

While in undergraduate college as a human, historical, and cultural geography major, with a minor in news editorial journalism (the J college) at the University of Maryland at College Park I did a work study position, one of several, with then-Professor Paul Groves in historical geography related to research on Baltimore's cottage industries for a book with Professor Robert Mitchell on 19th Century North America. I also assisted Professor Charles Christian in urban studies/geography with his book, *Black Saga*, and in exam proctoring for his classes as a student assistant. I was socially involved with the Gamma Theta Upsilon geography honors fraternity, and I was the undergraduate student representative as an upperclassman in the Campus Senate on two committees, the adjunct committee on human relations, and the adjunct committee on research (Omicron Delta Kappa). I found that I enjoyed working with the public after obtaining my bachelor's degree.

Positions I have held in the DC/MD/VA area include post-high school administrative assistance in non-profit associations (Weissbrodt & Weissbrodt Law Firm, People's Life Insurance Company, American Chemical Society, American Association of Retired Persons), the Federal government (Veteran's Administration Central Office, Office of Data Management and Technology, Systems Techniques Division), and the University of Maryland (Department of Agronomy and Central Administration Human Resources), before returning to college full time as a returning woman, the third in my family to attend UMD after my mother, Lynn Ribnitzki (Alpha Gamma Delta Chapter Grand) and her uncle, Frederick Ribnitzki, Jr., a letterman there and sergeant-at-arms of class. I am a lifetime alumni member, acknowledged as such on the Riggs Alumni Center wall (Go Terps!). While in college, I built upon my general administrative assistance by specializing in medical transcription and working in private medical practices and hospitals, which I continued after college along with editorial work.

I served as a ranger in the National Park Service, at the National Mall memorials in Washington, D.C., one of the three largest urban national parks in the U.S., the other two being San Francisco and New York City. I served as an interpretive national park ranger from 1992 to 1994, giving talks, and many other duties such as screening for permits, translating for visitors in English and Spanish when needed, special staffing details outside of the regular tour of duty at special events at the inauguration of President Clinton and Memorial Day and Independence Day holidays, reading of names to the public at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and on the sets of movies including 'True Lies' and 'Forrest Gump.' I was also on the editorial group project team who wrote for and produced *The National Mall Newsletter*, which was delivered on the Hill to members of Congress. I returned to the NPS for a visitor services assistant position at Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts in 2018.

I was employed as visitor assistant at the Capitol Visitor Center when covid-19 forced the shutdown in 2020. I was a guest relations associate at the Museum of the Bible from 2022 to 2024. I have worked with publishers of journals and books in several editorial positions, including as assistant copy editor for six journals for the American Geophysical Union, including *Water*, as editorial assistant for the *Journal of the American Podiatric Medical Association*, as production editor for the Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group and University Press, as copy editor for the World Hunger Education Service's *Hunger Notes*, and for other publishers in a freelance creative talent capacity with copy editing and proofreading, including Taylor & Francis, T. Rowe Price, Brown University, TechBooks (Aptara), Bloomsbury, and Globe Pequot, among others.

Returning to graduate school at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque for a master's program in language, literacy, and sociocultural studies, I was awarded a grant in 2003 for my

proposal, “Public School Districts’ Dual Language Considerations in the state of New Mexico.” I was able to strengthen my dual language understanding by living in a city where Spanish is historically important.

I married an economist, Dr. Elwood Lane Vanderslice (Ph.D., University of Michigan, Who’s Who in America, 1972), who did his dissertation on “The International Coffee Organization and the Control of Coffee Overproduction,” in 1971. He lived for three years in La Paz, Bolivia, and taught economics in Spanish at San Andres University on a visiting professorship grant from Rutgers University while living with his former wife, Carolyn Winter, and their young son, Lane. Subsequently, Lane taught economics as an assistant professor at the University of Notre Dame. Lane and I reside in Washington, D.C. Lane and I studied Spanish together at the Jabel Tinamit School in Panajachel, Guatemala in 2013. I studied a fourth language, German, first at Georgetown’s School for Summer and Continuing Education in the 1990s, and next at the International Language Institute and the Goethe Institute in Washington, D.C. I had studied French in elementary and French together with Spanish in middle school. I studied German abroad in 2012 with the Goethe Institut in Schwabisch Hall. I enjoy traveling, and meeting with others who identify with the history of Washington, D.C.

--Paula Smith-Vanderslice