TV Producer Finds Calling as Medical Librarian

College of Medicine ? Phoenix
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Changing careers from television news producer to librarian wasn't that big a leap for Kathleen Carlson, the associate and education librarian at the UA College of Medicine ? Phoenix.

"I am an information broker, and I am really good at communication and obtaining information," says Carlson, who has worked at the college since 2012.

She spent 15 years in TV news, working for stations in Phoenix and the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, as well as CNN and NBC Sports. When she began thinking it was time to start a new chapter in her life, she was drawn to health care.

"At the television station, we were always doing stories on how the health care industry was thriving, and that's where future jobs would be," she said.

Carlson, who didn't want to be a doctor or nurse, decided to pursue a master's degree in library science. Before coming to the UA, she worked as a hospital librarian for 12 years at John C. Lincoln Hospitals and at Arizona State University.

At the College of Medicine ? Phoenix, Carlson's job is to support medical students, students in the Pathway Scholars Program [1], faculty and staff.

Carlson said her job is "very gratifying."

"I learn something new every day," she said. "I have a natural curiosity to understand why something is a particular way. It's a job full of constant learning."

In addition to her daily tasks as a librarian, Carlson participates in nearly all of the 80 medical students' scholarly project presentations, she has joint faculty appointments as assistant professor of practice in the Department of Biomedical Informatics and the Department of Bioethics and Humanism, and she co-created the college's first Book Club for Diversity and Inclusion [2].

Her professional practice includes committee work for the Medical Library Association. She also served a three-year term as president of the Medical Library Group of Southern California and Arizona.

"It's important to give back to the medical librarianship profession because librarians are our future," Carlson said. "They will in turn help educate the future physicians of our country."
