

Projections from the Chair

Dan Trudeau, Geography Department Chair

If you think of the Macalester Geography Department, Laura Kigin's name is synonymous with its spirit and success. Since August 24, 1993, Laura has been the department's heartbeat as its coordinator, and her retirement in January 2025 marks the end of an era.



Laura Smith and Laura Kigin

For over three decades, Laura has been more than a coordinator; she has been the department's cornerstone, profoundly shaping its culture and touching countless lives. Her impact is exemplified by this newsletter – *The Graticule*. Recognizing the challenges of sustaining students' interest in publishing a department newsletter, in 2022 Laura proposed making it a paid work-study position. She hired students to create content and provided mentorship to help them to produce a professional publication. Her vision and editorial skills have elevated every issue since, strengthening our community's bonds.

Laura's influence extends far beyond *The Graticule*. Her dedication, care, and professionalism are woven into the fabric of 104 Carnegie. She has created a welcoming environment where students see themselves reflected, are empowered to overcome challenges, and find a sense of home.

As Laura prepares for retirement, we celebrate her immeasurable contributions:

- **Community Builder:** Laura has fostered a sense of belonging and connection within the department.
- **Student Mentor:** Her guidance has empowered countless students to grow personally and professionally.
- **Department Innovator:** Laura's initiatives, like *The Graticule*, have enhanced the department's vibrancy.
- **Place Maker:** She has shaped the welcoming and inclusive atmosphere of our department.

Laura's legacy will continue to inspire us. As she embarks on this new chapter, we wish her adventures as enriching as those she helped us embrace. Thank you, Laura, for your dedication, your warmth, and for making our department a true home. Your impact will resonate in our halls and hearts for years to come.



This Issue:

Projections from the Chair
PAGE 1

Laura Kigin's Farewell
PAGES 2-3

Goings On
PAGES 4-5

Faculty Updates
PAGE 6

Capstones and Lanegran Days
PAGES 7

The Wrapup
PAGE 8

A Fond Farewell

Laura Kigin, Geography Department Office Coordinator

A lot has changed since I started my position in the Geography Department (fall 1994). Back then, there was still a typewriter in the office and a mimeograph machine too, GIS had recently gone mainstream, and the world wide web had just been launched. Using basic html, Ansu John '95, helped Geography create one of Macalester's first academic department web pages. And back then, Professor Laura Smith '94 was a Mac senior, the Department had two tenured faculty, one tenure track and a part-time cartography instructor – my, oh my, have we grown!

Over the years, I have been so fortunate to work with some of the best colleagues a person could ask for. It's easy to describe them, they are passionate, intelligent, supportive, and of course, they know how to have fun. Many Department dinners have included Bill Moseley's "Twas the night before capstones were due" poem, sing-a-longs led by Dan Trudeau and late night-worthy monologues by Eric Carter. I have enjoyed joining Laura Smith, Holly Barcus and their students on many field trips and also traveling to various cities to help host alumni gatherings during AAG meetings. In more recent years, Ashley Nepp '08 returned to head up our cartographic and geospatial labs, and Catherine Chang and Xavier Haro-Carrion joined the faculty. Professor Emeritus, David Lanegran '63, led the department for much of my time here and opened up many opportunities for me. I am truly grateful for all of them.

While I might be a bit biased, I believe Geography has had some of the BEST office assistants on campus – you know who you are. Thanks so much for showing up and thanks so much for helping to make my job easier and more fun. Truly, the best part of being Geography's coordinator has always been the students. Overall, their time with us is so brief. They come from all over the US and the world and share their lives with us. It makes me so happy when I hear from alumni that what they learned and experienced at Macalester and in the Geography Department has meaningfully and significantly helped shape their personal and professional lives. Thanks so much everyone for enriching my life. I am truly looking forward to retirement. My goal is to celebrate – and eat more cake!



Macalester College Geographers, 1995-1996. Laura Kigin, top right.



Laura on the Rhine River enjoying her favorite – carrot cake!

Laura Kigin's Farewell



Laura Kigin & David Lanegran, Legends of Macalester Geography



BBQ at Laura Smith's



Founders Day



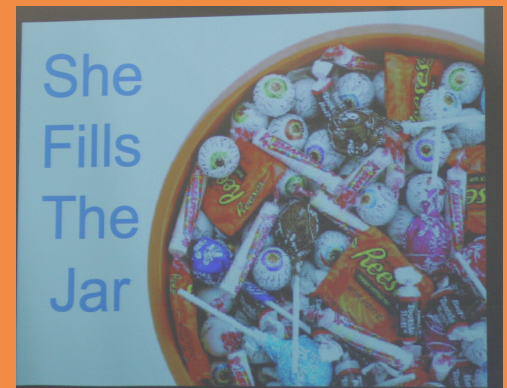
Field Trip to Thunder Bay



The early years . . .



The Geography Crew! (not pictured: Catherine Chang)



On behalf of all of the Geography Students, thank you Laura for filling up the jar!

Thank you Laura Kigin!

Expect an introduction to our next office coordinator in a future edition.

Goings-On

Freeman Boda '26, Sasha Joseph '25



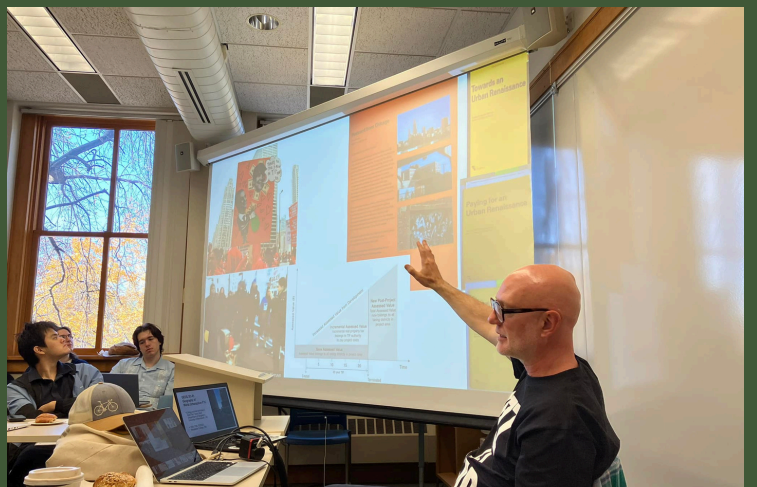
Geography Winter Dinner

Geography Awareness Week took place from November 18th-22nd! Celebrated worldwide, including here at Macalester, students participated in MANY festivities including a Geoguessr contest, a Mapathon, Geography Trivia, and lots of food!



MacGPT

Recently, dozens of students, including members of the Macalester Geography community, participated in the first-ever MacGPT policy hackathon. The program was sponsored by the Geography Department and Urban Studies Concentration. *The Graticule* Editor, Freeman Boda '26 and his team "Cityscapers" won first place!



Kevin Ward Lecture

Kevin Ward, professor and director of the Urban Institute at the University of Manchester stopped by Macalester to give a lecture titled "Old downtowns becoming new boomtowns? The case of Cincinnati, Ohio."

Faculty Updates

Freeman Boda '26, Sasha Joseph '25

Macalester's geography faculty somehow find the time to do some incredible things when they're not spending their hours teaching classes of geography-curious students. Here are just a few of the many things that some of our Mac Geog professors have been up to recently:

Prof. Dan Trudeau

In addition to the book he recently edited (see right), Dan has a forthcoming article in *Urban Geography* titled, "Rhythmanalysis and the emergence of public space: The case of University Avenue in Saint Paul following the George Floyd Uprising."

Prof. Bill Moseley

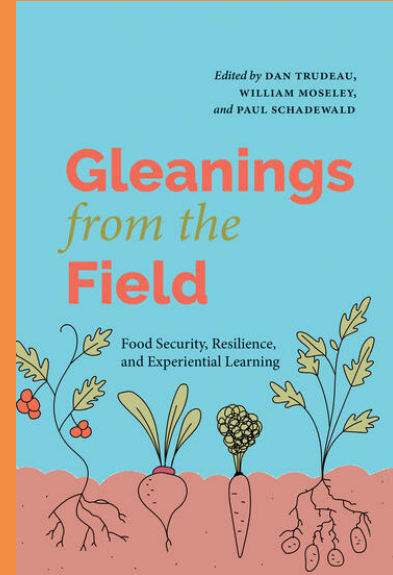
This January, Bill will be traveling to Buitama, Tanzania, representing the Kofi Annan Institute for Global Citizenship. While there he will be exploring internship and research opportunities for Macalester students.

Specifically, Bill will be connecting with the Nyerere University of Agriculture and Technology (MJNUAT) and the NGO Project Zawadi.

Students interested in food and agriculture might find collaborative possibilities in the future here so stay tuned!

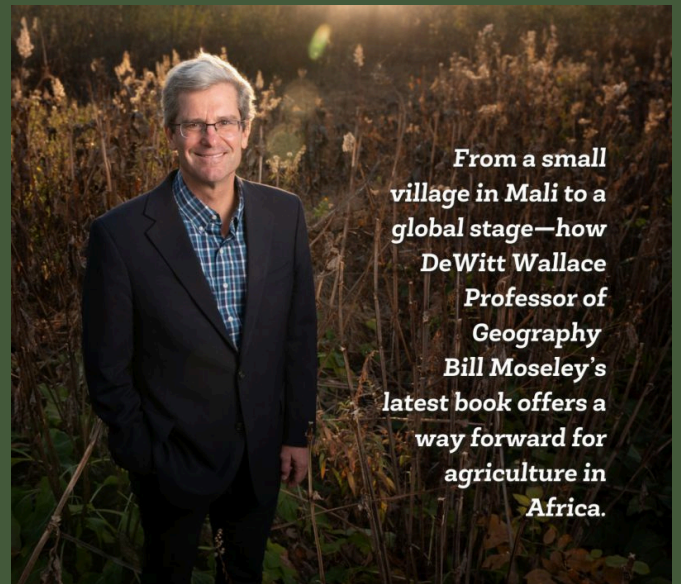
Watch this Space!

We'll have updates on even more of your favorite Mac geography professors in future editions!



Available this April, *Gleanings from the Field*, is a new book on food security, resilience, and experiential learning. Dan Trudeau, Bill Moseley, and Paul Schadewald [formerly at Mac] are the editors.

Check out Bill's interview about his newest book, *Decolonizing African Agriculture: Food Security, Agroecology, and the Need for Radical Transformation*, [here!](#)



Capstones and Lanegran Days

Students in Laura Smith's Transportation Geography Capstone presented their research on December 4th and December 11th. Congrats to everyone!



Pictured left to right: Seth Lorenzen, Ellie Sablak, Anna Jensen, Connery Ritter, Gwen Reoch



Pictured left to right: Rishika Kundu, Ella Krumm, Luna Johnston, Felicia Winfrey, Caleb Browne, Sam Posner, Sasha Joseph



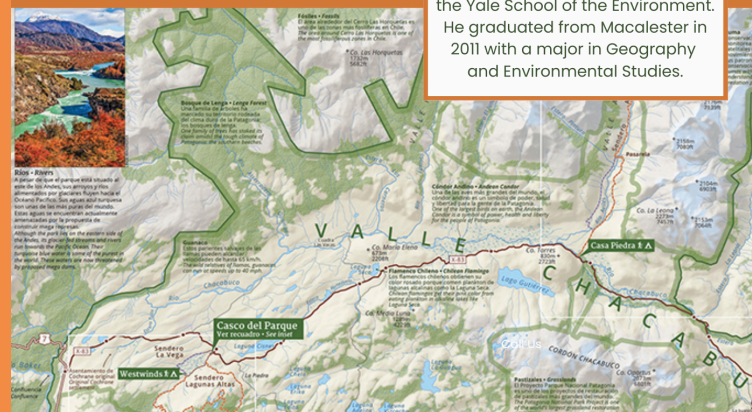
Exploring the World through Cartography: Geographic Information in a Changing World

Save the Date

Keynote & Dinner

Friday, February 21, 2025
5:00 PM | AGH BALLROOM, KAGIN COMMONS

ROSS DONIHUE '11
Ross is a National Geographic Explorer with a Master of Environmental Management from the Yale School of the Environment. He graduated from Macalester in 2011 with a major in Geography and Environmental Studies.



Next semester's Lanegran Days will feature a keynote speech from Ross Donihue '11! He was featured in a recent *Graticule* Alumni Spotlight, which can be found [here](#)!

Ross is the Lead Content Strategist on Esri's StoryMaps team. He provides leadership and direction for a team of professional writers, cartographers, and visual designers. He applies his background in geography and systems thinking to enhance geospatial technology, addressing the pressing challenges facing our planet. Before joining Esri in 2018, Ross was the Creative Director and Founder of Maps for Good, a visual storytelling team that makes maps and digital media for better world initiatives.

SAVE THE DATE

Lanegran Days Keynote

2/21/2025 @ 5:00 PM - AGH Ballroom, Kagin

Invites will be sent in early January via email, but please feel free to register now at the following link:

<https://engage.macalester.edu/register/?id=f432a30b-ebc9-4e40-8e7f-1a4d1404f737>

NEXT ISSUE

- **Alumni Updates**
- **Capstones**
- **River Semester**
- **... and much more!**

Alumni, What's Up?

We've heard from several of you in response to our past calls to action and hope to include a special alumni updates section in a future edition.

If you've been out and about, tell us what you've been up to! Where in the world are you? What have you been doing since you left Macalester? Have you traveled to far off places? Written a book? Started a new business?

[Submit an update here](#)

Want More?

Keep up with the wider Macalester Geography community by joining our LinkedIn Group (Macalester College Geography Network), Facebook Group (Macalester College Geographers), or follow us on Instagram (@macgeography).



THE GRATICULE

Macalester Geography Department Newsletter

Newsletter Contributors

Freeman Boda '26

Sasha Joseph '25

Dan Trudeau



Departmental Support

Laura Kigin



Support Geography!

When giving to Macalester, consider making a gift to the Geography Department. To direct your gift to our program, please select "other" in the "designate gift to" option and write "Geography" in the comments. Your gift will support high-impact activities, including field trips and professional development opportunities for students that are a signature part of the Macalester Geography experience.

44.938951, -93.169306
macalester.edu/geography