

Joanna Schneider Zangrando

A member of Skidmore's American Studies Department from 1976 through 2007, Joanna Schneider Zangrando taught a wide range of courses: American Material Culture, Civil Rights in the United States, Women and Work in the United States, and Disorderly Women, among many others.



She was also a founding member and faculty participant in the Women Studies program and the Liberal Studies program; she directed the latter for most of its existence.

“Skidmore has been a wonderful place for me,” Zangrando said when she retired. “I can’t imagine that any other institution would have given me the freedom to do the things I like to do.”

Among those things, she directed Skidmore's London program for several semesters and scouted universities in Australia for Skidmore students wanting to study there. Other high points included twice being a convocation speaker, and introducing visiting luminaries such as dance legend Martha Graham and poet Maya Angelou.

In appreciation of all that she did for Skidmore and American Studies, Joanna was honored with a Skidmore President's Award in 2000 and, in 2005, with the American Studies Association's Mary C. Turpie Award, which recognizes outstanding abilities and achievement in American Studies teaching, advising, and program development at the local or regional level. To honor Joanna upon her retirement, many friends, colleagues, and appreciative alums endowed the Joanna Schneider Zangrando Student Opportunity Fund, which helps support noteworthy student projects.

Although Joanna retired from the American Studies Department in 2007, she did not retire from the College. At the request of the Dean of the Faculty, she served as a consultant to the Education Studies Department for a year and as Acting Chair for the 2010 fall semester.

When those assignments ended, she left the country for the Orvieto, Italy, Jazz Festival and to see plays and visit old haunts in London during the 2010-2011 semester break. Nevertheless, Joel Brown of the Music Department and the Dean of Special Programs Jeff Segrave tracked her down and asked her to serve as the Interim Concert and Events Manager for Zankel Music Center and as the Interim Director of Summer School. She served in these capacities through July 2011, when she retired once again.

As ever, Joanna continues to attend lectures, plays, exhibits, dance and music performances at Skidmore. She also continues to be active in the Saratoga Springs community and to maintain her many interests, professionally and personally, in the life and culture of people in the United States, and beyond.

Joanna considers herself fortunate to have “the friends—faculty, students, staff, and administrators—who have been an important part of my life since coming to Saratoga Springs in 1976.” For myriad reasons—her teaching, scholarship, service, and friendship—we consider ourselves fortunate to have had her as a productive and generous member of this department.