

## Trustees Plan to Vote on Need-Blind in January

By **MATTHEW STONE**  
Contributing Writer

The Board of Trustees agreed at its meeting last weekend to vote in early January on whether or not to uphold Macalester's current need-blind admissions policy, President Brian Rosenberg said.

At a public session on Saturday, Rosenberg gave students who support the current policy the opportunity to address the Trustees during time allotted for his own remarks.

The 32 trustees were on campus last Friday and Saturday for their annual fall meeting. The Board met on Saturday morning to deliver reports on the activities of trustee committees, which met during the day on Friday.

Natalia Espejo '07 spoke at the beginning of the meeting on behalf of a group of nearly 30 students present to support need-blind. She presented a petition that she said 402 Macalester students signed to express their support for retaining the current admissions policy. According to Espejo, the petition drive was a last-minute effort that garnered the signatures of an overwhelming majority of students who passed by the petition

table set up in the basement of the Campus Center last Friday.

Speaking before the trustees, Espejo characterized need-blind admissions in terms of quality and access.

"Excellence is embodied by access," she said. "I want you to know that if only 20 students cannot be here because of need-aware admissions, it is unacceptable to sacrifice their potential contribution to our campus for the sake of economic advancement. Rejecting students based on wealth runs contrary to Macalester's tradition of excellence," she said.

The Board of Trustees is the primary administrative decision-making body at Macalester and is composed of 28 alumni, President Brian Rosenberg and three non-alumni members.

Originally, the meeting agenda allowed no time for public addresses from students or alumni to the Board on the admissions policy debate.

Rosenberg ceded the floor to Espejo during the time he was scheduled to deliver his presidential report.

William Sentell '02, an alumnus who maintains the blog [www.needblind.com](http://www.needblind.com), wrote in a

Sept. 30 entry that Mark Vander Ploeg, the chairman of the Board of Trustees, turned down his request to speak for ten minutes before the Trustees.

"It suggests that the board isn't really serious about discussing this issue or hearing from alums, despite Rosenberg's call for discussion," Sentell wrote in the entry. "For an issue like this one, the Board of Trustees needs to bend over backwards to accommodate students and alums and anyone else who has a stake in this matter."

Vander Ploeg did not respond to *The Mac Weekly's* requests for comment.

Trustee John Law '72, in an interview on Wednesday, indicated that discussion needs to be a major part of the decision-making process.

"I think this is a new enough issue that I think that everyone not only has to talk but do some listening [about] the issue as well," he said.

Law spoke about the final report issued by the Resource Planning Committee, which outlines the current alternative to our

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Natalia Espejo '07 served as a student representative at last week's Board of Trustees meeting. Photo by Phil Chen.

## Need-blind Dominates LB Meeting; Barnes Absent

By **AMY LIEBERMAN**  
Contributing Writer

MCSG President Michael Barnes '06 was unexpectedly missing at the first meeting of the new Legislative Body (LB) on Tuesday. In Barnes' absence the meeting

became an impromptu debate over need-blind admissions between need-blind advocate William Sentell '02 and President Brian Rosenberg, who supports a proposed change in the policy.

Barnes, who was supposed to deliver a State of the Campus address, said that his

unexpected absence was not an "ideal scenario" for him, but claims that he made a conscious decision to miss the meeting.

"The speech couldn't be had because it wasn't ready...it wasn't right," Barnes said. "It is a difficult question to answer: What is the state of the campus?"

Barnes said that his State of the Campus Address, which he now plans to give on Oct. 12, is completed and in "better shape."

Rosenberg said that Barnes had invited him to address the meeting briefly about upcoming opportunities for students to discuss the need-blind issue, and that he was not forewarned of Sentell's presence.

Sentell '02 was not on the agenda but a motion quickly passed giving him time to speak. Sentell read a two-page letter that he had emailed to several MCSG members earlier in the day and distributed to all those present at the meeting. The letter castigated President Rosenberg for his support of a move from a need-blind to a need-aware policy as proposed by the Resource Planning Committee report.

Sentell encouraged students to become involved in the need-blind admissions debate and to voice their opposition to President Rosenberg.

"The Administration does not want a public debate about this issue...public debates are too messy, especially when

your proposal involves creating an affirmative-action program for wealthy applicants," Sentell said. "This issue is not about the financial survival of the college. It's about our priorities as an institution and our willingness to find creative solutions."

Sentell stated that a group of students has already gathered over 400 signatures in support of need-blind admissions last week, and that the website he has created, [www.needblind.com](http://www.needblind.com), has had over 900 hits in the past two weeks.

"Macalester has a long history of progressive policies. But rarely were these policies dreamt up on the third floor of Weyerhaeuser. Rather, they were born in the dorm rooms, the classrooms and the dining hall," Sentell said.

Sentell accused President Rosenberg of continuing "to muddy the ethical waters with talk about our 'moral responsibility' to build prestige and pedigree while he downplays the proposal's real flaws."

President Rosenberg spoke after Sentell, noting that he wasn't prepared to respond to "questions or accusations."

Rosenberg said that he hopes to encourage student participation in debating the need-blind admissions policy, and noted two important things for students to keep in mind as they discuss the issue.

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## Men's Cross Country Races to Fifth



The men's cross country team competed in Wisconsin on October 1 at the Division Three Pre-National Meet. Story on page 9. Photo by Nate Bell.