, and the students and faculty of WCU."

Corinthian left a lasting imprint on our community at FHG through his legacy.



Circulation Supervisor Dana McDonnell (left) and Corinthian (right) at the annual University Libraries Holiday Luncheon.

A Library Legend: Corinthian Depte

That impact was evident on October 27, 2017 when we celebrated his retirement. Members from all aspects of the campus community gathered to honor Corinthian. Many of the friends he made in departments at WCU, student workers, and librarians were there for him that day. Even as Corinthian retired, he was still building community, still uniting us. Serving with such a kind and dedicated person was an honor. Corinthian's retirement was well deserved after all of his years of giving. Still, we miss his kindness and his humor. We miss his smile and his willingness to help others.



Corinthian with a group of students at the University Libraries Spring Luncheon.

"I miss his friendly, out-going manner and his hard-working personality. When he retired, I realized when I had to perform a lot of tasks just how much he was doing for me and not taking credit, Dana said. "I would realize something needed to be done and say to myself, 'O, Corinthian used to take care of that for me.' He was a great coworker and a great friend. He is sorely missed by all of his friends at WCU."

Even though Corinthian retired last year, we still incorporate his example into our daily routines. When I am at the Library Help Desk, I ask myself how Corinthian would help in the same situations I encounter. Additionally, there is also a plaque on the wall behind the Library Help Desk that honors Corinthian. That plaque is a reminder for all of us to be kind, friendly, and to serve all of you with compassion.

His legacy and example mean so much to us here at FHG that we are creating new traditions based upon his example. Every year on October 27, we celebrate Dapper Depte Day to honor how Corinthian contributed to our community. Furthermore, we created a new employee recognition called the Corinthian Depte Golden Bow Tie. This recognition will be given to an employee who consistently provides consistent and compassionate service to our community here at WCU, as Corinthian did for 33 years. Through these initiatives, we hope Corinthian's legacy will live on to uplift and inspire future Golden Rams.



From left to right: Access Services Manager Deirdre Childs, Circulation Supervisor Dana McDonnell, Library Technology Specialist Alex Miriello, Circulation and Stacks Technician Wesley Miriello, and Library Reserves Technician Riha Prophet.

Bibliography

“Access Services Staff.” 2017. JPG file.

Davood, Zaharra. “Reminiscences of Corinthian Depte.” Interview by Christian Sammartino. Personal Interview. 16 October 2018.

McDonnell, Dana. “Reminiscences of Corinthian Depte.” Interview by Christian Sammartino Personal Interview. 19 October 2018.

Flemming, Glenna. “Corinthian and Dana McDonnell at Library Holiday Luncheon.” 2002. Faculty and Staff Internal Photo collection.

Flemming, Glenna. “Corinthian and Student at Circulation Desk.” 2006. Faculty and Staff internal photo collection.

Flemming, Glenna. “Corinthian at the Library Security Desk.” 2004. Faculty and Staff Internal Photo collection.

Flemming, Glenna. “Corinthian in a Suit at Library Circulation Desk.” 2005. Faculty and Staff internal photo collection.

Flemming, Glenna. “Corinthian, Tracie Meloy, and Laura Hardy at a library celebration.” 2004. Faculty and Staff internal photo collection.

Flemning Glenna. “Corinthian with student workers at Spring Library Luncheon.” Approximately 2001. Faculty and Staff Internal Photo collection.