Many things about the UA were different when Jim Cushing [1] arrived in 1968 as an assistant professor of mathematics.

Perhaps most notably, at least for him, was the office in Physics-Atmospheric Sciences that he shared with two other faculty members. The room was so small, Cushing recalled, that all three occupants could not be in the office at the same time.

A few other minor differences: The library was housed in what is now Arizona State Museum North, and the basketball team faced opponents in Bear Down Gymnasium.

Cushing has long since left his shared office. He had his first solo space in the Mathematics building, and now has an office in Environment and Natural Resources 2.

As he moved from building to building, the College of Science moved up.

Part of its strong reputation can be attributed to Cushing. In the 70s, he helped establish the UA's now highly respected interdisciplinary program in applied mathematics.

"It has been a privilege and altogether fun ride over the years to be a small part of the University's growth into a major research level one institution and to be able to mentor really outstanding students along the way," Cushing said. "By far the biggest surprise was how fast it all went by!"

Cushing — the only UA employee celebrating a 50-year work anniversary — and 951 others were recognized Thursday at the annual Service Awards [2] ceremony, which celebrated employees who marked work anniversaries in 2018 of 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45 and 50 years.

The event's emcee, Andrea Romero, vice provost for faculty affairs and a professor of family studies and human development, helped quantify the honorees' service: They've logged 18,000 combined years — or 37 million hours — of work.

During the ceremony, Allison Vaillancourt, vice president of business affairs and human resources, summed up the UA's biggest strength by recalling a recent job interview she conducted. The interviewee asked what couldn't be learned about the UA by simply looking at the website.

"The answer, for me, was quite easy," Vaillancourt said. "It was: 'There's no way you could understand how remarkable this community is by just looking at the website. People here hang together through thick and thin. People keep coming in, keep showing up and,
importantly, we care for each other in such an extraordinary way."

Honorees this year include:

**Harrison Barrett**  
Regents’ Professor of Optical Sciences, Medical Imaging and Applied Mathematics  
45 years

**Ronald Breiger**  
Regents’ Professor of Sociology  
20 years

**Hsinchun Chen**  
Regents’ Professor of Management Information Systems and holder of the Thomas R. Brown Chair in Management and Technology  
30 years

**Jim Cushing**  
Professor of Mathematics  
50 years

**Jay Nunamaker**  
Regents’ Professor of Management Information Systems and holder of the Soldwedel Chair in Management Information Systems  
45 years

**Farhang Shadman**  
Regents’ Professor of Chemical and Environmental Engineering  
40 years

**Robert Smith**  
Vice President for University Planning, Design and Operations  
25 years

**Mary Stiner**  
Regents’ Professor of Anthropology  
25 years

**Kassandra Urquidez**  
Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs Advancement and Dean of Undergraduate Admissions  
25 years

**Ofelia Zepeda**  
Regents’ Professor of Linguistics  
40 years

*See a complete list of honorees [here](#) (PDF).*

Honorees received these gifts:

- 10 years ? Red or blue folding umbrella with the UA logo
- 15 years: Set of four tumbler glasses with the UA logo
- 20 years: Set of four stemless wineglasses with the UA logo
- 25 years: Pitcher with the UA logo
- 30 years: 9-inch square glass bowl with the UA logo
- 35 years: Glass carafe with the UA logo
- 40 years: Hand-crafted fluted glass bowl created by local glass-blowing studio Fire Ranch Glassworks
- 45 years: Hand-crafted glass egg created by Fire Ranch Glassworks
- 50 years: Large hand-crafted glass egg created by Fire Ranch Glassworks

Those who were unable to attend the ceremony can pick up their gift at the UA Visitor Center through the end of December.

Photos from the event can be found on Box [4].

**Source URL:** https://uaatwork.arizona.edu/lqp/service-awards-celebrate-employees-marking-50-years-ua

**Links**
[1] https://www.math.arizona.edu/people/cushing/
[4] https://arizona.app.box.com/s/mqn3xjp6ygiwh3uom0vrf0f61qwhdxd8