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## After Draft Dodgers, Protests, Hippies and Three UD Presidents, Annie Thornton Set to Retire After 44 Years Serving Students

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UNIVERSITY of



DAYTON

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Contact: Debbie Juniewicz  
Debra.Juniewicz@notes.udayton.edu

**NEWS RELEASE**

**AFTER DRAFT DODGERS, PROTESTS, HIPPIES AND THREE UD PRESIDENTS,  
ANNIE THORNTON SET TO RETIRE AFTER 44 YEARS SERVING STUDENTS**

DAYTON, Ohio — Annie Thornton didn't come with the building — she came before the building.

More than four decades and 1,000 student employees later, the University of Dayton Kennedy Union associate director for operations will retire when Thornton turns in her University walkie-talkie Dec. 31. Kennedy Union first opened its doors in 1964, but Thornton has been a University employee since 1960, when a one-question job interview led to a position in the Chaminade Hall cafeteria for the Athens, Ala., native.

"Brother Ed asked me, 'Are you old enough to work?'" Thornton says. "I told him yes, and I was hired on the spot."

Her roles on campus changed from dining services to custodial programs to Kennedy Union, where she was appointed operations manager in 1986. In her current position, Thornton oversees approximately 30 students each semester and handles tasks ranging from providing technical assistance for meetings and events to maintaining a spotless facility.

"She has an amazing ability to work with students," says Amy Lopez, director of Kennedy Union and conference services. "Annie doesn't 'mother' the students; that's never been her role. She is a mentor and a leader who talks to them about the vital role the union plays on campus and how they can be a part of that."

In 1990, Thornton was presented with the Marianist Service Award and, earlier this year, the annual Women's Leadership Conference was renamed the Annie T. Thornton Women's

Leadership Conference in her honor. Despite her success and her dedication, Thornton is ready to move on.

"It's time," she says with certainty. "People ask me how I can leave, they don't want things to be different. But it's supposed to be different. Things have to change."

During her 44 years at the University, Thornton has seen plenty of change. The 62-year-old remembers vividly the tumultuous times of draft dodging and political protests. She remembers the "hippie stage," as she calls it, and a time when female students weren't permitted above the ground floor of Kennedy Union in shorts. Three University presidents later, Thornton is philosophical about her tenure.

"I'd like to feel like I've given back as much as I've received," Thornton said. "I don't look at it like I've given UD 44 years of my life. The University has given me a lifetime of what people hope to gain."

A reception will be held in Thornton's honor from 3-5 p.m. on Dec. 9 in Kennedy Union Torch Lounge.

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For media interviews, contact **Annie Thornton** and **Amy Lopez** at (937) 229-3333. Annie Thornton resides in Jefferson Twp.