

## **Resolution on the Retirement of**

### **Bobbie Knable**

*To be adopted by the Faculty of Arts and Sciences of Tufts University*

*May 15, 2000*

*The members of the administration join our faculty colleagues in the College of Arts and Sciences to proclaim our admiration and warm appreciation for Bobbie Knable, who is retiring after thirty years of dedicated service to Tufts.*

*In 1970, Bobbie joined the English department as Assistant Professor and Director of the First-Year Writing Tutorial. Her five years of teaching in the department made it possible for many students to develop the skills and confidence to succeed at the university. In 1972, she also became the Director of Continuing Education. Her work in that role led to the creation of the REAL Program that continues today. In 1975, Bobbie became the Dean of Freshmen and Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies.*

*In 1980, Tufts was in need of a Dean of Students. The Dean of the Faculty, Bernard Harleston, asked Sol Gittleman to chair the search. Sol refers to this as the shortest and most successful search in Tufts' history. After speaking with Bobbie about the possibility of her taking on the new challenge, he and Bernie declared the search over and began the twenty-year reign of Bobbie as Dean. It has been the longest, and certainly one of the most effective deanships that Tufts has seen.*

*Bobbie's boundless energy and enthusiasm for her work have never faltered. All of us have seen the lights on in her office well into the night on many occasions as she met with students in crisis or responded to a parent or colleague who had a concern. And when she was at home, there was no one who would return to campus or make a nighttime visit to a hospital more quickly than Bobbie to see an ill student or meet with parents. Her work ethic is truly extraordinary – enough to make her a charter member of the “no whiners club,” a small, select group.*

*Bobbie has touched many lives in her years at Tufts, whether advising students about personal issues, career goals, their academic programs, serving Thanksgiving dinner at her house to those who couldn't get to their own homes, baking apple pies with the commuting students at Hillside House, or teaching one of the first courses at Tufts in African American Literature. One might also have seen Bobbie playing doubles ping-pong with Jack Zarker in Eaton Hall Lounge against any student team, getting visitors to her office to use her lending library of mystery books, creating and presiding over an “etiquette” dinner where seniors could brush up on luncheon interviewing techniques while eating pheasant, or arguing the talents of the Cleveland Indians, no matter how badly they were doing.*

*Bobbie leaves much in her wake. Under her stewardship Tufts has seen the creation of the Asian American, Latino and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Resource Centers, the rebirth of the traditional Convocation ceremony, the creation of the first residential college at Tufts at Bridge-Metcalf, and the very successful experiment of an all first-year residence hall in Tilton. She established a level of caring for students that those of us who have been lucky enough to work with her can hold as the model for which to strive.*

*Bobbie's contributions have not been limited to Tufts. She is a present member of the Board of Trustees at Bennington College and of the City on a Hill Charter School and a past Board member of Pine Manor College and of Vermont Academy. She has been a commissioner of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, has served on the governing board of the Massachusetts Institute for Psychoanalysis, has been a member of the steering committee of the Massachusetts Association of Women Deans, was President of the Council on Higher Education for Urban Women, and has served on the board of directors for Tufts Day Care Center and the Driscoll Extended Day Program. Last week, Bobbie was awarded the Outstanding Service Citation from Tufts' Alumni Council for her contributions to student affairs. Most recently, in recognition of her work in education and her efforts in improving health care for the elderly, Governor Celucci issued a proclamation saluting Bobbie's accomplishments and declaring May 10<sup>th</sup> "Bobbie Knable Day" in the Commonwealth.*

*Bobbie's formal teaching at Tufts has included Black Literature, Autobiography, Women Writers, Leadership, and Gender, Class and Race. But for many, her teaching went beyond the classroom. She is a woman of great style, a role model to students and colleagues, selfless in her energy and exemplary in her professionalism. She has changed Tufts for all time. I am proud to have this opportunity to thank Bobbie, to wish her well in retirement and to propose that she be declared Dean of Students Emerita.*

*Proposed by  
Bruce Reitman  
May 15, 2000*