Employee goes the extra mile in service to others at work and in her community

by LAURA NEFF-HENDERSON, APR

Angela Hayes, who works as the chief of staff for Vice President of Development and University Relations Elizabeth Flanagan, works largely behind the scenes for the university and volunteers her time at football games. Outside work, she mentors young girls and uses her expertise to help the elderly.

Hayes, who works as the chief of staff for Vice President of Development and University Relations Elizabeth Flanagan, has never attended a University of Virginia football game, but she's been to nearly every home football game at Virginia Tech since she began working in her current position in 2004.

She is one of the lucky few who spend game day in the President’s Box at Lane Stadium where she assists guests and donors. Hayes also travels across the country to bowl games.

Although working at football games isn't something that's in her job description, she volunteers to do it because it allows her to interact with the university's senior leaders and get to know many of the donors she talks with on the phone and by email.

"Our donors love her because of the high level of attention and customer service she provides. She works tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure that everyone has a positive experience with our university," said Flanagan.

On the job

Hayes came to Virginia Tech in 2001, to assume the role of director of gift accounting in University Development. After managing the gift accounting program for nearly four years, she jumped at the opportunity to transition into her current position supporting Flanagan.

She held previous positions at UVA as a benefits accountant and gift accounting specialist, giving her inside knowledge of the parts and parcells of the way development offices function.

"Her inside knowledge of how it all works," said Flanagan, "is how she makes so many things happen for so many people. Whatever she goes after, she gets it.

"When I came here, I called and asked her to look at this job description," said Flanagan. "And then I had the good sense to hire her," she said laughing.

Flanagan is more than a supervisor to Hayes. She's a friend and a mentor.

"Dr. Flanagan has been very influential in my life," said Hayes. "She’s helped course a lot of opportunities for me to grow, as a person and as a professional."

Hayes also knew when she accepted the job that she would likely work long hours to get the job done.

"The sacrifice is worth it," she says, "because it enables her boss to successfully manage a demanding job and intense schedule. It’s not a glamorous job and you have to be comfortable with being in the background, explained Hayes. Still though, she loves her job and wouldn’t have it any other way.

In the community

Although not part of her job description, Hayes is one of the lucky few who spend game day in the President’s Box at Lane Stadium where she assists guests and donors.

"The people, and the relationships we have here, are what makes Virginia Tech so amazing," said Hayes, who volunteers to help with Staff Appreciation Day each year.

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The support she’s received from Flanagan has been well worth the sacrifice, according to Hayes. Without Flanagan’s support, Hayes is confident that she would have never even considered taking advantage of the university’s tuition assistance program to pursue a master's degree.

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She’s actively involved in her church communities in Radford and the one she left behind in Charlottesville, and makes the two-hour trek down I-81 regularly to visit with friends and family. The oldest of three children, Hayes is also the daughter of two preachers and the granddaughter of a pastor.

As a self-admitted introvert, she spent her entire upbringing and young adult years in Charlottesville, moving away to attend college.

"The UVA fans are die-hard, but at Virginia Tech, 'hokieism' is a religion," said Hayes, who admits she isn’t necessarily a football fan, but has embraced the Hokie spirit.

Still though, she loves her job and wouldn’t have it any other way.

Virginia Tech officials came together on November 12, 2011, to celebrate the end of an eight-year fundraising initiative during which the university exceeded its goal, raising $1.11 billion in outright gifts, pledge payments, or commitments of future support. Approximately 1,000 of the university’s most generous supporters attended the event. Angela Hayes, left, and Elizabeth Flanagan, right, are seen here.

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Laura Neff-Henderson, APR, is the employee communications manager at Virginia Tech.