Resolution on the Retirement of John Wade Professor Robin B. Kanarek

Department of Psychology, Tufts University

With this resolution, the Psychology Department faculty recognizes and honors the John Wade Professor, Robin B. Kanarek, for her many years of outstanding research, teaching, and service at Tufts.

Robin received her BA in Biology from Antioch College in 1968. She changed fields for graduate school, receiving her Masters of Science in 1971 and her PhD, both in Psychology, from Rutgers University. Her dissertation focused on the area that would define her career, the behavioral neuroscience of nutrition. During graduate school, she began what would be many years of undergraduate teaching and mentoring. After graduation, Robin’s research brought her to the Boston area where she spent almost all of her career.

By authoring more than 120 books, book chapters, and articles, combined with hundreds of conference presentations, Robin became an authority on nutrition and behavior. Her work attracted funding from both public and private sources. Her books have become important nutrition and behavior resources, with titles such as, Nutrition and Behavior: New Perspectives (1991), Nutritional Neuroscience (2005), Nutrition and Behavior, A Multidisciplinary Approach (2006; 2011) and Diet, Brain, Behavior: Practical Implications (2011). What really stands out is her ability to synthesize a broad and sometimes conflicting literature and then to apply that to the real world. Further, she enhanced the eminence and visibility of the department by serving on various editorial boards for prestigious journals as well as federal grant review committees. Tufts recognized the importance of her research and her career when they made her the John Wade Professor, an endowed position, in 2000.

Robin had a profound influence on many students, both graduate and undergraduate, all of whom found her research both fascinating and relevant. She truly cared about her students’ success. The connection she made with her students can be seen in her many long-time research collaborations. She has always taken great pride in her students’ accomplishments, many of whom have gone on to have successful careers in organizations, private practice, and at major academic institutions. Her 24 years of service on the Health Professions Recommendation Committee served countless students’ quests to become doctors, dentists, and other health professionals.

Tufts will certainly miss Robin’s service, both her leadership and the oft-overlooked committee work. She provided service not only to her home school (A&S), but to other of Tufts’ schools, serving as Psychology Deputy Chair and then Chair, Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Interim Dean of the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy. Her committee work spanned A&S, Engineering, and Nutrition.

Robin’s research reflects her life in inspiring ways. She’s a nutrition scientist who is also a foodie. Dinner with her undoubtedly leads to delicious food. She lives her knowledge of the positive effects of exercise, having completed several triathlons herself and as a member of the AimTriTeam, an organization dedicated to helping women participate in a triathlon.

On behalf of the faculty of the Department of Psychology, and the countless other faculty, undergraduate and graduate students whose lives she has touched, I respectfully request that this resolution be spread on the minutes and that a copy of it be provided to Professor Kanarek.