THEY WERE FIRST

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

PAGE 20
ON THE COVER: 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

FEATURES

Data Driven 12
For journalist Aaron Mendelson ’09, numbers spark stories.

Creating Spaces of Belonging 14
Tani Prell ’13 is helping to expand ideas of what it can mean to be Jewish.

Voices from the Opioid Epidemic 16
History professor Amy Sullivan examines the opioid epidemic’s past, present, and future.

They Were First 20
In their own words: six first-generation college students share their journeys.

Golden Sounds 26
Still led by Gary Hines ’74, Sounds of Blackness is celebrating 50 years.

Nine Timeless Lessons from MacDo 30
What does a 1965 etiquette guide teach us today?

Partners with a Purpose 34
With their biotechnology startup, two alumni aim to improve treatment and quality of life for cancer patients.

Lecture Notes: Worlds of Work 36
Anthropology instructor Hilary Chart explores human experiences of labor, effort, and livelihood.

DEPARTMENTS

Correspondence 2
Sounding Board 3
1600 Grand 4
Presidential inauguration, involvement fair, and river research

Class Notes 38
Weddings 40
Books 42
In Memoriam 48
Last Look 52

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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 truly 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 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 extend since my arrival on campus on June 1, 2020. It’s with that care—for one another, and for that 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 and effective communication and argumentation, problem-solving, and teamwork with people who bring to each encounter very different lived experiences. Our alumni bring these skills and experiences to the places where they volunteer and in 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 to always innovate in ways that push our boundaries. “What’s 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.

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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 challenges, social inequalities, 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, pharmacists, 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.
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.”

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.
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’

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 successor 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 pads 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 was established as a program 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 those 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 a feeling immense pride in a journey yet to unfold. He knows success’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 save 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 Macalester’s support,” he says. “Being part of this program is probably the most rewarding thing I’ve done in my life so far.”

Athletics

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 Malavey. “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 they’re dealing outside of 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 scholar- ship 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 a National Science Foundation project to study the Mississippi.

What was your best day of research?
Zella Lobo ’22 (Portland, Ore.):

What do people get wrong about this subject?
Rebecca Drucker-Oehren ’22 (Huntington Woods, Mich.). People just plainly do not know what locks and dams are, what their purpose is, or that there are these in the Twin Cities area. And most of those people are embarrassed to not know! So we spend a lot of time reassuring folks that whatever questions they have are welcome and worth answering and understanding.

What’s your most surprising discovery?
Alexandra Jabourpour ’23 (Salem, Va.):

What people get wrong about this subject?
Professor Roopali Phadke:

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 it’s in our backyard, what we do here in Minnesota impacts the entire Mississippi river, it begs the question: whose voices are being left out? According to the 270 surveys that we have collected so far, we have been spending a lot of time surprising folks about the differences 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 participants and we had one of our best survey counts.”

What people get wrong about this subject?
Professor Roopali Phadke:

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

• assessing gender and race/ethnicity
• mapping the diversity of New Zealand’s mite harvestmen, tiny arachnids
• creating an ethnography of police culture and its possible changes
• exploring the science of establishing causality

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• creating an ethnography of police culture and its possible changes
• exploring the science of establishing causality

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 Balled 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 Tackling 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 Mike Myers; Born into It: A Fan’s Life by Mike Myers; Born into It: A Fan’s Life by Mike Myers; Born into It: A Fan’s Life by Mike Myers; Born into It: A Fan’s Life by Mike Myers. Perhaps I’ve been subconsciously missing my homeland—I really enjoyed Canada by Mike Myers. Born into It: A Fan’s Life by Mike Myers. By the way, perhaps I’ve been subconsciously missing my homeland—I really enjoyed Canada by Mike Myers. Born into It: A Fan’s Life by Mike Myers.

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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 macetoday@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 need to be well contextualized in the stories those numbers tell.

"Not that people can’t follow numbers in audio reporting. They just need to be well contextualized in the stories those numbers tell.

Mendelson explains how crucial data research was in developing his story. He discovered that business linked 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 report dealing 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. 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 columns.

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.

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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.”
Creating Spaces of Belonging

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 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 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.

“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. “The Jewish present and future is multicultural.”

“Even when I didn’t know Hebrew yet, it grounded me the first time I heard it.”
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 syringes exchange services emerged.
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—one the medical model with its prescriptions and evidence-based care—become more integrated. Haaselden Betty Ford is starting to use phrases like “reducing harm”; clients might leave with Narcan and be on medications. This was unheard of in our 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 so when people 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 our histories and 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 my high school?” 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 near-fatal 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 hysteric follow-up by a concerned 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 survival and 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 disturb me and I frequently traversed in all kinds of experiences. I knew that many people survive opioid overdoses, but when I first used the word, almost everyone had a hysteric follow-up by a concerned 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 survival and 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 disturb me and I frequently traversed in all kinds of experiences. I knew that many people survive opioid overdoses, but when I first used the word, almost everyone had a hysteric follow-up by a concerned 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 survival and 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 disturb me and I frequently traversed in all kinds of experiences. I knew that many people survive opioid overdoses, but when I first used the word, almost everyone had a hysteric follow-up by a concerned 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 survival and not surviving. And that sticky stigma always seemed to attach itself to these conversations: whether visible or more elusive, it was always there.

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

Professor Amy Sullivan

Once I could no longer see 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.

It was definitely one of the few kids in the entire country during the 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 fear-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 ran 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, 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 Rummiller Hope Network, but I didn’t understand how it was connected to syringes exchanges, clean needles, and the grassroots philosophy of harm reduction until a few years later. Although legal efforts to increase access to naloxone were still in flux, 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 this stigma was 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 Rummiller Hope Network, following a growing national movement to be creating worlds to help with changing state laws that kept Narcan away from people who needed it the most—especially 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
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. 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 sending college fliers 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 work, such as those in the Bonner Community Scholars Program, Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship, and QuestBridge—that include many first-generation students.

Jenisch 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 Jenisch 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.”

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

BY KIM CATLEY / PHOTOS BY DAVID J. TURNER

‘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 people’s expectations focused on families.

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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, so 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 under-represented 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 exactly 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.

‘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 a 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.

I had to write. I had never been to Minnesota or Macalester before I arrived on campus to move in. 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.

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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 towards 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 sort of behaviors that are essential and expected at a school like Macalester, like feeling comfortable walking into professor’s office hours and asking 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 well. 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 who 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 make the college decision that is right for them. Students make the college decision that is right for them.

I volunteered 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 those 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’

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‘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.

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Austin Ahlam ’21, Norfolk, Neb.

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 (IOG) 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 Mayes Undergraduate Fellowship: Housed within the IOG 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 (formally known as Samplers) provide a broad look into life at Macalester.

O’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.

POSE: In 2022, Macalester will welcome its first cohort of Posebridge (or POSE) Scholars, a 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.

Kim Catley is a writer based in Richmond, Va.
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 from Minneapolis to 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 city’s 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
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 as 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, rap—every sound of Blackness. “You could get people to perform it!”

In 1985, Macalester had launched an experimental and ambitious program called Expanded Educational Opportunities (CEO) 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, expansive at its height, 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 new students like Hines’s new Black students, far from their families and culture, and feeling out of place in their new environment, the Sounds of Blackness were a home. “The black students had a clubhouse. They white roommates but there was something familial about the Sounds of Blackness that was very welcoming,” 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 person is to say ‘no.’ They’re always going to question your credentials, but be prepared to answer yes. You have to be able to say yes to everything.”

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 Mahmood El-Kati, Hines had sked a then-20-year-old African American music student named Todd McInerney to join the ensemble and make 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 host professional artists. “We keep a grassroots and hands-on approach with city residents in addition to the high profile events,” he told me of the group, which includes maintaining a regular presence at neighborhood events. In addition to its Grammy Award-winning excellence, the ensemble has also won four Stellar Awards and one NAACP Image Award, and was nominated for an Emmy in 1999.

In 1991, songwriters and producers Terry Lewis and Jon Zavitz (aka 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.”

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.
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, 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 García 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.
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 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, unpinned, 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—exactly what you sincerely feel. Make it 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."

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?"

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 strain backed stinks or lugubrious glooms or flaxsash gold lettered ‘thank you’s decorating the front page."

BE COURTEOUS.

"Times, situations, customs may change, but courtesy is always courtesy...Informal note paper is acceptable. Be sure it is plain with no strain backed stinks or lugubrious glooms or flaxsash gold lettered ‘thank you’s decorating the front page."

Find your own style and proceed from there."

STOP SAYING HI!

"Only a MacDuffer would think it enough—or when meeting and greeting his ‘elders’? Just to twang: ‘Hi!’? (That raspy old, ghastly old/Naasalized ‘hi’)/When ‘elders’ pass/fly live than the full gushing ment/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."

BE YOURSELF.

"Part II. ‘Find your own style and proceed from there.’"

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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 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 Juniors. I’m first-generation, so I follow the rules: I read all three. 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 Owen 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 wear 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 Owen, 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 Owen 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.
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 Mejía Oneto earned a PhD in organic chemistry from Emory University, then a medical degree from the University of Minnesota. He then became an orthopedic 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 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 traveled 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 mitigating 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 orthopedic surgeon, he noticed 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 the 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 chemotherapeutic agents 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 Protodrugs 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 1a 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.”

Daniel P. Smith is a Chicago-based freelance writer.
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 do is de-center conventional ideas of work and open our thinking that we’re thinking of work as a human experience. The first thing that we are not coming at this from a very formal definition, but

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 then 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 pressure on your livelihood.

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.

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, 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.

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

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

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

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

The Class of 1969 will celebrate its 50th Reunion June 3–5, 2022.

In July, Tim Taggart ’09, Carolyn Black ’09, Matt Wegmann ’08, Megan Ritchie ’09, Chris Schodt ’09, Mark Salzwedel was hired in 2002 to the MPHA.

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

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

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

In July, a rising star in the Minnesotan health care system, Sarah Crangle Odegaard has been recognized for her work in public health and contributions to the MPH.

The Class of 2004 will celebrate its 20th Reunion June 3–5, 2022.

Sarah Cingle 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 2016 and 2015.

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The Class of 1987 will celebrate its 30th Reunion June 3–5, 2022.

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

In 1984, Mark Salzwedel was hired in May as a copy supervisor for RGB Group in New York City. In his spare time, he produces karaoke videos for YouTube and Instagram, writes science fiction stories, and composes music.

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

The Class of 1978 will celebrate its 50th Reunion June 3–5, 2022.

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

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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 in downtown Minneapolis, most recently working on a podcast about the Netflix show Emily in Paris, a podcast about the Netflix show Emily in Paris, a podcast about the Netflix show Emily in Paris.

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 experience. It’s all about beings there and supporting one another, and believing that each one of us is special and has something unique about the other,” Slesinger said. “I wanted to keep qualities like charm and sweetness, but reframe the story to follow, for instance, the quickly best friend, or the dissolution of a relationship instead of the beginning of one, and how that becomes a beginning of in and of itself.”

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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. “I am a person who has a job and I just love to perform. I love being there for people and having fun with them.”

Slesinger concurs. “I don’t think I could have had the experience that I did with Fresh Concepts and Downbeat without that spirit of, ‘Yes, we can do it.’”
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. In Chinese, I am simplistic. My story is over in a sentence or two, my questions are premeditated yet still come out stilted. In English, I know all the cues, the proper tones, the subtle openings.
‘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, talling 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 for Mac gear with a grandbaby on his lap—to encourage his classmates to give. He’s also recruiting...
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 can draw 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, they require a nuanced procedural argument. While the big moments like arguing to a court or presenting to a corporate board are exhilarating, 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: 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.

Acknowledging mistakes.

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 come up to a mistake. The quicker we acknowledge it, the quicker we can fix it.

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. 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 might be a good fit for me. Not surprisingly based on my own experiences, 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: 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.

The Class of 2017. © Justin Williams

Mitch Glasser ’12 has competed in count- less baseball stadiums since he picked up the sport as a kid. But seven years after his All-Region Mac baseball career con- cluded, 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 Israeli National Baseball Team and was named to the All-Olympic Baseball Team after batting .412, the fifth-best average at the Olympics. Midway through com- petition, he talked with Mac director of sports information Matt McCaughan about the experience. Their conversation is ex- cepted 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. Babe 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 over, 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, ask- ing 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 atmo- sphere. 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 spe- cial 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 ver- sions of me would not be disappointed. I couldn’t be more proud to be a Scot and be out there representing the MAC and DIII Athletics.

Almost 50 years after trustee emeritus Mark Vander Plaag ’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 Amslan, and former president Michael MclPheron. “Current geography professor Holly Barcus joing us 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 Plaag says. “Mac prepared me well and provided lifelong friends and mentors—a thrill at any age.”

CLASS NOTES

2013

Now that Lillie Carlii has earned an M.S. degree in nurs- ing adult primary care from the University of Pennsylvania, she looks forward to becoming a nurse practitioner. She is cur- rently 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 Scott Field has moved from Saint Paul to Olympia, Wash., where she has started in a new position with the Wash- ington Department of Ecology.
Francis Barnes Hooper, 97, died June 8, 2021. She was survived by a daughter, a son, seven grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

Robin Carnevale, 53, a financial secretary at Macalester Plymouth United Church. Nelson is survived by a daugh- ter and a son.

June Penshorn Nelson, 96, died Aug. 10, 2021. She was a member of St. Peter’s Lutheran Church and an elementary school teacher. Drever is survived by a sister.

Mary Jean Drever, 96, of St. Paul died June 8, 2021. She was a librarian for the Minneapolis Public Librar- ies. Christopher is survived by a sister.
IN MEMORIAM

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 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 Scouter. He is survived by his wife, Carol; two children, a granddaughter, and two brothers.

1970
Rory Koepp 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 her husband, Joe; a son, and three sisters.

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 served 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
Quilman Picknett of Mablioton, Ga., died July 25, 2021. He was a social worker for children’s services and a boys’ basketball coach at St. Paul Central. Picknett is survived by two children, four grandchildren, and a great-granddaughter.

1976
Richard Lockard, 47, died July 26, 2021, in Seattle. After working in development with the Minnesota Orchestra, the Bush School, and the North West Aids Foundation, Lockard joined the Production Network. At TPM, he took on many roles, including production manager, technical director, and organizer, and worked on corporate functions and such events as Bumber-Shock, the International Children’s Festival, and the NorthWest Flower and Garden Show. Lockard also managed the daily operations of the political blog Pandoglake 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.

1979
Jacqueline L. Meyer, 65, died July 16, 2021. She retired in 2006 after forty-two years with State Farm. Meyer is survived by her husband, Joe Copeit; 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 company Blue Beetle in 2010. He received Florida’s Don Quijote 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, Debba Kelley, and two daughters.

1987
Guillermo Pino, 56, of Humacao, Puerto Rico, died Aug. 13, 2021. He is survived by his partner, Nilda Burns, a daughter, his parents, a sister, and a brother.

1995
Disa Mynasi 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. Mynasi is survived by her partner, Diego, her parents, brothers, and grandmother.

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 choral groups. He is survived by a son, a sister, a brother, and his partner, Cathy Niswonger.

1997
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 1964, 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 in 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.

2002
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1998
Edmund D. Meyers, former director of the International Center, died May 18, 2021. He joined the Macalester faculty in 1964 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 Novel,” “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.”

2003
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 1964 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 Novel,” “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.”
“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. 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.
First day of class photo? Check.