

Several key developments during the years 1968 to 1971 set the stage for the Skidmore College of today. The awarding of a Phi Beta Kappa chapter to Skidmore in 1971 validated the College's success in educating its students, and it came at a time when the very nature of the student body was about to change in significant ways. It was also in 1971 that Skidmore moved to coeducation by opening its doors to men. By the mid-1970s men constituted about 15 percent of the student body, a proportion that gradually increased over the following decades to the current level of 40 percent.

President Palamountain and other Skidmore officials join a march to honor slain civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968.



Photograph courtesy of the George S. Bolster Collection of the Historical Society of Saratoga Springs.

1960s and early '70s related to the Vietnam War. Demonstrations on campus began in November 1967, with an anti-war "teach in" following in April 1968. More anti-war protests soon came, with many Skidmore students taking part in the nationwide strike in early 1970 to protest the American invasion of Cambodia. On May 5, 1971, a group of students later called the Black-White Coalition demanded that the College recruit

more black and Puerto Rican students and hire more faculty of color. When president Palamountain responded that the College lacked the resources to carry out the mandate, a group of Skidmore and

## The Student Body Diversifies; Activism Takes Hold



Albany Times Union

Students from Skidmore and other local colleges briefly occupied the president's office in 1971.



Skidmore students march against the Vietnam War in 1972.



The Higher Education Opportunity Program began at Skidmore in 1969 (1997 photo).

Other efforts were also making the College a more interesting and diverse community. Through the Academic Opportunity Consortium, which began in 1969, along with New York State's Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP), Skidmore began offering academic and financial support to educationally and economically disadvantaged students, many of them students of color. So successful has been Skidmore's HEOP program that the College began supplementing it in 1999 with its own Academic Opportunity Program.

Like colleges and universities across the nation, Skidmore saw a surge of political activity in the late

visiting students seized the administration building in a peaceful protest.

In 1968, Skidmore offered its first summer program—the forerunner of today's Summer Six art program—paving the way for what has since become a dazzling array of summer offerings to the broader community. In 1971, Skidmore launched the pioneering University Without Walls (UWW), one of the state's first external-degree programs for non-traditional learners, mostly working adults. Building on UWW's success serving nonresidential students, Skidmore added an external Master of Arts in Liberal Studies (MALS) degree program in 1992. ■