In Memoriam, Kachuen [Carol] Gee



Submitted by Kenneth Schlesinger, Associate Dean and Chief Librarian, Lehman College Leonard Lief Library

It is with sadness that I inform you of the passing of our beloved former Head of Technical Services Kachuen [Carol] Gee on October 23, 2026. Carol had served with distinction as Head of Technical Services from March 1986 until her retirement in September 2014. Carol was 86.

Carol became an institution onto herself. As you're aware – Head of Technical Services is one of the Library's most challenging and demanding positions with a focus on what we term ABC: **A**cquisitions, **B**udgeting, and **C**ataloging. Not only responsible for overseeing acquisition and cataloging of library materials in all formats – Carol had to wrestle with the annual OTPS budget and Lehman's Accounts Payable, Budget, and Procurement Offices.

Throughout all these challenges – Carol managed to maintain her sanity, equanimity, and – most importantly – sense of humor. Every year of CUNY's budget close is an heroic act: Carol was successful in exhausting all funds and balancing the budget. She also was a tireless advocate for increased Library funding and resources to meet the needs of Lehman students and faculty.

A native of China – Kachuen Gee received her education in the United States. She earned a BA in History from New York University, MS in Library Science from Columbia, and MS in Special Education from Lehman College.

At Lehman – Carol remained active with the campus Women's Center, particularly by promoting Chinese cultural events and inviting traditional musicians and political figures. One of her major contributions to CUNY Libraries was being pivotal in organizing the two-year CUNY-Shanghai Library Faculty Exchange Program. As cultural ambassador – Carol visited the Chinese host institutions of Shanghai Normal and Shanghai Universities.

She worked closely with me, helping design the program, translate the exchange agreement, as well as greet visiting Shanghai librarians, frequently entertaining them at her own expense. Primarily – she functioned as *Den Mother,* presenting a friendly face, offering onsite support to visitors navigating a strange city, and helping resolve unexpected intercultural misunderstandings as they arose. Truly – as Project Director I could never have accomplished this unprecedented and ambitious program without her ongoing support.

As a HEO – Carol pursued an active research agenda, chiefly in the area of Chinese genealogy. As granddaughter of Republic of China's first President, Yuan Shikai [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yuan_Shikai] – Kachuen practically functions as royalty here. With Baruch colleague Janey Chao – she was involved in a multiyear project to document the genealogy and history of her distinguished ancestors and descendants, involving extensive travel in her country of birth.

Further – Carol served as an active member of Chinese American Librarians Association [CALA], functioning as Past-President, sponsoring engaging programming for this community. In essence – she evolved into a national leader of this important undertaking.

At Leonard Lief Library – Carol will be fondly remembered for her warmth, kindness, searing intelligence, and disciplined work ethic. We will miss this extraordinary person and librarian.

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