

TODAY

THEY WERE FIRST

In their own words,
six first-generation
college students
share their journeys.

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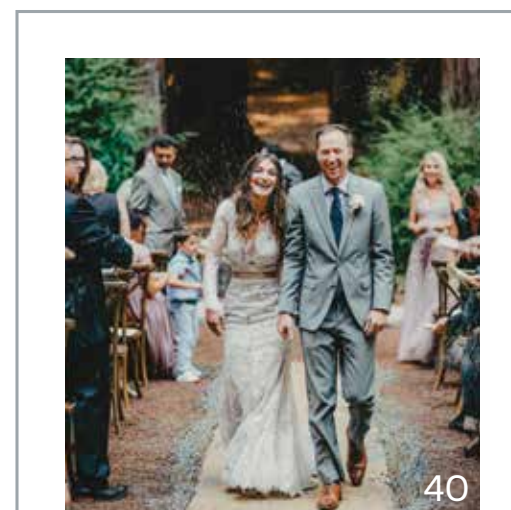
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This fall, 16 percent of Mac students are among the first in their family to attend college, including Macalester QuestBridge chapter president Haley Vien '22 (Oakland, Calif.).

PHOTO: DAVID J. TURNER

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Sandra Wegmann '00
Houston

ies program at Macalester while regional studies were hardly beacons of investment. She endeavored in this with an exceptional talent in teaching, scholarship, and mentorship. She left her mark on countless Macalester students and is deeply missed.

Editor's note: Although the college shared news of former Macalester history professor Teresita Martínez-Vergne's death with the campus community in 2013, her obituary was not included in *Macalester Today* that year. Martínez-Vergne was a distinguished scholar of Caribbean history, teaching Caribbean and Latin American history at Macalester from 1991 to 2005. She left academia to work in Washington, D.C., where she worked to increase access of youth to higher education, among other causes. She is survived by her daughter Irene, sister and brother-in-law Mari and Tom, and nephew Noel.

Lasting legacy

Good teachers hold up a mirror to students' highest potential. Macalester history professor Teresita Martínez-Vergne went beyond encouraging aspirations by nimbly meeting students where they were at. In doing so she influenced a generation of students.

I will never forget a moment at the end of my first year at Macalester. I met Teresita and her elementary school-aged daughter at Fuddruckers on Snelling Avenue. She thanked me for teaching Portuguese to her daughter. We were both headed our separate ways to Brazil for the summer, she for a faculty trip and me for a summer study program. "I'll let you know what I decide about transferring to Tulane," I said as the meal closed.

She arched an eyebrow and passed a gift across the table: a journal, each page featuring thought-provoking quotes about travel, adventure, and escape. A few years before starting Macalester I had lost my father, also a professor, and my first year was a challenging adjustment. A strong relationship with Teresita made my Macalester experience possible. I then followed her path to University of Texas–Austin for graduate work in Latin American studies.

Teresita equipped students over two decades to confront power dynamics, both through racial and gendered historical narratives as well as through moment to moment awareness. Teresita inspired many through her fiercely independent thinking and her commitment to living authentically as a parent, Puerto Rican-born woman, and activist for higher education access.

Teresita built a Latin American stud-

On trans women in women's sports

I find it disheartening to see a Macalester alum referring to "shackles of 'wokeness'" in a Summer 2021 letter. I do not consider myself shackled by my choice to step back and listen when others more vulnerable than me, or vulnerable in different ways, are trusting me by sharing their lived experiences. I consider this the very least I can do to repay that trust.

However, I am not writing to join in the perennial debate about a commitment to dialogue versus the need to take a hard line against dehumanizing viewpoints. I am writing because as an example of shackles, the alum asks, "Is it really clear that transgender athletes who are biological males should be allowed to compete in women's sports? Is that something that is so self-evident that it should be accepted without question?" and I know that someone may have read those questions and thought, "Hmm, that seems reasonable."

To those hypothetical readers, I am happy to report that actually, yes indeed, the place of trans women in women's sports is a thing that has had scientific justification for years. Dr. Veronica Ivy and Dr. Aryn

Conrad, for example, conclusively demonstrate that there is no relationship between unaltered endogenous testosterone and sports performance. The full paper may be read at bit.ly/transsport, but the main takeaways are: there's complete overlap of testosterone values for cisgender males and cisgender females (men and women who identify as the gender they were assigned at birth). Low testosterone elite men are actually statistically overrepresented in elite male sport. Any testosterone policy made to exclude "men" from women's sport will not work. It will exclude cis men. There is no clear list of biological features—chromosomes, testosterone, height—that separates men from women.

Further educational resources may be found in the March 2021 edition of *Scientific American*, NPR's March interview with Dr. Eric Vilain, the testimony of Dr. Joshua Safer in *Hecox vs. Little*, and the lived experiences of trans people, which I hope readers will seek out.

Gabriela Santiago '11
St. Paul

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Visit Mac's social media hub at macalester.edu/macsocial and join in by using the [#heymac](https://twitter.com/heymac) hashtag when you post on Twitter or Instagram.

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Onward, Together

Through joyful moments and immense challenges alike, this community has deepened and renewed my appreciation for the power of education as a catalyst to open doors, change trajectories, and question the status quo.

Last year presented incredible difficulties, and yet: students, faculty, and staff continued to stretch themselves and delve into research and class discussions that examined questions and problems that were unfolding in real time.

And, while we've discovered new ways in which technology can enhance what we do, we realize with keen appreciation that Zoom meetings never will replace the gift of working and learning together in person, in community.

Togetherness is something I suspect we won't ever take for granted again.

This year and beyond, we must proceed in a way that is more just and more caring. Many of you know that, before I came to Macalester, I worked as a bioethicist. While there are numerous moral theories that inform bioethics, the one that guides my thinking most is called ethics of care. In their book *The Elements of Moral Philosophy*, father/son philosophers James Rachels and Stuart Rachels write that ethics of care "begins with a conception of moral life as a network of relationships with specific people, and sees 'living well' as caring for those people, attending to their needs, and maintaining their trust."

I will never forget the care that I've seen our community members practice since my arrival on campus on June 1, 2020. It's with that care—for one another, and for this place—that we move forward together.

And the opportunities are vast.

Now, more than ever, we affirm the transformative power of a Macalester education, equipping our students with the ability to engage in critical analysis, effective communication and persuasion, problem-solving, and teamwork with people who bring to each encounter very different lived experiences. Our alumni bring these skill sets into their jobs, the places where they volunteer, and every other aspect of their lives. Back in 1945, Macalester President Charles Turck wrote that Macalester is "training students to live in the world of tomorrow and not in the world of yesterday." Seventy-six years later, I couldn't agree more.

Indeed, while we all know the college song's opening line, "Dear Old Macalester, ever the same," what we also know is that Macalester itself is always moving forward. The aspect of Macalester that doesn't change, that remains "ever the same," is our willingness—no, our insistence—to be on the cutting edge. What's "ever the same" about this place, whether you graduated in 1971 or 2021, is our leadership to address the most pressing issues of our time.

A Macalester education also trains our students to collaborate and examine problems across disciplines—and it's abundantly clear to me that we will not solve any of the challenges we currently face as a nation and globally without interdisciplinary approaches. Perhaps there have been moments in history when a researcher working alone could solve an important problem. But fixing any of today's most vexing problems—global health chal-



In October, the Macalester community celebrated the inauguration of its seventeenth president, Dr. Suzanne M. Rivera. This column is excerpted and adapted from her inauguration remarks. Watch the full address: macalester.edu/inauguration

lenges, social inequality, climate change, violence and conflict—will require people working together from different perspectives and academic disciplines.

We've all seen in the past year how addressing the COVID pandemic has required not only the expertise of virologists, but also of nurses, public policy experts, lab workers, researchers, social workers, clergy, supply-chain engineers, pharmaceutical company executives, activists, and lawyers. And how surviving and understanding the pandemic's effects has been possible only because of the work of historians, artists, anthropologists, economists, philosophers, and poets. If anyone thought the pandemic might make liberal arts education irrelevant, they were wrong. Far from fading from relevance, the tools developed through a liberal arts education are especially timely in our world today. And Macalester is meeting the moment.

Our efforts to build an even more vibrant and distinctive Macalester begin now. When we engage in this work as a whole community—when we create more equitable pathways in our institution, challenge ourselves to consider other perspectives, and put classroom lessons into action—it makes a difference in small ways and large. The impact of our efforts together will ripple across generations of future Macalester students. It will plant seeds of change on campus, in our neighborhood, across Minnesota, and in communities around the world, in ways we can't even yet imagine. That amazing possibility is at the heart of what we do on campus, every day.

This vibrant and transformative community inspires me and fills me with hope about our shared future. I can't wait to see what we accomplish in the years ahead.

Thank you for your partnership as we take this journey onward, together.

1600 GRAND



Join the Club

On a sunny Friday afternoon in September, more than 100 student groups and community organizations set up tables on the Great Lawn for Mac's annual Involvement Fair.

A. African Music Ensemble

The African Music Ensemble provides the fair's soundtrack. Celebrating its 35th season, the group performs music primarily from Ghana through song, drums, and a variety of other instruments.

B. Forensics

A gleaming 1987 tournament trophy draws visitors to the table—and signals a strong commitment from new director of forensics Beau Larsen to sustain the program's longstanding success. This year, students will compete in the following forensics competitions: mock trial, moot court, ethics bowl, bioethics bowl, and debate.

C. Community Partners

More than 30 community partners—including Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services, Regions Hospital/HealthPartners, and St. Paul Public Library—highlighted opportunities for civic engagement in the Twin Cities.

D. Cooking and Eating Club

"Low commitment! High return! (...Food, duh)" The Cooking and Eating Club promises themed potlucks, Pancake Sundays, and cookoffs.

E. Outing Club

Although the organization is beloved for its fall and spring break camping trips, Rhys O'Higgins '24 (Madison, Wis.) says new plans are also in the works for small excursions like plant identification-themed outings, day trips to local parks, and walks down to the Mississippi.

F. Mac Quidditch

With more than 400 college teams nationwide, Quidditch is a fan-made, all-gender sport that now stands intentionally separate from the Harry Potter series that inspired it. "It's a mix of rugby, Ultimate Frisbee, and dodgeball with an extra pinch of creativity—an active game for players of all athletic backgrounds and identities to engage with competitive play on the collegiate level," says captain Alexandra Jabbarpour '23 (Salem, Va.).

G. Chinese Culture Club

From calligraphy lessons to the Mid-Autumn Mooncake Festival, the club's goal is twofold: "We want more people to get to know Chinese culture and to provide a sense of home for Chinese international students," says Gina Qian '22 (Nanjing, China).

H. A Novel Idea

Definitely not assigned reading: this book club is "really helpful encouragement to read for fun more," says Jess Brown '22 (Boulder, Colo.), wearing a Marauder's Map tank top as a Harry Potter homage.

I. Women's Wrestling

And if you have an idea that's not among the existing options? You can start your own group, like Francesca LoPresti '25 (Richmond, Calif.), who launched a women's wrestling club with Anna Andreasen '24 (Santa Cruz, Calif.) and Sofia Doroshenko '25 (Rock City, Ill.) after four years of wrestling in high school: "It's a concept of my identity I want to take into college and share with other people."

NORTH STAR AERIAL

All Together

It's official: In October, the Macalester community celebrated President Suzanne M. Rivera's inauguration as the college's seventeenth president, with a series of events designed in equal measure to commemorate being back together. Festivities included a Big Questions discussion that launched strategic planning for Macalester's future, as well as a screenprinting workshop, dancing, guided meditation, tailgating, sporting events, and of course, bagpipes.

For more photos and a recording of the ceremony: macalester.edu/inauguration

Photos by David J. Turner





'It's my last chance to be on a team like this'

ATHLETICS

This fall, Omar Anwar '22 is playing MIAC soccer for the first time in nearly two years, and you can imagine the midfielder's jumble of excitement, nerves, and joy.

He's waited a long time for competition to resume after making an immediate impact in Mac's soccer program early on, starting 14 games his first year and logging more than 1,000 minutes on the field as a sophomore. Anwar's game-day routine is back: wearing his soccer polo to class, keeping his AirPods close for pump-up music from A Boogie and Lil TJay, watching game clips of Spanish midfielder Sergio Busquets, and fueling up with a pre-game meal of salad, pasta, and lots of Gatorade.

The routine is methodical now, but Anwar is candid that his Macalester journey hasn't always been so smooth. "When I came in freshman year, I was very, very disorganized," says Anwar (St. Paul). "I pulled nine or ten all-nighters in my first year that were just unnecessary; I would back myself into holes. I had to learn to be organized and accountable."

As he traded all-nighters for morning study sessions, Anwar found plenty of support from his teammates and coaching staff. "Part of our culture we've established as a program is that we're going to do well in the classroom," he says. "I always had resources from the older guys: What classes should I take? Where can I get these textbooks? What's the best way to study? That was huge."

And Anwar found another home in the Economics Department, especially in an investment banking course with Professor Joyce Minor '88 that proved pivotal for his path. This past summer, Anwar interned in New York City with Piper Sandler, and saw quickly how his coursework had prepared him for projects at the investment banking firm. "More than anything, Macalester taught me how to think critically," he says. "Instead of feeling daunted by a problem, Mac has given me the ability to attack it head-on, break it down into multiple steps, and work toward a solution."

It's been a big journey already for Anwar, who returned to Minnesota with a job offer in hand and will rejoin Piper Sandler after graduation—and he's feeling introspective as senior year gets underway. He knows soccer's role in his life will change after this fall. He's trying to lead by example, pass along his own lessons learned to younger teammates, and savor his time on the field for one final season.

"I want the best for this team because it's my last chance to be on a team like this—I wouldn't be where I am today without coaches and my teammates pushing me, on and off the field," he says. "Being part of this program is probably the most rewarding thing I've done in my life so far."

KURT STERNITZ



Meet the Provost

Learn more about Mac's strategic planning process and share your view: macalester.edu/strategic-plan

Three years ago, Dr. Lisa Anderson-Levy began to get to know Macalester in one role, as a Mac parent. In July, she joined the community in a new capacity: as the college's new provost and executive vice president.

Anderson-Levy comes to Macalester from Beloit College, where she spent the past 13 years as an anthropology professor who also served in multiple administrative roles. As an anthropologist, her scholarship focuses on race, class, and gender in the Caribbean and United States, and she's committed to providing students with tools to understand their worlds.

"The search committee was particularly impressed with her proven experience facilitating meaningful change for greater equity and inclusion, among many other strengths," says committee chair Professor Victoria Malawey. "Dr. Anderson-Levy is the kind of leader who will shepherd us with grace and grit into a new era."

We asked Anderson-Levy to share the approaches that guide her work—and will help her as she and President Rivera launch a strategic planning process to shape Macalester's future.

Office hours

As a faculty member, it was really important that my scholarship, teaching, and advising were inextricably intertwined. Often, students would come to my office for advice about work or life—and while it's important to support students as they move through the curriculum, it's also important to be curious about who they are and who they want to be, and to hold space with them as they figure that out.

Whole selves

It is important to acknowledge that students have lives beyond the classrooms. They may be worried about their families, money,

or their health, and they bring all of these concerns to class. Being able to see students and work with their whole humanity is important because what they're dealing with outside the classroom impacts what's possible in the classroom. Our work with students must integrate their intellectual and social lives.

Valuing inquiry

Students come to Macalester to work with faculty who are doing cutting-edge research. I've been impressed by and support the college's longstanding commitment to faculty scholarship and the high-impact research opportunities that are available to students who collaborate with faculty. Research not only helps faculty stay current in their field, it generates what happens in the classroom. Our students' experiences are amplified by the incredible scholarship in which faculty members engage.

Making plans

A strong strategic plan requires community input and has to be an expression of our entire community. While we may not have consensus on every point, we need to come together on the major themes. My goal with strategic planning is to identify mechanisms for community members to provide feedback, so everyone is heard and feels involved.

At the heart

My equity and justice work and perspective informs everything I do, including encouraging students to find their paths and supporting faculty and staff to do meaningful work. For me, being at a liberal arts institution is about creating a generative environment in which students grow roots that make them flexible and resilient—roots that prepare them for the rest of their lives.



Dear River,

Over the summer, environmental studies professor Roopali Phadke and three students asked Twin Cities residents a big question: “What’s your wish for the river?” Those conversations were part of their work on a National Science Foundation project to study the U.S. Army Corps public engagement process around the future of the locks and dams in the Upper Mississippi basin.

Why is this work important?

Professor Roopali Phadke: The Mississippi is America’s river, and it’s in our backyard. What we do here in Minnesota impacts millions downstream and eventually the Gulf of Mexico. While we know climate change will impact the river, we also know that planning for the best possible future must be done today. Lately we’ve been spending a lot of time surveying park users about the changes that are likely coming to the river infrastructure.

What was your best day of research?

Zella Lobo '22 (Portland, Ore.): “One of our survey days was spent at the Minnehaha Dog Park. We picked up donuts for survey-takers and brought our survey gear in our backpacks rather than our entire usual setup with a tent and table. We started asking folks if they would take the survey on our way down the path to the park and never made it to the river’s edge because so many people said yes. We were working furiously the whole time, got to meet a lot of dogs and owners, and had one of our best survey counts.”

What do people get wrong about this subject?

Rebecca Driker-Ohren '22 (Huntington Woods, Mich.): People just plainly do not know what locks and dams are, what their purpose is, or that there are three in the Twin Cities area. And most of those people are embarrassed to not know! So we spend a lot of our time reassuring folks that whatever questions they have are welcome and worth answering and understanding.

What’s your most surprising discovery?

Alexandra Jabbarpour '23 (Salem, Va.): There were only around one hundred public comments placed for the most recent Upper St. Anthony Disposition study comment period. Considering the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro area has a population of about 3.65 million people and these disposition projects have major implications for the Mississippi River, it begs the question: whose voices are being left out? According to the 270 surveys that we have collected so far, the public is largely unaware of the Corps’ study and of the purpose of the Upper Mississippi locks and dams, both of which are barriers to participation in the Corps’ public engagement efforts.

One goal of our research is to use our findings to inform the Army Corps of Engineers of ways to engage a larger and more diverse sector of the public in their decision-making process. This step will be especially important as the Corps continues the disposition studies of the Lower St. Anthony Lock and Dam and Ford Lock and Dam in the coming years.

DAVID J. TURNER

DAVID J. TURNER

SUMMER RESEARCH

For many Mac students, summer means time spent digging deeper into research projects with faculty, in departments all over campus. In 2021, their work included:

- studying tiny fragments of fossil eggshell extracted from 78-million-year-old rocks
- creating an ethnography of police culture and its possible changes
- mapping the diversity of New Zealand’s mite harvestmen, tiny arachnids
- assessing gender and race/ethnicity representation in dance and theater organizations in the Twin Cities

» Explore more summer research stories: macalester.edu/summer-showcase

Ever wonder about all those books lining professors’ offices? We’re with you.

Professor of Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer Science **Vittorio Addona** focuses on medical applications of statistics, as well as sports statistics.

Any standout books you’ve read recently?

During the pandemic I needed a fun read, and I enjoyed *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes*, a prequel to *The Hunger Games* series by Suzanne Collins. I also read as much Malcolm Gladwell and Michael Lewis as I can, and most recently, I liked Lewis’s *The Fifth Risk* and Gladwell’s *Talking to Strangers*. In particular, *The Fifth Risk* was ostensibly about the Trump team’s transition after the 2016 election, but at its core aimed to elucidate the importance of government, and the millions of things that good governments do which are invisible to the masses.



What’s one of your all-time favorite reads?

A few of my favorites from Michael Lewis are *Moneyball*, *Flash Boys*, and *Home Game: An Accidental Guide to Fatherhood*. I also can’t pass up an opportunity to mention *99: Stories of the Game*, a sports memoir by Wayne Gretzky; *A Time to Kill* by John Grisham; and, of course, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* by J.K. Rowling.

What book is crucial to understanding your academic niche?

A statistician strives to separate real relationships from random noise. People can get fooled into seeing patterns when there’s nothing there. Nate Silver explores these issues in *The Signal and the Noise: Why So Many Predictions Fail—But Some Don’t*. Moreover, *The Book of Why*, by Judea Pearl and Dana Mackenzie, examines the science of establishing causality. If you’ve taken a statistics course, you know the phrase, “Correlation doesn’t imply causation.” But sometimes it does, and it’s worth thinking about when that might be! We can never be certain that a relationship is causal but it’s important to take steps that get us closer to that belief.

Any guilty-pleasure reads?

Perhaps I’ve been subconsciously missing my homeland—I really enjoyed *Canada* by Mike Myers; *Born into It: A Fan’s Life* by Montreal Canadiens superfan Jay Baruchel; and *Waging Heavy Peace: A Hippie Dream* by Canadian rock legend Neil Young.

What book would you recommend to everybody at Macalester?

The Alchemist, by Paulo Coelho, inspired me when I read it as a teenager. One of its main themes is how to face adversity in the pursuit of one’s dreams. That really struck a chord with me.

Whose shelf should we visit next?
Email mactoday@macalester.edu.

Data *Driven*

For journalist
Aaron Mendelson '09,
numbers spark stories.

BY ELIZABETH TANNEN '05

Journalist Aaron Mendelson '09 has heard it again and again: *numbers don't work on the radio*. But he's got a different take: it's not that people can't follow numbers in audio reporting. They just need to be well contextualized in the stories those numbers tell.

Mendelson works as an investigative reporter for KPCC, National Public Radio's Southern California affiliate. He specializes in data research, uncovering the kind of information most of us would be hard pressed to find.

Mendelson doesn't rely only on data for his reporting. For all the time he spends sifting through public records, he spends at least as many hours in the field, talking to people whose lives intersect with those records.

But, he says, the data is what can spark a story and guide him to those conversations.

Take, for example, one of his biggest recent projects: a long-form exposé of an LA slumlord. The idea came when he was on vacation in Mexico, reading Matthew Desmond's *Evicted*, which chronicles the stories of Milwaukee tenants, landlords, and others caught up in what's become the big business of evictions.

At first he just wanted to know which Southern California zip codes had the highest rates of evictions. But in poring over law enforcement records, he noticed something else: a pattern of strikingly similar names in the plaintiff column.

By combing through county tax assessor data, Mendelson was able to trace the similar handles to a single owner, Mike Nijjar. A conservative estimate, Mendelson reported, is that businesses connected to Nijjar own 16,000 units. And, according to Mendelson's extensive reporting, many of those units are in devastating disrepair—forcing low-income tenants, who are often also immigrants and BIPOC, to deal with bedbugs, electrical problems, mold, fires, and more.

His story revealed not only the numbers but the personal stories of tenants like Vernon Moore, who told Mendelson about the persistent mold, and Nancy Romero, who shared about bedbugs.

Mendelson explains how crucial data research was in developing that story: "If you want to find out who the biggest landlord is in LA, that's something you can't easily Google," he says.

A lot of supposedly public data, like court records, also costs money to obtain. "And who does that hurt?" Mendelson says. "Not corporate lawyers, but community groups trying to research a landlord, or freelance journalists working a story."



His report received a lot of attention, and some are hoping it can lead to a legislative response. Oakland area assemblywoman Buffy Wicks introduced a bill that would track data including ownership, rents, and vacancies for landlords who own more than five units.

During his Macalester years, Mendelson didn't imagine a career in journalism. He didn't expect much of any career upon his graduation: the Great Recession began during his senior year and prospects everywhere seemed scarce.

But he did develop an intense habit of reading the news while at Mac. "I've always been a super consumer of the things I like," Mendelson says. He recalls picking up free copies of the *New York Times* available in the Campus Center every day.

He also grew an appreciation for film and nurtured a lifelong passion for music. Mendelson majored in media and cultural studies, and spent much of his time in the basement office of WMCN, Macalester's radio station. In addition to hosting a "prime time" music show, Mendelson held just about every administrative position possible at the station—including office manager, music director, and program director. "That was a huge part of my experience," he says. "It's probably not a coincidence that I wound up working in radio."

After graduation, during the height of the Great Recession, he worked a sequence of AmeriCorps gigs: first for a workforce center in north Minneapolis, where he encountered the recession's brute impact.

His next placement was also where he got his first taste of news radio: KFAI, a Minneapolis community radio station. He recalls covering high-profile events like the mayor's State of the City address and a Habitat for Humanity-sponsored visit from former President Jimmy Carter. He also supported interns who delivered the hourly news update and, along the way, learned the tools and skills of audio production. He remembers thinking, "this is something I could do."

That eventually led Mendelson to the journalism graduate program at the University of California–Berkeley. One of his courses at Berkeley, taught by two *New York Times* reporters, was in data journalism: broadly, the use of statistics to support reporting, encompassing the spectrum from watchdog investigations to features about baseball.

"I liked how you could find stories through examining charts and maps that you wouldn't find anywhere else," he says.

In addition to reporting on housing, Mendelson has investigated police shootings and Los Angeles mayor Eric Garcetti's outsized charity fund—one that's received donations from the likes of Rihanna and the government of Qatar. He and a colleague recently published an investigation about a group of egregiously mismanaged nursing homes—mismanagement that has often proved deadly.

Even when he's deep in data, Mendelson says that his work is "not as monastic as people might think."

He toggles back and forth between the numbers and the actual humans who can help him decipher what they mean. And then he turns it all into a story that listeners can understand—even when numbers are involved.

"I do get pretty excited when I come across something big," he says. "So I tend to want to share it right away." ■

Elizabeth Tannen '05 is a freelance writer in Minneapolis.

CHAVA SANCHEZ

Creating Spaces of Belonging

Tani Prell '13 is helping to expand ideas of what it can mean to be Jewish.

BY DAWN ARAUJO-HAWKINS

of 18Doors, an organization that helps people in interfaith relationships engage meaningfully in Jewish life. By supporting people as they explore the myriad ways they can integrate Jewish values into their lives, Prell is helping them to expand ideas of what it can mean to be Jewish.

"I think because I struggled so much to feel like I belonged—culturally I didn't belong, and religiously I was never aligned with the institutions I was a part of—it just makes sense that the career that I would find is all about creating belonging for people," she says.

Prell explains that her Judaism manifests in two ways: the internal and the external. Internally, Judaism is her calm in the chaos of the world. She especially loves the song *Oseh Shalom*, a prayer for peace. "Even when I didn't know Hebrew yet, it grounded me the first time I heard it," she says.

Externally, Prell's Judaism is about creating spaces of belonging and fostering *tikkun olam*, the Jewish concept of repairing the world.

In her spare time, Prell offers antiracism education and consulting for local and national Jewish organizations, after her master's degree in Jewish professional studies included research on antiracism in Jewish spaces. She also serves on the Union for Reform Judaism's North American Board of Trustees, and helps guide the organization's diversity, equity, and inclusion work.

At times, being an advocate for inclusion can be emotionally draining, but Prell says it's Judaism itself that sustains her. "One of the things I love most about Judaism is that it has a moment of pause and reflection built into it with Shabbat," she explains. "I take Shabbat as my moment to pour back into myself so that I have the capacity for sustained justice work."

In 2018, Prell was selected for the Union for Reform Judaism's leadership development program for Jews of color, which helped her to cultivate a network of people she can relate to on a new level. It's a growing demographic—a 2021 Pew Research Center report shows that 15 percent of Jews under thirty identify as people of color.

"So many times, I'm in white Jewish spaces, or spaces with other people of color," she says. "Being in spaces with Jews of color is a merging of my worlds. It is an exhale. We have a shared experience of navigating what it means to be Jewish in America, while also navigating racist systems in America as Black, Indigenous, and people of color."

Jews of color historically have been omitted from the narrative of American Judaism. But there are people of color living deeply Jewish lives, she says, and they deserve to have their stories told, too: "The Jewish present and future is multiracial." ■

Dawn Araujo-Hawkins is a religion journalist based in Kansas City, Missouri.

For a long time, Tani Prell '13 struggled to feel like she belonged anywhere. Her parents were sixteen and eighteen when she was born, and Prell, who is biracial, was raised by her mother's white parents in a suburb of Chicago. She's never had a relationship with her mother and has only recently gotten to know her father.

And then there was school.

Before college, Prell's entire education took place at two conservative Lutheran schools. Yet, even as a young adolescent, she often felt out of step with the version of religion these schools presented. She had questions: Why is Eve to blame for everything? What is the role of free will? But her schools did not encourage questions, so Prell saved hers for her grandmother, an Italian Catholic by birth who was also a spiritual questioner.

In middle school, Prell made a life-changing discovery when it dawned on her that the parts of the Bible that she connected to the most were also part of a thriving religion. "As soon as I found out about Judaism, I was like, 'This is it. This is who I am,'" she says.

She loved Judaism's openness, the fact that asking questions was at the heart of the religion. It felt like the exact opposite of what she was experiencing at school and church. So she started studying Judaism in her downtime.

Judaism also helped connect Prell to her Blackness—a process that she had largely been trying to work out on her own. When she sang Jewish prayers, she would often enter into a meditative state that made her feel connected to her Black ancestors, and she was elated to discover that ancestral connection was a part of many Jewish practices.

At Macalester, Prell coupled her independent study of Judaism with formal coursework, which further cemented her desire to become Jewish. "I went into Macalester thinking I had a really critical framework through which I learned and understood religion," says Prell, who majored in creative writing and minored in philosophy and religious studies. "Macalester expanded my thinking more than I could have ever imagined."

Prell planned to start the official, yearlong conversion process after graduation, but delayed her plans by a year to take on a Teach for America position. But in 2015 Prell converted to Judaism, and she hasn't looked back.

In February, Prell started her dream job as the Chicago director

"Even when I didn't know Hebrew yet, it grounded me the first time I heard it."

VOICES

— from the —

Opioid Epidemic

Minnesota's alcohol and drug rehabilitation programs have long been held up as the gold standard. For generations, the abstinence-based "Minnesota Model" has predominated worldwide in addiction treatment. But when it comes to addressing the opioid epidemic, history professor Amy Sullivan argues in her new book *Opioid Reckoning: Love, Loss, and Redemption in the Rehab State* that the Minnesota Model has fallen short, and the sluggish shift to a more effective one has cost our society dearly. Weaving in her own family's story with the accounts of current and former opioid users, parents, doctors, and treatment providers, Sullivan aims a spotlight on ordinary people who are struggling with and working to end the opioid epidemic that has ravaged communities across the country.

What is the Minnesota Model?

The model emerged among three different organizations in Minnesota in the late 1940s and is based on the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, counseling, and peer recovery support. The model was revolutionary because it approached alcoholism as a disease and offered a humane, hopeful alternative to the old standard of lifetime institutionalization—in fact, the doors were unlocked! Spirituality and personal introspection were key components of treatment. Over time, professional counselors, social workers, nurses, and physicians were incorporated into treatment centers.

How does the Minnesota Model differ from what's known now as the harm reduction model?

The harm reduction model is not a treatment but an approach towards drug users. It is about meeting people "where they are at," as its proponents like to say. It originated in the 1980s HIV epidemic among injection drug users—clean needles can prevent HIV—and so grassroots, street-based syringe exchange services emerged.

IN HER NEW BOOK, HISTORY PROFESSOR AMY SULLIVAN EXAMINES THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC'S PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

BY JOE LINSTROTH
ILLUSTRATION BY ADOLFO VALLE



Today, the opioid antidote naloxone/Narcan is a huge part of harm reduction because the drug reverses opioid overdoses. Philosophically, it's about building relationships and trust so people feel respected—not stigmatized—and are treated with dignity and care.

The push and pull between these two models is one of this book's key conflicts. What's the result?

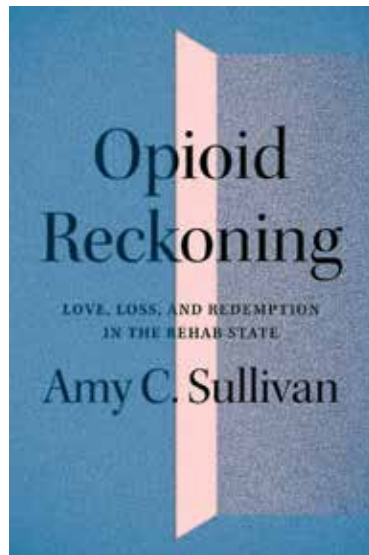
People overdose and die. It's a historical conflict, yet people are still dying all around us. My hope is that these two models, and a third—the medical model with its prescriptions and evidence-based care—become more integrated. Hazelden Betty Ford is starting to use phrases like “reducing harm”; clients might leave with Narcan and be on medications. This was unheard of in their abstinence-based organization a decade ago.

Why did you choose oral histories as the framework?

When I was a graduate history student, the topic I wanted to write about had not yet been written about historically, and the people who were present to it in the 1970s were still alive. I found some of them, and stumbled upon the practice of oral history. Ever since, oral history has remained the richest source of content for the histories I am drawn to investigate and write about. Oral histories are a gift to the present and the future and help us humanize our collective past. They can be used to study social problems, document community change, and guide future policy decisions.

You've taught “Uses and Abuses: Drug Addiction and Recovery” since 2016. What do you want students to take away from that class?

First they ask, “Why didn't I learn this in high school? It would have kept me out of so much trouble!” They learn a global history of drugs and society, but the most important thing we do is dissect stigma. We change our own rhetoric and we stop stereotyping drug users. I include Narcan training as well. Last year, even while online, I was determined they would still get that, so I mailed and delivered kits. One day last November, a student of mine saved a guy overdosing on a St. Paul bus because they had the Narcan from our class on hand. History teaches empathy if we let it.



The following excerpt of Professor Sullivan's *Opioid Reckoning* is reprinted with permission from University of Minnesota Press.

For most of my life, I thought that the term “overdose” implied certain death. I remember hearing about celebrity overdoses in my childhood and teenage years—Marilyn Monroe, Jim Morrison, Elvis Presley, John Belushi, among others—so in my limited knowledge, overdose meant the person had died. I did not know someone could survive an overdose. After my daughter's nonfatal overdose, I discovered that I was not alone in my misunderstanding of the term. Now I know that many people survive opioid overdoses, but when I first used the word, almost everyone had a hesitant look followed by an awkward follow-up question: Did she survive? Maybe there is something inherently ambiguous about the word “overdose,” situated as it is on that fine line between life and death, between surviving or not surviving. And that sticky stigma always seemed to attach itself to these conversations; whether visible or more elusive, it was always there.

This early memory of the fatal shame of “overdose” would now confirm the fine line I frequently traversed in all kinds of experiences. While we were huddled in the medical intensive care unit for eleven days wondering if Madeleine would regain the ability to breathe on her own, I overheard teaching doctors and residents refer to her as “an OD.” Although I later learned it is common for medical staff to use such shorthand, the callousness of the term made me cringe. Did they name other patients “a car accident” or “a stroke,” as they passed their rooms? The sting of that moment was softened only because my sister, herself a physician, stopped the group of residents in the hall and asked them to please consider using a patient's name when family are present on their rounds. This was just the first glimmer of my understanding of how deeply entrenched stigma is in all aspects of our society. Its pervasiveness had remained elusive to me until suddenly I noticed it everywhere. Once I could no longer unsee stigma, I began to recognize how I had been stigmatizing drug users through fear born of ignorance that then led to moral and ethical judgments. Fearing and then judging something we don't understand is an easy out that makes ignorance about that thing easier to maintain. Hard drug use truly scared me, and so it seemed obvious that I should also fear people who used those drugs. Aside from the “logic” born of ingrained stereotypes, the biggest challenge was understanding why someone would use hard drugs in the first place, and then why they couldn't “just stop.” I had no personal experience with drug use. None. And

I was definitely one of the few kids in the entire country during the early 1980s for whom Nancy Reagan's “Just Say No” campaign actually worked. Reflecting on the failure of that particular policy approach, my inborn nature was most likely the reason—I have always been risk averse.

Since parenting tests nearly every aspect of one's being, understanding drug use and its varied degrees of risk became one of my biggest challenges—I rose to it, but not without a struggle. In the circles of parents and professionals I knew, quitting all drug and alcohol use definitively was the only answer; the Minnesota Model of drug treatment predominated, and so I assumed that must be what worked; using illegal drugs meant there would likely be criminal charges and perhaps incarceration. Most, if not all, family support groups based on the Twelve Steps of AA supported the Minnesota treatment model. I would eventually learn about methadone clinics, but only one or two people I knew of had successful recoveries on methadone, so it seemed like a long shot. Once while visiting a suburban methadone clinic, I was shocked and confused when I saw a staff person hand a brown paper bag of clean syringes to a potential client. How was that helping them stop using? When drug use is believed to be the reason people get into trouble with addiction and the law, why on earth would anyone justify spending time and resources helping people continue to use drugs? I was completely uninformed.

I knew about Narcan (naloxone), the opioid antidote, from my earlier experience with a group of mothers affiliated with the Steve Rummeler Hope Network, but I didn't understand how it was connected to syringe exchanges, clean needles, and the grassroots philosophy of harm reduction until a few years later. Although legal efforts to increase access to naloxone were on the rise, the phrase “harm reduction” was not included because it had a negative connection to something edgier and perhaps scarier: needle exchanges for injection drug users. Given the stigma associated with drug users, it was a smart rhetorical strategy to not use that term and simply refer to naloxone as “a life-saving tool” that allowed someone overdosing the chance to live and then, hopefully, get into a treatment program. The diligent work of the Steve Rummeler Hope Network in Minnesota, following a growing national model, must be credited with helping to change state laws that kept Narcan away from people who needed it the most: the general public, injection drug users, and police officers; but it was not publicized as being part of a harm reduction philosophy. Even using the term “harm reduction” was taboo in the mid-2010s because of long-standing stigma about drug users and



Professor Amy Sullivan

harm reduction's connection to the most marginalized of them: the poor, people of color, and the unhoused.

People who inject drugs (and those who work to keep them safe) have been taking care of each other with needle exchanges since the late 1980s. They sourced underground naloxone. They coined the term “harm reduction” and expanded on its use, applications, and potential. They practiced a philosophy of respect, safety, and care while the War on Drugs incarcerated and devastated entire communities. Their approach is best explained by a handout made by Edith Springer, one of the founders of harm-reduction practices: “Show client unconditional regard and caring. Acknowledge her or his intrinsic worth and dignity. . . . Be mindful of the stages of change. . . . Any reduction in harm is a step in the right direction.” Harm reduction is about building relationships and offering support in a nonjudgmental way. One Minneapolis harm reduction activist, Lee Hertel, described it eloquently.

“It's everything intangible. It's everything that makes people walk taller and straighter and maybe just a little bit cockier. That would be the respect that I afford everybody, the dignity, the trust, the love, the belief, and a total non-judgmental attitude. That, I think, is equally as important as the actual physical prevention of the transmission of disease, HIV, hepatitis C, hepatitis B, any other type of blood-borne virus, hep A, hep D. . . . When you feel like you have someone who loves you, who cares about you, you're going to treat yourself better.”

“Once I could no longer unsee stigma, I began to recognize how I had been stigmatizing drug users through fear born of ignorance that then led to moral and ethical judgments.”

COURTESY OF LUCIA POSSEHL

THEY WERE FIRST

In their own words, six first-generation college students share their journeys.

BY KIM CATLEY / PHOTOS BY DAVID J. TURNER

This fall, 16 percent of students at Macalester are among the first in their family to attend college.

They come from all kinds of backgrounds: rural and urban, BIPOC and white, immigrant and U.S.-born, low income and solidly middle class. They're just as academically and intellectually prepared as students with a family history of college attendance. But they often need a little extra help with the information that students whose parents earned a degree absorbed by osmosis: the vocabulary of higher education and the shortcuts and secret handshakes that make it easier to navigate a complex institution. Getting into college isn't the same as feeling like you belong there.

"There's been a national endeavor to provide access to first-generation college students," says Sedric McClure, assistant dean of multicultural life. "First, institutions began to recognize that high-achieving students were admissible to highly selective institutions but didn't have the resources to enter into the space. So, that became a focus. Then, we began to see the emergence, in significant numbers, of first-generation college students in these spaces. But what does that mean for creating a sense of belonging?"

At Macalester, faculty and staff are working on a range of efforts to ensure first-generation students have the resources to find their way. In the Admissions Office, this means avoiding college lingo or taking the time to explain the application processes and services provided by different campus offices. A working group is identifying financial gaps, such as cost-prohibitive textbooks and health insurance, and tickets to campus events. And writing workshops from the Macalester Academic Excellence (MAX) Center help students understand expectations around academic writing and scholarly research.

One new program launching this fall targets the transition to college while also formalizing a connection between the Admissions Office and the Department of Multicultural Life. Aisha Gonzalez, senior associate director of admissions for diversity and inclusion, and her colleagues Makaya Resner '19 and Veronica Zapata '19, are overseeing a cohort of 20 first-year students who are BIPOC, first-generation, and/or LGBTQ. Resner and Zapata will have regular one-on-one check-ins with students to identify information gaps, connect students with faculty and staff in other departments, and find other resources around campus.

"We're able to say, 'I have a friend in that office. Let's go talk

to them together,'" Gonzalez says. "It feels more student-centered, and requires a personal connection."

Those connections can make a difference for any student but are especially critical for those who identify as first-generation. Programs like Bridges and Barriers, Bonner Community Scholars, and Pluralism and Unity (see page 25) help students quickly build relationships with faculty and staff and plug into a support network. Then, they have someone to go to when they run into challenges.

However, not all first-generation students are involved in these programs. Macalester is working to reach more students, while also looking for indicators that a student needs help connecting, even if they're not in a specialized program. Ruth Janisch, associate dean of educational partnerships, works with several student cohorts—such as those in the Bonner Community Scholars Program, Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship, and QuestBridge—that include many first-generation students.

Janisch has been working with colleagues to ensure Macalester's administrative offices aren't too siloed, creating disconnects for students. After all, she says, students come here for a holistic experience and don't divide their world between academics, work, clubs, and extracurriculars. First-gen students, in particular, may find complex organizational charts confusing and be dissuaded from seeking services if they're directed from one office to another.

She also says student voices are critically important as the college seeks to identify and meet the diverse needs of first-gen students. She cites Honoring the Journey as one initiative that developed organically from student advocacy. The pre-Commencement ceremony is an opportunity for first-generation students to recognize the friends, family, faculty, and staff who supported them throughout college. It began in 2014 after students asked if there were any Commencement events focused on families.

As Janisch tells it, "Students were saying, 'This moment is not exclusively about me. It is actually deeply meaningful for my entire family and community. How is Macalester going to see and welcome them?'"

"Now it's a tradition, and many of us can't imagine Commencement without it," she says. "I think that co-creation is what makes it so meaningful. It wasn't me deciding Macalester needs something. It was our community saying, 'How can we do this?' and building it together."

**'YOU HAVE
TO NAVIGATE
TOTALLY
DIFFERENT
WORLDS'**

Being first-gen and applying to college is super hard. Your parents can't support you because they don't know how to. You have to know the ins and outs of everything. I was lucky; my college counselors were used to helping first-gen students get into college, because essentially everybody was first-gen at my high school.

A big program that draws in students of color, low-income students, and first-gen students is the extended Spring Sampler for admitted students. You stay over in a dorm and get to meet people and see more of campus life.

One of the sampler events, the C-House Kickback, was the biggest reason I wanted to come to Macalester. Being a person of color and low-income on this campus is not easy. You have to navigate totally different worlds, especially if you haven't been at a predominantly white institution before. Hearing about people's experiences at the C-House Kickback—the good and the bad—was really nice. I knew that I'd have people who would support me and make this experience go well.

A huge part of being first-gen and low-income is having to support your family from afar. As someone who's a pillar of my family and used to carrying so much, leaving and choosing to focus on myself during college was a big thing to navigate. And, of course, family things just kept coming up. During that first year, there was a lot of asking myself, *Do I drop this assignment and potentially fail my classes to help out with my family? Or do I let my family go and focus on my education?*

—Haley Vien '22, Oakland, Calif.

KEY TAKEAWAYS



KODY



‘IT CAN BE DIFFICULT LIVING IN AN AREA WHERE THERE AREN’T AS MANY RESOURCES’

My dad is a factory worker in Michigan, and my mom is a stay-at-home mom. My parents didn’t go to college, but my mom always emphasized college as a path for my sisters and me to get out of my family’s generations of low-income jobs. I graduated first in my high school class, but my graduating class was only 120 students.

I was in fourth grade when my oldest sister left and went to a small school in Wisconsin. Going to the college campus as a little elementary school kid—that was intimidating, but also really exciting. I was like, *Wow, this is going to be me one day.* And now it’s here.

The hardest time was in my first year at Mac when COVID hit and we all had to leave campus. I didn’t grow up with the Internet at home, but I had to finish the rest of school at home. Sometimes I’d have to drive into my town and sit outside the library or a fast-food restaurant to use the Wi-Fi just to turn something in. It was very challenging for me in terms of my mental health and just being able to do the work.

It can be difficult living in an area where there aren’t as many resources—little things that I probably shouldn’t have had to worry about on top of all the work. COVID made disparities more obvious.

—Kody Harrington '23, Allegan, Mich.

HANAN



‘I WASN’T AWARE OF WHAT TO LOOK FOR’

I’m from Seattle, and my parents and my two older siblings and I were all born in Ethiopia. We moved to the U.S. in 2001, when I was a couple of months old. Both my parents got a high school education, and my siblings and I are the first in our family to go to college. My parents expected us to go to college, but they were unfamiliar with the U.S. higher education system.

My siblings and I all had different experiences with applying. My oldest sister had no one to guide her; she had to figure it all out herself. But with my older siblings in college, I had a little more support figuring out all the forms that are required and the essays I had to write.

I struggled with knowing where to apply. A lot of my peers knew what school they wanted to attend or knew about a lot of schools across the country. I was only familiar with a couple of universities in my state and wasn’t really aware of what to look for when applying to college—things like campus culture, the size of the surrounding city, and what programs and opportunities the school offers.

I learned about Macalester through the social-emotional learning coordinator at my high school, who thought Mac would be a good fit. I had never been to Minnesota or Macalester before I arrived on campus to move in.

I remember there was a BIPOC ice cream social the first week of school. A bunch of upperclassmen first-gen students came up to the freshmen and said, “You have to ask us questions. That’s what we’re here for.” That was really helpful. They helped me know who I can reach out to and what resources are on campus.

—Hanan Sherka '23, Seattle

‘THERE WERE PEOPLE ADVOCATING FOR ME’

“First-gen” in my family means the first generation to go to college as well as the first generation to be born and raised in the U.S. My family is Hmong, and my parents emigrated from Laos as refugees of the Vietnam War. My parents were initially skeptical about college, especially for my older siblings, the first to go. In the Hmong culture, girls don’t leave home until they get married. But seeing my siblings succeed and build a better life afterwards convinced the whole family of the value of higher education.

My dad passed away in my freshman year, so that made it difficult for me to transition into adulthood and into college. He was the head of the household, the pillar, the foundation. To lose that, especially when I was just starting college, completely turned my world upside down. I was getting support and started doing better, and then my younger brother passed and my whole world crumbled.

I was struggling with mental health when I applied to the Mellon Mays Fellowship my sophomore year. The fellowship supports underrepresented students who conduct independent research about a topic they’re interested in. I wanted to look into Hmong identity, because we are a diverse community.

I was very shocked when I was accepted, because I was not doing well during that time, academically. I think I had actually been put on academic probation. And it was a last-minute application, because Professor Rivi Handler-Spitz really pushed me to apply.

Mellon Mays was the light at the end of the tunnel for me. It opened up so many new opportunities, and the support that I received from the staff and faculty was what I needed—deep understanding, empathy, and humility.

It was very different from before, when I was trying to get help by approaching different departments at Macalester on my own. I knew what to do to improve my grades; it was easier said than done when I was struggling with mental health.

With Mellon Mays, there were more people doing behind-the-scenes outreach and advocacy for me. That really helped me and allowed me to stay at Macalester, and it gave me the space and time I needed to recover and do well.

—Diana Her '22, Cottage Grove, Minn.

DIANA



HUGO



‘THEY’LL PASS THAT KNOWLEDGE ON’

I’m first-generation, not just among my family here in the U.S., but my entire history of my ancestors and my family in Mexico. I come from a family of immigrants, and my parents came to the United States with nothing—and now they have a son who goes to college. I’m the first one to finish high school, the first one to go to college, hopefully the first one to finish college.

I had no one to ask what college is like, and I didn’t know what to expect. That led to a lot of anxiety. Going to my first day of classes was hard because it was completely different from high school. I had to figure out stuff on my own.

I hope to go to graduate school, earn my PhD, and then become a professor. Or, apply for a teacher licensure program and teach science. I definitely want to be in the field of education.

Every time I help somebody by teaching them something, they’ll pass that knowledge on to other people. It helps a whole community. I also want to help students—especially students of color—who don’t know what they want to do. I’ve had lots of mentors in my life, and most of those mentors were people of color. It’s sometimes hard to be a student of color, and I want to make it easier for students to fight for their goals and pursue their dreams.

I volunteer as a tutor around the St. Paul area, helping students with homework or assignments. I always tell my students to take risks. When I first got to Macalester, I didn’t know what to do. The minute that I took risks, reached out, asked for help, went to events, joined clubs—all these things that college offered me—things got so much better.

—Hugo Huitron '22, Chicago

‘IT FEELS HOPEFUL IN A WAY THAT I CAN’T EVEN BEGIN TO DESCRIBE’

The experience of being first-gen boils down to a constant feeling of cultural dissonance when you’re at an institution like Macalester. I think the people who really identify with the term “first-generation” are the ones who show up to Macalester without the faintest clue what this institution does and how it works. Neither of my parents have a college degree, my grandparents don’t have a college degree, my aunt and uncle don’t. Applying here was a self-driven thing. An older student on my debate team in high school taught me everything there is to know about college and pointed me toward Macalester specifically.

A lot of the cultural dissonance I felt was class-based as well. Being first-gen doesn’t necessarily mean that you grew up poor, but my goodness, I grew up poor. And when you go to a school like Macalester, you feel it immediately—I did not grow up the same way as most other students.

Another challenge is the fact that rural sensibilities cut strongly against the sorts of behaviors that are essential and expected at a school like Macalester, like feeling comfortable walking into professor’s office hours and asking them for help. The first time I talked to somebody with a master’s degree, or especially a PhD, was at Macalester. It takes a lot of time to learn the cultural cues that would have been embedded in you if you’d grown up around people who went to college, and you have to catch up on a super accelerated timeline.

Macalester has all these people and institutions on campus that are meant to be helpful, but they don’t necessarily recognize that the population they’re trying to serve is most resistant and least comfortable asking for that help if it isn’t proactively provided.

My first semester went great. Then the work got a little bit more difficult, and it was compounded with social issues and medical issues, and I flamed out. My first semester of junior year went so terribly that I got suspended. I took a semester off. I worked full time for about a year. And then I went to Metropolitan State University. The energy at MSU was, “We are here to make sure that everybody that wants and is willing to work for a degree can get one.” It gave me the space and the self-confidence to dig into some of the issues that I was having with my personal health.

But I knew that if I wanted a leg up, I needed to go back to Macalester. I knew that there were some caring people there who would give me the support that I needed, now that I had learned how the institution works.

When I walked across the stage at Commencement, it did not feel real. There’s certainly an element of guilt that, just by nature of having a college degree, I have a lot of class privilege over my immediate family and all my childhood friends. It makes me feel a little dissociated from them, but it also feels hopeful in a way that I can’t even begin to describe.

When I got my actual diploma in the mail, I opened it and I just started crying. I thought, *I have a degree, it’s in my hands, that’s my name on it. It says, “You did this.”* It took generations of work by my family, and generations of work from other families, to get this in my hands. That will never be lost on me.

—Austin Ahlman '21, Norfolk, Neb.

AUSTIN



TINA KROHN

First-generation initiatives to know

Bonner Community Scholars: A four-year program led by the Civic Engagement Center in the Annan Institute for Global Citizenship (IGC) providing leadership programming, academic support, engagement opportunities, and a social network. While the program is not specifically for first-generation students, they are strongly encouraged to apply.

Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship: Housed within the IGC and facilitated by faculty, the fellowship aims to increase the number of students from underrepresented groups, and others with a demonstrated commitment to eradicating racial disparities, who will pursue a PhD and enter the professoriate in selected core fields. Fellows benefit from a targeted series of grants and seminars, beginning with the early stages of graduate school and continuing through the postdoctoral years.

Bridges and Barriers: A program from the Department of Multicultural Life (DML) that centers first-generation students, helping them clarify pathways to personal and academic success and build a network of support among faculty, staff, and students at Macalester.

Pluralism and Unity: Offered by the DML, members of P&U co-create a community grounded in intergroup dialogue, and seek to deepen understanding of diversity and social justice issues.

QuestBridge: A national nonprofit based in Palo Alto, California, that aims to increase the percentage of high-achieving, low-income students attending selective, leading colleges. QuestBridge supports students through the college application process, in securing financial aid and scholarships, and throughout the college experience.

Mac Day and Multicultural Fly-In: Visit days for admitted students (formerly known as Samplers) provide a broad look into life at Macalester.

C-House Kickback: Hosted by Admissions and the DML during the Multicultural Fly-In program, current BIPOC students share their experiences at Mac and help admitted students make the college decision that is right for them.

POSSE: In 2022, Macalester will welcome its first cohort of Twin Cities POSSE Scholars, a small, diverse group of talented students.

Honoring the Journey: A special gathering during Commencement weekend co-hosted by the Annan Institute for Global Citizenship and the Department of Multicultural Life. Seniors acknowledge the family and friends who supported their journey to graduation as first-generation college students. **M**

Kim Catley is a writer based in Richmond, Va.



GOLDEN SOUNDS

Still led by Gary Hines '74, Sounds of Blackness is celebrating 50 years of music. But the Grammy-winning ensemble's work is far from done.

BY COLLIER MEYERSON '07

Tuesday nights are typically rehearsal nights at the Sabathani Community Center in south Minneapolis for the 30-piece ensemble called Sounds of Blackness. But in 2020, on the last Tuesday in May, the group didn't convene as usual. Instead, they joined hundreds of others in the streets, just five blocks from their meeting place, to protest the killing of George Floyd. "We live and work in the community," says the ensemble's leader, Gary Hines '74, of the group's presence in the historically Black neighborhood. "We were, and still are, in and of the community."

For fifty years, Hines has been leading the ensemble—through three Grammy Awards, eleven albums, and performances on five continents—from south Minneapolis. But Sounds of Blackness, and Hines, got their start right across the river in the dorms of Macalester College.

The year was 1971. The Black Panthers were a household name, "Mercy Mercy Me" by Marvin Gaye peaked at #34 on the Billboard charts, and the Congressional Black Caucus had just been established. Russell Knighton '72, who founded Macalester College Black Voices in 1969, would soon be graduating from Macalester and needed someone to pass his baton on to.

That person was Gary Hines.

Hines moved to Minneapolis from New York as a 12-year-old after his mother—Doris Hines, "a world-renowned jazz singer"—fell in love with the Twin Cities while visiting for a performance. Arriving in Minneapolis was a culture shock for the young Hines. "Everyone was blond," he recounts through chuckles. But even then, he adds, the cities' Black music scene was influential. "Numerically the Black community was small, but it was always very active culturally," he says. "Their R&B could rival Motown," he notes, adding that Minneapolis "was the backdrop of the birth of a Prince, literally."

Hines wasn't planning to go to Macalester. He'd gotten into

HERESA SCARBROUGH

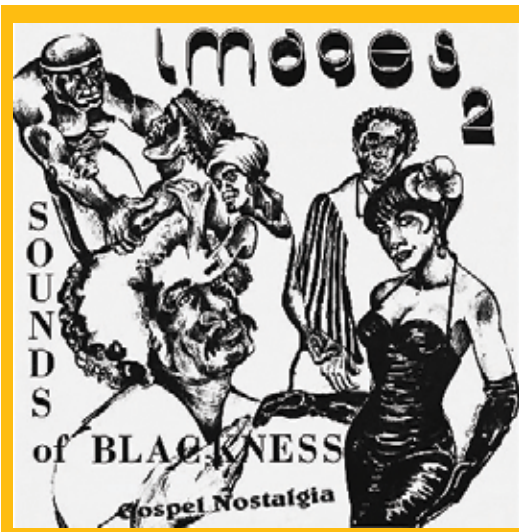
“How many fearful moments Sounds of Blackness got me through. . . . I wouldn’t be Michonne in *The Walking Dead* without ‘Optimistic’ by Sounds of Blackness, emboldening me as I went through that final audition. I wouldn’t be killing no Zombies! Have a song y’all, have a song. I now know that music is a part of my armor; it transforms the atmosphere, and sometimes that is all we can control.”

—Danai Gurira ’01, at Macalester’s Commencement in 2016

Dartmouth College, an Ivy League school back east a little closer to where he’d spent his early childhood in Yonkers, a working-class suburb of New York City. But Earl Bowman, his high school history teacher-turned-Macalester dean, led him to Grand Avenue. “[Dean Bowman] encouraged me to make the decision on my own but just his presence at Mac was enough to dissuade me from going to Dartmouth,” says Hines, who majored in sociology.

During his sophomore year Hines was approached by Knighton to take over the ensemble so it could live on, with a new name: Sounds of Blackness. “It was all about the movement at the time—our repertoire was protest songs,” Hines says of the ensemble’s role in the fight for racial justice and equality. But God, he says, gave him the vision to incorporate “every genre of Black music in the tradition of Duke Ellington—jazz, blues, spirituals, soul rock, gospel, reggae, ragtime: every sound of Blackness.” You’d often hear the group practicing in the Janet Wallace Fine Arts Center and around dorm pianos.

“The Sounds of Blackness really was my introduction to Black music in the church,” says Valeria Phillips ’74. “Gary had a way of drawing people in and his manner of teaching was really good. He would rehearse until we got it right. He had wonderful harmonies and rhythms,” which Hines attributes to growing



up in the church and hearing his mother sing.

But singing and performing was only one part of the group. To Black Macalester students at the time, Sounds of Blackness represented something different entirely. “The Sounds of Blackness was a respite and haven—not just to sing but also the teachings Gary included with the music,” says Phillips. “We got a lot of history with the songs we sang that Gary did wonderful arrangements of, as well as original songs he wrote that were really beautiful. It was a real community.”

Phillips remembers the group performing off campus in Minneapolis at Sabathani, the church where Hines grew up. “Gary’s mother sang at one of our concerts—I remember her coming from the back of that church singing the Lord’s Prayer and it was one of the most beautiful things you ever heard,” she says. “It was a really wonderful environment, reassuring our history and bringing it forth in our song.”

In 1969, Macalester had launched an experimental and ambitious program called Expanded Educational Opportunities (EEO) at the urging of a group of Black students. That year, 75 mostly Black students from working class and low-income backgrounds entered the overwhelmingly white campus, changing the college overnight. The program, progressive at its heart, intended to address the enormous racial disparity at the college. Born out of the initiative was Macalester’s African American studies program, an office of minority programs, and increasing faculty of color.

For some of Macalester’s new Black students, far from their families and culture, and feeling out of place in their new environment, the Sounds of Blackness was something of a clubhouse. “I had white roommates but there was something familial about the Sounds of Blackness that was very welcoming and nurturing,” says Phillips.

And Hines was, in many ways, the glue that kept the family together. Eventually, that family expanded beyond Grand and Snelling, adding students from Augsburg and Hamline. The group also began performing outside of the Twin Cities. “I remember taking a bus trip to Pueblo, Colorado,” says Phillips.

Between bus rehearsals and sleep, Phillips remembers picking up a hitchhiker, common for the time: “At the time there was a dance out called ‘The Robot’ and we met this guy who was doing The Robot, and he traveled with us to the next city.”

Quickly going from campus choir to accomplished ensemble by 1974, the group traveled to San Francisco to perform at the National Urban League’s convention. “Meeting and doing the grand finale with the Pointer Sisters and Edwin Hawkins was at the top of my list,” Hines says of his Macalester memories.

But perhaps the most memorable moment of Sounds of Blackness under Gary Hines was during his graduation. Legendary Black American photographer Gordon Parks gave a Commencement speech at a special ceremony for Macalester graduates of color. After the event Hines approached Parks for some personal words of advice. “He said one of the keys to survival and making it in this world as a Black man was to ‘always say yes. They’re always going to question your credentials, but be prepared to answer yes. You have to be able to say yes to everything,’” he recalls Parks telling him.

And Gary Hines did say yes. Over the next four decades the Sounds of Blackness became an institution, in Minneapolis and beyond.

Back in 1975, at the encouragement of Macalester history professor Mahmoud El-Kati, Hines had filed for 501c3 status, institutionalizing the group by making it a nonprofit organization too. Today the ensemble is 30 people with a touring ensemble of 17, all the while keeping to its ethos as a space to harness community. “We kept a grassroots and hands-on approach with city residents in addition to performing worldwide,” he told me of the group, which includes maintaining a regular presence at neighborhood events. In addition to its Grammy Awards, the ensemble has also won four Stellar Awards and one NAACP Image Award, and was nominated for an Emmy in 1999.

While Sounds of Blackness has enjoyed notoriety and fame across the Twin Cities and worldwide, its connection to Macalester faded once the ensemble moved off campus. But in 2014, the connection was rekindled. Kyla Martin ’15, who was a senior at the time, had been researching Black history on campus as part of her work for the Department of Multicultural Life. After DML staff member Sedric McClure brought the ensemble’s history to her attention, Martin met with Hines, talked with Mac’s archivist, and spearheaded an initiative to rename the Turck residence hall’s first-floor lounge—where Sounds of Blackness had often practiced—in the ensemble’s honor. “Macalester has a lot of rich histories for many identity groups that I think isn’t out there for folks to know about,” says Martin, who led the renaming so that other students would know about this chapter in the school’s history.

“I thought [the renaming] was a great recogni-

In 1991, songwriters and producers Terry Lewis and Jimmy Jam signed Sounds of Blackness as the first act for their new label, Perspective Records. “As a Black child, all through your education you never learn about who you are, where you’re from, the music that was there,” Lewis told the *Star Tribune*’s Jon Bream in June. “The Sounds of Blackness have kind of been the bridge to that in the Black community. Their significance is ultra-important.”

tion for Gary and the work that he’d done,” says Phillips. “I think it’s an appropriate recognition because a lot of rehearsing went on there.”

Back in Minneapolis, Hines remains a stalwart of his community. In May, the group, under his direction, performed his 2020 song “Sick and Tired,” at an event marking the anniversary of George Floyd’s murder. (The title is a nod to voting rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer, who famously said “I’m sick and tired of being sick and tired” in a 1964 speech about American racism.) “That was a rallying point not only for the African American community, but people of all backgrounds, whether they’re red, brown, yellow, black, white, men, women, young, old,” he says.

On Juneteenth this year, Sounds of Blackness released its newest single, “Time for Reparations.” As musicians, Hines says, the group has always been the vanguard of Black movements for justice and equality. “Being directly involved in the movement and also providing an anthem for the movement is what our goal has been,” he told me.

And for Hines—who hopes to use the renewed relationship with Macalester to recruit students for the ensemble—the Turck lounge renaming was a coming home. Since then, he has performed on campus at Reunion and addressed the Class of 2016 at Commencement. “I would like to see us come full circle,” he says about bringing the group back to Macalester.

In their future, he hopes for the Sounds of Blackness to return to the Janet Wallace Fine Arts Center once again, this time with members who hail from his community, a way to bridge the gap between the ivory tower and south Minneapolis, which are mere miles away but sometimes worlds apart. And Macalester would be lucky to have Hines back, an intrepid doer with an incredible legacy, who seemed to have followed the wise words of Gordon Parks by saying “yes” at every turn. [M](#)

Collier Meyerson ’07 is a writer living in New York City. She is a contributor at *New York Magazine* and a Knobler Fellow at Type Media Center.



Share your Sounds of Blackness memories: mactoday@macalester.edu.





9 TIMELESS LESSONS FROM *MacDo*

BY JULIE HESSLER '85

As Professor Mary Gwen Owen

(Class of 1923) might have put it, the chilly, brutal, twenty-first century Mars Rover truth is that etiquette books are risky endeavors.

They are often relics of their times. At best, a dollhouse window framing a frozen scene of the olden days. At worst, cringe-worthy, with passages and so-called rules of behavior (clothed in gloves and hats) that are sexist, racist, classist, and ageist.

Mary Gwen Owen, however, was not deterred. In 1965, she published her own guide to etiquette: *MacDo Book or How Not to Be a MacDuffer*. According to *The Mac Weekly* on February 12, 1965, the book was to “be distributed to all faculty and administration members, students, and trustees of the college. It will also be sent to all incoming freshmen during the summer.”

Like Owen herself, *MacDo* is highly unique and inventive. And unlike other etiquette books, which often promote temperate conformity of behavior, the surprising subtext of Owen’s guide is one of radical self-knowledge and independence. In a chapter devoted to what she calls “Stand-Up-Stand-Around-Ats,” events “such as teas, coffees, brunches, parties, receptions, weddings and garden parties where you will very likely remain standing up while chatting, eating, and sitting,” Owen tells readers, in poetry, how to greet their hosts at such an event: “Give ‘them’ your hand (with its shiny clean glove! And your name—just say, “I am me/ (Nothing fancy, you see!)”

“I am me.” Or, as we might tweet it today, “I. Am. Me.” During her 40-year tenure at Macalester, it seems unlikely that Owen would have needed to introduce herself to anyone. By today’s standards, she was glamorous, photographed wearing pearls and stylish red hats. The precise rules for hat wearing, too, are outlined in *MacDo*: “Your smartest hat for teas, special luncheons, weddings, and parties. No hat for evening affairs, but of course, hats in church!”

By any standards, she was highly accomplished, and dearly beloved. After graduating from Macalester, Owen taught speech and drama at the college for 40 years and founded the Drama Choros, a reading and acting and dancing group of students which toured nationally performing dramatic recitations of pieces such as “Dreams Deferred” by Langston Hughes, and “El Paseo de Buster Keaton”—“Buster Keaton Takes a Walk”—by Federico Garcia Lorca, incorporating movement and sound effects into its performances.

When Owen retired in 1968, she was feted with a campus-wide “Gwenday” celebration in her honor. Her founders’ biography on the college website describes her as “someone who was ahead of her time in many ways” and who “emphasized social justice.” These two latter qualities inform *MacDo* so that even today, nearly 60 years later, her etiquette guide still offers some timeless lessons.





9 TIMELESS LESSONS

BE YOURSELF.

"It therefore behooves you to cultivate the type of manner and manners you feel project the real you. What type of an individual are you, anyway—unself-conscious, gracious, kind, poised, thoughtful, capable, sophisticated, gay, easy? Or, on the other hand, are you the type of individual who is dour, unapproachable, unhappy, insecure, unpoised, abrupt, ungracious? Which type of individual do you wish to be?"

For example: "What to Say in Notes...Say exactly what you sincerely feel. Make it short, not necessarily a letter. Make it personal. What you liked—what you felt—what was lovely—how you appreciate—how sorry you are. Remember, always use your own words."

USE POETIC, VIGOROUS LANGUAGE WITH APLOMB—AND USE ADJECTIVES UNSPARINGLY.

Are you "A well-adjusted, poised, eager MacDoer?"

Or a blithering, mumbling, arrogant, ill-informed MacDuffer?"

BE BOLD AND STYLISH.

"Never be afraid to ask what to wear. It is done."



SAY NO THANK YOU TO SKUNKS AND CLOWNS.

"Your stationery should complement your personality...Informal note paper is acceptable. Be sure it is plain with no straw-hatted skunks or lugubrious clowns or flourishing gold lettered 'thank you's' decorating the front page."

BE YOURSELF, PART II.

"Find your own style and proceed from there."

STOP SAYING HI!

"Only a MacDuffer would think it enough—er/When meeting and greeting his 'elders'!* Just to twang, 'hi'/(That raspy old, ghastly old/Nasalized 'hi')/When 'elders' pass by/Give them the full greeting treatment/The nod of the head, the name, the smile/on the face/But never—not ever—/No, never/Twang/'HI'!

*Elders: defined as "30 or so."

RECONSIDER INFORMAL PARTY INVITATIONS (AND BEWARE OF MYSTERIOUS BRAIN WATCHERS).

"As a die-hard agitator against seven-digit telephone numbers and the frightening flood of test scores fed into IBM machines by multitudes of Brain Watchers, to haunt the testee to his dying day, We say down with dittoed 'invitations'! If a party is worth giving, let's make it so from start to finish. The dittoed 'invitation' can't be an acceptable behavior form—can it?"

BE COURTEOUS.

"Times, situations, customs may change, but courtesy is always courtesy..."



FIND YOUR TRUTH.

"Find the universal truth by which you can live. In this jolly Jet Age where time is of the essence, you may only have one moment in which to project the integrity of your Image."

Reflections on MacDo

Three alumni recall MacDo's influence in college and beyond.

"Growing up in the 1950s, I kept by my bedside a Bible, Emily Post's *Etiquette*, and required school readings. Once Macalester became my destination, I added the MacDo book. It became a carefully read reference with specific guidelines for the beginning of my freshman year. The first year I lived on the women-only floor in Dupre Hall. We had an evening curfew hour, we had a room Open Door Policy during male visits, and we were locked onto our floor each night. I do remember visiting with guys below our windows who were still outside after our floor was locked and we women were all 'safe' inside.

My, how life changed during those four Macalester years, 1966–1970! As we each came to know ourselves and rely on our inner self to guide our actions, books of behavior were left by the wayside. We had our studies, budding relationships, and the Vietnam War with all the senseless killings as focus. I don't even know where or exactly when my MacDo book disappeared. The reality of the times took priority and guided our actions.

Yet, as I raised my family a number of years later, I did share some of Mary Gwen Owen's advice with my children to help guide their decisions and actions. Interesting to think back now, for the MacDo book did have a lasting influence on my life!" **—Barb Brodie Erickson '70**

"The summer of 1966 before I started at Mac, I got a packet in the mail that included a summer reading list, which included MacDo, *Lord of the Flies*, and *The Jungle*. I'm first-generation, so I follow the rules: I read all three.


I was from a small town and led a very simple life. I hadn't attended any formal gatherings, and I could count on one hand the number of times I had eaten in a restaurant. There was a lot for me to learn. Mary Gwen wrote about having a little black dress and white gloves. I didn't have a little black dress, but I bought white gloves. I had a simple sundress that my mother made for me, which I wore to the president's reception on campus. It was an anniversary celebration of Wallace Hall, which was going to be remodeled, and there was someone from each decade who had lived in Wallace Hall. I went with my white gloves and my little black shoes and dressed the way I was supposed to dress according to Mary Gwen, and I gave my presentation about what life was like in the 1960s in Wallace Hall.

MacDo was very helpful, even in a joking sort of way. Mary Gwen was speaking to me. She was speaking to those of us who hadn't a clue how we were going to integrate ourselves into this community." **—Jeanne Sumnicht '70**



"I thought I still had my MacDo copy, but I must have finally discarded it. But I still have this 'little black dress,' which I am pretty sure Ms. Owen pronounced as essential. I long ago disposed of the also-prescribed elbow-length black gloves (though maybe she advised white), which I think I wore exactly once, to the Freshmen Tea with President Harvey Rice. All those 'dos and don'ts' now seem quaint and out-of-touch, but they were well intentioned as a help in our transition from gangly high schoolers to college students and citizens of the world."

—Anne Silvers Lee '69

How did MacDo shape your views? Have any pieces of advice stayed with you over the years? Tell us: mactoday@macalester.edu. 



PARTNERS WITH A PURPOSE

WITH THEIR BIOTECHNOLOGY STARTUP, TWO ALUMNI AIM TO IMPROVE TREATMENT AND QUALITY OF LIFE FOR CANCER PATIENTS.

BY DANIEL P. SMITH

They met during their opening weeks at Macalester in 1997—two South American students ushered across St. Paul in a Mac van to get their Minnesota ID cards.

During their junior year, they became roommates: two studious, goal-oriented souls intent on keeping a tidy residence in Kirk Hall.

They went their separate ways after graduation in 2001. José M. Mejía Oneto earned a PhD in organic chemistry from Emory University, then a medical degree from the University of Minnesota. He then became an orthopaedic surgery resident at the University of California–Davis. Sebastian Sanchez de Lozada joined a Twin Cities hedge fund before returning to his native Bolivia. He later came back to the U.S. to earn a master's degree in international economics and finance at Brandeis University and ascended the corporate finance ladder at a Washington, D.C.-based mining company.

In 2015, the two reconnected in Washington, D.C., where Mejía Oneto told his former roommate about a promising biotech innovation he was developing to improve the way drugs travel in the body, and his plans to bring the tech to the masses. Two years later, Mejía Oneto officially recruited the business-savvy Sanchez de Lozada to join him.

Now, the two Macalester alumni are leading Shasqi, an ambitious startup that aims to improve the effectiveness of cancer therapies while minimizing their negative side effects.

Reuniting for a mission

When Mejía Oneto, a biology and chemistry major from Peru, left Mac, he dreamed of becoming a scientist making positive contributions to the world. While training as an orthopaedic surgeon, he noted that many drugs scattered across the body, not exclusively to the affected areas, such as a tumor. This frequently caused collateral damage, and Mejía Oneto wondered if there could be a mechanism to escort more of a drug to its intended location.

"Shouldn't it be possible to tell the medication where to go, and to get more of the drug to the area where it was needed?" Mejía Oneto says.

That inquiry led Mejía Oneto to the emerging field of click chemistry. In his research at UC–Davis, Mejía Oneto developed a way to modify compounds so they would attract one another like



magnets within the body. His innovation enabled more medication to reach the desired area while limiting a drug's dispersion elsewhere in the body. "If you enhance the amount of the drug at the needed location in the body, then you can enhance efficacy and mitigate side effects," he says.

So, Mejía Oneto left UC–Davis and began his quest to create a sustainable biotech business that would have a tangible impact on lives. He held encouraging early research, including animal testing data, and had landed a spot in the prestigious Silicon Valley-based Y Combinator accelerator program responsible for launching the likes of Reddit and Airbnb. But he still needed help steering his newly formed company. Enter Sanchez de Lozada, who in 2017 moved from Washington, D.C., to San Francisco to join Mejía Oneto in building Shasqi.

"José trusted me to make sure the non-scientific aspects of the business, like HR and finance, were running smoothly," Sanchez de Lozada says.

When Sanchez de Lozada joined Shasqi, the entire company consisted of four people. Raising \$18 million in funding, the Shasqi team has since expanded to an industrious, though still intentionally lean, group of 12.

Attacking 'the impossible'

In 2018, Shasqi—a name drawn from the Inca Empire's runners who transported goods and messages—made the strategic decision to focus exclusively on oncology.

Though chemotherapy drugs have proven effective in killing cancer cells, they can also damage other parts of the body, resulting in detrimental side effects. Such effects, like the destruction of immune cells, infection, and vomiting, can reduce patients' quality of life to the extent that some cease treatment. Mejía Oneto believed that if Shasqi's technology could funnel more chemo medication directly to a tumor site, it could improve treatment effectiveness as well as quality of life.

A clinical trial in the U.S. is testing the safety and efficacy of Shasqi's proprietary Click Activated Prodrugs Against Cancer (CAPAC™) platform in up to 40 patients. By the close of 2021, Shasqi should complete the study's dose escalation phase that aims to establish the maximum tolerated dose, before proceeding into Phase 1's dose expansion phase with more patients.

It's a daring effort that Mejía Oneto, Sanchez de Lozada, and their team have grounded in rigorous science, resourceful business strategies, and relentless energy.

The hope—and plan—is to continue along in the rigorous clinical testing process proving the technology, expand it, and improve patients' lives. "We had people tell us it's impossible, that it was not going to work, but we've built our company on the belief to let science and nature speak for what is possible," Mejía Oneto says.

Both Mejía Oneto and Sanchez de Lozada say Shasqi's enterprising ethos is rooted in their shared experience at Macalester, where the two international students discovered an inspiring world of possibilities and gratitude for the opportunities they encountered.

"I think we both realize the incredible privilege we had to get a Macalester education," Sanchez de Lozada says. "That pushes us every day."

Adds Mejía Oneto: "Like Sebastian, I know how fortunate I was to have the transformative experience to attend Mac. So, whatever we have, we're going to contribute to improving the lives of others." **M**

Daniel P. Smith is a Chicago-based freelance writer.



BY REBECCA DEJARLAIS ORTIZ '06 / ILLUSTRATION BY GWEN KERAVAL

There's an abundance of headlines and hot takes in 2021 about the future of remote work, traditional office space, and work/life balance. Those questions are on sociocultural anthropologist Hilary Chart's mind, too—but as a visiting instructor in anthropology, she also wants her students to think more broadly. Together they examine today's worlds of work: through the diversity of worker experiences, historical shifts that brought us to this moment, and class discussions infused by student observations during the pandemic.

When you're teaching about this massive topic, where do you start?

From the very beginning, it's crucial that my students understand that we are not coming at this from a very formal definition, but that we're thinking of work as a human experience. The first thing we do is de-center conventional ideas of work and open our thinking to all kinds of human experiences of labor, effort, and livelihood—not just nine-to-five jobs in an office, but anything people get paid for, as well as work that's unpaid, and forms of work we don't see happening around us all the time, including important activism and advocacy work that many Mac students are engaged in. Cracking open that model allows us to see a lot of different kinds of labor that are out there, and imagine different ways of doing work.

How has your class drawn on examples from the pandemic?

Students are keenly aware of working worlds in a way that they

weren't before the pandemic. They've had to restructure their own work lives as students and manage themselves in new ways. They've seen their families and communities upended and heard conversations about the upsides and downsides of different ways of working, including flexible schedules that can blur the line between work and non-work. They've also heard more broadly about existing inequalities that the pandemic has brought to light—and the different ways that work can be privileged, including the privilege to be safe at work or to work remotely. They're thinking really critically and also bringing important conversations from their own families and communities into class.

How does your research play into your teaching?

In my research with aspiring entrepreneurs in Botswana, I've come to recognize how much loving one's work can actually be its own burden. The idea that your work has to be very meaningful or should fulfill you is very particular and relatively new. And there's this dream that being an entrepreneur is the ultimate privilege: to do what you care about, and work for yourself. Feeling passion for your work all the time, though, is difficult, and puts incredible pressure on your livelihood.

We talk about the ways in which loving your work is great, if that's the way it works out, but that it can also set people up for exploitation: "You love your work, so I don't have to pay so much, or can ask you to stay late." And when there's an expectation that jobs are deeply meaningful, they may be undervalued in terms of

compensation: "You care for children because you love it, not for the money, right?" Meaning becomes a form of payment in itself that can substitute for other kinds of remuneration.

What does an anthropological lens add to this study?

Anthropology is about appreciating and connecting across human difference—and embracing complexity. It connects everyday, intimate experiences to broad scales and trends. When we talk about migrant labor, for example, we're talking about how it supports our economy and how remittances sent home support other economies, but we're also centering human experience: what it means to cross the Sonoran Desert, what it means to live in limbo on a border. Moving across these scales also encourages students to think about their own work experiences and connect these to the shared histories of work and particular types of work ethics.

What's one key historical shift still visible in our work worlds today?

In class, we talk a lot about what anthropologist Karen Ho calls the shareholder value revolution. A lot of businesses—particularly in an American context—once saw a corporation's goals to be longevity and stability, with a lot of responsibility to its employees and its community. In the 1980s, that really changed: a company's primary responsibility came to be seen as to its shareholders.

That shift has had lots of reverberations for our work lives

today. One effect is the idea that we need to make profits more quickly, and a lack of interest in corporations' longevity. We've seen a rise of more insecure labor and more gig work, for example, when there's less responsibility felt to workers by employers. The ability to pivot or to flip a company, to move it elsewhere quickly, may be really great for shareholders, but not for employees or for the communities that businesses find themselves in.

What do you want students to carry forward?

I hope that they gain an appreciation for work's deep complexity. In one unit, we take kinds of labor that are conventionally talked about as either totally empowering or totally exploitative, and we say, "Is this the only story to be told here?" We consider the limitations of flat victim stories told about child laborers and sex workers, for example, as well as the darker sides of celebrated efforts like micro-finance promotion. People build meaningful lives under exploitative conditions, just as jobs that look amazing can take advantage of folks.

Rather than painting the world in terms of heroes and victims, I want students to see these complexities. I hope that deeper understanding will ultimately help us better address the inequities and injustices that exist in our working worlds. ■

CLASS NOTES

1969

After 15 years of raising funds for programs and scholarships as Metropolitan State University's director of development, Maureen Acosta has retired as director emerita. Maureen and her husband, John, sold their farm in Afton and now live in White Bear Lake, Minn. They have seven adult children, nine grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

1970

The Class of 1970 will celebrate its 50th Reunion on campus June 3–5, 2022.

1971

The Class of 1971 will celebrate its 50th Reunion on campus June 3–5, 2022.

1972

The Class of 1972 will celebrate its 50th Reunion June 3–5, 2022.

1977

The Class of 1977 will celebrate its 45th Reunion June 3–5, 2022.

1978

John La Pietra and his wife, Jennifer, announced the birth of a daughter, Harmony Iris La Pietra, on May 23, 2021. She joins big sister Serenity Rose.

1982

The Class of 1982 will celebrate its 40th Reunion June 3–5, 2022.

Send **MAC TODAY** your class note via email at mactoday@macalester.edu or mail it to Class Notes Editor, Communications and Marketing, Macalester College, 1600 Grand Ave., St. Paul, MN 55105-1899.

CLASS NOTES PHOTO POLICY:

We publish one photo per wedding.

We welcome photos of alumni gathered together anywhere in the world and publish as many photos as space permits.

Photos must be high-resolution, approximately 2MB or greater in file size.

If you have a question about your class note, call Editor Rebecca DeJarlais Ortiz at **651-696-6123**.



In July, Tim Taggart '09, Carolyn Black '09, Matt Wegmann '08, Megan Ritchie '09, Chris Schodt '09, Erica Tohtz '09, and Marissa Raymo '09 gathered in Keystone, Colo., for a much-needed mini-reunion.

Kate Houghton Zatz has been named chair of the American Public University System's board of trustees. She is a long-time board member and had previously served for nearly 10 years as chair.

1984

Mark Salzwedel was hired in May as a copy supervisor for BGB Group in New York City. In his spare time, he produces karaoke videos for YouTube and Instagram, writes science fiction stories, and composes music.

1986

After "enjoying another summer in Alaska," David Chidsey planned to return to Maine to begin his 36th year as a middle school teacher.



In July, Shirl Ahrens '62 visited Iceland's Vatnajökull Glacier, the largest glacial mass in Europe.

1987

The Class of 1987 will celebrate its 35th Reunion June 3–5, 2022.

1992

The Class of 1992 will celebrate its 30th Reunion June 3–5, 2022.

1997

The Class of 1997 will celebrate its 25th Reunion June 3–5, 2022.

Toby Heytens has been nominated to serve as a federal judge on the Fourth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. He has been on leave from his position as professor at the University of Virginia School of Law since 2018 to serve as Virginia's solicitor general.

2001

Annie Hallberg Halland is a county, tribal, and public health manager with the independent nonprofit health care plan UCare. She received the Minnesota Public Health Association's 2021 Albert Justus Chesley Award for her work in public health and contributions to the MPHA.

Anne Gomez Rubin has been named head of Castilleja School's upper school in Palo Alto, Calif.

2002

The Class of 2002 will celebrate its 20th Reunion June 3–5, 2022.

2004

Sarah Crangle Odegaard has been named one of Southern California Super Lawyers' 2021 Rising Stars. The designation recognizes attorneys who are 40 years of age or younger and have been practicing for 10 years or less. Sarah was named a Rising Star by Minnesota Super Lawyers in 2014 and 2015. She practices with Snell & Wilmer in Orange County and focuses on product liability litigation.

WHO'S A MAC ALUM YOU ADMIRE, AND WHY?



"I admire my first-year roomie Ayano Alexis Terai '15! She's one of the kindest, smartest women I know, and I was so lucky to live with her in Dupre." **–Carolyn Gilbert '15**

"The late, great John Van Hecke '85, who always had time for a Mac student, whether it was for a cup of coffee, a bowl of pho, job advice, an internship, or just a listening ear. He loved our alma mater, and he loved her students, and he lived her values each and every day." **–Celi Clark Haga '99**

"Dubie Toa-Kwapong '16 and Hawi Tilahun '16 are the light to campus." **–Sowinta Kay '17**

"Gayle Winegar '75 has served on the Alumni Board, operated a Mac-friendly fitness business (SweatShop Health Club), and been an active alumna for decades. For years she has housed, fed, and befriended international students who are unable to go home at the holidays. We've been friends since we met 50 years ago! I admire her work ethic, family focus, integrity, and honesty. She is a special person, and she raised a fine daughter whom I am lucky to have as a friend. That is the top accomplishment in life, in my book." **–Chris Havens '76**

"Thank you to Lee Nystrom '73 for making a significant impact on our football program by connecting the team—and me personally—with so many other amazing Macalester alumni." **–Tony Jennison, associate director of major gifts**

"I admire the brilliant and indefatigable Portlander Kate Wolf '01! She joined my organization as an innovation consultant recently and has added so much value. Kate designed and launched a new creative intake platform and process, is leading the effort to digitize our paper files, and sourced a stellar digital asset management solution. Beyond being incredibly competent, she has a wonderful spirit and infectious positivity. I feel so lucky to be reunited with Kate in this way. She does Mac proud." **–Andrew Kaufteil '01**

NOW TELL US: WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE WINTER MAC MEMORY?

Share with us via Twitter (#heymac), email (mactoday@macalester.edu), or mail (*Macalester Today*, Macalester College, 1600 Grand Ave., St. Paul MN 55105).



Oana Alexan Katz '13 married Jordan Katz in a grove of redwoods near Santa Cruz, Calif., on Aug. 31, 2019.



Maya Fehrs '11 and **Jeff Henebury '11** were married on an unseasonably warm day in November 2020 with four guests in a park in Michigan. Afterward, they jumped in a lake.

JOIN US FOR SEASON IV OF BIG QUESTIONS

We are continuing our series of intellectually stimulating events that feature Macalester faculty, staff, and alumni in conversation with President Suzanne M. Rivera. Register at macalester.edu/bq-events.

- ▶ **ST. PAUL | OCT. 7, 2021**
What is the future of a liberal arts education?
- ▶ **WASHINGTON, D.C. | OCT. 26, 2021**
How do we transform violence into peace?
- ▶ **SAN FRANCISCO | NOV. 11, 2021**
What can the "Harlem Hellfighters" teach us about Black internationalism?
- ▶ **CHICAGO | DEC. 9, 2021**
How can we increase trust in scientific advances that address societal problems?
- ▶ **NEW YORK | JAN. 12, 2022**
What's wrong with the idea of resilience?
- ▶ **LONDON | JAN. 15, 2022**
What is the future of internationalism for the U.S. and what does it mean for higher education?
- ▶ **TOKYO | APRIL 5, 2022**
When will we act on climate change?
- ▶ **SEATTLE | APRIL 21, 2022**
Is free speech possible?

TOGETHER | THE MACALESTER FUND Supporting Every Student. Every Year



Former Mac roommates **Chip Woodbury '76** and **Dan Yarosh '76** took in a Mets game at Citi Field in Flushing, N.Y. Dan is retired from Estee Lauder, and Chip is taking his final work laps at Valley National Bank.

2005

Josh Ortiz has joined the office of U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar as outreach director. He previously spent 14 years with the Minnesota Twins, most recently as senior manager, community relations and youth engagement.

2006

Aaron Beek and Anna Everett Beek have moved to Baton Rouge, La. Aaron is a Latin professor at Louisiana State University, and Anna works remotely as a researcher for North-West University in South Africa.

2007

The Class of 2007 will celebrate its 15th Reunion June 3-5, 2022.

Vanessa Waltz published an article in the *Star Tribune* about working in downtown Minneapolis during the pandemic. In "What I Don't Talk About When I Talk About the Pandemic," she writes, "I would not wish a global pandemic on anyone. And yet. ... At the risk of sounding tone deaf, spring 2020's turn of events drastically, blushing, changed work/life balance for the better."

ELLA PENNINGTON



Nina Slesinger '14 talks with **Hannah Rehak '15** about the *Downbeat* script on set.

// FROM STAGE TO SET

Just after Hannah Rehak '15 arrived at Mac in 2011, she auditioned on a whim for the campus improv troupe Fresh Concepts. "I went into the audition thinking, 'I don't even know what this is, but I guess I'll do it,' and left being like, 'I want to be these people's friend so much. And that Nina girl is so intimidating.'"

Rehak's time with Fresh Concepts became formative—and soon Nina Slesinger '14 became a close friend. Fast forward ten years: Rehak and Slesinger have teamed up on multiple creative projects, including the short film *Downbeat*, which premiered on the NoBudge streaming service last fall and appeared in the Spirit of Chicago film festival. *Downbeat* also features a musical score by another Mac friend, Bad Bad Hats lead singer Kerry Alexander '12.

The *Downbeat* collaboration started in late 2017, with Slesinger and Rehak both working and doing improv in Chicago. By that point, Slesinger had already dreamed up and drafted *Downbeat*, a story that follows two women in their early twenties who find themselves at a crossroads after a breakup between one main character and her boyfriend. "I love rom-coms but feel the genre hasn't aged well in my community. I challenged myself to take tenets of the rom-com and flip them to reflect the people I knew," Slesinger said in a 2020 NoBudge interview. "I wanted to keep qualities like charm and sweetness, but reframe the story to follow, for

instance, the quirky best friend, or the dissolution of a relationship instead of the beginning of one, and how that becomes a beginning in and of itself."

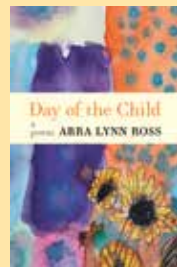
She asked Rehak to help refine the script, then assembled the plan. "Nina put the production together," Rehak says. "It was this incredible feat of pulling on all the talent of Chicago that she had at her fingertips." With Slesinger working as the film's director, Rehak was on set for the five-day shoot as an assistant director, then joined the editing process. That took another year and a half while Slesinger and Rehak juggled the project with their full-time jobs. Last fall, the *Downbeat* team finally celebrated its premiere, with a toast via Zoom.

Today the friends continue their creative pursuits in Chicago, most recently collaborating on *Nina, Hannah, and Emily in Paris*, a podcast about the Netflix show *Emily in Paris*.

And it's not a stretch to see how Fresh Concepts shaped the collaborative spirit that drives their approach. "Improv changed my life course," Rehak says. "From that experience, Nina and I share the sense that if you get your friends in a room and agree on what you want to accomplish, anything is possible. Improv is about being present, supporting one another, and believing that each one of us being here makes it better. Anything I write or produce now, it still comes from that spirit of, 'Yes, we can do it.'"



Penelope Geng, assistant professor of English, *Communal Justice in Shakespeare's England: Drama, Law, and Emotion* (University of Toronto Press, 2021)



Arra Lynn Ross '99, *Day of the Child* (Milkweed Editions, 2021)

I would for you make the kind world. A map of the compassionate Day: to go where you love and where you are loved, as I, to grasses, go. Here we are, in June water; on three? —So, on five. Together, our heads go under. Gone, the Self, shocked, by now knows the pure right bright wash so cold loosens it all our quarrels.



Ollie Schminkey '16, *Dead Dad Jokes* (Button Poetry, 2021)



This book taught me: When my dad died, I was 24, and the vast majority of the people in my life were just too young to have any real understanding of what it means to take care of someone at the end of their life. I felt incredibly isolated, but this process has taught me that so many people have had difficult relationships with terminal illness and death. I get messages almost daily from people telling me that this book has helped them feel less alone, which is amazing to me, because their messages help me feel way less alone. It's been a truly amazing way to build bridges and have honest conversations about death.

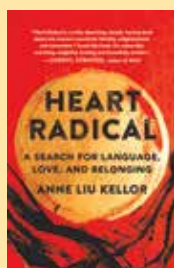
My routine: I write weekly with a poetry workshop I run on Sunday afternoons—writing in community is one of the absolute best ways to maintain a consistent writing practice while also getting to benefit from the knowledge of other folks.

Change the conversation: I think it's vital for us as a culture to shift the way we talk about death. There are no euphemisms or platitudes in this book—my father didn't "pass on," he died, while I was holding his hand, after an incredibly long and almost unbearable illness. Nothing in any of the media I had watched growing up had prepared me for the level of care I would need to give my dad, let alone how difficult and isolating it was to watch him die for months (add on to that our complicated relationship, his alcoholism, and me being trans and queer in a small town). It's so important to have real, honest, and frequent conversations about death and dying—to be frank, we're all going to die, which is something we can't change, but we can change the way that we prepare for it and care for one another. And, of course, there is room for humor in it all.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: LEFT: ANNA SWARTZ; MEL NIGRO; PHOTO PROVIDED.

Anne Liu Kellor '97, *Heart Radical: A Search for Language, Love, and Belonging* (She Writes Press, 2021)

Why is it so hard for me? Would the ease of a fluid tongue soothe the gaps in conversation, give me the missing key to social grace and protocol?



In English, I know all the cues, the proper tones, the subtle openings, the timing involved in asking a question or telling a story or paying someone a compliment. But in Chinese, I am simplistic. My story is over in a sentence or two, my questions are premeditated yet still come out stuttered, my ears are strained to hear the answer, my head nodding if I get the drift, too shy to ask for clarification. Seeking the ease of smooth exchange, seeking to feel like an insider, I sacrifice total comprehension. It's an old trick, ask anyone. Just smile and nod and you will belong.

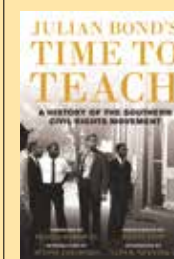


Robert Haynes '73, *Heidegger Looks at the Moon* (Finishing Line Press, 2021)



Wes Robertson '08, *Scripting Japan: Orthography, Variation, and the Creation of Meaning in Written Japanese* (Routledge, 2021)

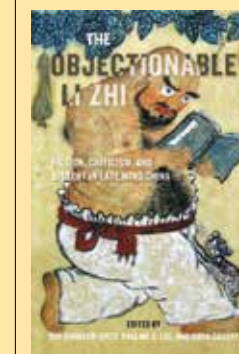
Pamela Horowitz '68 and Jeanne Theoharis, editors, *Julian Bond's Time to Teach: A History of the Southern Civil Rights Movement* (Beacon, 2021)



"Just as Julian's students loved learning it, Julian loved teaching them that they could be agents of social change. For him, that was teaching's greatest reward. . . . Oddly, though I had heard Julian speak countless times and written many of the speeches, I had never gone to a class or read



his class lectures. When I began reading them for this book, I could hear his voice. It was magical." —**Pamela Horowitz '68, Julian Bond's widow**



Rivi Handler-Spitz, associate professor of Asian Languages and Cultures, Pauline C. Lee, and Haun Saussy, editors, *The Objectionable Li Zhi: Fiction, Criticism, and Dissent in Late Ming China* (University of Washington Press, 2021)



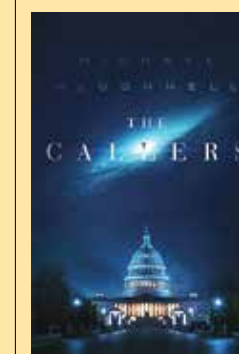
Bao Phi '97, *Hello, Mandarin Duck!* (Capstone Editions, 2021)

"On their way to the May Day parade, children come across a strange and colorful duck. What is it? Where did it come from? Hoa and Hue enlist the help of friends as they try to get the duck to the pond, its new home. But suddenly they are surrounded by people—they're in the middle of the parade! In his third children's book, Minneapolis poet Bao Phi writes about teamwork, collaboration

and acceptance as neighbors welcome and protect the new and strange duck. Illustrations by MBD (an abbreviation for a name, the artist notes, that 'does not even fit on the first page of his passport') show joy, diversity and—as a police car rolls through—apprehension. A glossary translates the many languages quoted in this wise book." —**Laurie Hertzler, Star Tribune**



David Lapakko '72, *Argumentation: Critical Thinking in Action*, 5th edition (Kendall Hunt, 2021)



Michael McDonnell '83, *The Callers* (Amazon, 2021)

'IT'S A GOOD LIFE, AND WE MAKE IT BETTER BY ENGAGING WITH OTHERS'

Steadfast service

Larry Dessem has a long history of supporting and advocating for Macalester, including serving for twelve years as a trustee; hosting alumni gatherings with his wife, Beth Taylor Dessem '73; talking with prospective students; and serving on career panels. Today as a Class Agent, Dessem uses tactics like social media videos—usually donning Mac gear with a grandbaby on his lap—to encourage his classmates to give. He's also recruiting other Class Agents to help generate momentum for the Class of 1973's 50-Year Reunion gift. In honor of his tireless efforts, the Macalester Fund honored Dessem this year with the Class Agent program's Golden Squirrel Award.



instead to take classes with four professors he still wanted to fit into his schedule. Among them: political science professor Chuck Green, who later wrote Dessem a long recommendation letter for law school. "Twenty years later, I was a faculty member and realized how much work those letters took," he says.

Giving back

"You get to a stage where you look back and think about the people and institutions that molded you," Dessem says. "My Macalester experience was so seminal in so many ways. How can I help others have that experience? Everybody's got different ways they can contribute—you learn that from day one at Mac, the lifetime of service."

The pitch

"I'd encourage anyone to get involved as a Class Agent," Dessem says. "You're supported so well by Mac staff that you really can't mess it up, but you can start to realize how rewarding it is. You think you're helping someone else, but along the way, you're helping yourself in all kinds of ways. It's a good life, and we make it better by engaging with others."

Get involved

Visit macalester.edu/alumni/volunteer to connect with the Macalester Fund's Class Agent network and learn about other opportunities to volunteer and engage with the college.

College years

Dessem enrolled at Macalester in the fall of 1969, and his college education overlapped with a period of immense and rapid change on campus and nationwide. "It was a very unsettled time, and I'm so thankful that I was at a place like Macalester, because I was surrounded by such thoughtful faculty and staff and students," he says.

Formative faculty

By senior year, Dessem could've graduated early but decided

CLASS NOTES



In July, Joan Crooks P'23 and Don Davies P'23 hosted a Mac gathering in their Seattle backyard, part of the college's summer sendoff series that connects incoming first-year students and their families with alumni and current students and families. Mac parents hosted twelve events around the country, mostly in-person and outdoors.

2008

Lauren Appelwick has been named vice president, content director for Digitas North America.

2011

Manon Gentil Banuelos and Jorge Banuelos welcomed their third child in January 2021.

Candace Groth has joined Vela Wood PC in Dallas as a mergers and acquisitions and general corporate attorney. She is licensed in Texas and Minnesota.

2012

The Class of 2012 will celebrate its 10th Reunion June 3–5, 2022.

ON CAMPUS AND ALL OVER

Virtually and in person, the Alumni Board's 29 members are connecting with both the alumni network and campus life in new ways this year. Part of that effort involves building an active and intentional presence and representation in what's happening around campus, says board president Justin Brandon '00: he's serving on the college's search committee for a new vice president focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion, and other members are involved in a range of campus committees and initiatives. The board is also continuing its

own DEI work by launching a task force to guide its practices, building mini-workshops into every meeting, and digging into introspective conversations around pronoun usage and the college's land acknowledgement practice. This fall and onward, the board's 29 members will focus their efforts in three working groups—athletics, career connections, and diversity—and create programming throughout the year that brings the campus experience to alumni, virtually.

Meet the six new members who will help drive that work:



Abaki Beck '15
Missoula, Mont.

Favorite Mac professors: My favorite professors were Juliana Hu Pegues, in American Studies, who taught me that students are producers of knowledge, not just consumers of knowledge; Soojin Pate, in American Studies, who taught me the importance of self-love in fighting for justice; and Katie Phillips, in History, who was the first Native woman professor I ever had and served on my honors thesis committee.



Richard Cambridge '70
Arlington, Va.

Favorite Mac memory: The day I met my spouse and life partner for the first time. It was on campus at the student center. Magic. We both graduated from Macalester and have been together since that day more than 50 years ago.



Mike Coleman '11
St. Paul

Favorite Mac memory: It's not a single event—it's the compilation of my time spent with Mac Tennis. These are my favorite memories because they involved both the highs and the lows of competition. And through everything Mac Tennis was always there: we were truly a team and the memory of Mac Tennis will stay with me for the rest of my life.



Masa Holocsi '25
Student Representative
Budapest, Hungary

Favorite Mac memory: So often I find that the seemingly unimportant moments are the ones that gradually change one's perception and thoughts. My favorite memories are quite simple. Like when I go into a friend's room asking for something and then end up

talking to them until 4 a.m. Or when I use the Little Free Library and fangirl over a book. Or maybe a moment when I truly realize how many amazing people are around me and end up doing a road trip to Chicago in the middle of the night.



Anthony Palma '23
Student Representative
 Mooresville, N.C.

One big lesson so far: Always be willing to learn and listen to others. By always being eager to learn, every community member is able to receive great amounts of wisdom from all the unique life experiences that our community has from every corner of the world.



Jordan Sadler '93
Chicago

What motivates me: I am very passionate about my job developing graduate clinicians who are obtaining a master's degree in speech language pathology at Northwestern University. I teach them to work with children with speech and language disorders; my specialty is autism spectrum disorder. The best moments—and they occur often!—are when both the graduate students and my clients are making progress in the same magical moment. I also love to see an a-ha! moment in a budding clinician who suddenly discovers the social justice elements inherent in work with neurodiverse individuals.

A PROBLEM-SOLVING ADVOCATE



At the global law firm Jones Day, partner Erin Sindberg Porter '00 specializes in commercial litigation and investigations. But that's far from the sole focus of her workdays. She's part of several of the firm's practices: state attorney general enforcement and investigations; business and tort litigation; investigations and white collar; and health care and life sciences practices—in addition to serving as the Minneapolis office's pro bono partner. "I've always loved having different subject matter expertise that I come upon by virtue of the experience—from how the False Claims Act is implicated to how corn cross-pollinates," Sindberg Porter says. "I really thrive on collecting that specific knowledge through practical application." In addition to her varied practice, she also chairs the state's Commission on Judicial Selection, appointed by Governor Tim Walz to lead the 49-member group that solicits, evaluates, and recommends judicial candidates. We asked Sindberg Porter to reflect on what she's learned so far.

Impressions add up.

Not every impression is made in large, grand moments. Instead, your reputation gets built on a lot of small moments—in my field, that might be demonstrating that you have a deep knowledge of the content of important documents, or understanding how to diffuse a nuanced procedural argument. While the big moments like arguing to a court or presenting to a corporate board are exhilarating, nailing the opportunities presented by the small moments are what lead you there.

Know your audience.

In private practice, there's a significant priority on delivering information quickly and confidently, starting with the headline and

then building in detail. Although I'm very comfortable presenting information orally, I have a tendency to get into the weeds, so I have to be intentional about giving the headline first. I try to think about my audience in preparing for a client call, court appearance, or internal discussion with colleagues. Seeking feedback afterward can be helpful, as can introspection without rumination.

Explore with an open mind.

At Macalester, I conducted many informational interviews with alumni when I was a student, talking to people who had jobs I thought sounded interesting or who worked in areas I thought might be a good fit for me. Not surprisingly based on my own experience, I encourage students to talk to people in different fields and roles to help them figure out what's going to be a good fit. If you don't understand a job or how an organization works, it's easier to dismiss: It can be really easy to write off a large corporation, for example, without recognizing the richness of opportunity that a large corporation can present. I want to see Macalester students be open-minded about that exploration: at big companies, small companies, public service, nonprofits, and for-profits. You are not defined by who you work for, but you can help define who you work for.

Acknowledge missteps.

Unfortunately, I have encountered people in my line of work who have tried to bluff their way through tough issues when they lack the substance. It may sound good and people may react well, but that sort of bravado and false confidence does not serve a client's best interest. Leaders in our profession must lead with knowledge, and must work to build trust with clients and collaboration with their teams. Self-awareness is key. When a leader can acknowledge to their team a failure, like a misstep in communication or an error in a presentation, the acknowledgement creates psychological safety. That's important for effective collaboration and for the quality of the work. I am always impressed with leaders who can pause briefly to acknowledge an error, but then carry on with the work that needs to be done. Similarly, I prize when colleagues own up to a mistake. The quicker we acknowledge it, the quicker we can fix it.

Continuing Education

What works at work? Three of Erin's recommendations:

- Organizational psychologist Adam Grant's "WorkLife" podcast
- Harvard Business Review's "Women at Work" podcast
- *How to Be Happy at Work: The Power of Purpose, Hope, and Friendship*, by Annie McKee

COURTESY OF JONES DAY



// MAC OLYMPIAN

Mitch Glasser '12 has competed in countless baseball stadiums since he picked up the sport as a kid. But seven years after his All-Region Mac baseball career concluded, he stepped into a ballpark that he won't soon forget: one with "Tokyo 2020" banners hanging from the rafters. This past summer, Glasser competed at the summer Olympics as a member of the Israel National Baseball Team and was named to the All-Olympic Baseball Team after batting .412, the fifth-best average at the Olympics. Midway through competition, he talked with Mac director of sports information Matt McLagan about the experience. Their conversation is excerpted and adapted here.

Unexpected path

I always said I was going to the Olympics someday—I just didn't say that it was going to be in baseball. I always joked with my wife, Maggie Wood Glasser '12, that it was going to be in table tennis. Gabe Feingold '12 and I would spend hours battling on Kofi Annan's table in the Leonard Center. Now this whole baseball thing has kind of pushed back my table tennis dream. Once this is done, I'll focus on my next sport.

The call

In 2016, I was playing for the Joplin Blast-

ers in the American Association when I received a call from the manager of the Israeli World Baseball Classic team, asking if I was interested in being part of the WBC qualifier. I said, "Absolutely." I was all in, whatever it took. I played for them in 2016 at the qualifier, and that's what started the whole journey.

Olympic spirit

Although there are no fans at our games because of COVID-19, the volunteers bring so much energy and positivity. I won't forget walking into the opening ceremony with the volunteers dancing and cheering to create a special atmosphere. In the village, all the athletes are so driven, but they also just want to feel the positivity and camaraderie before they compete. In the dugout, it is a special feeling to have everyone genuinely cheering for the success of one another.

Looking back

I have so many positive memories from Mac that I remember so vividly. And if you had told me at Macalester that I'd still be playing baseball almost 10 years after graduating—the younger version of me would not be disappointed. I couldn't be more proud to be a Scot and be out here representing the MIAC and DIII Athletics.

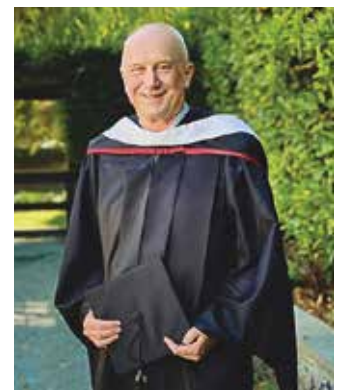
2013

Now that Lillie Carlite has earned an M.S. degree in nursing (adult primary care) from the University of Pennsylvania, she looks forward to becoming a nurse practitioner. She is currently a nurse in the University of Pennsylvania Hospital's heart and vascular intensive care unit.

2017

The Class of 2017 will celebrate its 5th Reunion June 3–5, 2022.

Hannah Scout Field has moved from Saint Paul to Olympia, Wash., where she has started in a new position with the Washington Department of Ecology.



Almost 50 years after trustee emeritus Mark Vander Ploeg '74 earned his Macalester diploma, he graduated from Stanford University with a master of liberal arts this past June. Mac friends provided plenty of encouragement along the way including professors David Lanegran, Karl Egge, and Paul Aslanian, and former president Michael McPherson. "Current geography professor Holly Barcus joined in as I wrote my thesis on the nineteenth-century transformation of the North American Great Plains—combining my geography and economics majors at Macalester with my academic work at Stanford," Vander Ploeg says. "Mac prepared me well and provided lifelong friends and mentors—a thrill at any age."

1945

Frances Barnes Hooper, 97, died June 8, 2021. She is survived by a daughter, a son, two grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

1947

June Penshorn Nelson, 96, died Aug. 10, 2021. She was a financial secretary at Macalester Plymouth United Church. Nelson is survived by a daughter and a son.

1948

Mary Jean Drever, 96, of St. Paul died June 8, 2021. She was a director of Christian education and an elementary school teacher. Drever is survived by a sister.

1949

Frances L. Christopher, 93, of Edina, Minn., died July 23, 2021. She worked as a librarian with the Minneapolis Public Libraries. Christopher is survived by a sister and a brother.

1951

Jane Carol Rudzenske Brown, 91, of Eden Prairie, Minn., died Jan. 8, 2021. She taught for more than 35 years in Hopkins, Minn., and Eden Prairie, retiring in 1989. Brown is survived by three sons, six grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Dean A. Lund, 93, of Minneapolis died July 23, 2021. He served in the U.S. Army at the end of World War II, helped prepare the territory of Alaska for statehood, and worked with the Ford Foundation in Tanzania in the early 1960s. Lund worked with the League of Minnesota Cities for more than a decade, including eight years as the organization's leader. He then took on leadership roles at the Group Health cooperative. Lund is survived by three daughters and five grandchildren.

Mildred Baker Morrow, 92, of Issaquah, Wash., died June

13, 2021. She was a medical technologist and homemaker. Morrow had a daughter, a son, six granddaughters, and 11 great-grandchildren.

Alice Rowley Panzer, 91, of Sun City West, Ariz., died June 11, 2021. She is survived by a daughter, two sons (including James Kirkham '74), six grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

1953

Thomas Lewis, 91, of Inver Grove Heights, Minn., died May 26, 2021. He served in the U.S. Army Reserve and worked at 3M. Lewis is survived by his wife, Beda, two daughters, a son, seven grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren.

1954

Marvin W. Heins, 89, of Rochester, Minn., died May 27, 2021. He served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War and retired from his family's business, the Heins Insurance Agency, in 1997. Heins also sang tenor in his church choir and coached fourth- and fifth-grade baseball. He is survived by his wife, Barbara, four daughters, two sons, 10 grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.

Sara Nelson Oja, 89, died July 29, 2021. She taught kindergarten and third grade in Detroit Lakes, Minn., for fourteen years and served for twelve years as a Detroit Lakes alderman. Oja is survived by a daughter, a son, four grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Creighton B. Sayles, 88, died May 23, 2021. With his wife, Marcia Young Sayles '53, he took over his family's printing business. Creighton was also a volunteer firefighter and launched his own fire investigation business, Eagle Investigation. He was also a member of Macalester's M Club. He is survived by his three children and their families. Marcia preceded him in death on July 8, 2019.

1955

Paul D. Webster, 90, of Wayzata, Minn., died June 2, 2021. He served in the Korean War with the U.S. Navy's Underwater Demolition Team and was a member of the U.S. Naval Reserve for twenty-four years. He worked for his family business, Webster Lumber Company, and was its president from 1962 to 2007. Webster also served as a tariff and trade representative for the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Asia and Europe and helped raise funds for universities to create endowed chairs and fellowships in wildlife conservation. He is survived by his wife, Mary, two daughters, two grandchildren, and a great-grandchild.

1956

Richard E. Nortin, 92, died July 23, 2021, in Marion, Iowa. He served with the U.S. Army in Germany. He began his career in advertising with Schuneman's Department Store, and over the next twenty-five-plus years worked for the Dayton's Company (where he was on the team that developed the Target store concept), Stark Brothers Nurseries, and Gordon's Jewelers. In the early 1990s, Nortin launched his own company, Cost Control. He is survived by four children, fifteen grandchildren, twelve great-grandchildren, and a sister.

1956

Richard L. Pryor, 86, died June 10, 2021. He worked in risk management with such large companies as Northwest Airlines and Bemis Paper Company. Pryor is survived by his wife, Liz, two daughters, three sons, fifteen grandchildren, twenty great-grandchildren, and a brother.

1957

Nancy Gesme Ellis, 83, of Prior Lake, Minn., died July 21, 2019. She is survived by her husband, Jim, three children, six grandchildren, and a sister.

Nancy Knuti Johnson, 85, of Aurora, Minn., died Nov. 26, 2020. She worked as a kindergarten teacher and had a caramel roll recipe published in the *Los Angeles Times*. Johnson is survived by her husband, William, three sons, and two grandchildren.

1958

George W. Amble, 86, of St. Paul died July 17, 2021. He was director of employee benefits and relocation for Deluxe Corporation. After retiring from a thirty-two-year career with the company, Amble volunteered with various community organizations. He is survived by his wife, Kathie, a daughter, two sons, and seven grandchildren.

1959

Jane Kallestad Winberg, 83, of Richfield, Minn., died Aug. 2, 2021. She was a church musician and educator. Winberg is survived by her husband, Robert, a daughter, a son, four grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, and two sisters.

1960

Richard L. Pryor, 86, died June 10, 2021. He worked in risk management with such large companies as Northwest Airlines and Bemis Paper Company. Pryor is survived by his wife, Liz, two daughters, three sons, fifteen grandchildren, twenty great-grandchildren, and a brother.

1961

Darlene Hodges Flemming, 81, of Ames, Iowa, died May 21, 2021. She taught in the St. Paul school system for forty years. Flemming is survived by her husband, Don, a daughter, a son, four grandchildren, a sister, and two brothers.

Curtis R. Swenson, 81, of Sarasota, Fla., died May 17, 2021. After working as a print and broadcast journalist with United Press International, Swenson began a career in corporate public relations. He worked with the Minneapolis-based firm Padilla and Speer and the New York firm Adams & Rinehart before launching his own Minneapolis-based public and investor relations consulting firm, Swenson/Falker Associates. As a philanthropist, Swenson supported Macalester

College and various performing arts organizations and charities. He was also an engaged volunteer with Macalester, including as an Alumni Board member and alumni chapter leader. He is survived by his wife, Melliss, two daughters, two sons (including John Swenson '83), and two grandchildren (including Chloe Swenson '18).

1962

Dennis E. Reynolds, 81, of Salem, Ore., died June 18, 2021. He was chief psychiatrist of the inpatient mental health service at the David Grant Medical Center at Travis Air Force Base and chief psychiatrist at Stambaugh House in San Mateo, Calif. After moving to Salem, Reynolds worked at the child and adolescent secure treatment program at Oregon State Hospital and consulted with other organizations. He retired in 2016. Reynolds is survived by his wife, Diane, a son, and a sister.

William M. Schade, 80, died May 30, 2021. He practiced law in New Ulm, Minn. Schade is survived by his wife, Sandra, a daughter, a son, four grandchildren, and sister Gretchen Schade Tjossem '61.

1963

David L. Frederickson, 80, of St. Cloud, Minn., died Aug. 13, 2021. After serving as a general medical officer in the U.S. Air Force during the Vietnam War, he was an emergency department medical director in Duluth, Minn., and St. Cloud, where he helped develop a paramedic program. Frederickson was also a faculty examiner for the Minnesota Department of Health, chief medical examiner and part-time deputy sheriff for Stearns County, and assistant physician for St. Cloud State University's hockey team. He is survived by his wife, Patricia, three daughters, a son, six grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Priscilla McKusick Hasler, 81, of Burnsville, Minn., died June 16, 2021. She was an elementary school special education teacher in Northfield, Minn., for 26 years. Hasler is survived by three daughters, five grandchildren, and a sister.

1964

Judy Bartosh Lacher, 79, of Bloomington, Minn., died June 25, 2021. She was a physical education teacher, coach, and academic advisor in the Twin Cities and the Fargo/Moorhead area. Lacher is survived by two daughters, two granddaughters, and a sister.

Linda Hudson Neuhaus, 78, died June 17, 2021. She worked for Mobil Oil for twenty-eight years. Neuhaus is survived by her longtime companion, Bob Berry, and a brother.

1965

Katherine Kauffman Bishop, 78, died Aug. 3, 2021. She taught music and worked for Sears, Lincoln National Life Insurance, H&R Block, Liberty Tax Services, and Fort Wayne Community Schools. Bishop is survived by two daughters and three grandchildren.

David E. Platt, 79, of Savage, Minn., died June 30, 2021. After working for more than forty years as a paralegal, he retired from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota in 1998. Platt is survived by a daughter, a son, nine grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren.

1967

Curtis B. Peterson, 78, of New Albany, Ind., died June 14, 2021. He served in the U.S. Army Reserve, retiring after six years as first lieutenant. He also worked for Indiana University. Peterson is survived by his wife, Judy, a daughter, a granddaughter, a sister, and brother Rolf Peterson '65.

// OTHER LOSSES



Professor emeritus of music **Donald W. Betts** of Simsbury, Conn., died May 31, 2021, at the age of 92. During the Korean War, Betts played clarinet in a U.S. Army band in Japan. He

also performed as a soloist with the Yokohama Symphony Orchestra and gave solo piano recitals at Carnegie Hall and other venues in New York City. After joining Macalester's faculty in 1959, Betts taught piano, music history, literature, and composition, and co-founded the Macalester Trio. In his original musical compositions, Betts found inspiration in the Romantic tradition while employing twelve-tone technique. He retired at the age of 77, subsequently self-publishing a book of essays and posting videos of piano performances on YouTube until he was 90. Betts is survived by daughter Katy Betts Adams '79, a son, and two grandchildren.



Former Macalester director of human resources **Lora A. Conroy**, 56, died July 1, 2021. She is survived by her husband, Patrick, a daughter, two sons, her parents, and two brothers.



Joy L. Davis, wife of late Macalester President John B. Davis Jr., died May 27, 2021, at the age of 90. She taught English and literature at Ohio Wesleyan

University, Hamline University, and St. Thomas College. Davis also published four books, including a memoir and playful analyses of the work of Jane Austen and Billy Collins. With her son, Russell King, Davis established the John B. Davis Endowed Scholarship Fund at Macalester. She also regularly attended events at the college and helped fund a bust of her late husband in the Janet Wallace Fine Arts Center. Survivors include two sons, three grandsons, and stepson Linc Davis '80.

1968

Robert B. Mikeworth, 74, of Henderson, Nev., died Aug. 4, 2021. He served with the U.S. Army in Vietnam and worked at the U.S. Postal Service data center in Minneapolis. Mikeworth is survived by his wife, Julie, two daughters, four grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, and two brothers.

1969

Bruce A. MacMullan, 74, died June 20, 2021. He pursued a long career in banking in Colorado. After his retirement, MacMullan became a metal sculptor and published *Zero to Sixty: Memoirs of an Inexplicable Scot*. He is survived by his wife, Carol, two children, a granddaughter, a sister, and two brothers.

1970

Rory Koepf Mazur, 73, of Pennington, N.J., died July 11, 2021.

She retired in 2010 after twenty-six years with the Spotswood School District, where she taught various languages, including French, Spanish, German, Japanese, and English. Mazur is survived by a son and two grandchildren.

1973

Carolyn S. Cody, 69, of Lincoln, Neb., died May 25, 2021. After earning a medical degree from the Penn State School of Medicine, she completed a surgical residency at the University of Minnesota. Cody is survived by two brothers.

1974

Evelyn Bradney Pickel, 66, died March 6, 2021. She worked as a licensed therapist and legal aide and was an author and a leader of desegregation efforts in St. Louis. She is survived by her husband, Tony, four daughters, three sons, many grandchildren, and three sisters.

1975

Quitman Pinkett of Mableton, Ga., died July 25, 2021. He was a social worker for children's services and a boys' basketball coach at St. Paul Central. Pinkett is survived by two children, four grandchildren, and a great-granddaughter.

1976

Richard Lockard, 67, died July 26, 2021, in Seattle. After working in development with the Minnesota Orchestra, the Bush School, and the Northwest Aids Foundation, Lockard joined The Production Network. At TPN, he took on many roles, including production manager, technical director, and organizer, and worked on corporate functions and such events as Bumber-shoot, the International Children's Festival, and the Northwest Flower and Garden Show. Lockard also managed the daily operations of the political blog Firedoglake and worked on the

2020 U.S. Census. Thirty-seven years ago, Lockard and his wife, Lisa Bergman, were married in a double wedding with John Caster '76 and Karen Katz '78. He is survived by Bergman, his mother, and three brothers.

Steven M. Lonergan, 65, died Feb. 24, 2021, in Scottsdale, Ariz.

1978

Paul Ernsberger, 65, died May 4, 2021, in Cleveland. After five years as an assistant professor at Weill Cornell Medical College, Ernsberger joined the faculty of Case Western Reserve University in 1989. During his 32 years at the institution, he directed the Laboratory of Metabolic Pharmacology, attained the rank of associate professor, and conducted research on obesity and the metabolic syndrome. Ernsberger also sang and played string bass with a number of choirs and bands. He is survived by a son, a sister, a brother, and his partner, Cathy Niswonger.

1979

Jacqueline L. Meyer, 65, died July 16, 2021. She retired in 2020 after forty-two years with State Farm. Meyer is survived by her husband, Joe Coopet, and four brothers.

1984

Miguel A. DelValle, 59, died July 7, 2021. He was an urban planner and consultant who helped rebuild communities and served the less fortunate in Michigan, New York, Chicago, and Cleveland. DelValle is survived by two daughters and five siblings.

1985

Reynaldo Rodriguez, 57, died June 7, 2021, in Lake Mary, Fla. An entrepreneur committed to bringing communication services and renewable energy to underserved communities, Rodriguez founded Maya Telecom in 1998 and launched the solar power companies Blue Beetle (which serves Puerto Rico) and Red Toad in 2007. He received Florida's Don Quixote Award for innovative entrepreneurs and was recognized twice by *Entrepreneur* magazine for leading one of the fastest-growing small businesses in the United States. Rodriguez is survived by his wife, Debbie Kelley, and two daughters.

1987

Guillermo Pino, 56, of Humacao, Puerto Rico, died Aug. 13, 2021. He is survived by his partner, Nilda Burnes, a daughter, his parents, a sister, and a brother.

2015

Disa Hynsjö died unexpectedly July 18, 2021. After working as a research assistant at Princeton University, she began pursuing a Ph.D. in labor economics at Yale University in 2016. Hynsjö is survived by her partner, Diego, her parents, brothers, and grandmother.

// OTHER LOSSES



William "Bill" Donovan P'80, '85, GP'13, professor emeritus of classics at Macalester, died June 4, 2021, in Minneapolis at the

age of 91. Donovan earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from Washington University and his doctorate in classics from the University of Cincinnati. Arriving at Macalester in 1966, he taught classics and art history until he retired in 1994. Donovan was selected three times to direct the summer program of the American School of Classical Studies in Athens and he served on the staff of four major archaeological excavations in Greece. He was also ordained as an Episcopal priest and was on the staff as an honorary canon at Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral Minneapolis for 45 years. Donovan was an accomplished scholar and devoted teacher, and remained engaged in the Macalester community following his retirement. He is survived by son Kevin Donovan '80 (Molly Donovan), daughter and trustee emerita Maura Donovan '85, P'13 (David Whitman '85, P'13), and four grandchildren, including Alex Whitman '13 (Cailin Rogers '13). The family welcomes the Macalester community to attend a memorial service being scheduled for 2022.



David B. Sanford, associate professor emeritus of German at Macalester and former director of the college's International Center, died May 18, 2021. He

joined the Macalester faculty in 1966 and helped launch the college's semester in Vienna program, accompanying the first contingent of students to the city in 1969. In 1972, Sanford joined the International Center as associate director, later rising to the post of director. After more than a decade, he returned to the German Department to teach language and literature, as well as topics courses such as "German and Austrian Culture in the 18th Century," "The German Novelle," "The German Comedy," and "The Role of the Artist in German Literature" before retiring in the mid-1980s. Frederick Hale '69 remembers Sanford as a "nattily dressed teacher, a competent and innovative administrator, a soft-spoken lover of art, an informed collector of antiques, and an ardent promoter of international education."



Edmund D. Meyers, former director of computing and information technology at Macalester, died May 26, 2021, in Fort Washington, Pa. He was 83. Meyers taught at Dartmouth

College and directed computing programs at the University of Chicago, the Center for the Study of Youth Development, and Haverford College. Meyers is survived by two daughters, a son, three grandchildren, and a sister.

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Green Room

This fall, more than 600 first-year students—the second-largest class in the college’s history—are settling into Mac’s residence halls. From posters to mementos from home, decorating decisions are part of that transition: the student in this undated photo, for example, transformed a Dupre single into a garden sanctuary.

What were your must-have decorations or room hacks in college? What helped your room feel like home?

Tell us:
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COURTESY OF MACALESTER COLLEGE ARCHIVES

“A planned gift is a different sort of gift. It’s an answer to the question, ‘What type of world do we hope to have in the future?’”

—Jon Walton '69 (left) and Jay Deputy



Photo credit: © B. Proud

“Being supportive of institutions that share our values is important to us,” says Jon Walton '69. “When I first entered Macalester, there were no LGBTQ groups,” he says. “But Macalester has traveled a long journey forward and has become the place of hospitality and welcome that I had hoped it would. That is not going to continue without both financial support and ongoing support. It also keeps alive the spirit of Macalester that has led the way to welcome LGBTQ people.”

After retiring from a 17-year career as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, Jon and his husband, Jay Deputy, now reside in Delaware.

However, they retain strong ties to Macalester through philanthropy and service.

“Deuteronomy 6:11 speaks of ‘drinking from wells that we did not dig,’” says Jon. “I love that as an image of philanthropy.” Together the couple has made a generous planned gift to the college, as well as scholarship support, and annual gifts to the Macalester Fund, and Jon concluded 12 years as a member of the Board of Trustees in May. “A planned gift is a different sort of gift,” he says. “It’s an answer to the question, ‘What type of world do we hope to have in the future?’”

For more information on making a planned gift, contact Theresa Gienapp at 651-696-6087 or visit macalester.edu/plannedgiving.

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