

Pam Dameron has been helping Missouri Western students excel for years, by providing them with the fuel to drive them through the day: coffee. But how did this purveyor of caffeine come to reside here at Missouri Western? And why does she remain such a steadfast part of each day?

The small coffee cart housed in the library is a relatively new fixture. Only five years ago did Java City and Aramark team up to bring it to Western. Java City is an eco-friendly coffee producer in California. Now the pastries served in the library are made here at Western's food court, and the coffee is bought and shipped from Java City itself. The small cart in Hearnese is managed by Food Services director Jim Maides. Maides knows Dameron himself, and said that she leaves a lasting mark on students by being someone they can look to for comfort. She always knows the names of her customers, and even their favorite items.

"She's such a sweet lady," Maides said, "She's made a huge impact."

Even before Java City brought its goods to campus, Dameron was working for Western's Food Services. For five years she was employed at the food court. In 2006, when the library was remodeled and the coffee cart was added, Dameron was asked to take over at the new location.

"It was the best decision I ever made about a job," Dameron said, "It is so much fun!"

Besides being a constant landmark for students, she also has a husband and three sons at home.

"I still have one [son] in high school," Dameron said. "It's all family stuff when I leave [campus]."

Her favorite aspect of her job, and her life, are the students, her family – all the people.

"And I just love making great coffee!" Dameron said.

Students take notice of Dameron and her service. Java City customers Claire Hendren and Mariah Stegman said they visit the coffee cart two or three days every week.

"We're here almost every other day," Stegman said.

"And Pam's always in a good mood," Hendren said, "And she makes [the coffee] so fast!"

Dameron's friendly demeanor and attention to detail, as well as the coffee that the students love, have earned her a place in Western's heart. As students continue to forge ahead in their studies, they will also continue to seek out Dameron's positivity, compassion, and mocha lattes.