

2006 Distinguished Service Award

**Presented in 2006 to
Lynda White, University of Virginia**

Presentation remarks from Linda McRae and Margaret Webster:

The depth and breadth of Lynda White's contributions to the profession encompass all three of the areas of achievement to be considered for a distinguished service award -- research, service, and leadership. Quietly, unobtrusively, but for the good fortune of this organization, most effectively, Lynda White has served the Visual Resources Association for over twenty years. Generally working behind the scenes, never wanting recognition, in fact generally wanting not to be noticed, Lynda has done much to make the Visual Resources Association the strong viable organization that it is today, and her steady hand can be seen everywhere.

In the 1990s, when VRA was a young and financially insecure organization, it was Lynda's guidance that put the organization on the stable footing it enjoys today. As VRA's treasurer from 1994 to 1997, she realized that the organization needed to build a financial base, and it was Lynda who encouraged the Board to invest in certificates of deposit. It was Lynda who realized the importance of continuing to develop that financial base and who called for a permanent committee whose mission it was to assure the organization's financial well being. Few of you may know that Lynda was the driving force behind the first *ad hoc* financial planning committee, serving as its first chair and continuing to serve as a member since its inception. The final report of that *ad hoc* committee was an essential resource for the VRA Strategic Planning taskforce and continues to guide the financial planning of the Association. It is largely through Lynda's foresight and encouragement that the organization is financially strong and healthy today.

As the Associate Director of Management and Information Services at the University of Virginia, Lynda's management skills have served the Visual Resources Association in multiple ways. For example, she has been instrumental in promoting management workshops at our national conferences. From financial and strategic planning to data standards to professional status, Lynda's thoughtful presence can be seen throughout the achievements of this organization.

She served as a member and chair of the Data Standards Committee and has published articles and books based on her research. In the area of professional status, Lynda was actively involved in a joint VRA~ARLIS/NA task force for which she designed and analyzed responses to the Professional Issues Survey. She has also served on the VRA Nominating Committee, Intellectual Property Rights Committee, Development Committee, and was actively involved in the establishment of one of our newer chapters -- the Mid-Atlantic Chapter.

Anyone who has worked with Lynda has been awed by her quiet gentle manner balanced by her strength and determination. We believe that Lynda's colleagues who write in support of her nomination (Arleen Arzigian, Sherman Clarke, Ben Kessler, Kathleen List, Gregory Most, Phyllis Pivorun, Jack Robertson, Jenni Rodda, Joe Romano, Allen Townsend, Christina Updike, Sandra Walker, Ann Whiteside, Loy Zimmerman) say it best. We quote from their observations:

- “Lynda is the most amazing person.” “Her original contributions to the published record and her unstinting service to professional organizations (local, national, and international) all bespeak dedication and innovative contribution to the fine arts and visual resources community.” “What makes me most pleased to have Lynda as a friend and long-standing colleague is her unabated enthusiasm for tackling projects or assignments that present huge ‘challenges’.” Robertson
- “Lynda is a leader who leads so that those being led are unaware of the ship behind them.” “Lynda has taught us the importance of being professional in all that we do.” Whiteside
- “It is folks like Lynda that work to bring us together and to find the common ground that enrich both of our worlds.” “Lynda, with her experience in both library and slide room arenas, is a stellar example of the librarian who can bridge the divide—the divide that need not be there, the bridge that helps all of us provide better documentation for our users.” [Lynda makes] “this field a joyous and intellectually stimulating place to learn and to be.” Clarke
- “She brings an informed perspective on what works and what is worth doing. She is skilled as both a leader and participant in group work. Her record of professional achievement reflects ... dedication, inclusivity, humor, energy, and intelligence.” “We may not always recognize when we become models and mentors in our chosen profession, but we soon recognize it in colleagues like Lynda White who leads by example, with steady, unselfish service and quiet grace.” List
- “Lynda’s groundbreaking use of MARC records for visual images which strived to build a foundation for shared cataloging, her work with the Data Standards Committee which culminated in the development of the VRA Core, and her dedication to educating everyone on standards should be celebrated as outstanding service to the visual resources community.” Pivorun
- “Lynda’s collegiality is her distinguishing trait.” Updike
- Masterful leadership: “It was for me like going to school on how to chair a committee.” Zimmerman
- “For years, she has played a dynamic role in shaping and improving the ways we go about doing our jobs.” Kessler

- “One of Lynda’s most attractive qualities, one which I truly value, is her quiet, but steady and measured approach to problem-solving. Her leadership style is humane, never pressed, and one that is viewed as increasingly out of fashion in our fast-paced, contemporary world.” Townsend

The fourteen letters from her colleagues all attest to her many years of service on boards, committees, and taskforces; to her research leading to vital surveys, publications, and guidelines; and especially noteworthy, to a very special brand of leadership—a leader who can achieve so much, be considered “masterful and dynamic,” and yet be described as “gentle, steady, thoughtful, collegial, humane, and one who brings us together”