**15493, Karen Eilers**

Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am Karen Eilers, a former administrator in the SOM Dean’s Office and I am honored to be a part of this special recognition. When I was introduced to Narri more than twenty years ago I was impressed to learn that for twelve years she had been commuting from Davis to UC Berkeley to manage the Italian Department.

I discovered that during her commute she kept abreast of current events reading *The Wall Street Journal,* sheenjoyed doing crossword puzzles in two languages (English and Italian), and reading books in five languages just for pleasure! Despite the fact she is an Italian native, her name, Narriman, has Persian origins and means “faith and brightness”, and that certainly fits Narri. I immediately thought that the School could benefit from Narri’s intellectual curiosity and dedication.

Soon after Rafe deVere White, who has a gift for recruiting stellar employees, hired Narri as manager of Urology on April Fool’s Day 1993. Narri passed her first trial by fire, not only surviving Rafe, but by meeting Administration’s first inflexible deadline! Narri learned the financial system, presented her budget, which had been due the day prior to her arrival on April 15, along with a gracious critique suggesting improvements to our budget system.

Narri quickly became an acknowledged leader recognized for her integrity and passion for excellence in the School and Health System. After successful stints as manager of Urology and the Cancer Center, she joined the Department of Psychiatry 18 years ago and, with Bob Hales, helped to build one of the finest departments of psychiatry in the country.

Narri’s contributions to the Health System are far too numerous to list, but her ability to aptly analyze problems and identify cogent solutions was highly valued among her attributes. She was frequently called upon by the Administration but Narri never said, “NO!” She represented our Office of Human Resources and investigated sensitive personnel issues related to administrative improprieties, harassment and personality conflicts.

She was frequently invited to represent managers in Health System strategic planning, executive recruitments and administrative and operational reviews. She chaired the SOM Council of Managers and was sought as a seasoned mentor to many chief administrative officers. Many times I welcomed her valued perspectives, often served up with a “double shot” of her sobering Italian espresso!

After my retirement I served on a Psychiatry Support Group Narri established and personally witnessed her firm leadership and nurturing heart when she dealt with her staff, faculty, and residents. They trusted her implicitly because she was available around the clock to listen and give advice and guidance. Narri ensured that every birthday, new baby, or other special achievement, was celebrated! She fostered a professional yet caring and supportive work environment, a balance that is very difficult to achieve!

Narri is also recognized for her external contributions as president of the National Association of Academic Psychiatry Administrators. Her unwavering spirit and commitment to excellence helped shape the organization into one highly respected at the national level by colleagues, department chairs and other leaders in academic psychiatry.

In recognition of her inspirational leadership and dedication to creating a positive and fruitful working environment aligned with our School and Health System’s missions in education, research, patient care, and community service, Narri was selected as one of the very first recipients of the Karen Eilers Award for Staff Excellence. I was truly honored and humbled by her selection.

Narri, I want to take this opportunity to thank you from my heart for being a tireless professional, an inspirational colleague and an amazing friend. What a blessing it was to work with you, and I look forward to our next chapter together in retirement! We will take advantage of your drive, or “Restless Brain Syndrome”, to plan more travel and adventures!

A rousing toast to Narri.