Meet Gena Thompson, Financial Services Analyst for the Department of Mathematics

Thompson keeps one eye on her work, and one on the people passing by her door.
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Lucas Van Wyk Joel
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Thompson is waiting for you to come say hello in the Department of Mathematics.

Picture Credit:
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The most important thing for Eugena “Gena” Thompson about working at UCI is the people. In the administration offices of the UCI Department of Mathematics, Thompson, who is math’s Financial Services Analyst, is often one of the first people you see when you walk into the office. But she doesn’t have to be: the office she sits in, which has a clear view of the department’s front doors, isn’t hers. But she sits there so she can catch and help anybody walking through the front doors.

Thompson’s been working at UCI since 2017, and she knows that many of the people who pass through math’s offices are students, and many of them, she explained, are new students who know precisely nobody at UCI, and who have no sense of connection to the university. “When they come in and they’re so happy to see me, it feels so good,” said Thompson, who remembers two students who she met and who she watched grow over time at UCI. When she started working in the department, she met two “wonderful” undergrad math student workers, Ivy Alonso and Andrea Agramon-Leon. “These two young ladies have shown me how hard they were willing to work in order to graduate from UCI and to grow in their working fields,” Thompson said. “During the past three years, I have watched these two young ladies excel and work hard for their future. To this day, I’m still in contact with both of them, and will continue to check up on them to see how they are progressing.” In her actual Rowland Hall office, Thompson has cards from faculty thanking her for all the work she does helping them get reimbursed for their work-related expenses, including relocation expenses for faculty moving to the university, or work-related travel expenses. But when she’s not working on expense reports, she’s peering out her office door in case someone needs help — even if the office isn’t her own.

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