



## **Be I t 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 26, 2024 in recognition and celebration of their distinguished service and achievement.**



invite you all to take a deep breath in. And out. Once more. Inhale, exhale. And, now, go ahead and—on that next exhale—sigh out on sound, perhaps letting the corners of your mouths turn up just a little.

Here we go. Inhale and . . . sigh.

How do you feel? A little more grounded? A little more present? Good.

Now, imagine, if you had a colleague who embodied that reminder. . . to breathe, to sigh, to revel in presence, in human-ness.

Such is Kate Kelly Bouchard. If you have worked in a Theater department, you know that the costume shop is like the kitchen, a kind of heart of the house. The voice and acting teacher is like the soul. At their best, the voice and acting teacher is the capacious keeper of the great range of humanity and its experience, the keenest listener you will ever be graced by, and the most empathetic and patient steward of success, risk, failure, and elation alike. Such is Kate Kelly Bouchard, a master teacher of voice and acting.

Kate came to teaching alongside a career in professional acting. Even with a full slate of classes and coaching at Skidmore, Kate never stopped acting professionally, doing the generous labor of bearing witness to characters with body, mind, and heart, the gifts actors give to audiences. Kate's acting career is an enviable journey through classical and contemporary work alike, and she has embodied characters drawn by the great writers of our time, from Kate in *Dancing at Lughnasa* by Brian Friel to the stage manager in Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*. As an actor, she takes on characters whose strength is accompanied by profound vulnerability. On Broadway, she played Gladys in *The Skin of Our Teeth*, directed by José Quintero. She won roles in First National Tours and major regional Rep Theaters alike. Kate is a founding member of the Lexington Conservatory Theater and Capital Repertory Company.

Professor Emeritus Carolyn Anderson recalls that “I first met Kate when she was acting at Cap Rep back in the early 80s. I was a Cap Rep board member and beginning a career at Skidmore. Our department chair at the time, Alan Brody, was in the process of developing a professional model for our department and reached out to Cap Rep actors. They were hired as

visiting guest artists teaching acting, and voice for the actor. As Cap Rep moved away from the repertory theater model, we continued to remain interested in the actors who continued to work there. We got to know,0 ( )TJ

Reyn Ricafort, a rising senior Theater major, actor and playwright



Humanities Dante Seminar at Dartmouth College. His  
role on the Editorial Boards of

and alumni seminars to Ireland, Vienna, and Istanbul that he has offered, which he describes as “great fun and many fond memories.”

Jim has also been Visiting Professor at NYU’s Stern School of Business, at Aalto University in Finland, and twice as a visiting Fulbright Scholar at the University of Applied Sciences in Krems, Austria.

We cannot, in honoring Jim’s life and career, ignore the importance of place. Jim’s life has been shaped by a sense of place, and the uniqueness of every place.

Jim was shaped, first of all, by Bayonne, New Jersey, in the shadow of New York City, where he grew up. If you’ve spoken with Jim at all of his life, you have no doubt come to consider Bayonne as a sort of working-class Eden, a city of neighborhoods that were truly communities. Jim likes to say that people from Bayonne are always eager to tell you where they’re from, because they are proud of having risen from such humble beginnings. Equally important in shaping Jim’s life is the Ireland of his parents and family, which gifted Jim with his love of poetry, of literature, and of the well-turned phrase. Finally, when Jim and his family came to Skidmore, they moved to rural Washington County, close by the Vermont border, where they went to work restoring an old dairy farm with a circa 1840s Greek Revival house. His rooting in the rhythms of a still largely agricultural community also effected a real transformation in his scholarship.

It is always tempting but rarely true to draw a straight line from the lives of scholars to their scholarship, but in considering Jim’s career it is undeniable that his experience informs his profound understanding of the importance of place. His career, infused with the essence of his beginnings, has been a testament to the power of environments in shaping perspectives, enterprises, and communities. This understanding has been the cornerstone of his research and teaching, particularly his innovative work on place-based enterprises.

Throughout his tenure at Skidmore College, Professor Kennelly has delved into the symbiotic relationship between busiel4 ( s)T vg. un.rs5the -1.15 Td {pow)D-1.15a(pow)D-1.15-2 (m)4 (ge)4nence( s)T vg nsbl d

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Elaine Larsen earned her BS in Animal Science and MS in Nutritional Biochemistry from Cornell University. She went on to Tufts for her PhD in Human Nutrition, and then completed a postdoc in cellular and molecular immunology at Albany Medical College. In 2004 she joined the Skidmore faculty as a Teaching Associate, and in 2010 was promoted to Senior Teaching Associate (now Senior Instructor).

For the past 20 years, Skidmore students have benefitted from Elaine's passion for teaching, enthusiasm for introducing non-majors to scientific inquiry, and ability to infuse her courses with her own unique interests and skills. Drawing on her broad training in biology, Elaine taught labs in Introductory Biology, Genetics, Cell Biology, Molecular Biology, and Comparative Vertebrate Anatomy. In the Health and Human Physiological Sciences Department, she taught Principles of Nutrition.

Throughout her teaching career, Elaine has been committed to incorporating active learning principles to engage students and improve their understanding. If there was a pedagogy workshop offered on campus, Elaine was likely attending. She served as a resource and mentor for other faculty interested in exploring approaches such as Team-Based Learning, Peer-Led Team Learning, and the use of case studies. Biology faculty member Erika Schielke says that 'Elaine has an impressive ability to translate pedagogical concepts into concrete activities. She was an incredible resource as I was starting my teaching career at Skidmore – and she still is.'

Non-science majors at Skidmore particularly benefited from Elaine's innovative course design, which drew on her experience as a horse owner and trail rider, and her involvement in the fiber arts community. In addition to teaching Human Biology for non-majors, she developed two highly popular courses that attracted a wide range of students – especially equestrians and artists. Students enrolled in 'Inside Equus: Biology of the Horse' could be found in the Skidmore stables studying behavior, or in the lab determining how to formulate a balanced diet based on the nutritional characteristics of various feed components. Or they might enroll in the linked travel seminar, 'Mustangs and the Wild West,' during which they would spend spring break observing horses in both wild and captive

settings in Nevada, and learning about the challenges of managing wild horse populations on public lands.

With Sang-Wook Lee in the Art Department, Elaine co-developed the course 'Straw Into Gold: Science in the Fiber Arts.' She continued to offer this course independently, and students could be seen throughout the semester working on the dyeing or weaving of their independent projects, or reviewing the microscopic structure of various types of fibers. She also participated in the development of the Tang exhibit 'Radical Fiber: Threads Connecting Art and Science.'

In addition to horses, ETJEd cention (s)-1 (e)44 ( ba)10 (C)



Trish Lyell's 2021 painting *Untitled I* looks alive. Across the canvas, expanses of color take on loose shapes, intersecting, concealing, bending, disrupting, expanding, and splitting in an exploration of how forms change in space and time. This description of the painting can also describe Trish: bold, colorful, and shape-shifting. It was 1977 when Trish Lyell arrived on campus as a new Skidmore student. In the years since, she has had many different roles: she led the Skidmore tennis team as one of its captains, returned in 1990 to teach in th



It may not be coincidental that Monica is an expert in ecology and animal behavior, with a specialization in optimal foraging.

I didn't know then how well Monica's practicing what she studies would translate into her brilliant work in the field, the classroom and the lab. Any non-human primate would have approved of Monica lecturing for her first two weeks of class with her infant Caitlin in a backpack, until a spot opened up for day-care. Most faculty in the 1990's used projectors to project lecture notes. Monica used them to illustrate animal behavior using shadow-puppets. Monica's imitations of bird calls and howler monkeys could be a sound track for an Indiana Jones film. More on Indian Jones later.

Monica came to Skidmore with impeccable academic credentials in her field: A B.A. in Botany and Zoology and a Masters in Entomology from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and a Ph.D. in Neurobiology and Behavior from Cornell University. She went on to develop courses in Animal Behavior, Tropical Ecology, Tropical Field Ecology and Conservation, Conservation Ecology, Ecology, Ecology of Food, and a First Year Seminar called "What to Eat?"

Corey Freeman-Gallant notes

introductory biology. Her passion for her subject was clear on that first day... I have fond memories of working in the classroom that we shared with the animals we studied; ...of our luck in sighting several quetzals during our Tropical Ecology trip to Costa Rica, and our efforts over the course of that week to catch a glimpse of a long-tailed manakin- it would be challenging to state in brief Monica's influence on my thinking as an ecologist and as an educator. I wish her all the best in her retirement.”

Monica has a special affinity and gift for mentoring students whose interests span both the arts and sciences. Her spouse and fellow ecologist Wayne notes that “Monica truly believes in Skidmore’s liberal arts mission of developing creative, interdisciplinary, wide-ranging young adults”. This is exemplified by a reflection from Courtney Mattison, Skidmore ’08, world-renowned sculptor and ocean conservation advocate:

“She’s such an important mentor, advocate and friend... I already knew that I wanted to study both tropical/marine biology and art, but had no clue how to combine those two seemingly disparate fields, or if I would even be allowed to pursue such an unconventional path. Her guidance was fundamental in empowering me to combine my interests through a self-determined major, exploring intersections of art and science while discovering possible routes to turn my eccentricity and passion into a career as an artist and ocean advocate. I often refer to Monica’s tropical

time to seek new neighborhoods, cultivate new alliances?”

I have here an Arcosanti bell, cast in bronze, from the Arcosanti foundation, “dedicated to sustainability through experimental architecture and agriculture”- each bell a true “original”, like Monica. To paraphrase Clarence Obody- “Every time you hear a bell ring, it

recommendation. That's in addition to what she wrote for her HPAC advisees, a position she had for over a decade.

Throughout her teaching career, Patti did not only challenge her students, but had the greatest emotional and empathetic connections with the students. If one of her students experienced a personal or health issue that prevented them from attending lab, she'd help them make up missed work on her own time. If they were having difficulty with an assignment, she'd let them work on it in her office. As a mom of four, she treated students with the same compassion that she'd want her own children to be treated. And as Josh Ness puts it: "She's intensely protective of them and they recognized that."

Patti's empathy and willingness to lend a helping hand is not just reserved for her students, but extends to her colleagues as well. Be it teaching an overload while also training two part-time new colleagues in BI 107 to ensure all lab sections were covered due to medical leaves. Frequently checking in with a colleague going through a difficult time, sharing some of her own experiences, and picking up some of the workload. Or being, as usual, still in the lab/her office late at night and willing/happy to help out if one of us forgot something. We can email Patti - chances are that even if it's 8 pm, she is on campus and happy to send something to the printer, transfer a PCR reaction to the freezer, or take something out of the autoclave.

Patti's empathy and compassion have made a world of a difference to her colleagues, and she will be missed dearly. Knowing Patti, we are assured that she will find some venue to continue to share her excitement about microbiology with others. For all Patti has done for us in her seventeen years in the Biology department we offer her our sincere thanks and wish her the best in this next stage of her life.

- *Sylvia McDevitt, Associate Professor, Biology*

When he arrived at Skidmore College in Fall 1988, Professor David Vella was already well on his way to becoming the teacher-scholar he is today. After completing degrees in mathematics, including a B.A. from American International College and a Ph.D. from the University of Virginia, David went on to complete a research fellowship at the California Institute of Technology and teaching visits at the University of Notre Dame and Bowdoin College. At Skidmore, David became

an inspiring instructor and cultivated his scholarship into a fruitful (a)-1.7 C /P ka-y ofem Colg(1)-4.6sidic 1 ( )TJs

studies and interdisciplinary courses. While many faculty members prefer repeat preps, David thrives on variety and often chooses to teach 5 different mathematics courses every year and even 6 if he is doing an overload. Typical characterizations of David's teaching by students and faculty suggest that he "makes math fun", "is an excellent explainer," and "exemplifies the supportive and challenging ideal." Many students have been amazed by how much time David devotes to them, with extended conversations often lasting long after office hours have ended. Many more have remarked on his capacity to make them to *want* to learn mathematics. As one student put it, "He inspired me to love math."

Through his dedication and hard work, David has supervised 32 independent studies and 13 senior theses. According to these students, David's thesis advising inspired several of them to pursue graduate degrees in mathematics and others to pursue successful careers in mathematics outside academia. Alumna Bond Caldaro '04 best describes the student experience with David:

"I did not just learn math from Professor Vella, I learned how to learn – how to build a mental model of complex systems, problem solve creatively, and apply rigorous logic to my thinking – all of which allowed me to pursue a successful career in mathematics. The endless lecture preparations, grading of assignments, office hours, and thesis meetings must have seemed tedious, but sometimes those hours are what set a student out on a lifelong path of intellectual satisfaction, a good career, and in turn, a good quality of life. It was certainly the case for me, and certainly for many other students. I will always be grateful and indebted to Professor Vella."

In addition to his teaching, research, and mentoring activities, David has served the Department and the College in many ways. He was department chair from 2014 to 2018 and charter member and director of the Honors Forum from 2007 to 2011. He has served on and/or chaired numerous departmental and college committees, including six search committees. In 1997, he established our local chapter of Pi