

“Interviews are the keystones for great stories that encourage us to think, feel, interact, or take action.”

~ Carol Spellman

In Celebration

Carol Spellman brought three young filmmakers, Alcides Cerrud, Miguel Cholula, and Adan Merecias-Cuevas, to the 2003 AFS conference to co-present with her. Here Carol, second from left, and Paddy Bowman of Local Learning pose with the teens after their film screening.



Photo courtesy of Paddy Bowman.

Carol Spellman came to folklore late. After a career as both a special education and gifted and talented teacher in Portland, Oregon, she discovered our discipline and fell so in love with folklore that she decided to get a second master's degree in the field. She also was avid about filmmaking. Combining folklore and filmmaking gave her fresh passion and useful tools to inform audiences about everyday traditions that are too often overlooked. After receiving her MS in Folklore from the University of Oregon, she worked in the Oregon Folklife Program at the Oregon Historical Society. The program was headed by folklorist Nancy Nusz, who shared Carol's attentiveness to education. OFP had a distinguished history of producing resources for K-12 students and educators as well as supporting traditional artists in school residencies. After Carol joined the staff, she quickly gravitated toward teaching interviewing and videography to young people through the Portraits of Oregon: Youth Exploring Culture and Community initiative. As with other joys in her life—Zydeco dancing, horseback riding, Irish music, child rearing—she went full bore at engaging young people in interviewing and filmmaking. When she attended her first American Folklore Society annual meeting in 2003 in Albuquerque, she brought three young Latino videographers who had made films about their families' traditions in their studies with Carol. She included them in two panel sessions, and they excelled. She took them to AFS receptions and plenaries, introducing them along the way. It was a joyful experience for them and for all of us who got to interact with Carol and her student filmmakers.

As JFE editors and publication committee members began planning this special issue, Art of the Interview, we thought of Carol, who died in 2017, and how she embodied our theme. We miss her, we honor her, we are pleased to reprint here an article she wrote for Listening: Interviewing in Education, our [2009 issue of the CARTS Newsletter](#).