MACALESTER

Planning Mac in Your City - Guide for Alumni Volunteers

Thank you for volunteering to host a Mac in Your City gathering on October 5, 2017! Mac in Your City brings alumni together to build community and connection, and to encourage alumni to engage with the college. We rely on alumni volunteers to help us host and manage these events, to give as many alumni as possible the opportunity to gather together, and to spread the word about opportunities to stay connected to the larger Macalester community.

This guide covers the following details for Mac in Your City volunteer hosts:

- Goals and Audience
- Finding a Location
- Finding a Venue
- Hosting In-Home
- Swag and Materials
- Welcome and Program
- Promotions and Outreach
- Important Dates and Deadlines

Questions? Please contact Daymond Dean '91, associate director of Alumni Engagement at ddean1@macalester.edu or 651-696-6079.

Goals and Audience

The purpose of Mac in Your City is to help alumni connect with the Macalester community in their area and reconnect with the college. Macalester staff will help you invite all alumni that live in your area - the goal of your event is to create a space where Mac alumni can meet new friends, catch up with old friends and learn how they can get involved with Macalester in their lives today. If everyone leaves having signed in, received information about how to connect with the college and having spoken to at least one alum that they didn't know before coming, you can call it a rousing success!

Macalester staff can help you see how many alumni live in your area. Depending on where you live, there could be thousands of Macalester alumni or less than 20. Thinking about the potential number of alumni at your event will affect where you host the event and the type of programming you include. If you live in a larger area with the potential for a high number of attendees, you may want to consider a bar/restaurant or even a company with a large enough meeting space. We suggest asking a few other alumni to help greet and welcome people so that everyone in the room feels the connection with Macalester. If there are fewer people attending, you may want to consider hosting the event in your home where everyone can have the opportunity to introduce themselves and perhaps hear a more intimate update about the college.

Historically, young alumni are the biggest participants in Mac in Your City gatherings. Over 50% of attendees in 2016 were graduates of the past 5 years, with less than 20% of attendees having graduated from Macalester prior to 2000. Depending on the number of alumni in your area, you can expect a good representation from young alumni who may be new to the area or learning how to build community after college. Your venue may also impact the range of class years who attend - bars may be more appealing to a younger crowd, whereas crowded bars and restaurants may pose challenges for older alumni with hearing issues.

Finding a Venue

There are several variables to keep in mind as you look for a venue for your Mac in Your City gathering: the number of alumni in your area, previous Mac in Your City attendance (if applicable) and the kind of atmosphere you want to create. You will need to identify and reserve a venue for your Mac in Your City gathering by **Friday, August 25.** Please consider the following question while looking for a venue:

- Is the venue accessible by public transportation?
- Is it accessible for people who cannot climb stairs?
- Is there a separate meeting room or event space that one can reserve?
- Is there a cost to reserve a space?
- Does that space include A/V (particularly a mic and speakers)?
- Are there food and/or beverage minimums?
- Will people who are vegan, vegetarian and/or gluten-free be able to eat/drink there?

Venues to consider include but are not limited to: bars, restaurants, coffee shops, bookstores, wine bars, breweries, distilleries, bowling alleys, common rooms, office spaces. The venue you choose may affect the class years of those who attend - younger alumni may be more inclined to come to a bar than older alumni, those with children may be more inclined to attend if you are in a child-friendly space. Please note that while there is limited budget available to support events happening in our chapter cities, we cannot cover food/beverage minimums for all Mac in Your City gatherings. Because Macalester is a non-profit organization, you may claim any expenses from Mac in Your City as charitable donations and deduct them on your tax returns - just keep those receipts.

If you are not familiar with the venue, you may want to visit during the same time that you are planning to host your gathering so you can see how the space is laid out, the noise level and the best places to place signage. You will need to have a table for name tags and the sign in-sheet, ideally placed towards the front of the meeting area.

Hosting In-Home

Hosting in your home provides a more casual and intimate setting that may be more welcoming to alumni who are not interested in going out to a bar or who may have hearing/ability restrictions. If you decide to host in your home, you will need to provide food

and beverages. Some hosts choose to provide food and beverages themselves, typically light hors d'oeuvres (veggie platter, chips and dip, cheese and crackers, cookies) and soda/lemonade/coffee; others have made their gathering potluck and asked guests to bring something to share.

Bar/Restaurant		**Your Home**	
Pros	*Cons*	*Pros*	*Cons*
Food and drink are available to purchase	May have food/beverage minimums	Easy to accommodate different dietary needs	Must provide food and beverage
Less set up and clean up required	Less intimate/may be harder to have conversation	More intimate and casual	Requires sharing your home address, more set up and clean up required

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Swag and Materials

Each Mac in Your City gathering will receive the following from the Alumni Office:

- Mac in Your City table tents and posters
- Sign-in sheet
- Registrations as of the day the box was mailed
- Printed and blank name tags
- Pens and sharpies
- Postcard with information on how to connect with Mac
- Drawing or award prizes

This will either be sent via US Postal Service to the volunteer host, or brought by attending staff if applicable. Depending on the size of your gathering, your event box will include several pieces of swag for prizes. We recommend giving them out during your program using the following criteria:

- Traveled the farthest
- Moved to the city most recently
- Most "seasoned" alum (aka the earliest class year)

Welcome and Program

For events that have more than 15 or so guests, ask 2-3 other alumni to be greeters with you. You want to make sure everyone feels welcomed and sees the connection with Macalester. These greeters can also ask people to sign in and make sure they have a nametag, the engagement postcard and swag.

Regardless of venue, we encourage you to offer a welcome about 20 minutes into your Mac in Your City gathering. This can be fairly brief - begin by thanking everyone for coming and remind them to sign in. You should also point out the engagement postcard and swag and encourage folks to stay connected to the college. Here are some talking points you may find helpful:

- Make sure to sign in so that you can get updates and information from Macalester
- Macalester alumni are here for you - wherever you are, you have a lifelong support system. Just look around!
- Coming to events and hanging out with friends is just one way to stay engaged with the Macalester community. Check out the postcard to see how you can stay connected throughout the year through career networking, volunteer opportunities, financial support and more.
- Macalester has built a legacy of demanding better of itself, its students, its faculty and its staff. Your participation in the Annual Fund is a vote of confidence and an indicator that you support Macalester's constant striving to live its values. Gifts of any amount allow Macalester to respond to the immediate needs of our students and faculty and to support every aspect of the Mac experience for students on campus today. Your participation, along with the participation of many other donors, helps sustain Macalester with a broad base of support. Please join me in making a gift to the Annual Fund.

If you have a small group or are hosting in a smaller venue or separate meeting room with AV or where background noise is not an issue, we highly recommend also doing a round of introductions. Even if it takes 5-10 minutes, this is a great way for folks to get to know who is in the room and to encourage future conversations and connections. Please ask alumni to share their name, gender pronouns, major at Macalester and what is taking up most of their time right now (school, job, family, etc).

Promotion and Outreach

The college will send postcards and emails to alumni in your area inviting them to attend and participate in Mac in Your City. However, we know that nothing inspires folks to come to an event like personal outreach from a friend! Please help us spread the word about your Mac in Your City event by posting on social media and reaching out to your Mac friends to encourage them to attend.

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Important Dates and Deadlines

August 25	Event location set and confirmed with Alumni Office
August 28	Invitations emailed and mailed this week
Sept 22	Swag and materials mailed to hosts
October 2	Final rosters emailed to hosts
October 5	Mac in Your City
October 6	Hosts to return attendance sheets and postcards to Alumni Office