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Faculty members prepare to line up in this photo from Commencement 2004. For details on this year's ceremony: [Story](#).



Patricia Hilleren will begin a major NIH-supported research project this summer. [Story](#).



Summer at Skidmore always includes dance. This year Ronald K. Brown\Evidence is in residence. [Story](#).

Welcome -- The Skidmore *Intercom* Faculty-Staff Newsletter is a production of the Office of College Relations. All members of the campus community are invited to submit story ideas or news items, using the contact information provided below. Department chairs and office directors are asked to please print a copy of this document to share with colleagues who do not have regular access to a computer.

We hope you enjoy this electronic newsletter and encourage you to share your impressions via email or telephone.

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Skidmore's 94th Commencement Set for May 21 at SPAC

Approximately 530 members of the Class of 2005 will receive bachelor's degrees at Skidmore College's 94th Commencement exercises on Saturday, May 21. The ceremony, open to the public, will begin at 11 a.m. at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center.

Approximately 30 students in the College's University Without Walls also will receive bachelor's degrees. Six master of liberal arts degrees will be presented as well.

Skidmore will award honorary doctoral degrees to three distinguished guests: Carolyn Patty Blum, visiting fellow at Kellogg College, Oxford University, and an authority on refugee and human rights law; Phil Ramone, one of the most highly respected producers in the recording industry; and Tim Russert, political analyst for *NBC Nightly News* and managing editor and moderator of *Meet the Press*. Each degree recipient will deliver brief remarks.

Following a Skidmore tradition, the keynote commencement address will be given by a faculty member – this year, Professor of History Tadahisa Kuroda – chosen by the graduating class. President Philip A. Glotzbach will address the graduates and their guests, as will Rachael Beard, president of the Class of 2005.

Keynote speaker Kuroda is a scholar of American history who has taught at Skidmore for 36 years and has served as chair of the College's History Department and as associate dean of the faculty. He once said that as a historian, he has been less concerned about current controversies and more interested in how things got to where they are today, a line of thinking that governed his research on the electoral college, which was the topic of his 1991 Edwin M. Moseley Faculty Research Lecture.

At Skidmore, Kuroda has taught courses in American colonial history, the Civil War and reconstruction, and the history and political thought of the American Revolution. He will retire from the college this spring. Biographical profiles of the degree recipients follow:

Carolyn Patty Blum



In addition to her work with the Oxford Master's Programme, Blum serves as senior legal advisor to the Center for Justice and Accountability, based in San Francisco. In that capacity, she worked on a series of cases to establish legal culpability for state terror in El Salvador in the 1980s. She also teaches refugee law and supervises students at the Human Rights Clinic at Columbia University Law School.

Blum is a clinical professor of law emerita at the University of California's Boalt Hall Law School, where she taught for more than two decades, specializing in immigration law, refugee rights, and human rights. She has written on refugee law and human rights as well as on film and the law.

The recipient of two Ford Foundation research grants, Blum twice received the Carol King Memorial Award from the National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild, and also received the Jack Wasserman Memorial Award for Excellence in Litigation from the American Immigration Lawyers Association.

Blum is a graduate of Northeastern University Law School.

Phil Ramone



Nominated for 30 Grammy Awards, Ramone has received 12. His three most recent Grammy Awards came this past February for his work on *Genius Loves Company*, by Ray Charles (Album of the Year and best Surround Sound Album). He also received a Grammy for Outstanding Technical Significance to the Recording Field.

Ramone has been a pioneer in audio technology, supporting such innovations as the use of the compact disc, digital video disc, hi-definition recording, and surround sound. The first CD ever pressed – Billy Joel's *52nd Street* – was a Phil Ramone production, as was the first pop DVD release, *Dave Grusin Presents West Side Story*.

The list of artists with whom Ramone has collaborated includes such diverse musicians as Clay Aiken, Tony Bennett, Bob Dylan, Aretha Franklin, Elton John, Quincy Jones, Paul McCartney, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Billy Preston, Frank Sinatra, Barbra Streisand, and Brian Wilson. His numerous concert, film, Broadway, and TV productions include *A Star is Born*, *Beyond the Sea*, *Flashdance*, *Midnight Cowboy*, *Seussical*, and the *Songwriters Hall of Fame Awards*.

Ramone champions music programs in public schools to ensure that children have the opportunity to foster their music talents. He serves on the board of the National Mentoring Partnership and the Berklee College of Music.

Tim Russert

Managing editor and moderator of *Meet the Press* and political analyst for *NBC Nightly News* and the *Today* show, Russert also anchors *The Tim Russert Show*, a weekly interview program on CNBC, and is a contributing anchor for MSNBC. He is senior vice president and Washington bureau chief of NBC News, which he joined in 1984.

In 1985 Russert supervised the live broadcasts of *Today* from Rome, negotiating and arranging an appearance by Pope John Paul II, a first for American TV. In 1986 and 1987 Russert led weeklong broadcasts of NBC News from South America, Australia, and China.



He took over the helm of *Meet the Press* in December 1991. Since then, the show has become the most-watched Sunday morning interview program in America. Now in its 58th year, *Meet the Press* is the longest-running program in the history of TV.

Before joining NBC News, Russert observed firsthand the inner workings of the executive and legislative branches of government as counselor in the New York Governor's office in 1983 and 1984 and as a special counsel in the U.S. Senate from 1977 to 1982.

A native of Buffalo, N.Y., he is a graduate of John Carroll University and the Cleveland-Marshall College of Law. Last year Russert's book, *Big Russ and Me, Father and Son: Lessons of Life*, was a best seller.

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\$720K NIH Grant to Further Professor's Genetic Research


Patricia Hilleren, Lubin Family Professor for Women in Science at Skidmore, has received a five-year, \$720,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health to further her research on quality control in the nucleus of cells.

Like any good factory, living cells have quality-control systems by which many mistakes are detected and cleared up before they cause harm. Quality control for genetic processing takes place in the cell's cytoplasm and also in its nucleus – where it has been little

studied to date.

A key step in the expression of genes – that is, the delivery and carrying out of their coded instructions for the synthesis of particular proteins – is the modification of "pre-messenger RNA" to generate various permutations of code. A strand of pre-mRNA resembles a train: boxcars of genetic code, called exons, are separated by linkages, called introns. In pre-mRNA processing, introns are chemically spliced out so that the exons on either side join contiguously, forming a new code sequence.

The splicing is done by a complex process known as a spliceosome, which binds to an intron and excises it. But not always: If an intron is flawed or the chemistry goes awry, the spliceosome may get stalled or stuck. Not only does the splice fail, but the stuck spliceosome can't move on to its next task, and the faulty intron stays hidden from the enzymes that should clear it away. Soon, says Hilleren, "It builds like a traffic jam: wrecked cars clog the road, and the tow trucks get blocked in too. It could shut down gene expression, a potentially lethal situation." Given the number and speed of splicing operations occurring in cells all the time, such errors are not infrequent; most splicing errors are somehow detected and cleared from the cell.

In the lab Hilleren studies QC in a single-celled yeast, which "carries out the same biological processes as human cells but is much easier to manipulate," she explains. First she chemically infuses into the yeast cell a "reporter gene," so called because it can be uniquely traced. The splicing machinery will recognize that transcripts made from this reporter gene contain an intron, and they will attempt to splice it. However, the intron has been intentionally altered such that splicing will be stalled at a specific stage. Then she samples the genetic material in the cell to monitor whether the aberrant introns accumulate, indicating stalled spliceosomes, or degrade, indicating disassembly and cleanup.

In practice, what she can see are only indirect indicators: Through extensive chemical processing, the concentrations of reporter-gene components are imaged as gray bands on a white card. By varying the introduced introns or other factors, and by comparing the results of many tests and controls, Hilleren seeks to identify the agents and pathways of spliceosome disassembly that help determine the fate of ill-processed RNAs.

Co-author of a 2001 article on RNA quality control in the journal *Nature*, Hilleren was a researcher in the Howard Hughes Medical Institute at the University of Arizona from 1997 until 2003, when she joined Skidmore's biology faculty. She holds bachelor's degrees in microbiology and public health from St. Cloud State University and a Ph.D. in biochemistry, molecular biology, and biophysics from the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. Her NIH research grant begins in June.

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Vibrant Dance This Summer by Ronald K. Brown\Evidence

Widely acclaimed for its explosive and original fusion of diverse dance traditions, Ronald K. Brown\Evidence will be in residence at Skidmore June 5-25. During the residency, the eight-dancer company will present an array of public events, conduct an extensive workshop for preprofessional dancers, and collaborate with award-winning jazz artist Nneena Freelon on a new work based on Billie Holiday's life and legacy.

Choreographer/dancer Brown has been hailed for creating dance described as "unbridled and raw and brimming with emotional undercurrents....movement that never lies, bound to the beat of Africa ...a dance continuum of past and present, something that Brown has captured like no other African-American choreographer" (Pittsburgh *Post-Gazette*).

Brown and Evidence will present a full-evening dance performance at the Egg, in the Empire State Plaza in Albany, at 8 p.m. Friday, June 10, with a pre-performance talk at 7:15 p.m. For reservations, call the Egg box office at 518-473-1845.

Events on campus will include three community master classes (for intermediate- and advanced-level dancers) in the Skidmore Dance Center studios, at 7:30 p.m. June 7, 14, and 21. Admission is \$10, with registration at the door. Brown and dancers will present three free lecture-demonstrations beginning at 7:30 p.m. June 8, 15, and 22, in the Dance Theater, with a glimpse of Brown and Freelon's work June 22. The residency will conclude with a free presentation by dance-workshop students at 2 p.m. Friday, June 24, in the Dance Theater. For more information about residency events on campus, call 518-580-5595.

About Ronald K. Brown

Brown grew up in Brooklyn, N.Y. After two years of formal dance training, starting when he was 17, Brown believed that "I could create a dance folklore for the Afro-American community," and fused a highly distinctive style drawn from multiple sources, Caribbean, urban hip-hop, traditional West African dance, Martha Graham, and more. "I want people to experience the desire to have their spirits lifted," Brown has said.

Commissioned by Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Philadanco, and others, Evidence has performed at New York's Joyce Theater, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Lyon/Biennale de la Danse, the American Dance Festival, and other venues. Brown is the recipient of numerous awards and honors, including a Bessie (a New York Dance and Performance Award).

Supported by the New York State Council on the Arts and the Office of the Dean of Special Programs at Skidmore, the College's summer-dance program has brought to campus such outstanding choreographers and companies as Twyla Tharp, Mark Morris, Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane & Co., Martha Graham, Trisha Brown, José Limón, David Parsons, Garth Fagan, Lar Lubovitch, Ballet Hispanico, and Doug Varone and Dancers. While in residence the groups create new works, rehearse, teach, and perform.

For more information about the summer dance residency, call the Office of the Dean of Special Programs at 518-580-5590 or go to www.skidmore.edu/summer.

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Vol. 4, No. 5 - May 17, 2005**New DOE Grant to Support International Affairs Major**

Skidmore has received a grant of \$173,000 from the U.S. Department of Education's Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language Program. The funds, to be provided over two years, will be used by the College to strengthen its International Affairs Program and the new international affairs major.

"This grant provides significant support for one of our top priorities at Skidmore College – increasing our students' intercultural and global understanding," said President Glotzbach. "If we want our students to emerge as leaders and not just as observers, they must understand this world and their role in it. Our job is to immerse them in that world. It is their future."

With the help of the grant, Skidmore will revise and develop its three core courses in international affairs and introduce 12 new courses. The new courses with a regional focus will include Arabic Language and Culture, Islamic Religious Sciences, Maghreb in International Affairs, Franco-Québécois Identity in History and Literature, Dynamics of the Caribbean Political Economy, and Confucian Values and the Rise of East Asia. The international courses will be Human Rights and International Affairs, HIV/AIDS: A Global Perspective, Global Feminisms, International Law, International Migration, and Comparative Constitutional Systems.

To strengthen students' foreign language skills, the College will use a portion of the grant to introduce new "language across the curriculum" courses at the advanced level in Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish. These courses enable Skidmore students to build a foreign language component into a wide range of courses taught in English. In addition, the funds will support the creation of summer internships in China, Germany, Italy, and Japan that will immerse students in a foreign-language setting. The grant will also help provide advanced foreign-language training for faculty.

The new funds will also be used for faculty workshops related to teaching, assessment, and methodology, as well as a travel program that introduces faculty members to foreign cultures of vital interest to the United States. Skidmore is planning a faculty educational program in Tunisia and Morocco in 2007.

In addition, the U.S. Department of Education grant provides funds for cocurricular activities, as well as library and research materials.

Said Mary-Beth O'Brien, professor of German and director of the College's International Affairs Program, "Our goal is to enhance students' global awareness, cross-cultural understanding, and international education. As a community, we believe that all students should learn to acknowledge and respect that their worldview is not universal and that other people may have profoundly different perspectives and values."

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Inamoto Receives Chaplin Prize

Lecturer of Japanese **Masako Inamoto** has won this year's Chaplin Memorial Award for Excellence in Japanese Language Teaching, administered through the Northeast Council of the Association for Asian Studies.

The annual \$1,000 prize was established by Professor George Chaplin to honor his wife, Hamako Ito Chaplin, who was considered an outstanding instructor of Japanese and scholar of the Japanese language and taught at Yale University from 1956 to 1975. Current graduate students or full-time instructors of Japanese from throughout the country are eligible for the Chaplin Memorial Award.

Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures Chair Paty Rubio called Inamoto "One of the star teachers in the department. It is wonderful to have her talents receive national recognition."

A Skidmore faculty member since 1989, Inamoto holds degrees from Kwansei Gakuin University in Hyogo, Japan; the University at Albany, State University of New York; and Ohio State University. She is known for a teaching style that emphasizes understanding of the global community, and for stressing the finer points of Japanese culture by helping students understand the differences between phrases that show respect for elders and bosses, and those that are saved for conversations among peers or younger people.

Lilly Earns International Honor

Reg Lilly, professor and chair of the Department of Philosophy and Religion, has been voted a Correspondent of the Collège internationale de Philosophie, a national institution supported by several French ministries that is dedicated to the advancement and dissemination of philosophy in France and abroad.

Correspondents – who come from throughout the world – are nominated by program directors of the Collège. The duties of a correspondent include making regular reports on meetings, conferences, debates, and publications of philosophical interest in their region or country; and organizing events or gatherings to promote philosophical work. Toward that end, Lilly will deliver a series of eight lectures in French at the Collège internationale from October to December 2005 in Paris. During the same period he will be serving as the inaugural director of Skidmore's new Paris Seminar.

The series will be geared toward philosophy professors and graduate students in philosophy and will be open to the public. Titled "The Fissured Subject and Tragic Being," the series will be an analysis of the human condition from a philosophical as well as from a psychoanalytic and literary critical perspective. Drawing on Reiner Schürmann's *Broken Hegemonies* (which Lilly translated) and incorporating trauma theory as found in Freud, Lacan, and contemporary psychoanalytic theory, the final lectures of the seminar will employ fundamental concepts of Jacques Derrida and Maurice Blanchot to propose a critical supplement of Martin Heidegger's "existential analytic" and his later "history of being."

College Receives NEA Grant for Jazz Institute

The College has received a grant of \$7,500 from the National Endowment for the Arts to support the Skidmore Jazz Institute. Offered in collaboration with the New York State Summer School of the Arts School of Jazz Studies, the Skidmore Jazz Institute—two weeks of serious jazz for students of all ages—returns to Skidmore from June 25 to July 9 this year. The program features master classes, daily improvisational classes, and private instruction for students from high school age on up.

This is the third grant in four years from the NEA, and as in the past the funds will be used to support the popular performances by guest artists and provide scholarship support for students. Guest artists performing this year include the following:

- June 28, the Bill Charlap Trio—Blue Note pianist Charlap will be joined by Peter Washington on piano and Kenny Washington on bass.
- July 1, Jazz Drummer Carl Allen and the Art of Elvin
- July 2, The Dick Oatts Quartet
- July 5, Saxophonist Terrell Stafford's Quintet

All concerts begin at 8 p.m. in the Bernhard Theater. Admission is free.

Media Update

Skidmore faculty and staff whose expertise has been used in recent stories in the mainstream media include the following:

Mary Lou Bates, dean of enrollment and financial aid, was a source for an April 24 Baltimore *Sun* story titled "College Admission, But With a Catch: A Growing Number of Students Weigh Second Semester Entry as Universities Try to Keep Dorms Full All Year Long."

Sandy Baum, professor of economics, was quoted in the following stories: "As Merit-Aid Escalates, Wealthy Often Win," April 19, *The Washington Post*; "Ivy Leagues Top \$40,000," April 21, *Newsday*; "You May Have More Money for College Than You Think," April 27, St. Paul *Pioneer Press*; and "College Sticker Shock: \$40K and Rising," May 3, cnn/money.com.

Donna Brent, visiting assistant professor of education, was cited in "Colleges Chasing Internet Cheaters," *The Post-Star*, Dec. 19, 2004.

Jennifer Delton, associate professor of history, was interviewed for "Vietnam: 30 Years Later - Class Offers Closer Look at Both Sides During Vietnam Era," April 25, *The Saratogian*.

Mary Lynn, professor of American studies, was a source for "'Father Time' Set the Clocks from Spa City," March 5, *The Post-Star*; and "Skidmore Grows Through the Years: Professor Takes Audience Back Into College's History," March 25, *The Post-Star*.

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Faculty/Staff Activities

Research by three members of the Department of Geosciences was presented at the 40th annual meeting of the Northeastern Section of the Geological Society of America. Approximately 700 geoscientists attended the meeting, held March 14-16 at the Prime Hotel and Conference Center in Saratoga Springs, and jointly hosted by Skidmore and Union colleges.

The following presentations were made:

Richard Lindemann, associate professor, "Walcott at Saratoga, New York, 1877-1878," in the History of Geology Category; **James McLelland**, visiting professor, with Marion E. Bickford of Syracuse University and Bruce Selleck of Colgate University, "Shrimp U/PB Study of Detrital Zircons from the Adirondacks and Adjacent Grenville Province of Canada: A Preliminary Report," in the Precambrian Geology Category; and **Kyle Nichols**, assistant professor, and Derek Eaton '05, "Born-Again Gully: The Re-establishment of the Miller Brook Gully, Northern Vermont," a poster presentation in the Geomorphology Category.

William LeFurgy, professor emeritus of psychology, was one of four winners this spring of a *Journal and Courier* George Award. The awards, established in 1963, recognize people in the Lafayette, Ind., area who have contributed significantly to their communities. "Award winners are self-starters who have taken selfless acts of initiative to meet a community need," according to jconline.com., the web-based version of the *Journal and Courier* newspaper.

LeFurgy was cited for his work with the West Central Indiana chapter of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill. He sought a grant to help support establishing a Crisis Intervention Team to help those with mental illness through a crisis and determine appropriate medial treatment for them. The team involves police officers from Tippecanoe County who trained with mental health professionals to learn appropriate methods to diffuse a crisis involving people with mental illness. The awards were presented at an April 11 ceremony.

Murray Levith, professor of English, participated in the "Histories of Sources" seminar at the 33rd annual meeting of the Shakespeare Association of America March 17-19 in Bermuda. His paper was titled "A *Midsummer Night's Dream* and the Theseus Myth."

Reg Lilly, professor and chair, Department of Philosophy and Religion, gave a paper titled "Heidegger Orinary Incapacity for Ethics" at the 39th annual North American Heidegger Conference this month in Baltimore.

Lenora de la Luna, assistant professor of education, gave a presentation titled "Power and Reflection During Student Teaching" at the annual meeting of the American Educational Researchers' Association April 11-15 in Montreal. This month, she is giving two presentations in Athens, Greece, "The Power of Power in Classroom Discourse: and "Sociological Theories of Emergence and the Analysis of Classroom Discourse." George Kamberelis is a co-author of both presentations. Both will be delivered at an international conference sponsored by the Athens Institute for Education and Research (ATINER).

Phyllis A. Roth, professor of English, was honored in April as a Woman of Distinction by Girl Scouts of the Adirondack Council. Roth was one of five people in the region cited by the council for their professional involvement, volunteer efforts, and overall community impact.

Robert Shorb, director of the Office of Student Aid and Family Finance, led a college financial aid workshop Jan. 10 at the Saratoga Springs High School.

Sheldon Solomon, Ross Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies, was a speaker at "Thoughts on War, Death, and Freedom," a conference on the psychology of political violence May 14 and 15 at New York University. The event featured a number of accomplished scholars, thinkers, and writers exploring the inability of people to coexist peacefully.

Publications and Exhibitions

John Cosgrove, **Barbara Norelli**, and **Elizabeth Putnam**, Lucy Scribner Library, are the authors of "Setting the Record Straight: How Online Database Providers Are Handling Plagiarism and Fabrication Issues," published in Vol. 66, No. 2 (March 2005) of *College and Research Libraries*.

Deb Hall, assistant professor of art, won a Juror's Award for the work she is exhibiting in "Tech II," open through May 29 at the South Shore Center in Cohasset, Mass., in conjunction with the Boston Cyberarts Festival. Hall's submissions consisted of four large Iris prints titled "ChuteS & LaDders," "Messengers," "Once Upon a Time," and "Radio."

Karen Kellogg, visiting assistant professor of environmental studies and associate director of the Environmental Studies Program, has had two papers accepted for publication: "Experimental Evidence of Female Choice in Lake Malawi Cichlids," by the journal *Copeia*, and "Habitat Shift of a Native Darter (Teleostei: Percidae) in Sympatry with a Non-Native Darter" by the journal *American Midland Naturalist*.

Doretta Miller, Robert Davidson Professor of Art, has a solo exhibition of her China Series paintings through June 17 at Johnson & Wales University in Providence, R.I. The exhibition will be featured on Providence Gallery Night during the third week of June.

Jeffrey O. Segrave, professor of exercise science, is the author of "The Olympic Games 393 AD-1896 AD: The Genealogy of an Idea in Literature, Music, and Dance," published in Vol. 13 (2004) of *Olympika: The International Journal of the Olympics*.

Kris Szyborski, science librarian, Scribner Library, is the author of "Korzenie trawy," a story on American grassroots democracy that cites the administration of former Saratoga Springs Mayor Ken Klotz. The report was published in the May 8, 2005 edition of *Polityka*, a leading Polish weekly magazine. In addition, an essay by Szyborski on feral children and language acquisition was read by approximately 300,000 Polish high school students who took their exit exam this spring. The article, originally published May 4, 2002, formed the reading comprehension portion of the exams required for completion of the high school degree.

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