

# Jared Leigh Greenbaum '11

## The David H. Porter Award for Young Alumni Service



For Jared Leigh Greenbaum, serving the Skidmore community as an alumnus volunteer has simply been a continuation of his active involvement during his student days. Consultant and executive director of strategy at higher education consultancy Keeling & Associates, he traces the beginnings of a successful professional life back to Skidmore faculty mentors and a campus culture that values “diversity of thought.” While he pursued a self-determined major in arts administration, Jared was a lighting designer and member of the management staff for the Theater Department, SGA treasurer, head tour guide, pre-orientation and orientation advisor, and a Business Department student coach. The depth of his involvement earned the honors graduate a President’s Award. Since then, Jared has enthusiastically served as an alumni admissions contact, Presidents Society chair and a Regional Events Committee member. He celebrates his 10th Reunion as class co-president and reunion chair.

The busy Los Angeles resident has a few local volunteer gigs but admits, “Most of what I do is for Skidmore.” Jared is co-leader of Skidmore-Los Angeles regional alumni group and a member of the Alumni Nominating Committee. He typically comes east twice a year at the invitation of business professor Christine Page to be a guest speaker in classes that include Foundations of Marketing and Advertising and Promotion.

Jared gives back as an expression of gratitude for the influence his Skidmore experience had on his professional path. “It helped me figure out what I liked to do and who I wanted to be.” As a first-year, his plan was to major in biology with a pre-med concentration, in preparation for a career in medicine.

Skidmore appealed to Jared because it offered the opportunity to major in science and minor in theater, one of his passions. As a lifelong backstage “techie” who loved lighting design but was not particularly interested in being on stage, it was a perfect fit.

After attending Theater Pre-Orientation as a first-year, Jared carried a full course load that included Introduction to Biology and Introduction to Theater. Early in his sophomore year, he moved away from science and declared a theater major with a concentration in lighting design. “When I told my mom about my new plan,” he quips, “I was afraid she’d have a heart attack.”

By the spring, Jared discovered that theater, the arts and business overlap in a way that intrigued him. With the guidance of faculty, he designed a self-determined major in Arts Administration, three years before classes in that discipline were offered at Skidmore. His favorite extracurricular pursuits — serving as a member of the theater management team, producer of ComFest 2011, and a Special Programs and ArtsFest intern — dovetailed with his academic interests. “All this, along with my backstage/management work, brought me to the realization that I wanted a career in entertainment on the production side of things.”

Landing a job at Nickelodeon shortly after graduation, Jared spent three years working for the network in New York City and Los Angeles. He eventually found his way to 3 Arts Entertainment, where he was involved in talent management. The prospect of advancing in the industry prompted him to complete an MBA at Emory University’s Goizueta Business School. Along the way, things took a familiar twist: just as he had done at Skidmore, Jared became deeply involved in student governance and university-wide initiatives. Suddenly a new career path, working as a higher education consultant, presented itself.

The prospect of taking yet another detour was cause for trepidation. Happily, Jared was able to reconnect with former Skidmore Dean of Student Affairs Rochelle Calhoun, ultimately leading to a fortuitous introduction.

The many relationships Jared forged at Skidmore continue to be a source of inspiration and cherished memories. “Whether it was Kate Kelly Bouchard yelling at me for ‘never taking an acting class’ or Patty Pawliczak, who tried to teach me how to sew, the entire Theater Department was extremely supportive, even as I charted my own course through it. Carolyn Anderson, Alma Becker, Marie Glotzbach, Gary Wilson and Dave Yergan all taught me something that changed how I work and see the world, including how to avoid ‘missing the bus.’ Christine Page was one of the most transformational professors I have ever had. She taught me creativity is essential in every aspect of business, a lesson that has and will continue to inform every step of my career.”

Close bonds with classmates are another gift of his Skidmore experience. Of his myriad volunteer activities, Jared is most proud of working with 2011 Reunion Committee members to honor former student photographer **Chris Weigel '11**, who died in a tragic accident a year prior to their 5th Reunion. Classmates in attendance received limited-edition prints of Chris’s most iconic Skidmore images, which were displayed prominently during the weekend.

Reflecting on a journey that did not follow a traditional route, Jared remarks, “Skidmore has always been a safe place for me to return to and learn from. It’s given me experiences and relationships that have always helped me figure out the next step. You don’t get a ‘cookie-cutter’ education at Skidmore. When you leave, you’re prepared to interact with people from all over the world, in any industry you can think of. Therefore, doors to diverse experiences are already open to you.”