Tabatha ("Tabby") Farney
Kraemer Family Library
University of Colorado
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Nominator: Donald Klingner

1. Please tell us in 2-3 sentences why your nominee should win this award. What sets them apart?

Professor Tabatha ("Tabby") Farney is without doubt the best librarian I’ve worked with in my 42 years as a tenured or tenure-earning professor of public administration at public universities in Indiana, Florida and Colorado since 1974. This includes 6 years at IUPUI (1974-1980); 21 at Florida International University in Miami (1980-2001), and 15 at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs (2001-present). She has been assigned by the UCCS Kraemer Family Library (KFL) as the dedicated research librarian to the UCCS School of Public Affairs for the past six years. In that role, she has expanded the accessibility of scholarly information to our faculty, students and staff in ways that increase our ability to conduct data-driven strategic inquiries, engage with the communities we serve and, in the case of the MPA (Master of Public Administration) program, achieve (in 2014) a full 7-year accreditation from our international accrediting body (NASPAA, the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs and Administration). As a University of Colorado Distinguished Professor and MPA program director, I know that her support services have contributed directly and in measurable ways to transforming lives – our own, our students, and in the communities we serve.

2. Please discuss how the nominee has helped you and/or others and made your experience of the library a more positive one. For instance, did the nominee assist you in a research project or enhance your students' learning experience?

I’m submitting this nomination as an individual nominee. However, it’s been circulated to other faculty in the School of Public Affairs. Many other colleagues have contributed their personal experiences and insights to it.

Tabby excels in her role as the librarian assigned to the School of Public Affairs. Each semester for the past six years she has conducted a virtual library orientation the first night of every class I teach, showing my students how to access and effectively use scholarly databases to find and use current, relevant and authoritative sources to document the literature reviews, conclusions and policy
recommendations their papers contain. Her knowledge and enthusiasm help make
the library accessible to MPA and MCJ students starting their programs as well as
providing excellent support for students completing their final, capstone project,
which require an extensive concept- and theory-based literature review,
appropriate methodologies for data collection and analysis, and valid
(documented) conclusions and policy recommendations for their client agency. In
every class, she ensures my students she is there to help them succeed—and
indeed she does. She actively encourages students to contact her (face-to-face or
virtually) for help with their individual papers. Tabby understands that many of
our students are busy working, raising families and attending school at the same
time and we appreciate her flexibility and willingness to meet students when it is
convenient for their schedule. Overall, Tabby helps make the library an inviting
resource for students.

Other SPA faculty members have experienced the same high level of engagement
and professional support from Tabby Farney. For example, over the years Dr. Ana
Kosloski has contacted Tabby for assistance in connecting students with the many
resources the KFL has to offer. Tabby never hesitates an opportunity to interact
with our Criminal Justice students. It is in these guest lectures with our Criminal
Justice students that Dr. Kosloski has become acutely aware of the enthusiasm
that Tabby has for teaching. Her guest lectures are engaging and interactive. Dr.
Kosloski consistently brings her Freshman Seminar (GPS 1010) students and her
Introduction to Criminal Justice (CJ 1001) students to Tabby. A majority of these
students are freshmen and therefore new to the UCCS campus. Tabby first takes
the time to welcome them and then really shows students how to navigate both the
physical library and all of the electronic resources available through the library.
Tabby walks students step-by-step through using journal databases and assessing
the credibility of sources. She engages students in active learning techniques by
developing short and interactive assignments for them to practice using library
resources. This becomes incredibly helpful for students when they engaging in
their own research projects. In addition she walks around and speaks to each
student one-on-one showing that she has a vested interest in their success.
Tabby stresses to our undergraduate and graduate students that she is a resource
for each of them as they move throughout their college career. She lets students
know she is available to meet with them and help with any questions they have in
regards to research, library sources, citations, etc. She takes a genuine interest in
each student that she assists. Professor Mark McConkie notes that she has come
into Capstone Courses to help students find access to electronic information
sources, and to organize data and how to find and use data sources valuable to
Capstone research.

Tabby serves a challenging content area. Regina Winters reports that one of her
key assignments is creating a legislative history on local and national policy areas,
and that Tabby is able to help students navigate the networks of databases and
paper forms of information. Each student is able to learn how to do this process
and use it in their own civic work.
Tabby is a champion for online learning. Not only has she helped to cultivate a series of video and web-based content for individual School of Public Affairs courses on information technology advances, literature development, and her specialty of data analytics; she has also helped shaped the infrastructure of online engagement at UCCS. She has served on the campus online task force helping to create policies that break barriers between online and traditional student engagement.

Tabby helps faculty as well. She will assist with accessing educational material for class and needed scholarly resources for faculty research projects. She has tutorials on how to convert a research project into a professional paper and runs various workshops on library resources and seminars related to new technologies to assist in research and teaching.

3. **How does the nominee make the college, community college, or university a better place? Please be specific.**

The School of Public Affairs at UCCS is a relatively small unit within UCCS, comprising undergraduate programs in criminal justice (BSCJ), graduate programs in criminal justice/criminology (MCJ) and public administration (MPA), and a Center for Human Security that address the needs of our stakeholders in the Colorado Springs community, southern Colorado, the nation, and the world. We offer a range of courses in traditional face-to-face, online and hybrid modalities. To meet NASPAA accreditation standards, we are required to maintain the same quality of course delivery in all modalities with respect to the academic / professional qualifications of individual faculty, and to provide students and faculty with adequate support services (including research, writing and oral presentation skills). We measure our individual students’ competencies along seven key variables related to public administration and public service, both with baseline metrics when they enter their MPA program, outcome assessments at the end of the capstone class, and continued quality improvement measures with the help of a Student Advisory Board for the MPA program, a community and alumni advisory board comprising graduates and representatives of public agencies, private businesses and NGOs, and a separate advisory board for the Center for Human Security. By all these measures, we deliver high-quality degree programs and create and maintain an arena for civic engagement that encourages students and faculty to apply strategic, data-driven research to the public policy issues our communities face.

None of this would be possible without close and cooperative collaboration between the Kraemer Family Library and other academic units at UCCS. In the case of School of Public Affairs, none of this would be possible without Professor Tabatha Farney’s integral contributions to our research and outreach capabilities. Although Tabby’s primary responsibilities are as the Director of Web Services and Emerging Technologies for the library, the breadth of her responsibilities far surpasses the expectations as designer and manager of the Library’s web site. She
is the library liaison to the School of Public Affairs and the departments of political science and sociology in which she works closely with faculty and students to ensure their research interests are met in the KFL’s collection of materials as well as in our instruction efforts.

At the University of Colorado Colorado Springs, faculty members tend to fulfill many different roles than just teaching and research. Professor Tabatha Farney exemplifies this practice through her service to the university. Tabby recently chaired the library’s strategic planning task force and led this team to actively solicit input from students and faculty and used this data to draft the library’s 2020 strategic plan. While this type of planning helps make the library a better place, Tabby’s service contributions extend beyond the Kraemer Family Library. In 2015, she was selected and served on the search committee that successfully recruited our founding Dean of the School of Public Affairs at UCCS.

At the university level, Tabby participates on several committees include the Information Technology Exchange Committee and the Council of Undergraduate Education. She is also the faculty advisor to the Undergraduate Research Journal at UCCS. Last year, the campus recognized her achievements and potential by selecting her as one of six individuals from UCCS to participate in the University of Colorado Excellence in Leadership Program. This is a selective University of Colorado system-wide program to develop leadership internally. Additionally, her record in teaching/librarianship, research and creative works, service, and professional practice led to her being awarded tenure and promotion to the rank of Associate Professor at UCCS. As a member of her primary unit committee and of the Vice-Chancellor’s Review Committee, I can attest to the wholehearted and unanimous support she received from the University faculty, the Dean of the Library, and the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at UCCS.

However, Tabby’s librarianship is not solely that which is based on the more academic nature of the profession. She also goes out of her way to ensure those faculty and students, as well as community users, with whom she works, receive the answers and assistance they seek. Tabby’s recently retired former colleague and Dean commented, “Having been an administrator for over 20 years, I found that my reference and research techniques had gotten stale. Who did I go to for help? Tabby! She is a librarian’s librarian! Tabby has a calming and nurturing nature to her. She can sift through all the extraneous information and pinpoint exactly what it is you are asking for and need. She doesn’t just dole out answers. Instead, she takes every opportunity to teach information literacy and critical thinking skills to those asking for help. However, she does this in such a way that you learn how to efficiently find what you need, thereby saving yourself time and energy.”

4. **How has the individual demonstrated leadership in the campus community?**

Like many young faculty members who are budding servant-leader role models, Tabby Farney doesn’t see herself as a leader, but just as someone who can help
solve a problem or make something better. Tabby Farney is a team player who is passionate about her work; dedicated to the students, and a core member of our UCCS academic community.

While still relatively young in her professional library career, Professor Tabatha Farney was promoted from Web Services Librarian to the Director of Web Services and Emerging Technology in 2014. As Director of Web Services and Emerging Technologies, Tabby manages a small team and has enabled the Kraemer Family Library to make advancements that have long been only dreamed of here at UCCS, though they are standard in larger and better funded research libraries elsewhere. Due to Tabby’s expertise, energy and persistence, the Library is now working more closely and collaboratively with campus IT. Under her leadership in this academic year, she led two major projects to offer students and faculty seamless circulation privileges and easier remote access to library resources by managing the proxy server implementation. She constantly seeks to improve the user experience by making the library resources more accessible to students and faculty.

Tabby has also started and serves as a faculty advisor an Undergraduate Research Journal, an open access journal that publishes high quality student research at UCCS. This commendable achievement reflects well on the entire University. She is a collaborative leader and she demonstrates this by transforming the Undergraduate Research Journal at UCCS from being her sole research project, to a fully functioning student organization where trained student editors oversee the publishing process in conjunction with faculty advisors from various departments across campus. This type of open source journal publishing is fast becoming the standard by which libraries are promoting scholarly communication and Tabby embraced this concept in 2008 when she originally launched this publication – quite an accomplishment for a faculty member who just received her graduate degree in 2007.

Tabatha Farney has also assisted the School of Public Affairs in other ways. During the 2014-2015 academic year she was a member of the successful search committee that hired our equally talented and motivated Educational Technologist, as well as serving on another search committee for our new Dean. UCCS has recognized Tabby’s potential for leadership at the campus and University of Colorado System level by selecting her for the 2014-2015 cohort in the University of Colorado’s Excellence in Leadership Program (ELP). She was one of the six UCCS representatives nominated to attend this year long program to introduce current campus leaders to the University’s system level of governance and further develop her leadership skills.
5. How has the library, and the nominee in particular, had an impact on students and faculty and the teaching and learning process? Please be specific.

The Kraemer Family Library’s (KFL) mission is to foster the intellectual growth of UCCS students, faculty, staff, and our community by developing innovative services, technologies, collections, and spaces that facilitate their emerging information needs.

The KFL’s vision is to promote an open atmosphere of scholarly inquiry where all members of UCCS and the Colorado Springs communities can pursue their intellectual endeavors. The Library enhances our users' ability to access information and develop critical research skills by creating physical and virtual pathways for them to interact with Library resources and staff at the most opportune times in their learning processes.

The core values underlying the KFL’s mission and vision are:
- It offers an environment that encourages scholarship, creativity, and academic & intellectual freedom.
- We believe information literacy is an essential learning outcome of our students.
- We recognize that the needs of each user are different or unique.
- We embrace campus and community partnerships.
- We cultivate employee and organizational excellence by supporting innovation, teamwork, inclusiveness, civility, flexibility, risk-taking, accountability, and professional growth.

The University of Colorado Colorado Springs serves a diverse community in Southern Colorado. Although Denver is only 65 miles to the north, we are the only University of Colorado Campus south of the Denver / Boulder metro area. Many of our students are the first in their family to attend college, much less graduate. Our default rate on Federal Pell Grants is just 2% -- the lowest in the entire state -- and those students who incur student loans average only $15,000 at graduation with a BA or BS degree. We are proud of the difference we make in our communities.

Professor Tabatha Farney epitomizes what it means to be a member of a university, working together across units and disciplines, helping students to learn the skills and earn the credentials they need to make a difference in their own lives, and to give back to the communities from whence they have come. Her open, welcoming and engaging style invites students to view the KFL as a critical gateway to information access, first by giving them permission to use such universal web-based tools as Google Scholar and Wikipedia for research inquiries, then by gradually moving them toward more valid and replicable data through scholarly research databases. She understands that conceptualization and operationalization are integral to good research. She encourages conceptual clarity
while at the same time inviting students to explore alternative terminology and languages to develop a more complete and robust view of the fields (theoretical and conceptual) they have chosen to research.

Overall, Tabby makes learning fun. She engages students (and faculty and staff, for that matter) in a cooperative process of discovery and imagination. This is why I love he