



MACS Times

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The Newsletter of the Middle Atlantic College Stores, Inc. serving Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia since 1970.

KATHY GRACE RECEIVES ASPEN AWARD

MACS past president, Kathleen Grace of Swarthmore College Bookstore was recently honored in Houston with the prestigious Aspen Award by the Education Committee of NACS, the National Association of College Stores. The Aspen Award is a lifetime achievement award recognizing industry professionals who have made continuous, notable contributions to the education and professional development efforts of NACS and helped advance the industry through learning endeavors. Below are excerpts from Kathy's acceptance speech. Congratulations, Kathy!

"This Aspen Award is truly beautiful. It is beautiful in its own right. It's also beautiful for what it represents as an industry award. But I think perhaps it's most beautiful for what it suggests about our industry.

You probably don't know that Aspen trees are considered a "keystone tree species." A keystone species has a disproportionate effect on its environment relative to its biomass. In other words, even though it may be a small player, relative to others in the environment, it plays a critical role in maintaining the structure of an ecological community, affecting many other organisms in an ecosystem. Removal of a keystone tree species causes immediate and overwhelming negative changes to a forest community.

You can see my analogy coming a mile away, can't you?

I would suggest that collegiate retailers are a keystone campus species. We may be small players, relative to others on cam-



pus. But we play a critical role in maintaining our communities. And we affect many other members of our campus ecosystems. Unlike many larger campus departments, collegiate retailers touch almost everyone in the campus community from prospective students through alumni, faculty and staff, parents, prospective employees...well, you know this, if they visit through our doors.

So now our ecosystem is under tremendous stress. We'll need to adapt and change to survive—let alone thrive—in the coming years. And it won't be easy.

But you know what? Aspen trees are also considered to be the ultimate wild landscape survivors. They actually thrive in the aftermath of events like fire and landslides. Their root systems send out offshoots that quickly re-forest devastated areas.

Following my Aspen Tree corollary, I believe collegiate retailers can be the ultimate campus survivors. We have a wonderfully strong root system via our industry education and networking. And that, ladies and gentlemen, is what will allow us to continue to be keystone species on our campuses."

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