



Karen Adams

October 10, 1950 - April 7, 2009

Members of the Central Michigan University community forever will remember Karen Adams as an inspirational visionary leader of the university and its education and human services programs.

Adams, dean of CMU's College of Education and Human Services since 2003, died April 7 at MidMichigan Medical Center in Midland. She was 58.

"She used her tremendous talent to help CMU create many innovative programs such as the Alternate Route to Teacher Certification program," President Michael Rao says. "Her lasting impact on the university will be the visionary academic design of the new Education Building, which will forever enhance the university's teacher education program."

An avid traveler who visited 103 countries in her lifetime, Adams was a vocal advocate for the value of international experiences as part of an academic education as well as one's life education. Her e-mail signature included a fitting quotation from Mark Twain: "Travel is fatal to prejudice."

On CMU's behalf, she traveled to India and China to explore possible partnerships with universities; she also traveled to Ghana to co-instruct a professional development workshop for teachers and to Mexico to assist with cultural studies aspects of a CMU service-learning project.

An art enthusiast and collector who also was passionate about literacy and children's literature, Adams had co-hosted "Children's Books: The Dean's List" with former College of Communication and Fine Arts Dean Sue Ann Martin on CMU Public Radio since 2006.

"I enjoyed my friendship with Karen on a personal level, but also feel very privileged to have had Karen as a colleague, not only as a highly regarded education dean, but as a renowned scholar," Rao says.

Prior to joining CMU, Adams served as dean of the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences and professor of teacher education, literacy and library media education at Western Kentucky University from 1999 to 2003 and dean of the College of Education and professor of curriculum and instruction at Tennessee Technological University from 1994 to 1999. She also chaired TTU's curriculum and instruction department from 1989 to 1994.