

Projections from the Chair GTU PRESIES: Our Time in Mac Geography

Caroline Fitzpatrick '26 & Oliver Matus-Bond '26

Oliver:

On my first day of school, before I had taken any classes, at 7:30 AM I clocked in to my new job: Office Assistant at the Geography Department. I came into college unsure of what I wanted to major in and feeling unprepared for this next chapter. But as I walked into the office, Laura Kigin greeted me and taught me how to work the printer, take scans, and brew strong coffee to Bill's liking. Quickly, my routine three days a week became opening up the lounge and putting in two scoops of coffee for a brew (which four months later I found was still too weak!). As mundane as these tasks may seem, they exposed me to the people in the department that would soon become an intrinsic part of my Macalester experience.



As I sat at that desk my freshman year, professors in the department continuously came up to me, badgering me about what major I would declare. After two semesters of Dan going over different courses I would like and many different students cycling in, exposing me to different scopes of geography I would someday study, I found that this was the department I felt a tie to. After exploring other departments, I declared a Geography major without taking any courses in the department, because I was not only excited by the things I could study, but also by the community I could be a part of.

Having completed hundreds of hours in 109 (Remote Sensing Lab), debated on countless maps (mainly with Tim), and spent an excessive amount of time bothering SRM TAs, I have finally finished my time at Mac Geography. I am grateful for all of the friends and mentors who have made my past four years go so quickly.

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Projections from the Chair

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Caroline:

Like Oliver, my Macalester Geography story starts way back on the first day of college. My curiosities about cities and urban spaces led me to enroll in Metro Analysis with Laura Smith during the first semester of my first year. As a fresh high school graduate, I immediately felt intimidated and anxious in this course, as I was academically challenging myself like I never had before. With that being said, the endless support I received from my peers and Laura provided me with a blanket of comfort and assurance that never let me give up or feel alone. My peers in that class shared endless wisdom with me about navigating Macalester and the Twin Cities, and inspired me to pursue a Geography major.

Over the following few years, I continued taking every Geography course I possibly could, and fell more and more in love with the Geography community here and the Twin Cities at large. Opportunities to connect with community partners have been of particular influence to me, and have pushed me to apply my learning from the classroom into the real world. I am eager to continue learning about people, place, and the interconnectedness between people and place after I graduate.

I feel eternally grateful for the Macalester Geography Department for fostering this special space of openness and inclusivity that has not only shaped my experience at Macalester but has also shaped me as a person. If I were to share any words of wisdom to the next generation of geographers, I would say to stay curious and continue building community!

Congratulations, Geography Class of '26!

Not pictured: Caleb Browne, Julia Castellano, Lily Gomi, Alice Gray, Dylan Herlihy, Max Leussing, James McConnell, and Georgia Richter.

SAM ANTHONY

What geography song do you have on repeat right now?
"I've Been Everywhere" by Johnny Cash"



BEN ARNOLD



Advice for the next Mac Geographers?
"Be creative and ask for help!"

FREEMAN BODA



Favorite Geography Class?
"Laura Smith's Geography of the US and Canada"

JOSHUA CORORVE



Mac Geography in one word is:
"Sprawling"

TIM DELVENTHAL



Favorite Geography Class?
"Geography of Development and Underdevelopment"

Congratulations Geography Seniors!

**CAROLINE
FITZPATRICK**



Favorite memory from Geography?
“Hanging in the geog lounge”

**CATHERINE
KANE**



What geography song do you have on repeat right now?
“Georgia On My Mind by Ray Charles”

**EZRA
KORN-MEYER**



Mac Geography in one word is:
“JOYFUL”

**RISHIKA
KUNDU**



Favorite Geography Class?
“Borders and Belonging with Rupak”

**SOL
LANDMAN-
FELDMAN**



Favorite memory from Geography?
“The geography progressives!”

**OLIVER
MATUS-BOND**



Advice for the next Mac Geographers?
“Map everything you can”

**MARA
PIRONE**



Best Geography Field Trip?
“Trip to the Gifberg in South Africa”

**WILL
ROSENBERG**



Favorite Geography Class?
“Geography of U.S. and Canada”

**BRENNA
SOMDAHL-SANDS**



Advice for the next Mac Geographers?
“Take a class with every professor!”

**ELIZABETH
TREVATHAN**



Favorite Geography Class?
“Neotropical Landscapes”

**DALLAS
WATSON**



Best Geography Field Trip?
“Eric Carter's trip through Minneapolis and Minnehaha Falls”

**ELLA
WILLIAMS**



Advice for the next Mac Geographers?
“Attend SRM Office Hours!!”

Geography Honors Day

Sophia Weil '28

On April 15, the Macalester Geography Department celebrated Geography Honors Day. Ben Arnold, Julia Castellano, Tim Delventhal, Alice Gray, Oliver Matus-Bond, and Mara Pirone presented their honors thesis presentations. Congratulations honors students!



Spring Happenings

Henry Kling '28



Dallas Watson '26 presented at the 2026 Scholars at the Capitol Showcase. Dallas presented in the Minnesota State Capitol Rotunda to state policymakers and members of the public about "The Black Aquatic Tradition: Reclaiming Bodies of Water." Congratulations Dallas!



During spring break, Julia Castellano, Alice Gray, Mara Pirone, Ben Arnold, Oliver Matus-Bond, and Tim Delventhal presented their honors projects at the AAG (American Association of Geographers) meeting in San Francisco, CA. Congratulations!



This year, UMN Geography hosted Mac geographers at the third annual UMN x Macalester Geography social. Hope to see them again soon!



Spring Dinner

2026 Spring Dinner Recap

Henry Kling '28

Mac Geographers gathered for this year's Spring Dinner to celebrate everyone's hard work, the graduating seniors, and another great year in Geography!



Geography Department Awards



Macalester Geography Award for Excellence of Scholarship:
Julia Castellano



David A. Lanegran Award:
Caroline Fitzpatrick, Catherine Kane, Oliver Matus-Bond, & Will Rosenberg



Hildegard Binder Johnson Prize in Geography:
Zayna Hopkins, Sophia Spisak, Patrick Angelo Sursano, & Kelsey Blickenstaff (not pictured)

2026 Midwest Undergraduate Geography Symposium

Henry Kling '28

This year, Macalester Geography had the opportunity to host the Midwest Undergraduate Geography Symposium (MUGS). MUGS is a unique opportunity for undergrads in geography to meet other students, present their own geography research, and get to hear about others' work. Many of Mac's students presented, and Professor and AAG President Bill Moseley delivered the keynote presentation.



I-Chun Catherine Chang Promoted to Professor

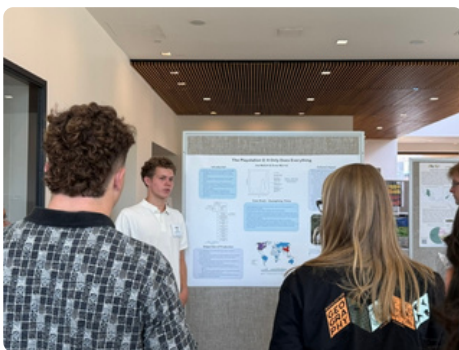
Henry Kling '28



Congratulations to Professor I-Chun Catherine Chang on her promotion to full Professor. Catherine works very hard to support students and the department, and we're very lucky to have her!

Thank you for all that you do for Mac Geography, Catherine.

Congratulations!



NEXT ISSUE

- Summer Recap
- Student Research Spotlight
- And much more!



Alumni, What's Up?

We've heard from several of you in response to our past calls to action and hope to include more alumni updates in future editions.

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

[Submit an update here](#)

Want More?

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



THE GRATICULE

Macalester Geography Department Newsletter

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Support Geography!

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

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