

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

DEBBIE TAYLOR



WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO ABOUT RETIREMENT AND WHY RETIRE NOW?

I look forward to lots of carefree adventures around Blacksburg and Southwest Virginia with my husband Duane. Now's the right time to retire while I still have some of my wits about me.

WHAT'S BEEN THE MOST MEANINGFUL PART TO YOU WHEN LOOKING BACK AT YOUR CAREER?

The most meaningful part of my career has been all the wonderful coworkers and students I have worked with. This is what I'm going to miss the most. And every August when the students come to campus, there is so much hope and energy and excitement. There is no other time like it and so it's very meaningful to me.

WHEN YOU WERE A KID, WHAT DID YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GREW UP?

A geologist. I watched the movie *Journey to the Center of the Earth* and it made a big impression on me. But I took up accounting for practical reasons.

WHAT TV SHOW ARE YOU CURRENTLY WATCHING THAT OTHERS NEED TO CHECK OUT

Endeavor on PBS. It is made in Britain, takes place in the 60s, crime, passion, it doesn't get any better than that. Don't get me started on TV—I love it and I'm retiring. Uh oh...

WHAT TYPE OF MUSIC DO YOU ENJOY?

I'm very nostalgic so some of the music I like is the music I listened to as a kid in the 60s and 70s on WEEL radio AM in Fairfax...the rock and roll that my brothers listened to and such. But I also love classical music, like the Vivaldi concertos, Mozart piano sonatas, and the like.

WHAT'S ONE PIECE OF ADVICE YOU HAVE FOR SOMEONE THAT'S JUST STARTING OUT HERE IN FINANCE OR AT VIRGINIA TECH?

Stay current on all the new technologies and modern trends in finance and administration—these things will become your future. Learn how to query and report on all the data you generate. And keep a diary of sorts because it will be really interesting to look at 34 years from now.

FIRST JOB?

My first “real” job was selling life insurance, believe it or not. I actually sold 3 policies before I was rescued into my first bookkeeping job at Montgomery Furniture in Christiansburg.

- ASSOCIATE BURSAR
- JOINED VIRGINIA TECH IN: 1985
- B.S. in ACCOUNTING: VIRGINIA TECH, CLASS OF '83
- MRGRAY@VT.EDU

ANY PETS?

I have one little kitty named Tillie. It's a myth that I'm a crazy cat lady with dozens of cats. While I took my PID from the name of a cat I had at the time—O! Mr. Gray—and I am somewhat eccentric, I never had dozens. A dozen yes, but not dozens.

ONE FOOD OR BEVERAGE YOU JUST COULD NOT GO WITHOUT?

My hot tea and some nice cookies to go with it.

IF YOU COULD HAVE ANY SUPERPOWER, WHAT WOULD YOU CHOOSE...?

It's not really a superpower—but a time machine would be great. I'd want to go back in time and see how the pyramids were built, for instance.

FAVORITE PLACE YOU'VE VISITED?

Portland, Maine—you can walk to all the restaurants and there are quiet beaches nearby.

FAVORITE MOVIE?

Apollo 13. I still get teary at the end. Those astronauts and moon mission days were really something.