

Retirement from the Skidmore College Faculty

Spring 2023



Faculty Meeting
April the Twenty-Eighth
Two Thousand and Twenty-Three

Be It Resolved:

The faculty of Skidmore College expresses its profound appreciation and admiration for the following members of the Skidmore faculty who have this year expressed their determination to retire. The faculty further resolves that the following biographical highlights be included in the minutes of the faculty meeting of April 28, 2023 in recognition and celebration of their distinguished service and achievement.



Michael Frank Arnush joined the Skidmore Faculty in the fall of 1989. His hiring was the third and last in the string of hires designed to bolster what was then the Classical Studies Program. The Program, created in the 1970s and housed in World Languages and Literatures, had come to be overseen by Skidmore faculty with deep appreciation for and learning in antiquity, but without formal accreditation in Classical Studies. Two credentialed classicists before Michael had been hired to steward the program, and two had failed. The third time, however, was the charm. Michael cracked the code and not only revived the program, which had languished due to years of turmoil, but also (along with his partner, Leslie Mechem) made it the vibrant interdisciplinary program that it remains today. Over the years, our external reviewers have expressed admiration, and sometimes astonishment, at how our small department — a department since 1999, after Michael brokered an amicable divorce from World Languages — is able to punch well above its weight. Michael himself would remind you that our inherent scrappiness was born of necessity. Many Classics programs at other small liberal-arts colleges have been embedded in their institutions since their founding. But since Classics was never one of those foundational programs at Skidmore, our journey has been much more of an odyssey, in the sense that finding our place at the College was our guiding concern. I would remind us that the place we in Classics have found, especially when compared to where we started out, is due in equal measure to Michael's diplomacy and his tenacity.

Michael's success in building up Classics recommended him for building other programs at the College. In the late 1990s, along with Dean of Studies Jon Ramsey and other Skidmore luminaries, Michael founded the Periclean Honors Forum and was appointed its first Director by Dean of the Faculty Phyllis Roth. It should be noted, however, that the descriptor "Periclean," which seems like the work of a classical historian like Michael, was added well after he had stepped down, when SGA de-chartered the Periclean Honor Society in 2008. Nevertheless, "Forum," which was the name of the program from the beginning, reveals the outlook of a classicist looking to provide a special and official place for high-achieving students at the College, yet one that is open and inclusive, rather than exclusive. With the maxim "a

rising tide lifts all boats" in mind, Michael established the Honors Council and implemented a curriculum of both dedicated and add-on courses. On the one hand, these involved higher expectations from faculty and demanded deeper engagement from students; on the other hand, the curriculum was, and remains, available to all Skidmore students, regardless of whether or not they had been accepted into the Forum. Finally, early in Michael's directorship, he co-created the annual Academic Festival. Though participation in the Festival was modest at first, the event has grown into a Skidmore tradition, held on the first Wednesday after classes so as to maximize contributions from all quarters of the College.

As if building one program that has endured for 25 years weren't enough, Michael was prevailed upon again in the mid-Eighties to become the inaugural Director of the Skidmore First-Year Experience, the FYE, which at the time was heralded as one of the most innovative programs of its kind, in line with the institution's venerable ideals of Hand and Mind, and what would become our principle of Creative Thought Matters. Working with 350 thousand dollars from both the Mellon Foundation and President's Discretionary Funds, Michael got the program up and running in the Fall of 2005 with all of the hallmarks that we would recognize today, including a summer reading (the first being the *Antigone* of Sophocles by way of Seamus Heaney), the Peer Mentor program, and, above all, the close mentorship and advising of first-year students by their instructors, who were called upon to teach their passions. Then, as now, there is value added in selecting a member of the Faculty to direct the FYE, someone who understands the institutional culture, as well as the particular demands of teaching the Skidmore student. In Michael's case, even as he encouraged faculty to design their dream courses, he also supported those faculty who wanted to teach in clusters, such as the long-running Human Dilemmas cluster that harkens back to the Liberal Studies curriculum, which itself had been long part of the Skidmore freshman experience before the creation of the FYE.

It was for these and other efforts that Michael became the third recipient of the Phyllis A. Roth Distinguished Service Award in 2012. This honor, which recognizes a faculty member at the College for special achievement in service and leadership, is often — though not always — extended to someone either at or rapidly approaching the end of their Skidmore careers.

Michael was one of those exceptions. Although he could have rested on his laurels then, he decided that he had even more work to do, including serving on the Committee on Educational Policy and Planning (CEPP) for a second time — and chairing it twice during that stint; serving on the Appointments and Tenure Committee (ATC) and chairing that as well; and co-founding the CHI, or Center for Humanistic Inquiry; and all of this while continuing to chair the Classics Department since 2013. There is also, of course, his most recent three-year turn as the Associate Dean of Student Academic Affairs, where his experience in teaching, departmental and program leadership, and committee service rendered him uniquely qualified to inhabit that rarified liminal space between faculty, students, and administration.

To summarize thus far, and to start bringing this citation to a close: Most of us, when it comes to performing our daily responsibilities at the institution, will be traveling on trails first blazed by Michael Arnush. Yet none of these extraordinary endeavors — which often involved deep dives into the curriculum — would have succeeded had Michael not been a consummate, dedicated, and restless teacher. Rarely satisfied with any incarnation of a course, Michael continually revised and updated his classes, whether the ancient languages or the Greek and Roman history offerings that he delivered under the History Department rubric for over 25 years. What I will recall of Michael's teaching most fondly are his appearances in *Classical World*, our gateway course, which he and Leslie invented as a team-taught, interdisciplinary experience, and which has persisted under many versions into the present day. One of Michael's signature moments in *Classical World* is his magisterial handling of the so-called *Melian Dialogue*, written in the fifth century BCE by the historian Thucydides to dramatize the conflict between the people of Melos, a small and non-threatening island, and the oppressive Athenians, who have besieged Melos in order to quash any sympathies toward their sworn enemies, the Spartans. Michael divides the students in two, Athenians on one side, Melians on the other, and makes them recreate the negotiations between the two parties. Then, just when the debate seems settled, he flips the script and asks the Melians to argue the Athenian position, and vice versa. It is a master class not only on the complexities of the Peloponnesian War, but also on the power of rhetoric in shaping policy, and the power of policy to shape action, even immoral action. I couch my summary in

the present tense: "Michael divides...Michael flips the script..." — as if these are things Michael still does or will continue doing. Yet, the stark reality is that, on February 24th of this year, a little over two months ago, I probably witnessed Michael delivering this lesson for the very last time.

Our colleague, Amy Oh, on whose behalf Michael began the long conversation that led to her appointment to the tenure track, has this to say about his mentorship and support: "Michael is a tireless supporter, going out of his way to welcome you and help you to feel like a full member of the department. As soon as he finds a way to leverage his experience and connections at Skidmore and abroad to help you, he gets to work, whether introducing you to opportunities to travel for research, inspiring you to dream big when it comes to your teaching, visiting your classes in order to write job recommendations, recommending good bottles of wine, or being overheard when speaking about you effusively to someone on campus — or to your mother-in-law at your wedding. Each of these examples is classic Arnush. The level of support you receive is potentially embarrassing, but it is sincere and true to who he is. Once you have Michael in your corner, you're set. He will believe in you, and you will believe him when he does." Speaking for myself, I would second everything that Amy has said. First and foremost, Michael is the problem-solver's problem-solver — an identity perhaps honed by his voracious appetite for the *New York Times* crossword. Many were the occasions when, faced with a particularly thorny pedagogical or professional issue, I consulted with Michael and almost immediately came away with either a fresh perspective, renewed purpose, or both — especially if he happened to utter that magic phrase, "Let me make a few calls."

Michael, let me close with some wishes, on behalf of all of your colleagues in Classics. First, we wish you, after so many years of being in school, a long series of years that begin on January 1st instead of September 1st. We also wish you unfettered time on your own clock, after so many years of marking time here at Skidmore. Perhaps now you'll be able to finish that monograph on the Themistocles Decree. Or to travel to places in the world that do not involve keeping track of Skidmore students. Or simply to enjoy life with Leslie, who has been your rock through all these years. Finally, we wish you the particular contentment and satisfaction that come from dedicating oneself to the

ideals of an institution, and embodying them with industry, integrity, and skill. That said, if you are feeling restive and are not quite sure what to do with yourself, I know I will have some advanced Greek independent studies with your name on them! Because with Michael, you never know. As his beloved Sherlock Holmes understands only too well, the game is always afoot.

How do you repay someone who has given so much for 34 years? The answer is, you cannot. But what you can do — and here I have to use a phrase that Michael hates — is promise to pay it forward. To take the best of someone, what you remember and cherish, and what they have taught you, and pass it on. By this token, our colleagues and especially our students, present and future, will be rich indeed.

Congratulations, Michael, and thank you, *ex animis*, for everything.

Communication Design in the Art Department at Skidmore College begins with Deb Hall. When Deb joined the Skidmore faculty in 1992, computers were not yet part of our everyday life and work, but in design, they were required. Deb, having experience in her own design and printing firm, arrived at Skidmore with a background in design and photography that made her the perfect person to help Skidmore take some of its first steps into the digital age. She studied journalism at the University of Oregon and received a BFA in Photographic Illustration at Rochester Institute of Technology. She studied graphic design at the Art Center College of Design and Kent State University on the way to an MFA in Digital and Visual Art at Vermont College. Drawing on these wide-ranging skills, Deb worked to develop the Art Department's curriculum in communication design and built the first incarnation of the digital lab over several years. Ever since then, she has been a driving force in the Art Department, working with generations of students to explore new technologies, new tools, and new ways of creating, including Interactive Design, as early as 1996.

As a professor of communication design, Deb has opened students' eyes to how type, image, composition

and color combine to create visual communications with meaning. One of her former students perhaps puts it best: Deb's teaching changes "the way [you] see things (literally)." The cornerstones of her teaching portfolio are Digital Foundations and Communication Design I, II and III. The sense of community, support, and inspiration she cultivates in the classroom and the studio is just as important and lasting as what she teaches her students about design and image-making. Her former students look back on her courses as spaces of encouragement and enthusiasm, consistently citing Deb's wonderful sense of humor; one alum describes working as an intern in her design studio as a "wonderful period of learning, real world experience, and general hilarity." This hilarity permeates not only Deb's classroom, but the Art Department as a whole: her signature laugh can often be heard echoing through the corridors of Saisselin. While Deb likes to have fun, she nevertheless maintains high expectations of her students.

Deb's belief in her students inspires them to believe in themselves—in their abilities to take on new challenges, to create at the highest levels, and to thrive and grow as practicing designers and artists. In light of this inspirational work, it is no surprise that Deb is retiring as the Robert Davidson Chair in Art, a position that honors a distinguished artist and teacher with a profound impact on their students. Her former student Ashley Halsey recalls a particularly memorable moment of inspiration in planning her senior year work in Deb's Communication Design class: "As we were gathered together, reviewing our proposals for our senior projects, Deb announced: 'Ashley is an expert at planning and carrying out a project, so if you have questions talk to her.' Or, something along those lines. I was truly taken aback at this pronouncement, and a little embarrassed. But Deb's confidence in me gave me confidence in myself. I used the books I created in Deb's classes in my portfolio and went on to get my first job as a book designer at HarperCollins Publishers about 8 months later."

The energy, enthusiasm, and desire to inspire others that Deb has shared with her students over the years ventures beyond the door of the communication design lab. Her courses often involve collaboration with other departments, other faculty, and non-profits in the region, engaging her students in creative projects as part of what it means to be a designer in the world. Over the years, her students have had many opportunities to contribute to the larger community

through art and design, including working on design for SPAC, Caffe Lena, Saratoga Farmer's Market, and Skidmania. In Spring 2013 Deb taught Interactive Design in conjunction with Mike Eckmann's Computer Science course, Programming for Interactive Design, pairing her design students with computer science students to create interactive media that was both visually and technologically ambitious. While these collaborations have empowered and energized her students, their reach goes far beyond that—Deb's work with her students has shaped how the Skidmore campus looks and how the Skidmore community sees. This work takes the form of teaching and mentoring, but also of community building. Her colleague emerita Janet Sorenson notes that Deb's "ability to forge lasting relationships with Alumni is legendary, and that strong network begins in her classes as she steadily crafts a welcoming environment complete with high standards and ample healthy laughter." Her frequent reunions with former students on the Art Department's regular bus trips to New York City, which also provide networking opportunities for current students, are only one of the ways she maintains these meaningful connections across years and generations of students.

Deb has always maintained an active art practice. Deb's work as an artist examines our impact on the natural world through digital means, using contemporary technology to ask difficult questions about the cost of our online obsessions. Her images often emerge from her strong passion for ecological issues. As a native Oregonian with a longstanding love for the natural environment, she turns her eye towards the lyricism of the natural world, wondering what we might preserve of it, and what we stand to lose if we let the forces of industry, development, and distraction continue to encroach upon these treasured spaces. Her 2016 series *Iconographia* blends pristine natural landscapes with emoji, interfaces, and other digital detritus of screen culture in order to subtly suggest what is at stake when the constant stream of our digital lives invades the landscape around us. In another recent series, *Habit and Habitat*, Deb begins with images captured on an extended trip through the Columbia River Basin where she grew up. She then transforms each image through digital modification: some she distorts and expands, while others she collages with images of the built environment; some she pixelates, others she renders painterly. Taken as a whole, the series allows us to see the fragility and sublimity of the natural landscape with new eyes.

Deb has displayed this work in a wide range of venues, regionally and nationally. Among dozens of shows across her career, she has exhibited at the Bates College Museum of Art, the Pearl Conard Gallery at Ohio State University, the Maine Print Project at the University of Southern Maine, and The Center for Photography at Woodstock, NY, where she was a recipient of the Photographer's Fellowship. She has had solo exhibitions at the 677 Prime Gallery in Albany and the Tom Myott Gallery in Glens Falls. Her work is also part of a number of permanent collections, including the Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art at SUNY, New Paltz, The Adirondack Trust Gallery in Saratoga Springs, and the Portland Art Museum in her home state of Oregon, as well as numerous private collections.

Outside the walls of the Communication Design Lab, Deb has been an active force at the college, in the department, and beyond. At the College level, she has served as Chair of the Committee on Educational Policy and Planning and as Chair of the Advisory Committee for International Study Abroad. Deb served on IPPC, IRC, the Science Literacy Planning Group, the committee to develop the Media and Film Studies minor, and was also Director of the Visual Literacy Forum as part of the PROJECT VIS Mellon grant to strengthen visual literacy across campus. She has served on numerous committees for the Art Department, as well as Chairing the Departmental Curriculum Committee and the Art Department Faculty Advisory Council. She was a member of a team of faculty members that went to China as part of a Freeman Foundation Grant in 2007.

On a national level, Deb has served as a member of NASAD, the National Schools of Art and Design, which serves as the accrediting organization for undergraduate and graduate art and design degrees. Deb has been a NASAD Accreditation Team Member since 2012 and a Team Evaluator since 2017, and has participated and served as lead member for site visits and evaluations for numerous institutions. Given that Skidmore was one of the first liberal arts colleges to receive NASAD accreditation in 1970, Deb's work with the organization is a powerful way of giving back to her field on behalf of Skidmore, and the continuation of a meaningful legacy. As her colleague emerita Doretta Miller says, Deb's "ever-current and increasingly relevant expertise in Design and Digital Media has contributed to important recommendations and new curricular directions for member institutions,

and has impacted the next generation of students in art and design.” Deb also served for several terms as a local school board member and is currently active in SaratogaPlan.

Deb’s former student, Rosie Garschina, offers a reflection that stands as a true testament to how her impact will continue to reverberate at Skidmore and beyond. Rosie writes, “I was fortunate enough to be Deb’s student from 2001-2003. I have so many great memories of those years. What I remember most was observing her incredible work ethic, her fierce loyalty to the department during a period when it was unpopular to be a designer, her kind and generous devotion to her sons and the immense joy and humor that she brought to the classroom. I met my husband in her Communication Design class. His ability to set perfectly kerned type won her over and I eventually followed suit. We have two children and are still working in design today. Evan and I send her our best wishes for this new chapter. We are so happy for her and hope she will have a family of Russell Terriers alongside her as she heads back to Oregon.” Deb, we wish you the same—we will miss your laughter filling the halls of Saisselin, and we know it will have plenty of space among the mountains of the Pacific Northwest.

While chemistry is often described as the ‘central science,’ Ray Giguere has always reminded us that science is central to a liberal arts education as an objective way to explore the world around us and our place in it. His career has embodied Skidmore’s ‘Creative Thought Matters,’ and he has championed the philosophy that a college education should inspire lifelong learning and the ability to interrogate issues from multiple perspectives. Throughout his 35 years at Skidmore, Ray has been an exemplary mentor and role model. He has been masterful in the classroom and laboratory, and some of his best teaching has taken place one-on-one in his office, where he has given his time generously to counsel students and his faculty colleagues alike. When we think of Ray, we think of the integrity and courage to stand up for what is right. He has done so for Chemistry throughout his career, and we have become an independent, stronger, and more effective department under his leadership.

Prior to arriving at Skidmore, Ray received his BA in chemistry from Kalamazoo College. He then traveled to Germany to conduct his doctoral work at the University of Hannover, where he also became fluent in German. After receiving his doctoral degree in 1979, he remained in Hannover as a Postdoctoral Researcher before relocating to his home state as Research Associate at Michigan State University in 1981. He began his independent career as an Assistant Professor at Mercer University in 1983, achieving tenure in 1987. In 1988, Ray joined the faculty at Skidmore to teach and conduct undergraduate research in organic chemistry. As a dedicated member of what was originally the joint Department of Chemistry and Physics and is now the Chemistry Department, Ray has served as acting department chair in 1997, chair from 2000-2002 and 2009-2013. He was recognized with an endowed chair as Class of 1962 Term Professor of Chemistry from 2007-2012.

When he arrived on campus in 1988, undergraduate research in science and technology was at its infancy. Through his vibrant research program and involvement with the Council on Undergraduate Research, Ray showed how high-level research could be accomplished with undergraduates, taking their education to another level. Indeed, Ray’s research group was one of the first two teams in the world to demonstrate the use of microwave heating to facilitate organic chemical reactions! His program attracted significant funding from the National Institute of Health, the American Chemical Society and the Camille and Henry Dreyfus Foundation. His laboratory produced high-quality publications, drew the attention of the chemical industry, and won numerous awards, including those sponsored by Albany Molecular, Merck, and Pfizer. Ray’s students have been recognized at Skidmore as Periclean Scholars and externally with awards sponsored by the Council on Undergraduate Research and at the Waldo Semon Undergraduate Research Symposium. Given the high profile of his work, Ray has been asked to organize symposia and serve as keynote speaker at a number of international congresses such as Pacificchem, the Sandoz Pharma’s Symposium on Non-Conventional Reaction Conditions, and the International Microwave Power Symposium. Ray was also appointed to a prestigious committee of the American Chemical Society from 1996-1998, which selected recipients for the Award for Research at an Undergraduate Institution.

Beyond all the accolades, the greatest impact of Ray's research program is arguably the tremendous influence it has had on the 80+ students he has mentored during the past 35 years! These research experiences have had tremendous influence on these students. Indeed, Ray's career celebrates the significance of student-faculty relationships and how they inspire young people and propel them into a life of learning and discovery. Ray has trained generation after generation of scientists who will all agree that he has mentored with great attentiveness, sincere kindness, and true integrity. Ray's success has inspired the exponential growth of undergraduate research in the Chemistry department, and it has become a cornerstone of its program. When he first arrived on campus, only two Chemistry faculty members were involved with undergraduate research, and only a handful of students participated in it. Currently, all tenure stream faculty have undergraduate research programs and >50 students participate annually, including a vibrant summer research program involving > 30 students each year.

Ray is well-known for his expertise in teaching organic chemistry and having turned many students on to a subject that they initially were anxious about. His ability to turn abstract symbols into molecular life has attracted scores of chemistry majors over the years, many of whom have gone on to study organic chemistry in graduate schools and now lead research teams of their own. Those who have been fortunate to observe or teach alongside him have witnessed his passion for science and genuine care for his students' success. Whether teaching students how to use a pipette properly or how to perform a complex, multistep synthesis, Ray is thoughtful and precise in his lessons, ensuring that students learn techniques correctly and understand their theoretical underpinnings. Ray's dedication to his students and excellence in teaching is inspirational and reminds us of what it means to be an educator.

Ray's teaching and influence have gone well beyond chemistry at Skidmore. Having taught LSI The Human Experience for many years and later Human Dilemmas as part of the Scribner Seminar program, Ray championed science as an important way of knowing, and connected many Skidmore students with the notion that understanding science is critical to formulating our ideas about social issues. Through the development of his LS IV course "Playing Nature: Organic Synthesis and Society," Ray reminded us continually that science is a creative process. He also

connected art to his own scholarly work in tangible ways. His aptitude for cross-disciplinary thinking culminated in the Tang Museum exhibition "Molecules That Matter" in 2006. This installation highlighted a molecule from each decade of the 20th century, illustrating its impact on the human experience. The exhibition, with its historical pieces and fascinating artwork, travelled to museums throughout the country from the Chemical Heritage Foundation in Philadelphia to Grinnell College in Iowa, and left a lasting impression on its visitors. As Juan Navea from the chemistry department remembers: "Because of "Molecules that Matter," I knew about Skidmore before I joined the faculty. These types of interdisciplinary achievements are the essence of liberal education." These large molecular models produced for "Molecules That Matter" can still be found around campus today, installed over the Burgess Café and in the brand-new Billie Tisch Center for Integrated Sciences.

Ray's colleagues will miss his larger than life presence both at the department meetings and on campus. As Ray's longtime colleague Steve Frey puts in: "Ray has been a tremendous mentor to me over the years, helping me to navigate life as a liberal arts college professor. I will miss his sage advice, his humor, and his friendship." Kara Cetto Bales notes: "Ray's dedication and commitment to the chemistry department, our students, and Skidmore is always evident. Whether it be in the classroom, office hours, conversations in the hallway, or working side-by-side with his research students, Ray has always been a caring and compassionate mentor and colleague." In the words of Juan Navea, "Ray has been a driving force in the chemistry department, a mentor, and an example to many in chemistry." His former student and now colleague, Jessada Mahatthananchai, recognizes how "Ray has shaped who I am both as a person and a chemist. He has always been a great mentor and true friend. I still remember that first time I walked into his office and how he welcomed me with open arms, teaching me how to do science in a liberal arts environment." Over the years, students have shared that they chose to attend Skidmore because of Ray's passion during Accepted Candidates' day. Many of the students and former colleagues who have been mentored and inspired by Ray remain in touch with him. Over the years, these relationships have resulted in generous financial support, such as funding provided by Jean Richards and the Richards family that kept Ray's passion for Skidmore and science moving

forward, and is now supporting the collaborative research of students across the chemistry department.

Ray, you have served Skidmore College with passion and loyalty for the past 35 years. During this time, you have distinguished yourself as a scholar in the field of organic synthesis, amassed an outstanding record of teaching, and served the college in substantial and meaningful ways. You have been an influential leader in the Chemistry Department, helping it become the vibrant program it is today. As you retire and begin this new and exciting phase of your life, know that we will miss your wisdom, knowledge, and dedication to the college and our students. Thank you for being our great colleague and making Skidmore a special place for us all. We wish you the very best in your very well-deserved retirement.

Charlene Grant is retiring after a 31-year career teaching Spanish and French at Skidmore College. Charlene has been a tireless source of encouragement and guidance for the many students who have been fortunate to have been in her classroom. Her dedication to teaching is unrivaled. But she has also been a source of inspiration to the lucky colleagues who have worked closely with her. For many of us in the Department of World Languages and Literatures, being a colleague of Charlene has been one of the high points of our time at the college. Working with someone like Charlene, who always has a positive attitude and is always ready to collaborate on projects, has been a great privilege. Her departure from the college leaves a void that will be hard to fill.

Charlene received a B.A. in French and Spanish from the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, in 1978, which included two years of study in Valencia, Spain, and in Montpellier, France. Two years later, she received a Master's Degree in French Literature from the same institution. In 1989, Charlene obtained another master's degree, but this time in Business Administration from Eastern Washington University. Later, she did doctoral work in French Studies at SUNY Albany. Before coming to Skidmore, she taught at Whitworth College, Gonzaga University, and Eastern Washington University, in addition to doing professional work for three years in Madrid, Spain, as

a teacher of English as a Second Language and as a translator and interpreter for Spanish companies.

One of Charlene's most remarkable qualities is her exceptional knowledge and expertise of Spanish grammar, which her students could always immediately recognize. As one student commented, "She is a stickler for details, but the reality is that when professors and teachers don't care about details in language courses, you get a Swiss cheese understanding of the language." Charlene's students, for sure, did not end a semester with a Swiss cheese knowledge of anything; they constantly mention that Charlene is uniquely able to make complex grammar concepts easy to understand. In her upper-level classes on "Spanish for Business" and "Spanish for the Health Professions," Charlene's drive to make the Hispanic world relevant to her students is widely recognized. Constantly attentive to the diversity encompassing such a large geographical area, she has ensured that her students learn Spanish and end the semester with a high level of cultural literacy, always with the objective of application in their future careers.

Charlene believes deeply in the need to create opportunities for students outside of the classroom. She created the Spanish Club in 2005 and has been their faculty advisor until recently. For many years, she has coordinated volunteer work and internships for Spanish students to become engaged with the Spanish-speaking community of our area. Given her heartfelt support for the importance of civic engagement, Charlene was chosen to be one of seven faculty members to serve on the Arthur Vining Davis Task Force on Civic Engagement when it was becoming central to Skidmore's Strategic Plan. Later, she was part of the Middle States Working Group on Civic Engagement, and thereafter continued working for many years on the IPPC Subcommittee on Responsible Citizenship. Given Charlene's commitment to her students and to civic engagement, she was the recipient of the Skidmore President's Award in 2009. In addition, Charlene taught several students from Antigua in the UWW program. Another endeavor for many years was Charlene's role as Associate Editor for the literary journal *CELAAN* (Centre d'Études pour les Littératures et les Arts d'Afrique du Nord) when it was housed at Skidmore.

Charlene always strives to challenge her students to think critically and creatively. Her passion for teaching is evident in every class she has offered, from the basic

levels of the language acquisition sequence to her upper-level courses in Spanish for the Professions and in her own Scribner Seminar "Vanity: From Narcissus to Nike." In this last course, she introduced her first-year students to interdisciplinary approaches to the concept of vanity as it is theoretically explored in Roman mythology, by philosophers and writers in the Enlightenment period, and in contemporary business driven by the effects of globalization, specifically how vanity is manifested in the area of branding, marketing, and the consequences of fast fashion. One of her students commented about the course, "Humanities and Business together in a class? That's why I came to Skidmore!"

Another of the outstanding qualities of Charlene as a teacher is her ability to connect with her students on a personal level. She has always made it a point to understand the needs and concerns of her students and has gone above and beyond to help them achieve their goals. For the student-athlete, the artist, the musician, the scientist, and the business student, Charlene has been the professor to go to for support, her door always being open for them. She has never hesitated to offer guidance, support, and encouragement. Her unwavering and honest commitment to her students has earned her the respect and admiration of all who have studied under her; she is a true mentor. She has inspired countless students to pursue their professional and artistic endeavors, especially encompassing the joy of languages and cultures.

In addition to her abilities as a teacher, Charlene has been an exceptional colleague because her generosity is unparalleled. She has always been willing to collaborate and share her expertise with her peers and has been one of the most vital members of the Spanish Section of the Department. Charlene embodies the highest level of professionalism and manifests a constant willingness to go the extra mile to support her colleagues. Charlene's ability to foster a sense of camaraderie and collaboration among her colleagues was the basis of a supportive and productive work environment. Her colleagues in the department, especially those who have worked closely with her in Spanish, will miss her expertise and institutional memory. We will miss her sense of humor and how Charlene always finds the positive in every situation. Nobody else can lighten up a room as Charlene does. Her impact as a teacher and a colleague in the Department of World Languages and Literatures will

be felt for years. Te extrañaremos mucho, Charlene. ¡Anda!

Professor Mark C. Hofmann grew up in Pattersonville and Niskayuna, New York. His father was an engineer and his mother stayed at home raising Mark and his three brothers before she returned to college to study library science. From his family, Mark learned the importance of science and mathematics and developed his love of reading.

Mark began his liberal arts career studying mathematics at Bates College and spent his junior year abroad in York, England, where he met his wife of over 45 years, Linda. After graduating from Bates in 1975 with Phi Beta Kappa honors, Mark returned to York to work in the budding field of computer science as a computer programmer before starting graduate school at the University of York. Moving back to the US, Mark completed his MS and PhD in Mathematics at The University of New Hampshire, focusing on finite group theory in his dissertation titled *On a Conjugate Class of Subgroups Determined by a Formation*.

After his graduation, Mark began his academic career as an Assistant Professor of Mathematics at St. Lawrence University, and in 1985, he transitioned with Linda and his son, Owen, to Saratoga Springs to assume an assistant professor position at Skidmore. Shortly thereafter Mark's son, Liam, was born. Mark received tenure at Skidmore in 1991 and was promoted to full professor in 2004. Throughout his career here, Mark has worn many hats as a faculty member, scholar, citizen, administrator, and mentor.

Mark has taught most of the courses in the mathematics curriculum, including about 35 different courses; several of these were new courses that he developed. Students and colleagues observe that Mark is enthusiastic about math. One recent student described how Professor Hofmann's relaxed and humorous demeanor created a low-stress and stimulating environment for learning. Clearly, they enjoyed the famous "dad jokes" he practices at home! Another student wrote that they always left Mark's class in a better mood, no small feat for a section of Calculus II, which along with Linear Algebra is one of Mark's favorites classes to teach.

Outside of the department, Mark was instrumental in the creation of the Science Literacy Project, starting in 2012 with his team-taught seminar *Death From the Skies*, which focused on extinction, and culminating in his 2023 team-taught seminar *Shifts in Perception*, focusing on parallax. Mark has readily contributed to Skidmore's liberal studies curriculum and the First-Year Experience program, teaching *Mathematics and the Art of Escher* as well as *Where Are We?*, a London-based Scribner Seminar he delivered twice as Faculty Director of the London FYE.

One of Mark's most fulfilling teaching experiences was with the Skidmore University Without Walls Inmate Higher Education Program where he taught both basic quantitative reasoning and advanced mathematics for ten years at the two correctional facilities in Comstock, NY. Colleagues who taught in the program with Mark described him as a beloved professor whose quiet demeanor and approachable teaching style endeared him to the incarcerated students, who saw that Mark would go out of his way to make sure each student grasped the mathematical concepts he was presenting and to help many of them overcome their fear of math.

As a scholar of mathematics, Mark's work concentrated on group theory, a subfield of abstract algebra that centers on algebraic structures known as groups. Mark has produced a wide variety of scholarship on Formations and Prefrattini type subgroups, publishing in refereed journals (such as his work "The Normal Complemented Formation" in *Communications in Algebra*) and presenting his work across the U.S. and internationally at the annual meetings of the American Mathematical Society and at group theory conferences. In addition to delivering highly technical research talks, Mark discussed group theory and symmetry more locally, holding a tessellation workshop for fourth graders and talking about this content and connections to the art of MC Escher in his Skidmore courses and at the Saratoga Children's Museum.

In recognition of his significant contributions to Skidmore's community, Mark received the Phyllis A. Roth Faculty Distinguished Service Award in 2021 for his service and leadership, the Skidmore College President's Award in 2012 for his work on science planning, and the President's Award again in 2013 for his work on the Science Literacy Project. His service contributions are numerous and include chairing for

two separate terms the Committee on Appointments, Promotion, and Tenure (CAPT), twice chairing the Committee on Education Policies and Planning (CEPP), and also chairing the Committee on Faculty Governance (CFG), Athletic Council, the Engineering Advising Committee, the Quantitative Reasoning Subcommittee of CEPP, and the Science Working Group—a group which spearheaded the development of the sciences at Skidmore and ultimately led to building the Center for Integrated Sciences. He wrote and/or co-wrote grants that established the Skidmore Scholars in Mathematics and Science Program (S3M), the Clare Booth Luce Program for scholarships for women in mathematics and science, and the Alden Trust Foundation grant to support classroom renovations.

Mark has also served on a broad variety of other task forces, committees and working groups, including the Institutional Policy and Planning Committee (IPPC), the New Faculty Learning Community, the Middle States Working Group, the Porter Scholars Selection Committee, and the Search Committees for both the Dean of Faculty and the College President as well as numerous departmental faculty searches. In addition, Mark served as the Director of the Faculty/Student Summer Undergraduate Research Program, dramatically increasing the number of participants during his tenure. While certainly a prolific citizen of the College, some of Mark's most important service is not listed on his CV. For decades, he has lent a willing ear and provided counsel and support to countless faculty colleagues navigating their way through job searches, tenure, promotion, the nuances of the Faculty Handbook, and the quest to achieve work-life balance. He is always willing to share anecdotes of his classroom challenges and provide encouragement and thoughtful solutions to tricky situations.

For several years Mark's service to Skidmore took him into administrative roles, first chairing the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science, later serving as the Associate Dean of the Faculty for two years, and more recently serving as the Associate Chair of the Mathematics and Statistics department. In all of these roles, Mark is rightly known for his measured calm and his ability to integrate faculty concerns with institutional priorities. Mark is an excellent administrator, but at heart, he loves being in the classroom, a passion which his students and colleagues have admired for many years and which leaves him covered in chalk dust and smiling at the end of the day.

In the 2022 College Convocation, Mark was selected to carry the Skidmore mace and lead the procession as the Grand Marshal. His dedication and contributions to our community are exceptional. The Mathematics and Statistics Department and the College wish Mark all the best in his retirement. We hope that in addition to doing recreational mathematics, Mark will continue to enjoy traveling, downhill skiing, rowing, watching British TV, and supporting Welsh rugby. We will miss you dearly but are excited for you to begin your next adventure.

Professor Mark Huibregtse has been a mainstay in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics for 46 years. In the words of his long-time colleague Professor Dan Hurwitz, “It is hard to imagine Skidmore without him.” Indeed, it is hard to imagine a more deeply committed colleague, teacher, friend, mentor, and scholar than Mark. His generosity, humility, and genuine humanity have undoubtedly shaped the collegial culture that characterizes the department today.

In 1971, Mark earned a B.A. from Haverford College. He was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa and graduated magna cum laude, with high honors in mathematics. After earning a Ph.D. in Mathematics in 1976 from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Mark was a visiting assistant professor at the University of Connecticut before starting his academic career at Skidmore in 1977. It was here that his beloved colleague, friend, and former department chair, the late Professor Dick Speers, introduced him to Renee, his wife of 36 years.

Mark’s mathematical interests lie mostly in the areas of geometry – especially algebraic geometry. His dissertation was on the topic of a “Hilbert Scheme of an algebraic surface.” Scheme theory is the modern formulation of algebraic geometry and enjoys a reputation for being one of the most abstract and technically difficult areas of mathematics. Mark has maintained an interest in this subject, publishing subsequent work on Hilbert Schemes and related topics periodically throughout his career. Still, Mark enjoys teaching geometry at all levels. He has taught a senior capstone seminar on plane algebraic curves, providing a more classical introduction to the vast

subject of algebraic geometry for our most mature students. For decades he was the department’s main expert in the area and our primary instructor for the upper level modern geometry course. Mark also developed his Scribner seminar ‘The Non-Euclidean Revolution,’ which introduces some of the wonders of non-Euclidean geometry at the introductory level.

Mark is a superb teacher, and his versatility as a teacher-scholar is incomparable. In the mid-1980s, like many colleges, Skidmore began to offer computer programming courses in its mathematics department. Mark participated in the Institute for Retraining in Computer Science (IFRICS) at Clarkson University, and subsequently taught some of our first computer science (CS) courses at Skidmore, including Basic programming, data structures, and other CS courses, and in doing so, he was instrumental in starting our new CS program. Along with teaching geometry and computing, he has taught an enormous array of courses over the years, ranging from calculus, linear algebra, introduction to proof writing, and differential equations to upper-level courses such as analysis, and more recently, abstract algebra, abstract algebra II, our problem-solving course, and number theory. Mark has also directed multiple independent studies and several senior honors theses as well as a summer collaborative research project that led to a published paper that he coauthored with former student Adam Winchell (class of 2016). Their paper was on the topic of “Equidistant sets” and addressed a type of geometric question remarkably different from Mark’s other work in algebraic geometry.

In addition to his teaching and research, Mark has served the College in countless other ways. He was the department chair from 1991 to 1996. He is also a charter member of our local chapter of Pi Mu Epsilon, the National Mathematics Honorary Society, established in 1997, and has served for the past 26 years as a faculty advisor to our chapter and/or the liaison to the national organization, presiding over our annual induction ceremonies. Mark has played an equally crucial and important role in the College’s chapter of Phi Beta Kappa (PBK). Our colleague and fellow Phi Beta Kappa member Professor Ron Seyb writes, “Mark wrote the program that generated student records for the Chapter members that separated the PBK eligible courses from those that the PBK National prevented the Chapter from treating as ‘liberal arts.’ He also ran the election meetings, helping the Chapter members assess the student

records and responding to all member questions with his characteristic precision, humility, and respect.” Mark also designed and constructed the website for the College Chapter and arranged for local visits by no fewer than seven PBK National Scholars.

In recognition of his legendary service in our faculty governance system, Mark received the Phyllis A. Roth Faculty Distinguished Award in 2014. He has served on and/or chaired scores of committees – including major ones like CAPT (the precursor to ATC and PC), CFG (the precursor to FEC), CEPP, IPPC, and PC, as well as many others such as the Campus Environment Committee, the Faculty Advisory Board, and the Athletic Council. Often, he has served on several of these committees simultaneously! As our colleague Professor Mark Hofmann writes, “Many years ago Mark was heavily involved in the Committee for Faculty Governance, CFG. Back then committee elections were run by hand and involved the hand counting of ballots, which was complicated work. Since then he has served on many different committees and even now while in phased retirement is on the Promotions Committee.” All of this is to say, Mark’s institutional service is without parallel.

No retirement tribute would be complete without sharing some things you might not know about Mark. First, Mark is a dutiful sports fan. He even ran the timer and scoreboard for the Skidmore Men’s and Women’s Basketball teams early in his career. He also holds a unique position in Skidmore sports history. Until the early 1980s, the Skidmore mascot was the wombat, and in some unofficial circles, the unicorn. Around that time a contest was held to name a new mascot. Mark proposed the thoroughbred, and as they say, the rest is history! Outside the Skidmore community, Mark is a skilled musician and an active member of his church, where he sings in the bell choir. He especially loves classical music and has been known to compose a piece every now and then. For years, Mark also has participated in his church’s annual mission trip to Maine, where he and his fellow parishioners repair homes in economically distressed areas of the state.

In short, Mark is the quintessential teacher-scholar and model citizen. As Professor Emeritus Gove Effinger shared, “Mark was a tireless teacher, scholar, and community member. I’ll always think of him as a perpetual motion machine, putting every ounce of energy into his work” Professor Emeritus Pierre von

Kaenel echoed a similar sentiment when he remarked, “Mark Huibregtse has always taken his work seriously, in his teaching, heading the department as chair, volunteering for various committee work, and doing some deep work in his research.” Perhaps Mark’s most lasting legacy, however, will be his kindness. Heartfelt expressions of gratitude and appreciation from his former students and colleagues abound. Former student and thesis mentee Chen Lin (class of 2018) had this to say: “Professor Huibregtse and his wife Renee helped me a lot during my days in Saratoga. I can still recall the breakfast we had at the Saratoga Race Track and the many dinners they invited me to during the holidays, which made me feel at home.” His colleague Dan Hurwitz adds, “I was a rookie myself when the department was lucky enough to find someone like Mark Huibregtse. We expected him to develop into a fine mathematician and teacher, which of course he did. But what I have learned to value even beyond this is what a dependable colleague Mark is. He has always been there when you needed him.”

We will miss you, Mark. On so many occasions, we have seen you in your office or in the hallway, meeting with individual students or small groups, and in your gentle and quiet way, revealing your incredible abilities in mathematics and your deep love of teaching. We have always had the feeling, that’s the way it is supposed to be done. We suspect you will never stop doing mathematics and we look forward to seeing what you do next in your new position as Skidmore retiree. We hope you will continue to be a part of the department you have so profoundly shaped. Congratulations on your retirement!

Twenty-seven years after first teaching at Skidmore, Christine C. Kopec, Senior Teaching Professor in the Management and Business Department, has decided to retire. A vibrant presence in the department and the college, Chris’s retirement is an ending for the department, and for her, a new beginning. For Chris, it means, among other things, a much longed for ability to ignore email, the internet, and all the pernicious and intrusive new technologies that college faculty have had to learn to abide.

Chris was born and raised in Brooklyn but is retiring to her 60-acre farm in Washington County with a dog,

sheep, chickens, and her husband, Alan. From time to time, she'll check in on her daughter, Sarah '14, who lives nearby, and on her son, Josh, and his wife, Sharon, who live on Cape Cod. Mostly, she'll collect eggs, walk her dog, read fiction, and watch other people shear her sheep, at times all at once.

Chris's journey from Brooklyn to Skidmore is perhaps more convoluted than most. It starts with a detour to Ripon, Wisconsin (not generally considered the most direct route from Brooklyn to Saratoga Springs), where she graduated from Ripon College in 1973 with a degree in English and Political Science. Her students are well aware of Chris's inner English major; her focus on good writing is legendary (infamous?) among our majors. Her student evaluations of teaching are filled with comments like "challenging," "high expectations for writing," and "anyone who does not want to work should not take this course."

She then seemingly got back on track to her ultimate destiny (Skidmore, that is) when she came to Albany Law School in one of the first classes that had more than one or two women students. Graduating from law school in 1976, Chris first worked at the Legal Aid Society and then became an Assistant Attorney General in Albany.

She then decided to marry her husband, Alan, just as he was about to move to Paris (we've always suspected that these two facts were not unrelated). Her cunning plan to be a lady of leisure in Paris was foiled when, instead, she accepted a job to work for Price Waterhouse in their expatriate tax department. This, in turn, led to a job at the New York State Tax Department when they moved back to Albany, the Paris of New York. Next was a position in the Office of Court Administration, which included responsibility for training state employees in various aspects of the law. That led to her teaching at College of St. Rose and, finally, to Skidmore in 1996.

Since starting to work full-time at Skidmore, Chris has been an enthusiastic teacher and citizen of the department and the college, an enthusiasm recognized when she became one of the first Senior Teaching Professors at Skidmore in 2016. Chris has mostly taught MB333 (Business Law I) and MB355 (Business, Ethics and Society). She also teaches MB334 (Business Law II) and a topics class she developed on law and ethics in the gig economy. But her true love has always been her FYE class, Law,

Religion, and Society, which she teaches more years than not, having taught a Scribner Seminar routinely since the year it was first offered.

Tim Harper captures much of what makes Chris such a valuable colleague:

Christine Kopec has been a stellar contributor to the Management and Business Department since her arrival at Skidmore. She has demonstrated dedication to her teaching across all levels of instruction. She has always been a demanding instructor with a focus on improving her students' writing and analytical skills. Her love for first-year students has been exhibited by her willingness to consistently offer her Scriber Seminar with a positive disposition toward the advising demands that accompany Scribner seminars. She is always the first to volunteer for college and department service roles such as pre-law advising which carry high responsibility but low visibility. Her comments and feedback during department meetings often add significant value to tense and nuanced discussions. Finally, she frequently visits MBD colleagues in their offices to brighten their days and share positive stories regarding work and life.

Chris' dedication to the department and college is particularly evident in her service, which far outstrips what is expected and which is too lengthy for this appreciation. As Caroline D'Abate says, "*When I was chair, I routinely leaned on Chris to contribute to departmental reports and work; she never complains or shies away from volunteering to help; her insights and contributions are meaningful; and she is a true 'team player' in the MB department.*"

Here is just a small sampling of her service: she has served on the Faculty Advisory Board; she has served on Sexual Assault Hearing Board (particularly valuable and difficult service); she has served as College Parliamentarian; she has served on the Campus Wide Safety Committee; she has served on the Institutional Policy and Planning Committee; she has served as pre-law advisor; and when the department, or the FYE, or another department needs last-minute emergency coverage for a course, Chris steps in.

Organizational Behavior teaches us about Organizational Citizenship Behavior, in which extraordinary people go to extraordinary lengths for (in

our context) their students, their colleagues, and the college. Chris's contributions are irreplaceable. They, and she, will be sorely missed and the department hopes that she will spare a thought, as she sips a good bourbon and looks up from her novel across her green Washington County farm past the sleeping dog and scratching chickens down to the sheared sheep, for those of us still tied to our desks and the technologies that never stop bothering us.

Denise McQuade earned her B.A. in Psychobiology from Wellesley College and her M.S. in Biobehavioral Sciences at the University of Connecticut – Storrs. She joined the Skidmore faculty as a Teaching Associate in 2000 and was promoted to Senior Teaching Associate (now Senior Instructor) in 2006.

Denise's enthusiasm energizes her classes, whether she is traipsing through the snow with students to observe winter bird foraging, helping students to untangle the data from a fruit fly cross, or demonstrating where to find a squid's three hearts. Denise genuinely cares for her students and supports their success. Often times, students (and faculty) in need of a smile would stop by Denise's office to witness the goofy antics of her two small canine side-kicks, Marvin and Ed. At times, however, a trip to pet the pint-sized pups was seemingly just an excuse to visit with Denise.

Within the Biology Department, Denise taught labs and courses at the introductory and upper levels. She played a key role in developing the Introductory Biology labs during the most recent revision of the major, and in particular, the design of a series of labs using dissection to understand structure/function relationships and to make comparisons across taxa. In addition, she developed a popular non-majors course entitled "The Birds and the Bees: The Biology of Sex." This course, cross-listed with Gender Studies, leveraged multiple animal models to help understand the physiology of sexual reproduction. Denise regularly taught introductory labs in the Neuroscience department, where she served on the department's Steering Committee. Outside of the academic year, she contributed to the S³M program and the Summer Science Institute for Girls.

Denise's colleagues benefited from her years of experience in the classroom and generosity with her time. Sylvia McDevitt said, "as a new faculty member, having an office next to Denise was a godsend." Erika Schielke added, "I knew that no matter how busy Denise was, she would find time to talk through a challenge that I was having in the classroom or help brainstorm a way to make class content more interactive. I would leave with additional perspective and often a bonus conversation about hiking routes."

Denise is a "46er," one of a hardy group who have hiked all Adirondack peaks above 4,000 feet (completed in 2013). For Denise, it wasn't enough to make the treks during the summertime, so she did them all in the winter as well (completed in 2016). For added good measure, she earned her second-degree black belt in Tae Kwon Do. Denise Evert, who taught with Denise in Neuroscience, shared that "amidst her final preparations for her third-degree black belt test in Tae Kwon Do, Denise is a force to be reckoned with. She approaches her Tae Kwon Do in the same way that she approaches her teaching – she is careful, intentional, thoughtful, and she, indeed, has indomitable spirit."

While her appointment as an Instructor involved no research commitment, Denise developed an active research program on digit ratios using the Common degu (*Octodon degus*), a small burrowing rodent native to Chile, as her model system. She mentored collaborative student research projects and was awarded a Bender Grant to involve high school students in her studies. For multiple years, she brought students to the Northeast Undergraduate and Graduate Research Organization for Neuroscience (NEURON) conference to present their research findings. She has served as a member of the NEURON steering committee since 2009, where she trained student-presentation judges and organized awards presentations.

Denise serves on the Advisory Council on Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct and has played a key role in assessment at both the institutional and departmental levels, including leading departmental assessment in Biology for many years. Bernie Possidente noted Denise's advocacy of the use of rubrics for assessment, and offered his own rubric to evaluate Denise's career:

- Teach 100 sections of introductory biology labs: 20/20

- Generate 10 Annual Assessment Reports: 20/20
- Teach overloads with multiple courses in more than one department all in the same semester multiple times: 20/20
- Remain a loyal Atlanta Braves Fan despite the superiority of the Yankees and the Red Sox: 20/20
- Develop and teach a non-majors lab course for the core curriculum and the Gender Studies program on the Biology of Sex: 20/20
- Conduct and publish collaborative research with students and become the world's expert on the analysis of digit ratios in non-human animal models; be selected to review a research manuscript describing a correlation between digit ratio and penis length (Extra Credit): 100 pts.
- Be recognized by Northeast Undergraduate and Graduate Research Organization for Neuroscience (NEURON) conference committee for exceptional mentoring of undergraduate students in the Neurosciences, and channel Ms. Frizzle by driving a bus full of Skidmore NS students from Skidmore to Quinnipiac University Medical School in North Haven CT (Extra Credit): 100 pts.
- Score: 300/100 points = A+

Denise's energy, sincerity, and expertise will be deeply missed. Her friends and colleagues in Biology wish her the best of luck for her move to North Carolina where she will have new trails to explore (and blaze). Knowing Denise, she will continue to set challenges for herself and then promptly surpass all benchmarks.

Cystal Moore has always been "kind of a big deal." From her tender years spent driving Range Rovers in a floral-print bikini on California's beaches; to her time

at the California State University Bakersfield and the University of Albany's Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy, where she excelled as a student of psychology, behavioral science, and social work; to her tenure at Skidmore, where she has been a peerless teacher, a respected scholar and a superb administrator, Crystal has earned the title she gave to herself, "Le Grand Fromage," which, for those who do not understand Crystal's unorthodox take on the French language, is a title that also goes by the sobriquet Interim Dean of the Faculty and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

In her over two decades of shifting among the classroom, the field, the scrivener's desk, and the Dean's Office, Crystal has always been a learned, insightful, empathetic, and astute thinker and communicator, one who knows how to deliver her messages clearly and emphatically but always with care and compassion. She has also been an indispensable friend and colleague to so many faculty, staff, and union employees. Crystal may have been Le Grand Fromage, but she never failed to take the opportunity to buoy the spirits and clarify the thinking of those who sought a dose of her counsel, her assistance, her ministrations, or her "beyond the fringe" humor.

Crystal's early scholarship concentrated primarily, though not exclusively, on elder care. In particular, she investigated how to foster shared decision-making processes that treat the elderly patient with respect and give the patient's family the emotional support they need as they begin, as the psychoanalyst Irvin Yalom put it, "to stare at the sun." As Crystal and her co-authors argued in a 2005 article, "Communication can be considered to be the primary medium of care delivery." Specifically, health care professionals must "develop the skills to **really hear** what the patient and family are communicating." Developing these skills requires health care providers to become aware of their own emotional reactions to their patients, reactions that often include a feeling of grief when the patient expires. This theme of thoughtful communication engendered by self-reflection and emotional attunement to others recurs in all of Crystal's scholarship, whether the topic is providing effective and compassionate elder care; assisting those who have experienced child abuse or domestic violence; helping veterans who suffer from congestive heart failure; counseling estranged partners who are enduring a divorce; caring for people who need mental health

services but are reluctant to access them; or advocating for patients who are denied access to health care or are offered inadequate health care because of their race, ethnicity, or income level.

Whether Crystal seeks to change a person's understanding of their own grieving process, their sense of self-efficacy, or their misperception of their inability to cope with an anxiety disorder, she does so with an ethic of care and a degree of intellectual engagement that is inspiring. As one of her students put it, "Crystal is the best teacher and mentor who ever existed on the face of this earth. She is funny, bright, and interested." Another student echoed this sentiment and added a revelatory fillip to her assessment of Crystal, "I LOVE CRYSTAL!! She is a true role model in every definition of the word. Her husband also makes the best cookies under the sun!" I think that all of Crystal's friends and colleagues endorse these sentiments... and are wondering, to paraphrase Liz Lemon, the character that Tina Fey played in *30 Rock*, "WHERE ARE OUR COOKIES?!"

During her service in the Dean's Office as both Associate Dean of the Faculty and Interim Dean of the Faculty and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Crystal shifted from personal engagement with others to policymaking with ease. Apropos the latter, she reshaped the college's policies governing non-tenure track faculty's teaching loads; was the prime mover behind our now well-established policies governing the protection of minors, sexual harassment, and workplace harassment; crafted a uniform peer classroom visitation policy; and sparked a healthy faculty-wide conversation on the criteria for promotion to full professor.

Her policy acumen was, however, merely one of Crystal's many administrative talents. For example, her determination to prove that Mary Poppins was right when she averred that "In every task to be done there is an element of fun," and that Warren Zevon was also right when he said, "When I feel pressure, and I need a break, I load up the Winnebago, drive it into the lake" allowed her to create a work environment that was positive, productive, and just a tad mischievous. All of those who worked with Crystal in the Dean's Office regularly received a refreshing drenching of her humor, good will, and fondness for the irreverent. Crystal took pains to speak with each member of her staff every morning, both to receive "early warning" information and to learn what she could do to help

them complete their tasks for that day. She also met with anyone who needed assistance or support from the Dean's Office. She at times resembled the Irish political boss Frank Skeffington in *The Last Hurrah*, holding audience with both the powerful and the powerless, though she would likely prefer that we compare her to The Dude from *The Big Lebowski*. Like the Dude, Crystal always abided, no matter what atmospheric and angina-inducing events occurred on a given day. We would be, however, guilty of painting an incomplete portrait of Crystal's leadership style if we did not disclose that on those rare occasions when the vagaries of a Deany life became too much for even Crystal to manage with sangfroid, she would scream, "This is not 'Nam! There are rules!"

A tribute to Crystal would be shamefully incomplete if it did not include a discussion of her collaboration with her husband, Jeffrey, a collaboration that includes more than baking escapades. Jeffrey and Crystal are the founders of the band Dark Ballet, which, as they describe it, writes and performs music that is "heavy melodic rock ensconced in catchy melodies." Those who have seen Dark Ballet perform The Eagles' "Hotel California" can testify that Crystal and Jeffrey's rendition makes what The Eagles called being "Tiffany-twisted" something that even the most twisted-averse are eager to try.

Jeffrey and Crystal have worked tirelessly to bring music education to many local school children. For example, Jeffrey and Crystal established Peak Music Studios in Cohoes, which offers guitar and singing lessons to young people in the area. They also created the IGNITE Music Passion! program, which they delivered to interested students in the Cohoes City School District in the summer of 2018. The three-week session concluded with a music video featuring a song that Jeffrey and Crystal's students wrote and performed. As the Mayor of Cohoes, Shawn Morse, noted, Crystal and Jeffrey provided the students with "hands-on arts education... that provided them with an opportunity to channel their inner creativity." Crystal and Jeffrey's students also learned, to quote Dewey Finn from *School of Rock*, how "to melt some faces!"

Crystal has elevated, enlightened, and enlivened all of us during her time at the college. She has allowed her little light... excuse me, her Le Grand Fromage light, to shine on so many of us. We are confident that she will now take her little light and her big bass guitar into

her retirement, where she will continue to make a beautiful—and face melting—noise.

Professor Lary Opitz joined the Skidmore College faculty in 1974 as lecturer and Technical Director in the Department of Theater, initially teaching stage technology, stage management, and stage lighting. He completed his bachelor's degree in both theater and studio art at Queens College, City University of New York, and studied conceptual-based designing with many top Broadway designers at the renowned Studio and Forum of Stage Design in New York City, from which he graduated with distinction in scenic painting and scenic, costume, and lighting design. He began his professional career while an undergraduate, working on Off-Broadway productions as a technician and designer. Lary taught graduate classes at Columbia University's Teachers College and then built the Queens Playhouse, the first professional regional theater in the NYC borough of Queens. After serving as the technical director of this theater, he continued working on Off-Broadway productions as a designer and as the stage manager of the long-running *El Grande de Coca Cola*. As a student he was an active member of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, the Congress for Racial Equality, and Students for a Democratic Society.

When he came to Skidmore, the Theater Department was located on the downtown campus. There were only a handful of theatre majors and few were going on to graduate programs or professional careers. The department was housed in Skidmore's original 1913 building – Lucy Scribner's Young Women's Industrial Club of Saratoga Springs. The department was beginning to expand and was outgrowing the tiny run-down theatre. While the first building for the Sports Center was being designed for the new campus, Lary and Peter Gould, the department's scenic designer, offered to design and build a temporary theatre in a large open bay that was added to the building. The Regent Street Theatre was soon condemned by the city and a year was spent producing in the college Chapel. During the winter and spring terms, Lary and Gould created a 250-seat thrust stage, scenic shop, and attendant facilities with the assistance of three students and two of Lary's former assistants. The fully equipped theatre opened in the fall of 1976 with a production of

Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party*. Later, Lary worked closely with the architects and consultants on all phases of the planning and design of the Janet Kinghorn Bernhard Theater.

Throughout his Skidmore career, Lary continued to work as a theater professional. When admitted to United Scenic Artists Local Union #829, he was one of only one hundred lighting designers qualified to work on Broadway. He worked extensively on countless Broadway, Off-Broadway, and regional theater, opera, and dance productions and was invited to assist legendary lighting designers Tom Skelton, Tharon Musser, and Ken Billington. He spent nine years as the resident designer for the renowned Limón Dance Company. His theatre and dance designs were seen throughout the United States and in over twenty countries. He designed world and New York City premieres, working with choreographers that included Alwin Nikolai, Sophie Maslow, Anna Sokolow, Suzanne Linke, Heinz Poll, Remy Charlip, Lucas Hoving, Jean Cebron, Phyllis Lamhut, Carla Maxwell, and Meredith Monk. His work was favorably reviewed in the *New York Times* and other publications.

At Skidmore, Lary served as the theatre design director for many years, creating the lighting for fifty-three productions and the scenery for thirty-five productions. In 1988 he directed the first of his many productions at the college and elsewhere. Among these were six Shakespearean plays, the East Coast premieres of *If All the Sky Were Paper* and *Blood Relatives*, and his own adaptations of Büchner's *Woyzeck* (*Woyzeck in Auschwitz*), Kafka's *The Trial* and *Metamorphosis* (*Metamorphosis: A Slapstick Tragedy*), and Joyce's *Ulysses* (*Bloomsday: Dublin, 16 June*). As a director, he has been fortunate to work closely with a number of playwrights on his productions. When the college chose Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia* as the first-year student reading, he directed the production and, with ten faculty members, recruited from as many departments and developed an extensive interdisciplinary study guide that has since been used as a resource by many college and regional theatres in the US and several other countries. He has worked on one-hundred-and-twenty-six Skidmore productions in various capacities. Lary was promoted to professor in 2001 and he is extremely proud of the many students he has taught and directed who have gone on to develop successful careers in the theatre, film, and television.

Over his career, Lary has been involved in the design of several theatres as a consultant. In addition to Skidmore's Fieldhouse Theatre, The Janet Kinghorn Bernhard Theatre, and Queens Playhouse (working with architect Philip Johnson), he designed Capital Repertory's theatre in Albany and two innovative spaces for BOCES in Saratoga and Glens Falls. He consulted on the theatre complex in Albany's Egg, designed renovations to the Lewis A. Swyer Theater, and consulted on renovations of the Saratoga Performing Arts Center. He has been a consultant for many well-known colleges and universities, including Stanford University, Williams College, Union College, Maryville University, the Juilliard School, and Hamilton College, and he was a scholar-in-residence at New York University for three semesters. He served as theater advisory panelist for the New York State Council on the Arts, served on the Marshall Scholarship Regional Selection Committee, and as a judge for the English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition.

Lary proudly calls himself a total theatre artist. He began his professional life as a technician, and has since served as designer, producer, director, playwright, and actor working in theatre, opera, dance, and film. He has pursued most of these areas professionally with little or no formal training, having been greatly influenced by the many well-known artists with whom he has worked over the years. In addition to designing sets and lights, he has also designed costumes, projections, props, and sound for many productions. He is the only person to be a member of four of the Broadway guilds and unions, including United Scenic Artists (LU#829 of IATSE), Actors' Equity Association, The Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, and the Dramatists Guild. He has also been a member of Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas and the Shakespeare Theatre Association. He has acted in over forty stage productions and films over the course of his career. In addition to writing his own plays, Opitz assisted famed scientist Carl Dujarsi on his play, *An Immaculate Misconception*.

Lary developed many theatre courses in acting, stage management, directing, technical theatre, and both scenic and lighting design. He has lectured in several other departments, taught a liberal studies course entitled *Arts and Politics in Weimar Germany*, and taught multiple semesters of a Scribner Seminar entitled *Shakespeare Was Jewish?*, focusing on

historical, societal, and literary aspects of *The Merchant of Venice*. He worked closely with the Music Department as a performer on various events over the years and was a presenting member on a variety of college panels.

As long-time department chair, Lary worked to successfully expand the theatre faculty and was instrumental in securing a number of large donations to upgrade the facility. He brought many performers, events, productions, and guest artists to Skidmore, including regular events to celebrate Black History Month. He served on various college committees, including the Committee on Educational Policies and Planning during a major curricular change, the Performing Arts Committee, The Periclean Committee, many ad hoc and search committees, two terms on the Committee for Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure, serving as chair for one year, and worked as a consultant for the establishment of the Arts Administration Program.

In 1994, working with the British American Dramatic Academy, he and Barbara Opitz developed the London-based *Shakespeare Programme*, a Skidmore study-abroad program that he ran until 2006. A significant number of students in the program from Skidmore and many of America's top colleges and universities have gone on to graduate study and professional careers.

In 1996, Lary began focusing on the works of William Shakespeare and started directing and acting in Shakespearean productions in 2000. A founding member of the Saratoga Shakespeare Company, in 2012 he and Barbara Opitz stepped in to ensure that the company would continue to present free professional productions in Saratoga's Congress Park. He served as producing artistic director until 2019, acting, directing, and designing for the company. Under his and Barbara's leadership the company expanded the production season and the student apprentice program, presented seventeen productions, and engaged far more regional and national professional theatre artists than in previous years. Lary played eighteen Shakespearean roles in the company and elsewhere and edited and adapted the texts of the productions he has directed as well as others.

As a theatre designer, Lary necessarily became adept in a number of areas of technology. He was among the first faculty members to make extensive use of

computers for teaching and theatre design applications. In the 1990s he began developing web pages for all of his classes. Since then he has designed and maintained over two dozen different websites.

Colleague and Skidmore alum Sue Kessler shares:

Lary's legacy in Theater at Skidmore is indelible. His various talents led him to reinvent and expand his artistry, from design and technical theater, to acting, directing and playwriting, thus demonstrating the Skidmore spirit of exploration and versatility. He also instilled a love of Shakespeare to the students, and was instrumental in building programs and opportunities for students to work within that genre. We are grateful for his many contributions to the Theater Department!

Lary has been an active member of Saratoga's Congregation Shaara Tfilie, serving a number of terms on the board and terms as both vice president and president. During his presidency he oversaw the fund-raising, design, and establishment of the congregation's new synagogue and Jewish Community Center on Weibel Avenue.

Among his current and future projects is the writing of a book on Shakespearean acting that he plans to develop into an extensive website. In addition to being a compendium dealing with all aspects of technique, hundreds of monologues will be fully annotated with glossaries, scansion, play synopses, acting notes, and commentaries. In recent years he has presented several performances and lectures both online and in person and hopes to continue to do so. He has also begun a number of playwrighting projects for one-person shows.

Lary and Barbara Opitz have been a couple since meeting in college in 1966 and they look forward to traveling and spending more time with their two sons, Seth (class of 1998) and Noah (class of 2001), their partners, Yael and Randi, and their granddaughter, Mayim Eve. Lary has been a long-suffering but loyal Mets fan since 1962 and looks forward to seeing more spring training games during regular treks to their home in Delray Beach, Florida.

A chemical system reaches equilibrium when the amount of chemical species has no further tendency to change with time and the system has no observable changes in its properties. That is the level of consistency and reliability that, for sixteen years, Cindy Sood has brought to the Chemistry Department, to her students, and to her colleagues. For sixteen years, there was no doubt that what needed to be done to have a successful semester in the first-year chemistry sequence, was there. It was the equilibrium consistently brought by Cindy Sood.

Prior to arriving at Skidmore, Cindy worked as an "Advanced Scientist" for nearly a decade in the pharmaceutical Rhone-Poulenc, where she worked on efficiency and quality of products; as part of her work in Rhone-Poulenc, she received the "Innovation Excellence Award." She followed that up as a Senior Scientist and Section Manager at GE Healthcare. In 2007, Cindy joined the Skidmore College faculty to teach the Principles of Chemistry lab as a Visiting Teaching Associate, quickly becoming the reference for management of laboratories of Principles of Chemistry and reaching her current position as Senior Instructor.

At Skidmore, Cindy Sood was able to bridge her experiences as a manager/scientist in industry to her teaching and course development, always having student experience, safety, and training at the forefront of her efforts. Cindy masterfully found the way to allow students to find their footing in the science lab while guiding them with questions and insights. She was known for her dedication to teaching, seeking ways to constantly improve and make connections among laboratory experiments, chemical theory, and the world around us. Through her teaching, students got the opportunity to have hands-on experience and real-life applications, making chemistry accessible to even the most chemophobic students.

Her managerial position in industry made Cindy a master in assembling and directing a highly enthusiastic team of student workers each semester who help prepare and take down the experiments in Principles of Chemistry. She was also instrumental in the development and design of the teaching spaces for Principles of Chemistry in the new Billy Tish Center for Integrated Sciences, where her vision allows for

pedagogical developments in an efficient and safe teaching laboratory.

In addition to the hundreds of students trained by Cindy, she also mentored faculty who are new to teaching in the lab course or to those who teach it infrequently. As her colleague, Dr. Steve Frey, puts it: "Cindy has been a wonderful colleague and true asset to our department. She is a community-minded individual and a leader in our department whose voice is always influential in the decision-making process. She always advocates for students and junior faculty, and reminds us about the importance of equity and fairness." Within the department she has served on various committees including the safety committee, the awards committee, and numerous search committees. Her training in hiring and interviewing transformed how we assess candidates and has led to the hiring of the many strong members of our department.

While Cindy's work was primarily in General Chemistry, she also got to develop a course of chemistry, "Principles of Chemical Systems," designed for students interested in becoming Physician Assistants. Here, as in all courses Cindy Sood designed, she placed student learning at the center, making sure she created a space where students were free to think and understand. As one student in this class commented, "the lab environment made me feel more comfortable to ask questions and participate more." Working with Cindy in that class and in the Principles of Chemistry lab, she does create a comfortable environment to practice science and learn. Cindy is a caring and thoughtful teacher who, during her time at Skidmore, constantly revised and reworked the Principles of Chemistry laboratory to improve the experiential learning of our students. Her enthusiasm and dedication led Cindy to recently redesign the Principles of Chemistry laboratory for inquiry-based projects, where students have more liberty to explore and learn chemistry. In the words of Cindy's longtime colleague in laboratory innovation, Dr. Beatrice Kendall, "Her devotion to the hundreds of students that have taken general chemistry led her to the complete redesign and overhaul of the general chemistry lab curriculum. Cindy's lab redesign is incredibly innovative and drives to the heart of teaching the students to become more independent in their critical thinking and trusting of their own abilities."

Beyond Skidmore, Cindy is active with the local branch of the National Alliance on Mental Health, which enables her to bring empathy, honesty and compassion to those around her. As Dr. Beatrice Kendall explains, "when she is here, she is completely and wholeheartedly in her work. At the same time, she is able to lead a fulfilling life whether it be swimming in the pool, taking pilates classes, or enjoying the weather at lunch with her colleagues. Cindy is the ultimate example of someone with total balance." Dr. Steve Frey puts it well when he says that "Cindy's presence has made our department a better place to work and learn, and we will miss her contributions." She leaves our department on a good path to a new equilibrium, as she will move to a new phase of traveling & hiking with her husband, Anup, her two sons, Ravi and Alex, Alex's wife, Emily, and her new grandson, Teddy. Cindy, we will miss your dedication to our students and all of us. We wish you all the best.