



Patricia Lampkin – described as compassionate, practical, and low-profile but high-impact – arrived on Grounds in 1979 as Assistant Director of Student Services and earned her doctorate in education at UVA in 1986. The following year, she was named Associate Dean of Students for Residence Life.

She served as compliance officer for the Americans with Disabilities Act, and she was Associate Vice President for Student Affairs in 1998 when she became one of the inaugural recipients of the Zintl award.

She took over as Vice President and Chief Student Affairs Officer in 2002. Among her accomplishments, Lampkin is credited with combining Medical Services, Counseling and Psychological Services, the Student Disability Access Center, and Health Promotion and Well-being as a collaborative

department, a vision that culminated in the Student Health and Wellness Center, which opened in the fall of 2021; establishing the Meriwether Lewis Institute for Citizen Leadership, which provides students with an immersive leadership experience; and leading the restructuring and expansion of the University Career Center to better support students' professional development after graduation. In 2012, Lampkin received the Thomas Jefferson Award for excellence in service, the highest honor given to University community members.

The announcement of her retirement in 2020 elicited an outpouring of gratitude and emotion from students and alumni. Meghan Sullivan, a UVA alumna who today is a professor of philosophy at Notre Dame, summed up Lampkin's contributions: "Pat is a living example of what it means to love and trust the students you serve and to have a relentless vision for the people they are capable of becoming."

WHY DID YOU COME TO UVA?

I had finished my master's at the University of Vermont and I came to UVA in 1979 to be Assistant Director of Student Services, but it was on the business side of things in the housing division.

WHAT WAS UVA LIKE WHEN YOU ARRIVED? HOW HAS IT CHANGED AND/OR STAYED THE SAME?

UVA just had gone fully coed in 1970 and, even though it had been almost 10 years and the first class of women had graduated in '74, things moved more slowly. It was still a much stronger regional institution. And there weren't signs on buildings because "if you don't know where to go, you probably shouldn't be here."

UVA has really changed in terms of demographics, obviously, which then shifts the culture in a very positive and challenging way – not that things weren't challenging in 1979. Since 1985, women have been in the majority, and the diversity has only increased, not just gender but race, ethnicity, religious background. We've been more globally focused and become more highly ranked as an institution. In the early years, we were noted as a university, and you didn't ever know the names of the schools. Now, many folks talk about their school more than they do about the University. I was worried about that for a while because I think we need both.

Mainly because my job the last 20 years was the Vice President of Student Affairs, I was always in the student community, so it was always important to me that students found their place. But it made sense as the University got bigger to make sure students could affiliate in smaller groups. The beauty of UVA is you could always grow and learn more, but you always need a place of comfort.

There were not many women in positions of leadership, and there were very few administrators who did not receive their undergraduate degree from the University of Virginia, which I did not. But it was also a very collegial place where decisions were made by consensus.

When you think about changes over 40 years, like most things there are opportunities and challenges. The thing that I have always loved about UVA is, if you are willing to work hard and identify the areas of change and willing to put the effort in, the world was open to you. It's what kept me at the University for 42 years, and I was challenged until the end.

continued

In Her Words | Patricia Lampkin

HOW DO YOU THINK DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF YOUR IDENTITY, INCLUDING BEING A WOMAN, IMPACTED HOW PEOPLE RESPONDED TO YOU IN YOUR POSITION?

Early on, being a woman mattered in some ways and in some ways it didn't. As I said at the beginning, there were very few women, so there were very few role models, and it was a male-dominated culture. When I became pregnant as an Associate Dean of Students, it was said to me, "Oh, we've never had a pregnant dean." Well, of course not. They were all men! I didn't take issue with it. We were all trying to figure things out.

I used to get babysitters for my children to put them on the bus because I needed to get to early meetings. The last thing I was ever going to say was that I had to get children to school. They would have said, "She can't do her job."

Later on, when we were still starting meetings at 7:30 a.m., I knew there were other women with children. I said, "Can we move this meeting later? I think some people have kids who they need to get to school," and they were like, "Oh, of course." But that's not how it would have been viewed earlier.

My husband put up with a lot of the reverse of that. He did a lot of the childcare because we both had demanding jobs, but he got grief for taking care of the kids, or cooking the food. One of the hardest things for me was dealing with other mothers. For some reason, women are not very supportive of each other all the time. Other mothers would frequently judge me that I never had time for my children. Luckily, they seem to have turned out well in spite of me.

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WHAT KEPT YOU GOING IN MOMENTS OF ADVERSITY?

I always made sure that I had a confidential group of colleagues who understood what stresses were, that you understood theirs and they understood yours. I've always been really fortunate to have a core group of friends not related to work, women and men but primarily women, who you could do anything with and not be your work role.

I've also had a great partner who's in sync with me. Mine happens to be a husband.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A WOMAN IN A SIMILAR POSITION TODAY?

Find a strong group of people. I never thought of them as really mentors, but someone who is kind of that unconditional support, yet calls you on your stuff. I've had the benefit of two or three people who call me on my stuff but are supportive.

And you have to seek that out. It's not something that is handed to you. It doesn't have to be one person. I had two or three who were my mother friends, I had two or three who I could call, or a friend who I didn't talk to for 30 years and I could call them up. And I knew that if I needed them, they'd be there. So, I suggest, spend time developing at least one or two relationships, but also understand that you are the driver of your career. Nobody does that for you.

HOW DO YOU WANT TO BE REMEMBERED?

I kind of live my life to make other people's day better, a better day because maybe I was able to help them in some way.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE PEOPLE TO REMEMBER MOVING FORWARD?

I hope we can all respect where people were at the time and that they did the best they could. If you want to change something or move something forward, understand where it came from, then you'll know how to change it. It's very hard to change things without understanding the history.

If I look at the Zintl award – I mean, I was young, when I received it. I wouldn't get it now. What they're recognizing probably has changed, it's grown. The beauty of awards is that they give insight into what accomplishments were important, at the time, and how you did it was perceived as leadership.

But if you look at who's getting the Zintl award now and what they've contributed and how they've impacted the University, it's remarkable. I may be one of the few who knew Elizabeth Zintl and her many contributions.



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