

Dana R. Metes '90

Outstanding Service Award



Dana Metes is no stranger to embracing a new challenge. The English major has built careers in three diverse professions and pursued them in just as many regions of the country. Successful in each endeavor, she's grateful to Skidmore for instilling the idea that such a journey was possible. Today, Dana is a managing director with the Dartmouth College Fund. She attributes the ease with which she was able to switch professions — from publishing to law to higher education — to the strong interdisciplinary foundation she received at Skidmore. "It fostered a flexibility in my thinking, which allowed me to believe that I could travel the world and continue to learn; that I could move anywhere and create a life for myself." She has been giving back as an alumna volunteer ever since.

Dana vividly recalls the excitement in Mary Ellen Fisher's "Political Change in Communist Systems" course when, on November 9th, 1989, the Berlin Wall came down. She and other students eagerly scanned news reports that fueled their classroom discussions. For Dana, the historic event was personal; her Romanian-born grandparents had experienced life behind the Iron Curtain through family and friends still living there. "I was extremely lucky to view what was happening through a Skidmore lens. It was the first time both history and current events were so clearly intertwined for me," she reflects.

Expansive study across disciplines opened her eyes to the intersection of ideas. Dana paired courses in Stravinsky and Balanchine with Ballet, Historical Geology with Darwin and Darwinism, and Biology of the Mind with Modern Political Thought.

There were transformational experiences outside the classroom as well. Dana credits her role as a coxswain for Skidmore Crew during freshman year with honing her time-management skills. "Knowing I had to be at the boathouse for practice at 5:45 a.m. really helped me avoid some of the typical first-year pitfalls." Later, acting on a lead from the Career Services' database in her senior year, Dana traveled to Chicago during spring break to meet publishing executive Susan Hirsch Schwartz '68. Securing a job prior to graduation, she notes, "really took pressure off senior spring."

After several years in the publishing industry, Dana's focus turned to the study of law. In 1999, she earned a J.D. degree from the University of New Hampshire's Franklin Pierce School of Law and went to work as an attorney for two New York City law firms. A decade later, the siren call of New England life drew Dana to Vermont, where she launched a career in higher education. She started out as an events and special projects coordinator for Dartmouth Medical School and Dartmouth-Hitchcock's development and alumni relations office. Dana then transitioned to assistant athletic director before moving into her current role as a managing director with the Dartmouth College Fund.

At every point along her path, she remained a stalwart Skidmore volunteer. Class correspondent for a decade, she is concurrently juggling three additional volunteer positions: president, reunion chair and class agent. She's served multiple terms in each one. A member of the Alumni Awards Committee since 2017, Dana is now chair, part of her role on the Alumni Association Board of Directors. Over the years, planning reunions and other outreach has helped her maintain strong bonds with classmates, "particularly in the pre-Facebook era." Dana is most proud of helping establish memorials to two cherished friends. The Jennifer M. Landers '90 Internship Fund supports students pursuing a career in advertising. The "Scho Award," which honors the memory of Thoroughbred Rick Schofield '90, is bestowed each season to the Men's Ice Hockey team member who "epitomizes all that it means to be a great teammate and competitive student-athlete." Skidmore relationships, notes Dana, have shaped her life. "I feel so lucky to still have my core group of friends, with whom I'm able to laugh (and sometimes cry) on a daily basis."

She adds, "I'm so honored to be recognized among so many other impressive and committed alumni. It's a real gift to see the many other ways that Skidmore has influenced the lives of its alumni and the equally amazing ways those alumni have chosen to respond."