

Rosemary Bourne '60

Jacqueline M. Jung '61 Lifetime Service Award



Rosemary Bourne has never been one to sit on the sidelines. In September 1956, she walked into a philosophy class led by professor and department chair Jesse Mauzey, ready to explore the ideas of Plato and Aristotle. A few minutes into the lecture, she recalls, the professor “suddenly tossed his notes aside and delivered a passionate call” to support the Hungarian uprising against an oppressive Soviet-led government. “Unfortunately, the world watched while that effort was crushed,” she reflects. But Mauzey’s fiery speech ignited Rosemary’s desire to effect change for the common good; she would never be a bystander. That spirit has inspired a lifetime of serving the communities she loves. For over three decades, she has been one of Skidmore’s most prolific volunteers.

After graduating with a degree in English, Rosemary launched a career in finance while attending New York University’s Graduate School of Business. One of the few female security analysts in the early ’60s, Rosemary retired in 2003 as vice president of the YMCA Retirement Fund, managing and investing a portion of its multimillion-dollar portfolio. She credits the “multi-tiered liberal arts foundation” she received at Skidmore for “allowing this English major” to flourish in her chosen profession and later in a successful 12-year tenure as mayor of Oyster Bay Cove, Long Island.

Through it all, Rosemary maintained close ties to classmates and her alma mater. A longtime class agent and regional and admissions volunteer, she served as class president and Reunion fund chair for her 25th Reunion in the mid-’80s. Since then, she has taken on many more leadership roles, serving extended terms in several, including Reunion chair and Friends of the Presidents chair. Rosemary celebrates her 60th Reunion as gift planning chair and class fund chair.

Rosemary’s involvement intensified when she was invited to join the Alumni Association Board of Directors in 1984. Initially selected as vice president of the Alumni Annual Giving Executive Committee, she subsequently became a member of the FOP Committee, serving both bodies as chair for a number of years. As a member of the Nominating Committee, Rosemary helped recruit the next generation of alumni volunteers, spearheading a special initiative focused on engaging young alumni early on. She championed scholarship opportunities and drew upon her professional connections to lay the foundation of what would become the perennially popular Wall Street Walk. In 1990, her exceptional contributions were recognized with an Outstanding Service Award.

Rosemary’s leadership skills and business acumen did not go unnoticed; in 1998 she was appointed to the Board of Trustees. Over the next three decades she became an invaluable member of the Investment, Infrastructure and Budget and Finance committees. As such, she helped guide Skidmore during one of the most dynamic periods of growth in its history. Her wise counsel promoted the careful stewardship of College resources through a dramatic campus expansion that included the Tang Museum, Zankel Music Center and Northwoods apartment complex.

Known for her tenacity, quick wit and unwavering commitment to Skidmore, Rosemary has served the College through the administrations of three presidents and just as many capital campaigns. In 2003, she dedicated a room in Palamountain Hall to her parents and English Professor Julia Hysham. She still looks to classmates for encouragement and inspiration.

“I have the great fortune of belonging to the Class of 1960, a group of women whose humor and myriad interests and accomplishments, both individually and collectively, never cease to influence my work for the College. I accept this award on their behalf.”

Rosemary is also exceedingly proud of her niece, physician Katherine A. Bourne ’96, and the many fellow volunteers she was worked with over the years. “The most important thing I have learned,” she adds, “is that we are all Skidmore alumni for life.”