The Next Big Idea

Nine professors share the big ideas they would like to see implemented in today’s world.

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ON THE COVER: In our pandemic-shadowed world, it’s easy to think small: To imagine a world in which we tamp down our biggest dreams and place limits on what seems possible. That’s why we asked Macalester professors to think big—really big.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: CHARLES JISCHKE

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Pays it Forward
Her long career spans law, to human rights, to working to eliminate racism and empower women.

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Visiting sociology professor Alisha Kirchoff explores how college shapes who students are and who they become.
**SOUNDING BOARD**

President River's editorial in the summer issue was a breath of fresh air. For years, viewpoint diversity at Macalester had been replaced by a concern for microaggressions and safe spaces to recover from them. I do hope incoming freshmen, and current students, will accept the points River made in her essay. It sums up well the value of a liberal arts education. Like the one I got in the 60s. My hope now is Macalester will sign the University of Chicago pledge on viewpoint diversity.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**Viewpoint Diversity**

President River's editorial in the summer issue was a breath of fresh air. For years, viewpoint diversity at Macalester had been replaced by a concern for microaggressions and safe spaces to recover from them. I do hope incoming freshmen, and current students, will accept the points River made in her essay. It sums up well the value of a liberal arts education. Like the one I got in the 60s. My hope now is Macalester will sign the University of Chicago pledge on viewpoint diversity.

Roger S. Peterson ’67 Founder, Macalster Alumni of Moderation

I was pleasantly surprised to see President River’s article “More Speech—Not Less—Is Vital to Learning” when I opened up the summer issue. One of the things I appreciated about Mac was the student’s diversity, and that included viewpoint diversity. Reading issues of Macalester Today over the past few years, I was left with the impression that diversity at Macalester had come to mean “people who look different but think the same” and that was very disappointing. When I learned that the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE), a non-profit civil liberties organization, I worked with then-Chaplain Russ Froebel Bartholomay ’82 to submit her reflection about FEASCO—the Fun, Educational, Alternative, Social Change Organization, on second floor Bigelow in spring 1980

FEASCO shared a floor with Bob Mould of Hücker Du fare as well as others, since we didn’t take up the whole floor. I was one of the RA’s of the floor, and Steve Steinhoff, Neil Laskey, Brian Findley, and Pat Ruece, among others, all lived there too. I also remember Tim Ahrens and his friend Martha, Maria Rikas, Doug Tilson (Doug managed to get Mac divested from South Africa so as not to support apartheid). Frank Herrotn, Jim Levin, Suzy Plum, and Jim Stamp. I’m not sure if all they lived on the floor, but they were a part of the social change community. We were a combination of very idealistic looking and for a fun social life at Mac. Most of us were involved with other campus social change organizations and wanted to live together to mostly easily exchange ideas and have a sense of community. We had to petition the college to be able to live together on one floor, so no sororities or fraternity spaces were allowed. We got permission, and away we went!

As head of Mac’s World Hunger organization, I worked with then-Chaplain Russ Wigfield and his wise. Norma. We wanted to know how to bake bread. Norma taught us all, and we used that knowledge to host our once-a-month homemade sourdough and bread meals in the Bigelow basement, for whoever would come, with a social change speaker to educate us, make us think and talk, and hopefully, take action. The community meals at the Hebrew House were our model. FEASCO’s monthly meals were a lot of work and a lot of fun. I remember many good, late-night conversations, as well as watching a stupendous chocolate candy fight staged by the Hücker Du friends, up and down the hall.

Correction

In the Summer 2022 issue’s Memorial section, the obituary of Mac (née Johnson) A. Rurik ’79 did not include Johnson’s Mark’s home state when he was a student. We regret this error.

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Visit Mac’s social media at macalester.edu/macsocial and join in by using the hashtag macalestertoday when you post on Twitter or Instagram.

**CORRESPONDENCE POLICY**

We invite letters of 300 words or fewer. Messages may be edited for clarity, style, and space and will be published based on their relevance to issues discussed in Macalester Today. Share your thoughts:

- Email: mactoday@macalester.edu
- Tweet: @macalster using the hashtag mactodaytoday
- Mail: Macalester Today, Macalester College, 1600 Grand Ave., St. Paul, MN 55105

People sometimes ask me, “Did you always dream of being a college president?” And my answer each time is the same. I did not have the audacity to dream of being a college president until only a few years ago. But, now that I am here, it’s an incredible privilege and honor to lead this extraordinary community and to help shape its future.

When I was offered the opportunity to become Macalester’s seventeenth president, our trustees told me they hoped I would undertake a strategic planning process in my first year. The challenge excited me, and right away, I began to dream about how to approach a process for charting a path to the college’s future. But, just weeks after I accepted the job, the COVID-19 pandemic upended life on Macalester’s campus and around the world. I knew by March of 2020 that the difficulties we’d face together would be extraordinary and unprecedented. Then George Floyd’s murder in May 2020, a few miles from our campus, sparked a national civil rights crisis that—rightfully—commanded our attention and prompted intense reflection about Macalester’s responsibility to address racial injustice. Throughout my first year, operating the college and supporting our faculty, staff, and students through immense challenges required my full focus. We simply did not have the luxury to plan even months ahead, let alone years.

I’ve quipped that my second year at the college felt like a “do-over first year” because I finally was able to gather with others in person, and build relationships—both on campus and around the U.S. at various meetings, celebrations, and events. The theme of that year for me was “togetherness” and, accordingly, I sought connection with members of each of the college’s constituencies. These connections laid a foundation for collaboration as we began to gather college-wide, students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, and local neighborhood residents about what Macalester should do, or let go of in order to make the college irresistible to the students of tomorrow.

The college’s Senior Leadership Team named the strategic planning process Imagine, Macalester and through it we invited all of you to dream along with us. We solicited applications for the positions of “Strategic Planning Champions” (see page 4) from the college’s various constituencies and invited them to work closely with our team on synthesizing more than 3,000 suggestions made by members of our Mac community. At every step in the drafting process, we shared our work in transparent ways and invited feedback. We also held numerous town hall-style listening sessions in person and online by Zoom to ensure no constituent perspectives were excluded. Finally, an email box remained open throughout the process, through which we received hundreds of messages that helped us ensure that we were inspiring to see the creativity, innovation, and deep care for Macalester’s future that so many of you shared with us over the past year. Although the pace of planning may have seemed frustratingly slow to some, I believe the unconventional inclusive approach we took to solicit this input was well worth the effort and time it took to give everyone a voice.

The plan that was approved unanimously by the Board in October reflects the best thinking of all who participated in the dreaming process. It builds on Macalester’s strengths and vision of "The college’s Senior Leadership Team named the strategic planning process Imagine, Macalester and through it we invited all of you to dream along with us. We solicited applications for the positions of “Strategic Planning Champions” (see page 4) from the college’s various constituencies and invited them to work closely with our team on synthesizing more than 3,000 suggestions made by members of our Mac community. At every step in the drafting process, we shared our work in transparent ways and invited feedback. We also held numerous town hall-style listening sessions in person and online by Zoom to ensure no constituent perspectives were excluded. Finally, an email box remained open throughout the process, through which we received hundreds of messages that helped us ensure that we were inspiring to see the creativity, innovation, and deep care for Macalester’s future that so many of you shared with us over the past year. Although the pace of planning may have seemed frustratingly slow to some, I believe the unconventional inclusive approach we took to solicit this input was well worth the effort and time it took to give everyone a voice."
Imagine, Macalester: VOCI ES OF CHAMPIONS

In collaboration with the senior leadership team, twenty-three Strategic Planning Champions representing all members of the Macalester community helped to create the Imagine, Macalester strategic plan. In September, college leadership gathered one final round of feedback on the draft through several community listening sessions. The final plan was approved unanimously by the Board of Trustees in October, with development of steps for implementing the plan to follow. Find current information and timing at macalester.edu/strategic-plan.

With their work now concluded, we asked six Champions to reflect on the planning process.

Anna Diagne Sène ’24
(Dakar, Senegal)
Majors: Political science and Arabic

We had to list our main ideas on two boards. After all of the reading through the feedback, all of the summarizing, all of the—Okay, this is what people are saying, how can we synthesize it?—these were the big ideas. When we were finished, everyone was so happy. We went around putting stars on the words we liked—I like this idea, I love this idea. Then the facilitators told us, ‘Now you have to get rid of one board each.’ I was like, ‘What?’ It was already hard to decide what to put on the boards, but now you want us to take one down? That was a moment of realizing that this is a work of prioritizing. Not everything is going to be able to be there, and it’s not that the other ideas are not meaningful or valuable. What are the ideas that we want to carry forward for the Macalester we want to see in a few years?

Bobbie Pennington ’24
(Mbabane, Eswatini)
Majors: Economics and international studies

The process really opened my eyes about all of the implications involved in a decision. I’d bring up an idea related to students. Why don’t we have a twenty-four-hour cafeteria? But I hadn’t thought through all of the effects—the staffing model changes, the tuition raise it would require, the ways our regular dining hall would have to look different as a result. There are so many implications that you just don’t think of unless you have a wide range of perspectives in the room to listen and learn from.

Dennis Cao
Associate Professor, Chemistry

The process has been so interesting—almost like doing research. You have all these known things that people want, and all these unknowns that people don’t even realize that they want. And you’re trying to tease all that out, piece things together, and see if we can get to a consensus about where we want to go. We’ve gathered a lot of data, and we have a good picture of what the Mac community is looking for.

Niloy Ray ’99
Shareholder, Littler Mendelson P.C.

During the feedback sessions, Mac alumni showed up. They showed up in numbers. They were opinionated. They were feisty. They were forceful. They were expected to have points of view and they delivered. We’ve been beaten down by the pandemic, and politics, and civil unrest, and injustice in this country. But when everyone came back to Mac for that process, virtually or otherwise, we were all net positive, net upbeat. We were here because this can be a place for change. We’re not resigned to anything. We’re agents of our own destiny. We’re agents of the future. I saw that coming through from all these minds, no matter whether it was 2 p.m. or 2 a.m. their time. That gave me hope that Macalester is putting out alumni who are just as civic-minded and engaged as they were on campus.

Rohan Preston ’25
Theater Critic, Star Tribune

We were meeting on a Friday afternoon at 4 o’clock. It had been a long week. We had met through COVID lockdowns and all of that. I remember thinking to myself, “This has been so much work and yet it’s so good. It’s so worth it.” Someone acknowledged that it was Friday and we were probably exhausted. And yet, in acknowledging that, we all came alive again around our shared goal and our shared desire to keep Macalester moving and building on its wonderful legacy.

Tamatha Pertman
Associate Director, Academic Technical Services

I approach almost everything differently because of my experience as a Champion. When I started this process, I had just started my position as associate director, and it helped me think long-range—to get on the balcony, so to speak, and think about what choices we could make in long-range planning to benefit Macalester, how we support people, and what that looks like for the future. During the pandemic we had to be so reactionary, and we talked a lot in our department and in this process about shifting out of that mode. It just felt good to be thinking about a brighter future.

*No longer at Macalester*
English professor Coral Lumbley teaches courses in medieval studies.

Any standout books you’ve read recently?

Susanna Clarke’s *Piranesi*. What’s special about the novel is you don’t really know what genre it is. A first-person narrator shares details about his life and you start wondering, ‘Where is he in time? Where is he in space?’ It’s fantastic. The genre itself is the mystery that plays out, and I won’t spoil it by telling you what it is.

What is one of your all-time favorite reads?

Predictably for a medievalist, J.R.R. Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings*. It enchanted me when I was in middle school and it led me to become a medievalist. It’s prosaic, antiquarian, focused on nature, and offers a shameless love for fantasy and imagination and magic. It’s still got a grip on me.

What book is crucial to understanding your area of research?

The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages by Geraldine Heng. I work on the Middle Ages and colonialism and race and gender. I’m interested in how hierarchies of identity start getting entrenched in the culture of medieval Europe. Heng’s book is a magisterial, detailed study of that topic, and it has really revolutionized the field of medieval studies.

What is something you love to read that we might not expect?

I love to read historical sewing manuals and fashion books. Victorian and Renaissance-era sewing guides provide fascinating details of the ways everyday people wanted to style their lives and fashion their identities, just the way people do today. I am designing a fashion history course, so students should watch out for that.

What’s one book you recommend to everyone at Macalester?

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. It’s a fourteenth-century English poem. On the surface, it’s a classic adventure story: this terrifying, giant green knight comes into King Arthur’s Court and poses a really scary challenge. Gawain has to rise to that challenge and go on a quest. But the poem is also historically beautiful and thematically unified within itself. It’s a masterwork of literature as well as being a beautiful window into medieval English aesthetics. It’s both fun and philosophical at the same time.

What shelf should we visit next?

Email mactoday@macalester.edu.

“

We need you. We need your good minds, your critical thinking, your good hearts because the fact is that the solutions to the problems we have today are not likely to be found in the paradigm which created them. ... We have such great wealth to draw from and such great spiritual opportunity to be the ones that do something beautiful.”

—Winona LaDuke P’13

The renowned activist, author, and environmentalist delivered the keynote address for the college’s annual First Thursday convocation celebration in September. She was awarded an honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters.

Ever wonder about all those books lining professors’ offices? We’re with you.
WHAT I BROUGHT FROM HOME

When students returned to campus this fall they brought along their own special items: A killer-whale stuffed animal, a sketchbook and mechanical pencil, carrot halwa, an aquamarine chain, a fake signed record, and a necklace.

CASSIE WRIGHT ’25 (PENNINGROVE, CALIF.)

SHWETA SHANKAR ’26 (MAPLE GROVE, MINN.)

BRADY THOMAS ’26 (APPLE VALLEY, MINN.)

SAM HEMESATH ’26 (SACRAMENTO, CALIF.)

KURIAN S. JOS ’26 (BRENTWOOD, CALIF.)

CLARENCE PAN ’24 (CHONGQING, CHINA)
In 2019, as a student employee in Macalester’s Entrepreneurship and Innovation office, Ayba Arbay ’23 (Izmir, Turkey) took on an assignment to edit a video for a new startup called Easy EMDR, founded by Zachary Jordan ’20. Three years later, they collaborated again—this time through the college’s MacNest program, which connects students with local startups for paid ten-week internships. Jordan, now Easy EMDR’s successful CEO, was named to MinnPost’s “Innov Under 25” list in 2020. Through Easy EMDR, he launched an app for mobile and web use that makes Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) treatment accessible and affordable by integrating the technology into virtual therapy. He pledges 10 percent of Easy EMDR’s profits to nonprofit organizations, part of his broader mission to make trauma therapy affordable and accessible for anybody who needs it.

Ayba, a computer science major with a concentration in cognitive science, was curious to learn more about the wide range of tasks that working at a startup requires. As an intern at Easy EMDR, she took on projects focused on backend and UI (user interface) software development. She also helped research and redesign the startup’s mobile application. “It was a really fun change to use my creativity more,” she says. “The project showed me that I want that creativity in my development, and that I would like to work more on the UX [user experience] and UI side in the future.”

Ayba also learned from Jordan’s mentorship and support—a role reversal—I, the intern, was running the meeting and getting feedback from the leader of the village project. This experience was also very rewarding.”

In the span of ten weeks, Arbay was able to make an impact on Easy EMDR, too—and she’ll continue her work there as a developer this fall. “Because of her work to help redesign and program our mobile app, clients can communicate better with their clients,” Jorie says. “I couldn’t be more impressed with what she was able to achieve in such a short time.”
Marisa Luft ’25 (they/them) of Brooklyn, N.Y., worked with geology professor Ray Rogers and geology and biology professor Kristi Curry Rogers on a five-week summer research project focused on ecology and fossil preservation in Montana.

“I was actually being a geologist. On the trip, I had a moment at our first campground. Ray had taken us up on this little walk, and I was looking out over everything. And it was near sunset and I was sitting up there looking down. I was like, ‘Wow, I want to do this. This is what I want to do for the rest of my life.’”
Hello from Oxford!

Julian Applebaum ’23 (Wellesley Hills, Mass.), a political science major, spent spring semester studying at Oxford University in England. He wrote this letter for The Words, the English Department newsletter.

I’ve been here about six weeks now, and it has been surreal in the best way. Oxford, from its architecture to food to culture, feels like a totally different world. I have attended more formal dinners in the last few weeks than I have in my entire life. I met a student who plays the organ and conducts opera professionally, another writing his dissertation on rare book bindings, and another in my politics lecture who writes all his notes with a fountain pen. I’ve drunk at a 700-year-old pub where Oscar Wilde, CS Lewis, Margaret Thatchers, and Ernest Hemingways have also drunk. I even got to attend a black-tie ball last weekend!

Perhaps the biggest adjustment I’ve had to make is operating in Oxford’s tutorial system. Oxford has a unique academic structure. Rather than attending classes, everyone self-studies the material and meets with a professor once a week or less. These meetings, called tutorials, are one-on-one with the professor to review the material. I am taking one English course this term. Victorian Gothic Fiction. I need to read one book from the reading list and submit an essay about it every two weeks. So far I’ve read Great Expectations, Villette, and Wuthering Heights. My tutor professor is an upbeat but stern British woman named Charlie who wears long, dark dresses with puffy sleeves and always has her hair tied back in a tight bun. Our bi-weekly tutorials feel like a rollercoaster; she asks me difficult questions about the novels and pushes me to deepen my analysis. I left the first tutorials feeling totally out of my depth and melodramatically wondering if I wasn’t fit to study literature. I had a sort of breakthrough recently, though, so my essays are getting better and I feel a lot more confident in my abilities.

For fun I have been hanging out at the college bar (yes, there’s a bar where the students live), competing with the Mock Trial team, and going to really interesting events around the university. A few weeks ago I attended a workshop with the Oxford English Society held in celebration of Virginia Woolf’s birthday where we went to the Bodleian Bibliographical Press to use the same kind of handpress and typeface that the Woolfs would have used for their first publications. I also bought a tweed jacket for fifteen pounds, which I’m thrilled about. Oxford feels like an academic’s Disneyland. There’s just SO MUCH to do all of the time!

Since this is The Words, I wanted to share some fun new British and Oxfordian words I’ve learned:

- **Rusticate** verb, to either be suspended from Oxford or take a leave of absence for welfare. It comes from the root “rustic” for country, and rusticate quite literally means “to return to the countryside.” You’ll hear students say “I’m thinking about rusticating next year,” for example.

- **Invigilator** noun, a proctor/someone who watches over exams to prevent cheating.

- **Plonker** noun, an idiotic or inept person.

- **Bugbear** noun, an annoyance or pet peeve. “The lack of sinks in the dorm rooms is a bugbear of mine.”

- **Scaf** noun, an informal self-service dinner held before the night’s formal hall.

- **Buttery** noun, the college kitchens. Originally meaning the place from which you request more butter/milk/tea when you run out, now used more generally.

Sending love,

Julian
DANGER ZONE

BY HILLARY MOSES MOHAUPT ’08

Over the last three decades, Benjamin Dille ’82 has represented the State Department at hotspots around the world. In August 2021 he was in Kabul, Afghanistan, as U.S. forces withdrew from the country.

As the Taliban closed in on Kabul, Dille was working furiously to ensure safety at the embassy at the time. As the senior administrator, he was responsible for overseeing everything from human resources to information technology, maintaining facilities to securing supplies. During the withdrawal of U.S. military forces, the Taliban moved into Kabul more quickly than experts had expected. In response, the State Department decided to evacuate its embassy there in just one day. The operation became the single largest civilian evacuation in modern history, with more than 2,000 American diplomatic and support staff leaving the city on August 30.

During the evacuation, Dille worked with his team to ensure that all American and allied diplomatic personnel were relocated. He then stayed on with his support team to coordinate housing, office space, and IT, as well as in-bound flights for supplies like clothing, baby formula, diapers, blankets, and other necessities for the tens of thousands of people waiting for flights at the airport. This was an operation carried out in the height of the global pandemic, which not only impacted the mission on the ground but also the support task forces in neighboring countries and back home in D.C., he says. Communication was made more difficult, and the embassy was short-staffed. “The situation in Afghanistan was quite unique and impossible to draw a parallel to other events.”

At the Kabul airport, the military operation was quite unique and impossible to draw a parallel to other events. “The military did the hard and dangerous work of protecting the perimeter of the airport under dangerous conditions, while State Department staff worked with the military to get flights boarded and off the ground.”

Aside from military, security, and two IT professionals, Dille was one of the last people out of the embassy. He stayed on at the Kabul airport for days, along with more than one hundred embassy personnel—some staying two weeks—to ensure that all American and allied diplomatic personnel were relocated; with Dille and many others continuing to provide support from Washington. Using the airport as a base of operations, Dille and the other State Department personnel worked to ensure the evacuation of at-risk Afghans who worked with the U.S. military or embassy. In all, Dille and his colleagues supported the evacuation of more than 124,000 Americans and Afghans—including 2,000 Afghan employees of the embassy and their families—from Kabul over the last two weeks of August.

For his work at the Kabul airport, Dille shared the State Department’s Award for Heroism. His efforts in pressing embassy COVID-19 strategies that included purchase of vaccines for all Afghans and staff and for advocating for more staff to remain in Kabul to support evacuation efforts earned him a 2022 American Foreign Service Association Award for Constructive Dissent.

D.C. to Micronesia to Turkmenistan to Quantico

After leaving Kabul, Dille was asked by the Acting Under Secretary for Management to go to Washington to provide guidance to those who were working on the U.S. side to continue to arrange flights out of Kabul.

Dille has since served as the deputy chief of mission and chargé d’affaires at the U.S. embassy in Colombo, Micronesia, and as chargé d’affaires in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. His next position is stateside at the Marine Corps War College in Quantico, Virginia, where he will teach diplomacy to Marine officers.

Dille may no longer be in Afghanistan, but the country and his colleagues are never far from his mind. “Many of us continue to work on Afghanistan-related issues a year later,” he says. “We will continue to be relentless in this effort as we stand by our Afghan allies and their families.”

Studying history, he says, has proven invaluable to his career. “It gave me a tremendous understanding of geography, culture, technology, economics, and—most valuable of all as a manager—what are essentially case studies in leadership.”

The biggest challenge I could take

There tended to take challenging assignments, and I saw the Kabul job as the biggest challenge I could take,” he says.

From the outside, the mission to evacuate Kabul appeared rushed and dangerous, and there continue to be long-term repercussions for the American military, officials, and civilians, as well as their Afghan contacts. Dille is quick to emphasize that relocation efforts required intense collaboration among embassy staff and military teams.

“I was surrounded by courageous individuals that never swayed in their commitment to duty despite near-constant credible threats of danger,” he says. “The military did the hard and outstanding work of protecting the perimeter of the airport under dangerous conditions, while State Department staff worked with the military to get flights boarded and off the ground.”

After graduation, he earned a law degree from the University of Minnesota, concentrating his studies in international and comparative law to prepare for a career in government or international service. “I come from a family of public educators, so public service seemed natural, especially combined with my international interests,” Dille says.

As a management officer, he has spent much of his career running the administrative operations of embassies or supporting them from Washington. He has served in Africa, the Pacific, Europe, and Central Asia. It’s unusual for someone in the Foreign Service to have served in as many parts of the world, but Dille says that the working relationships with his colleagues have made his many assignments enjoyable. He had even served previously with three of his colleagues in Kabul. “I am very much a consultative leader,” he says. “I believe that the collaborative creativity of my team is better than ideas that I think of myself.”

Dille encourages young people to pursue a range of experiences and human connections, which will provide frames of reference as they get older and advance in their careers. “The advice I would give to current students is to be resilient and be positive,” Dille says.

Benjamin Dille ’82 received awards for heroism and for constructive dissent for his work in Afghanistan.
Tennis legend Billie Jean King calls Title IX “37 words that changed everything.” The landmark law, passed in 1972, banned discrimination on the basis of sex in federally funded education programs, revolutionizing women’s sports at Macalester and across the nation.

Before Title IX, Macalester’s women athletes competed against each other in phys ed classes and intramural competitions and occasional matches against other college women. The Mac Weekly describes a 1960 Christmas show put on by the women’s Aquatic League, featuring synchronized swimming and diving exhibits. Women also were cheerleaders (“Holler Girls”), rope jumpers, and “powder-puff” football players who played or performed at half-time during men’s games. A 1971 Weekly story recounts the experience of the women’s tennis team: “With the tight money, the team, unlike a nameless men’s organization, has chosen to do without uniforms, and sought a schedule consisting largely of home and local meets to save on traveling. Only tennis balls have been furnished, and any extras, such as entry fees, etc., have come out of the players’ own funds.”

After Title IX, women’s teams, with budgets and other resources, gradually began to compete and, finally, thrive. At a Reunion 2022 panel, scholar-athletes, coaches, audience members, and President Rivera reflected on women’s sports before and after Title IX. Read edited excerpts from their conversation.

By Julie Hessler ’85 / Illustrations by Débora Islas

No expectations
I was interested in golf, but along the way I took a tennis class with Coach [Ralph] Lundeen. I was good enough that he suggested maybe I could play on the intramural team, but after a couple of weeks, it was clear that I wasn’t really good enough. So I said, “How about we form a golf team?” He was very helpful in thinking about that. He let us practice, if we wanted, with the men’s team. He invited us to go on the spring trip with the men’s team. My parents wouldn’t let me go. I had no expectations coming in about having a women’s team. I had to start a team in high school but then had trouble finding teams to compete against. At that time, Macalester, like other colleges, was very different from today, as some of you know. For example, we had hours. Women had to be in the dorm at 11 p.m. The men could stay up all night, and we had fifteen minutes of grace time per semester that we could be late. It was a very different environment in all sorts of ways.

There were about four of us who had found each other and played golf occasionally. The University of Minnesota had a team and we asked to play them. They invited us to their course. It was early spring and still quite frosty, with the grass sticking up through a thin layer of snow. But, we were determined to play our match. We did horribly. After the round, we all gathered in the clubhouse where we were thankful to find hot chocolate and a roaring fire in the fireplace. We were never able to secure another match with their team or any other. —Carol Wolf Runyan ’72, professor emeritus, University of North Carolina, Gillings School of Global Public Health

An awesome major
For a short timeframe, Mac had a physical education and kinesiology major. That was my major, and it was awesome. Two years after I graduated, I was accepted into a master’s program in athletic training at Indiana State University. There were only two universities in the U.S. that offered a master’s in athletic training, and neither had accepted a woman when I graduated from Mac! I was one of the first twenty-five women who were certified as an athletic trainer. I thank [former coach and athletic director] Sheila Brewer and [former athletic trainer] Tom Copeland for that, as I built the love for that while I was here. —Muriel Gilman ’72, professor, Benedict State University, Dept. of Physical Education, Health and Sports

Unlimited opportunities, for some
As a kid I played golf with my family. My brothers followed me to Macalester in the two years after I was here. They were all three-, four-star athletes in high school. They had unlimited opportunities to play sports and did. They and their friends also had fantastic opportunities for scholarships, with leadership recognition, for a big boost into the world ahead as people who had participated and been engaged, and had a lot of experiences that were helpful for them on their way through life. —Cherie Doyle Riesenberg ’72
HALL OF FAMERS
Sheila Brewer and Patricia Wiessner played pivotal roles in the growth of women’s athletics at Macalester.

Sheila Brewer
In 1983, Sheila Brewer became the first woman to serve as an athletic director for both men’s and women’s sports at a MAC institution. During her 33 years at Macalester, she also coached several women’s sports, and her success guided the Scots’ volleyball team. Brewer’s 1980 squad won 58 matches, captured both the state and Region 6 tournaments and finished seventh at the AIAW national tournament. In 13 seasons, Brewer recorded 350 volleyball victories and won three MAC titles. Brewer was inducted posthumously into M Club’s Hall of Fame in September 2022.

Patricia Wiessner
Patricia Wiessner’s teaching career at the college spanned 35 years. She taught tennis, basketball, dancing, yoga, first aid, water safety, downhill skiing, and the history of physical education. She directed the college’s synchronized swim shows in the 1950s, started the women’s cross-country team, and supervised the cheerleaders for 23 years. She coached tennis, volleyball, swimming, field hockey, and basketball, and was Macalester’s first women’s athletic director. Wiessner was inducted into M Club’s Hall of Fame in 1988.

The wave
I played volleyball here for four years, and also ran track and field for two years. Little did I know when I first came in ’79 that it was one of the first years of any varsity-level sport at Macalester for women. You could start to feel a little wave coming. You could see women wanting to play sports. Being on the volleyball team, I came in with a pretty strong group of girls, and we were all very serious about playing and competing at a high level. Sheila Brewer did a lot with advertising and marketing to make the volleyball and track teams stand out.

—Smoak Mueller Vitke ’83, head volleyball coach, Rosemount High School

Beyond athletics
One of the fun things about Title IX is that it goes beyond athletics. I was the second woman to be elected to the presidency of the student government here at Mac. There have been a lot of things that were possible because of Title IX. Women were able to use that as an instrument to get involved, be recognized, and carry on positions. It’s been phenomenal. I could go through the list of friends I’ve been able to do in my career, including breaking the glass ceiling of being president of the American Military University. A lot of that has to do with Mac — Kate Houghton Zatz ’92, acting president, American Public University and American Military University

Mental health
There is a priority of mental health in DI3 athletics and specifically at Macalester, which is part of why I came here. The coaches and staff care about me as a person before they care about me as a player, and I know that I can go to them if I need to. Because I am a student-athlete, we all know that the “student” comes first and my courses will take priority. Just knowing that everyone cares for me really helps. I know I can advocate for myself when I need to take a step back from soccer, and when I need to adjust my priorities to make it all work because we are a high-achieving group. —Sarah Hamilton ’23, member of Macalester’s women’s soccer team

History lessons
I went back and read some of the history of Title IX. I was surprised at how many challenges there have been over the years, and I was completely unaware of that. I think we need to be teaching everyone about the history of not only their sport, but sports in general, and how these issues all interweave, and not take anything for granted. I’ve had many graduate students over the years who have said to me, “Oh, feminism. That was your era. We don’t have to think about that.” They may be changing their tune a little bit right now in light of Roe v. Wade. But I think we haven’t done enough to educate about the history of how some of these issues evolved so that we can sustain progress. —Carol Wolf Runyan ’72

A better path
When we first started the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW) was the governing body for women’s sports. It was a tremendous organization. AIAW was really about building a base of energy around women’s sports. They were developing women athletes, developing the love of sport, and starting to build some history. My senior year, we went NCAA. It was a totally different experience. One negative about Title IX and NCAA is that we followed the path of men’s sports when we think women with AIAW were creating a better path. A big part of it was, “How did we as a group get better?” Now with a lot of sports, if you’re a fellow coach you keep secrets to yourself, instead of coming together and making everybody better. It’s just a really different culture. —Smoak Mueller Vitke ’83

Changing paradigms
There are a lot of paradigms that have existed in the way that sports are organized, and it’s very difficult to change. I’m hoping that women, as they gain economic, social, and sports experience and all these other things just like in other fields, will bring that experience to bear on the larger world of sports and athletics. —Cherie Doyle Biesenberg ’72

Motivation and pride
I was born before Title IX was passed, so I really saw its effects on my own childhood in terms of what was offered to play when I was in grade school, versus what was available to me in high school and in college. And now, as a mother, I see a difference in terms of what sports have meant to my own daughter, who started playing a sport at age four that she could imagine playing professionally if she excelled at it enough. That made a big difference in terms of her motivation and the pride she took in her sport.

—Suzanne Rivera, president, Macalester College

Little wins in everything
Today there is a lot of support around providing resources for the women’s teams and just being able to go out and recruit, see athletes at a young age develop over time, and then also make sure that they’re developing as humans. It’s important that we get to know our student athletes as more than just athletes. Being there for them when they need help. It’s not yelling at them, it’s talking about, “Hey, what’s going on? Is everything okay?” It’s not only about winning. There are little wins in everything that you do. —Tashina Stegall, associate head track and field coach, Macalester College

Life off the pitch
One of my teammates helped start Pride Athletes at Mac this year for LGBTQ+ athletes. A lot of my teammates and I have been taking part in that. Another teammate is on the BIPOC Mac Student-Athletes Collective Board. One of the cool parts about being here is seeing what everyone else is doing off the field and off the court. It’s awesome to see how everyone is trying to make a change in the world, and also making themselves better. It’s something that we’re here, as well as trying to be the best athletes we can be. —Sarah Hamilton ’23

Undies and Uppies
At Mac, I played—well, there weren’t a lot of opportunities—but I did what my friends were doing. I went to swimming practice, and I must have competed a couple of times. I played tennis. We played powder-puff football, of course—freshman and sophomores were the Undies, and when you became a junior you were on the Uppies team. And Carol [Runyan] tells me that I played in a golf tournament. —Muriel Gilman ’72

Do you have memories to share about women’s athletics before Title IX? Email us at matcday@macalester.edu.

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I
n a pandemic-shadowed world, it’s easy to think small. To imagine a world in which we tamp down our biggest dreams and place limits on what seems possible.

But Macalester is designed to help people see opportunities all around them. Earlier this year, we reached out to professors with a question meant to reveal those possibilities: If they had all the necessary time, resources, and political will, what is an idea they’d like to see fully implemented in the world today?

And across the board, they thought big—really big.

They painted pictures of transformed schools that inspired truly meaningful student learning. They shared the paths they saw to a world filled with people who were generous rather than judgmental. They illuminated their visions of a world of abundance, not scarcity. They also suggested you tuck away those screens for—gulp—a two-week digital vacation.

In the pages that follow, we’re excited to showcase their ideas.

**BIG IDEA No. 1**

**Keep the Arctic cold**

Mary Heskel is an assistant professor of biology.

A lot of people think of the Arctic as a barren, lifeless region. Certainly, many people don’t think about it much when creating policies at lower latitudes. But what happens in the Arctic doesn’t stay in the Arctic. Things are changing fast there, and the consequences will be seen everywhere.

For example, recent calculations show that it’s warming more than four times faster than the rest of the planet—which is a problem, because the Arctic is a huge carbon reservoir and regulates climate and weather patterns in lower regions. The white, energy-reflecting ice cover has been shrinking, and the dark, heat-absorbing ocean is expanding. Fish that used to live around Maine now can live near Greenland, altering the marine ecosystems. Spruce and birch trees live much farther north than they have in millennia.

Scientists and engineers are coming up with all sorts of unconventional ideas to try to solve this problem. One idea is to release aerosols into the high...
atmosphere to dim the sun. Another research group wants to use DNA splicing technology to bring back woolly mammoths to help re-sube the Arctic ecosystem. In theory, mammoths would trample the over-shrubbed and heat-absorbing forests and help revert the area to arctic grasslands, which do a better job at reflecting the sun’s heat and keeping the ground cold. There are also companies developing technology to suck carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere. The better—if politically unpopular—option is to stop burning fossil fuels, which promote warming.

We're at a tipping point, so we've got to keep it cool.

**BIG IDEA No. 2**

Get the lead out (for good)

We’ve known for literally thousands of years that lead exposure can lead to health and behavioral problems. It’s why we started phasing out the use of lead in products like fuel and paint in the 1970s and 1980s in the United States. We know now that any exposure is bad, especially for sensitive populations such as children and older adults. How big is the problem? One study suggests that eliminating small amounts of lead from fuel had the same health benefits as reducing other air pollutants by 90 percent.

The problem is that there is a lot of legacy lead out there in materials that predate the bans that have been implemented over the decades. There are also a few loopholes to lead bans. Examples include lead service lines that deliver water to many homes in the United States, lead-based paint, and fuel used in classic cars, motorcycles, and some small airplanes. We should get rid of it all. That’s not just eliminating it from any current uses. We should also subsidize households to replace service lines and windows that have lead paint, common in those built in the mid-1970s or earlier.

Yes, it will be expensive. Replacing service lines—mostly found in homes built before the mid-1980s—can cost thousands of dollars per household, and some studies suggest at least ten million people live in the households that may be affected. While President Biden recently announced a plan to replace these lead water lines within the decade, funding may not be sufficient to do so.

That said, we know that when we reduce lead exposure, we see decreases in older adult and child mortality. We also know that reducing lead exposure can reduce cognitive and behavioral problems that affect all aspects of individuals’ lives. Further, in areas where service lines have been replaced, research finds that home values increase up to and even beyond the cost of the replacement.

Lead exposure can lead to tremendous and lasting losses, even above the many health problems it causes. My own research on the housing market impacts of the Flint water crisis provide a prime example of the detrimental effects and risks of legacy lead in our lives. It’s time to mandate its removal.

**BIG IDEA No. 3**

Take students into communities through experiential learning

When the pandemic hit and schools moved to Zoom—when the social cohesion of school was fundamentally disrupted—school became very different. At first, the task before educators felt straightforward: Can students learn this packet of information? That moment led to larger, important questions: What is the purpose of school? Is it just preparation for the future? What if school could actually be for right now?

We need a fundamental reconceptualization of education. We need to incorporate far more hands-on, experiential learning in our school curricula and take students into their communities. Much of it should be in the service of democratic engagement, not simply learning skills for some time in the future. When students are helping construct their own educational environments and outcomes, when young people are participating in the conversation about important issues, it can be such a rich experience. They gain a desire to be truly engaged in their communities. Schools would also become a central site of problem solving for whatever a community is facing—economic challenges, social cohesion issues, or housing issues.

For example, in St. Paul Public Schools, the Student Engagement and Advisory Board, an extracurricular organization, encouraged the school board to develop a curriculum for the district in ethnic studies; after some significant back and forth, the board ultimately mandated it as a graduation requirement. But this kind of work doesn’t need to be extracurricular—it can be part of every student’s experience.

If we don’t change now, when will we ever be willing to make these changes? Writer Arundhati Roy says the pandemic is a portal—a gateway between one world and the next. What are we holding on to? It’s time to rethink what education can be.
Incorporate data analysis and machine learning into farming and agriculture

Lori Ziegelmeier is an associate professor of mathematics, statistics, and computer science.

I grew up on a farm in rural Kansas, where my dad primarily farmed field corn, wheat, and soybeans, and raised cattle.

Technology has advanced a lot in the farming industry over the years. When I was growing up, my dad would use flood irrigation techniques—laying pipes to flow water down small trenches through crops—but it’s inefficient and can lead to runoff. Today, it’s more common and efficient to use pivot irrigation sprinklers, machines that rotate around a central pivot, to water crops. But there’s so much more that we could do to deploy our resources more effectively.

For example, rather than water the whole field equally with pivot irrigation sprinklers, we could use a combination of drone imaging and spectral signatures to determine how much water certain parts of a field actually need, which could reduce water usage. We could do the same with disease or pest control: rather than spraying an entire field with pesticides, we could do more targeted treatments. We could even create robots that use machine learning to distinguish between weeds and crops. Those robots could remove the weeds so we wouldn’t have to use herbicides at all.

Some of these strategies are already being implemented on a small scale, but they’re not yet mainstream. As the world population continues to grow, as drought conditions accelerate, and as farming conditions continue to deteriorate, using data analysis and machine learning could have a huge impact and help farmers continue to feed the world.

Take a two-week digital sabbatical

Victoria Malawey is a professor of music.

My idea is for everyone to take a two-week digital sabbatical from the internet and their phones. I found it illuminating that when Apple started showing us our screen time each week, at first we were mortified. Then we just turned that notification off, because we didn’t want to know.

My hope is that this break would rewire our brains to be more present in our physical environments and to approach others with curiosity. If we spent more time face to face with people, I think many of us would be better versions of ourselves.

This isn’t just about the problems of social media. I know that for myself, sometimes I’ll get an email when I’m in the wrong mood for it, and I’ll whip up a response that isn’t as thoughtful as it would have been if I’d been speaking to the sender in person.

As social creatures, we need to connect with others for our survival. But if we’ve learned anything from the pandemic, it’s that digital connection is helpful but does not fulfill our need for physical human connection.

When we turn the screens off, we will be forced to seek connection in analog ways. This type of connection—where we speak with one another, see and respond to each other’s body language, and simply be present with one another in the same physical space—is optimal. A digital sabbatical could help us cultivate better, truer connections with one another.

My proposal is for every student to take a year off after high school before they go to college or do anything else. For six months, they’d hold down a service-industry job or a white-collar internship in a region or state they’re not from, depending on the kinds of experiences they’ve already had in high school. For another six months, they’d spend time abroad.

Here’s why: In my classes, my students and I talk about “epistemic communities.” These are communities—friendships, political groups—in which the people share a common set of beliefs or ways of looking at the world. We are all in epistemic communities.

The problem is, if you’re trying to communicate with someone from a different epistemic community, the things that will be compelling to you will not be as compelling to them. There’s not a common platform for understanding. One way to expand our understanding of others is just to meet many different kinds of people in many different situations.

In my proposal, high school graduates would be primed to take on the perspectives of very different kinds of people and different kinds of lives that they couldn’t have imagined as students. Hopefully, they would form lifelong friends that would open them to thinking beyond what they learned from their parents or at school.

The point is not that students specifically spend time in service-industry jobs, white-collar internships, or even in international locations. The larger goal is to encourage meaningful relationship-building across different kinds of people who might not naturally intersect.

In the end, I want to help people become more empathetic, open-minded individuals who can think for themselves, in part because of the rich experiences they’ve had.
Shift everything to electric, then move to renewable energy

The single biggest challenge right now is climate change, and the most significant contributor to climate change is the combustion of fossil fuels. United Nations data suggests that the world can emit just 300 additional gigatons of carbon into the atmosphere before we push the planet past 1.5 degrees Celsius of warming—after which we are highly likely to see some of the most devastating consequences of climate change. To put that in context, in 2019, we emitted 33 gigatons of carbon. So there’s a really pressing need to shift away from fossil fuel technologies to electric technologies supplied by renewables much faster than we are.

This means putting electric motors in vehicles and replacing the oil and natural gas boilers in people’s basements with electrical technologies like heat pumps. To do so, we really need to be thinking at the systems level, and in even bigger ways than the recent Inflation Reduction Act that includes billions to support the transition to clean energy.

Instead, we need “moonshot strategies,” both in the U.S. and internationally, to overcome seemingly impossible barriers in a short time. There are many policy levers to pull and incentives to offer to shape markets, including subsidizing renewable energy production, supporting the technological advancement in areas such as solar panels and wind turbines, and offering incentives in the form of rebates to lower the upfront costs of electric cars.

There’s no “one thing” that a single country can do, but globally, nations need to start pulling as many of these policy levers as they can, as quickly as they can, to solve this global problem.

Accelerate meaningful learning through virtual reality environments

Walter Greason is DeWitt Wallace Professor of History and chair of the department.

For too long, we’ve been bogged down in nineteenth-century ideas about how teaching and learning work.

In most classrooms, we have to train people intensively for long periods of time in ways that are not natural or automatic. Here’s what I mean: we don’t learn to walk by reading about walking—we learn to walk by practicing and failing.

In contrast, immersive virtual reality environments found through technology like Meta’s Oculus—where you can see, hear, and synthesize data in ways similar to what we’ve been doing since we were born—open new frontiers for retention and innovation.

I believe they can become a regular part of the way we do education.

For example, I recently finished work on a scholastic simulation about the Civil Rights movement that enables students to walk through a historic Black community, meeting with local church and business leaders, as they discuss different opinions about how to challenge racial segregation effectively.

This is the kind of experience that can open students up to new ideas and new questions.

We can pair these experiences with formal debriefings led by educators and with assessments built in along the way. If we do this right, the result will be students who feel real enthusiasm for the topic and who will internalize the lessons of learning experiences.

We’re on the brink of a quantum leap in learning: something akin to an industrial revolution, but in a digital setting. Young people are ready for this. What is possible is going to completely transform in the space of a generation.
As a former litigator, Shelley Carthen Watson ’82 is skilled at gathering information. “My friends joke that I can find anything on the internet about anyone,” she says, “which for people who are dating my daughter is pretty scary at times.”

Her ability to gather information and trust her gut led her to Macalester. Having been raised in San Bernardino, California, Carthen Watson admits she didn’t know much about the college at first—and was considering other schools. Her research made all the difference.

“I realized that it was the same school whose debate program I had heard about for years. It was among the top five debate programs in the country,” says Carthen Watson. “The political activism [at Macalester] really drew me, and I thought that it’s a place where it would be easy for me to find my niche.”

**Political and intellectual engagement**

It didn’t take long. By age nineteen, Carthen Watson was intern- ing at the State Capitol and had become involved with Minnesota’s Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party. She was even elected as an alternate delegate to attend the Democratic National Convention in 1980.

“It was exhilarating,” says Carthen Watson. “I’d never even been old enough to vote before then. And there were a lot of people who sort of took me under their wing, and they were stalwarts of the DFL and continued to mentor me. I learned an awful lot and it certainly helped me in my career.”

Perhaps the biggest way it helped was by distilling Carthen Watson’s goals as someone who wanted to link the policy issues she debated on campus and turn them into tangible change. Thus leading her to a career in law.

But there was just one problem—she hated law school. “I remember being so disappointed in law school. At Macalester, there were all these people who were well read, who were engaged polit- ically and intellectually. And you would sit around and you’re having these conversations about the state of the world of public policy.”

The hyper-competitive nature of law school students was such a shift that Carthen Watson contemplated leaving. “After that first semester, I hated it so much. I didn’t know if I wanted to come back after Christmas,” she recalls. A visit with a Mac friend’s brother who had gone through the same thing reoriented her thinking. “He said, ‘Look, law school is nothing like practicing law. They’re just like everyone else’s child.’”

Carthen Watson finished law school. She enjoyed an esteemed legal career for decades—first as a litigator in private practice, and then for years as senior associate general counsel managing labor and employment matters at the University of Minnesota.

Despite her success, she wanted more. “I loved practicing law,” says Carthen Watson, “but it did not feed my soul. I took a sab-}

Shelley Carthen Watson

### Her long career spans law, to human rights, to working to eliminate racism and empower women.

**By Tinethe Ermias ’08**

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Epidemiologist Omar Mansour ’16 helped communities hold Big Pharma accountable for the opioid crisis.

In March 2020, weeks before COVID-19 would overtake the nation, Omar Mansour ’16 visited Cabell County, West Virginia, to confront another public health crisis.

The 288-square-mile county on the West Virginia–Ohio border told a gripping story of the despair the opioid epidemic had unleashed upon American communities, as well as the re-silience and demands for justice many residents were leveraging to reverse the devastating trend. Mansour was there to help local leaders determine the cost of interventions to rebuild community health—as well as the cost of not taking action.

In Cabell County, an estimated 81 million opioid painkillers had flooded the not-quite-100,000-resident county over an eight-year period, according to court documents. At least 10 percent of Cabell County’s population, including one in ten newborns, are affected by opioid use disorder.

In addition to the eye-opening numbers, Mansour recalls the tale of young siblings orphaned twice in twenty-four hours. A day after the children’s parents died from a fatal overdose of opioids laced with fentanyl, their grandparents—and newly entrusted caregivers—overdosed on the same tainted batch of drugs.

“You see the devastation firsthand and hear stories like that, and it’s hard to look away,” Mansour says.

Mansour’s work with Johns Hopkins University epidemiologist Caleb Alexander, MD, however, has enabled some communities to begin healing. His experiences in the field fueled the former Macalester biology major to double down on efforts to improve human health.

Finding his niche

Born and raised in Jordan, Mansour attended high school in the Netherlands, where he encountered Mac students studying abroad. Listening to their stories of Mac’s liberal arts focus and the international service and educational opportunities its students pursued, Mansour felt a calling.

“After high school, I always knew I wanted to pursue medicine,” Mansour says. “However, when I got to Mac, I realized that wasn’t the only path to improve human health.”

Mansour’s work with Johns Hopkins University epidemiologist Caleb Alexander, MD, however, has enabled some communities to begin healing. His experiences in the field fueled the former Macalester biology major to double down on efforts to improve human health.

Projects with a purpose

Over the next three years, Mansour crisscrossed the county, from West Virginia to California, studying the far-reaching impacts of the opioid epidemic. He toured towns with staff from local family services agencies, counselors, law enforcement officials, teachers, and municipal leaders. Every visit left Mansour with a heightened sense of purpose.

Alexander designed customized abatement programs for each community, such as treatment centers, public education, and increased access to Naloxone, the medicine used to reverse opioid overdoses. A health economist calculated the cost of Alexander’s prescribed interventions, a figure local governments would later use in court cases when seeking abatement from manufacturers, distributors, pharmacies, and others charged with driving the opioid crisis. Meanwhile, Mansour completed the underlying modeling and statistics for Alexander’s plans. Specifically, he forecast the burden of the epidemic in public health terms with or without certain interventions over the next fifteen years.

Mansour’s work made the complex digestible. It provided political leaders, judges, and the general public straightforward and accessible information to explain the extent of the problem and the value of potential solutions.

If you fail to make a clear and compelling argument, then you’re not going to get support,” Mansour says.

Alexander’s team continues advising local governments in about twenty cases collectively seeking some $100 billion in abatement. Its work contributed to the $252 billion settlement in 2019 between roughly 2,000 local governments and Purdue Pharma, the manufacturer of OxyContin. Any awards from these lawsuits fund many of the much-needed interventions Alexander designed.

“Having seen the devastating effects of the opioid crisis firsthand, I’m honored and humbled I was able to use my skills to help here,” Mansour says.

Last year, Mansour left Alexander’s team to pursue a PhD at Harvard University in pharmacoepidemiology, a field devoted to evaluating the effects of pharmaceutical use in large populations. He plans to focus his research on the effectiveness of various cancer-treatment strategies. Mansour predicts that increased access to health data, technological developments like artificial intelligence, and a promising pipeline of oncology drugs will dramatically change cancer treatment over the next two decades.

“I want to be a part of that change,” Mansour says. “I want to keep doing my part to help people.”

Daniel P. Smith is a Chicago-based freelance writer.
College campuses are often referred to as “bubbles” for their seemingly insular cultures and disconnection from the “real world.” But for visiting sociology professor Alisha Kirchoff, such a characterization could not be further from the truth. The college experience, she argues, is actually shaped by and a direct reflection of the forces that influence our wider society for better and worse.

This fall, Professor Kirchoff and her students aim their critical lenses at themselves in an effort to explore how college shapes and transforms who they are and who they become, the similarities and differences between the Macalester experience and those at other colleges and universities, and what needs to change in order to make the college experience more equitable.

**This is the first time you’ve taught a class about college life. Why were you compelled to create this course?**

As a sociologist, I feel a moral obligation to help guide students in thinking about the structures they inhabit and the impacts that these structures can have on people. My point of departure for the class is how a group of people can come into a college environment and have very different experiences within that institution and then have very different experiences once they leave that institution, even though they’re all carrying a piece of paper that says the same thing: a bachelor’s degree from this place. And then discuss how that fits into this larger ecosystem of social stratification and inequality in society.

Historically, a college degree was supposed to be the great equalizer, and college is often a vehicle for class mobility—it’s a vehicle for wonderful things. But what has happened over time and what is not discussed in that same conversation is how college and university life is itself a system where inequalities that exist in broader society are replicated or, at times, perpetuated, and that they can also be challenged.

The goal with this class is to turn the lens on the college experience as they’re living it, to think about how it’s reflective of broader patterns or how it reinforces patterns of inequality in society. But then also to think about college as a social structure in and of itself, where we have experiences that are different from others and why that might be the case.

**One of the concepts you employ to have this discussion is called “sociological imagination.” Explain what that is.**

It’s where we make the familiar strange.

Sociological imagination is about seeing the world as it is, as opposed to how we are and knowing the difference. There are people who say there’s no such thing as an objective truth, and yes, of course, we all see things through the lens of our own experiences, but what the sociological imagination invites us to do is to think about things outside of ourselves and our own lived experiences and to understand that these are multiple truths that can coexist at the same time. It helps us try to see the world through the lens of experiences that are not our own, and importantly, to not assess a normative value to those experiences.

**How do you get students into that frame of mind to be able to look beyond their lived experiences?**

I usually start by asking them questions that seem like “well, duh” kind of questions. For example, why would you go to college? As a faculty member who has spent a large amount of time in education, it’s absurd that I would ask that question, but that question can be taken a lot of different ways.

There is a pedagogical strategy called “the structured discomfort” where you guide students through a set of ideas that might be difficult or in conflict with their worldview. And you do that not in big chunks, not by hitting anyone over the head, but by taking small bites of a challenging issue throughout the course of the semester.

I’m looking for a way to show students at Macalester how abundantly privileged they are just by being here, and what they can do with that and what their experiences at Macalester mean when they leave. Even students who do not necessarily come from what we think of as being typically privileged backgrounds, just being in this space at this time with the resources available provides opportunities that a state school or community college doesn’t. By showing students the whole spectrum of diversity of experiences that are possible in college, I hope it will help them assimilate what their college experiences are in a different way.

**Why is this class relevant right now?**

I think we’re on the precipice of a transformation and have been for the last few years. The nature of college is changing—who is able to access it is changing and the importance of it. There’s a shift in the narrative that’s questioning broadly the importance and meaning of college.

There’s also been a lot of introspection in higher ed that has accelerated some of those conversations. There’s also been a lot of introspection in higher ed that has caused people to ask, “What are we doing?” Attending college has gotten really expensive and it’s increasingly out of reach for people. What’s the value added? COVID and going online really accelerated some of those conversations.

This is a good moment to engage in conversations with Macalester students who are bright and civically minded to simply read some things and ask, “What is the point of all of this?” “What is this for?”

**By Joe Linstroth / Illustration by Wenjia Tang**
1983
The Class of 1983 will celebrate its 40th Reunion June 8–11, 2023.

1984
Tom Morgan has been promoted to full-time artistic director of Ars Nova Singers, the professional choir he founded in 1984. Based in Boulder, Colo., the ensemble is committed to presenting new music and engaging in interdisciplinary collaborations.

1988
The Class of 1988 will celebrate its 35th Reunion June 8–11, 2023.

1999
Christopher Berger attended the World Economic Forum’s annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland, where he “worked in partnership to advance racial justice on the global agenda.” He collaborates with Tara Kavakli ’18 and Annelie Cotton Coat ’06 at the Minneapolis-based GHR Foundation. Christopher’s spouse, Sarah Reichert ’96, is a racial equity leader in the St. Louis Park, Minn., Public Schools.

1998

2002
Stacey Sorensen Green was named a district court judge in Minnesota’s First Judicial District in February 2022.

2003
The Class of 2003 will celebrate its 20th Reunion June 8–11, 2023.

2007
William Clarke and his wife, Alison, recently welcomed a daughter, Kerry Barry, into the world in Rutland, Vt.

2012
Mai Weisinger is programs and communications manager at Culture Action Europe. Based in Brussels, Belgium, CAE is a network of cultural organizations, artists, activists, academics, and policymakers that functions as “the first port of call for informed opinion and debate about arts and cultural policy in the European Union.”

2013
The Class of 2013 will celebrate its 10th Reunion June 8–11, 2023.

2017
Serdy Moore graduated from the University of Minnesota’s Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs in May with a master of urban and regional planning degree. He served as a bus rapid transit planning intern with Metro Transit in Minneapolis. Serdy and his partner have moved to Chapel Hill, N.C.

2018
The Class of 2018 will celebrate its 5th Reunion June 8–11, 2023.

Max Meyerhoff ’17 captained a Hood to Coast running relay team made up of Mac alums from New York City, Boston, Minneapolis, Seattle, and Olympia, Wash., in August. The 196-mile course from Mount Hood to the Oregon coast took 30 hours to complete. Top (from left): Andrew Boyer ’17, Rachel Ladd ’17, Lydia Fermanich ’17, and Shay Gingras ’17. Bottom: Jordyn Whitman ’17, Hannah Scout Field ’17, and Max.

Not only were Consuelo Gualtieri-Croesi ’98, Monica (Tuttle) Smith ’98, and Stacy Grant Overgaard ’97 on the swim team together at Macalester, they have children who swim on the same high school team. From left: Consuelo, Austin Crosby, Thomas Danielson, Monica, Mike Danialson ’98, Connor Overgaard, and Stacy. Not pictured: Matt Crosby ’98.

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John Austin ’72, Kathy Steiner ’72, John Callahan ’71, Kim Miller ’72, Craig Laughlin ‘71, and spouses traveled to Cornwall, England, this past July. “The Land’s End sign usually shows the distance to New York,” Kathy wrote, “but John Callahan improved it.”

While traveling through Morocco, Professor Andy Overman of Macalester’s Classical Mediterranean and Middle East Department met up with Matthew Wilkinson ’22 in the city of Meknes. Matthew is conducting field research and will continue studying Arabic with the support of a Critical Language Scholarship.

CLASS NOTES

Four classmates gathered on June 13. Front (from left): Mayva Richards Boranian ’53 and Mary MacRae Mark ’53.

Email book publication news to mactoday@macalester.edu.

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BOOKS
**WEDDINGS**


Lily Jilk ’16 and Ben Farber ’16 were married July 30, 2022, in East Jewett, N.Y. Back (from left): Jordan Katz ’16, Justin Kleschen ’15, Nick Mar ’15, the newlyweds, Kendall Van Stalline ’16, Hannah Currens ’16, and Kayla Steinberg ’15. Front: Nick Marotta ’13, Scott Foltz ’15, Hannah Pollard-Garber ’16, and Dylan Kilgour ’17.

Maddie Gerrard ’17 and Sean Mock ’17 were married April 30, 2022, in Boston. They were joined by Maddie’s parents, Michelle Decker Gerrard ’89 and Chris Gerrard ’88, and two generations of Macalester friends. From left: Enrique Pacheco ’16, Grace Zhu ’16, Greg Fait, Sam Dyer ’19, Paul Reischmann ’19, the groom and bride, Ali Willip ’09, Kira Liu ’17, Amelia Gerrard ’20, Anna McEvoy ’17, Nata Kellar-Long ’99, Beth Kellar-Long ’99, Sierra Pancost ’17, Brian Lindeman ’89, Mara Halvorsen ’17, Lilian Yo ’18, Cami Garcia-Flaxland ’17, Alex Abramsen ’16, Becky Dale ’88, and the bride’s parents.

Lydia Craig ’16 and Joseph Aulisi ’17 were married recently. In attendance were: Joe Trier ’18, Ben Castagnetti ’18, Alex Baretta ’18, Izzy Ballet ’17, Peter Bertel ’17, Sean O’Brien ’18, Quentin Stuart ’17, and Anson Justi ’17.

Michael and Emily Paulson ’09 have gotten married after 10 years together.

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Ellie Bekmanis Nokes ’16 and Cowan Nokes were married July 23, 2022, in Hochborn, Germany. Ellie is surrounded by (from left): Jillian Neuberger ’16, Jake Speirs ’16, Kayla Sirak-Raid ’16, Lila Hansen ’16, and Dagmara Franczak ’17.

Eric Stephens ’15 and Rachael Murray were married July 31, 2022. In attendance were: Matt Creasy ’15, Sam Parker ’15, Gina Thayer ’15, Nate Leech ’16, Mackey Borg ’14, and Lisa Zueckler ’15.


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A biology major, Jo Opdyke Wilhelm says she found a love for ecology while studying abroad in the Republic of Palau. The senior environmental scientist for the King County Water and Land Resources Division in Seattle has been in her role for seventeen years, but her path wasn’t always so steady. ‘In my first ten years out of college, I did a ton of three- to six-month seasonal positions and temporary jobs and did ecological fieldwork on the side,’ she says. ‘I resided in Papua New Guinea, and I’ve touched most corners of the United States chasing opportunities to get experience and figure out ultimately what I wanted to do.’

Today she designs, implements, and monitors stream, river, and near-shore habitat restoration projects in the role of ecologist or project manager. The team takes down barriers and hard arming that humans have put into a system, but they also create habitats. ‘All of those habitats are critical for salmon, especially when they are young and just coming out of the gravel,’ she says. ‘They need quiet water to get out of the main floods, to find food, to grow, and get big. Without proper habitats, they are less likely to be able to survive and come back and spawn and create the next generation of salmon.’ Wilhelm shared some career lessons she’s learned in the field and elsewhere along the way.

**Take jobs you believe in**

The passion piece of mission-driven work comes naturally to me. I’ve always looked for jobs that I believe in. One of the things that I love most about what I do now is that we’re making change on the landscape. We’re taking degraded systems and trying to improve and restore them. Over time, you can see the change. You see it when the big yellow steel vehicles are out there moving dirt, and when the first floods come through. Watching how these projects evolve and watching the fish use them is amazing.

**Don’t discount joy**

Recently, I was encouraged to apply for a supervisory job. Part of my brain was saying, ‘Do for it, this is a step up,’ but I couldn’t get excited about it because I really love what I’m doing now. The mistake I’ve seen people make is doing what society is encouraging them to do and not listening to their heart. I’m privileged in that I was able to say, ‘No. It’d be a little bit more money, but I’m okay where I am.’ It can be valuable and important to recognize what you like to do and what you find joy and fulfillment in, and staying true to that.

**Speak up**

If you get eight ecologists in the room, you’re probably going to get eight different opinions. The reality is, none of them are wrong and none of them are right, but some people speak more loudly and more confidently. My ongoing journey is having confidence in what I’ve seen, and what I’ve understood, and what I’ve learned, and then applying that to the projects and making sure that my opinions and my voice are being heard in those conversations.

**Be prepared**

Depending on what I’m doing, when I’m out in the field I’ve got my personal protective equipment—steel-toed boots, reflective vest, hard hat, eye protection, ear protection. Project engineering plans (hard copy or on my phone), project specifications, my phone—for looking up water-quality data, compliance information, regulators’ contact info in case there is a fish kill I need to call in. Water, snacks, car keys, GPS, mallet and stake to mark spots visually, lots of flagging tape. Sharpies, chest waders, knee boots, sampling equipment (for water quality or fish), measuring tape, and my EpiPen and Benadryl. I have an allergy to some kind of stinging insect, but I haven’t figured out what it is yet.

**Volunteer Spotlight**

Anna Graziano ’13

They had abandoned the pollution idea for another project: upcycled pants. They had sewn together windbreaker, waterproof pants on the outside and sweatpants on the inside, with special buttons so you could easily remove the top layer—like a better snow pant! It was so interesting to see how quickly their ideas evolved and what they were willing to go for. They made an amazing product.

**Want to volunteer?**

Visit macalester.edu/alumni/volunteer.

‘Giving back to the place that formed me is important to me.’

**DAY JOB:** Enterprise success manager at DeepScribe, an AI medical technology startup. Our product helps doctors with their medical documentation and electronic medical records, so that they can look at their patients, listen, and be fully present during a visit instead of typing away on the computer. Prior to that, I was head of growth at Theta Den HQ and on the strategy and innovation team at Privia Health.

**VOLUNTEER ROLE:** The first thing I did was Macathon (the college’s twenty-four-hour innovation and creativity contest) in 2017, and I totally fell in love. I’ve been an alumni judge almost every year since, helping to mentor and evaluate the student teams. There’s something pure about the idealism at Macalester and the way that manifests itself into solving real problems at Macathon.

**FAVORITE MACATHON STORY:** On a Friday evening, I met with a student team whose goal was to solve air pollution in India after Diwali, when there are lots of fireworks ignited. I said, ‘Cool! Tell me more,’ and we talked through questions. I didn’t see that team again until they made it to the finals the next day. Their ideas evolved and what they did was amazing and should be nurtured.

**‘Giving back to the place that formed me is important to me.’**

**WHY DO YOU VOLUNTEER AT MAC?** Staying connected to the community and giving back to the place that formed me is important to me. I transferred to Macalester as a sophomore and my three very best friends to this day also transferred there that same year. That in itself is a gift. Another part of it is staying connected to that feeling of learning. I find the students really inspiring. It’s that true, raw energy and idealism, with a little bit of naïveté, which I think is amazing and should be nurtured.
1940
Florence Elkoer Halverson, 103, of Minneapolis died May 8, 2022. In addition to teaching school and working in an insurance agency, Halverson played on several church organ and director numerus choirs. She also took care of her disabled husband, the late Carl Halverson, 93. She is survived by five children, 16 grandchildren, and 30 great-grandchildren.

1942
Lowell A. Gess, 100, of Alexandria, Minn., died June 27, 2022. After attending seminary and medical school, completing an ophthalmology residency, and serving as pastor of small congregations in rural Minnesota, Gess began doing medical missionary work in West Africa in 1952. With his wife, Ruth, he established an eye clinic in Free-town, Sierra Leone, that is still in operation. Gess wrote several books about his experiences and received numerous awards for his work, including the Order of the Rokel (Sierra Leone’s highest honor). He is survived by two daughters, a son, four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

1943
Dorothy Whiston Bedahl, 92, of Fort Collins, Colo., died June 27, 2022. She worked at Mutual Life of Minneapolis and served on the Fort Collins Library, and served as a homemaker, chair of the board of trustees of the Children’s Foundation, and an elder with Christ Presbyterian Church in Edina, Minn. Nickells is survived by her husband, Robert, three children, eight grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren, and a sister.

1945
Velie Hansen served during World War II. During his 50-year career, Stevenson taught English for three years at Macalester College and 13 years at San Diego City College, served as inaugural chair of the English department at San Diego Mesa College, and taught at West London College for a year on a Fulbright exchange. Stevenson is survived by two daughters, a son, and five grandchildren.

1946

1947
Eileen Block Klein, 91, of St. Paul, died June 24, 2022, in Fort Collins, Colo. She volunteered with the Cob Scouts, the Camp Fire Girls, and the Friends of the Fort Collins Library, and served as a church treasurer. Klein is survived by four children, six grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, and a sister.

1948

1949
Lois Hansen Penning, 94, died March 15, 2022. She is survived by two daughters, a son, four grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

1950
Marlyn Johnson Berglund, 90, of Shoreview, Minn., died May 14, 2022. She is survived by seven children, 15 grandchildren, and a great-grandchild.

1951
Charles A. Veil, 93, of Delray Beach, Fla., died June 29, 2022. He was president and owner of Velie Oldsmobile and Veil Mercedes and pursued a career in real estate in Palm Beach County. Veil is survived by his wife, Anne, two daughters, two sons, nine grandchildren, two sisters, and a brother.

1952
Gerald K. Villars, 92, died July 26, 2022, in Denver. During a career in educational leadership, Villars helped launch Colorado’s gifted-lincensed program and won numerous awards, including the Association of American Educators’ Vincent Van Gogh Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Visual Arts Education. He is survived by his wife, Joan, two daughters, 18 grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, and his first wife.

1953
John J. Hargraves, 88, died Feb. 15, 2019. He pursued a career in research and development, flying, and teaching. He once spent 30 days in an environmental capsule to help prove that astronauts could survive in space. His wife, Luella Eilers Hargraves ’53, died July 27, 2021, in San Antonio at the age of 89. They are survived by two daughters, a son, four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

1954
Circie Uehli Turry, 90, died June 27, 2022. She worked for many years as a medical technologist at La Verendrye Hospital in Fort Frances, Ont. Turry is survived by two children, four grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, and a brother.

1955
Allena Pritchard Burns, 88, of Edina, Minn., died May 6, 2022. She taught second grade and third grade in the Edina Public Schools. Burns is survived by her husband, Roy, a daughter, and four grandchildren.

1956
Norma Dagit Anderson, 86, died Aug. 9, 2022. She worked as a teacher and substitute teacher and sold real estate. Anderson is survived by her husband, Marilyn; two daughters; a son, six grandchildren, and a great-grandchild.

1957
Barbara Tjornhom Nelson ’57, died Aug. 7, 2022. A trained practitioner in the specialty. He is survived by his wife, Nancy Luxon Tjornhom, nine children, six great-grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

1958
Viktor O. Wilson of Stillwater, Minn., died Aug. 8, 2022. He taught biology for 34 years. Under Wilson’s leadership as head coach from the early 1960s to the late 1980s, Stillwater’s high school wrestling team produced three state champions and captured eight conference titles.

1959
Carl E. Andersen, 87, of Sierra Vista, Ariz., died Jan. 12, 2021. He is survived by a daughter.

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Barbara Tjornhom Nelson ’57, died Aug. 7, 2022. A trained practitioner in the specialty. He is survived by his wife, Nancy Luxon Tjornhom, nine children, six great-grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.
IN MEMORIAM

1965
Kay Jones Jacobson, 79, of Mankato, Minn., died July 31, 2022. She taught elementary school and was co-founder of the Mankato-based Kaltstrom Corporation. Jacobson is survived by her children, four grandchildren, and a sister.

1966
Sandi Tomlinson Clay, 78, of St. Michael, Minn., died recently. She is survived by a daughter, a son, a grandson, and a brother.

1967
Ellen Mikulak Newcomb, 77, of Wynnewood, Pa., died June 12, 2022. During her career in education, she taught, engaged in research and development, and worked in the administration of technology services. Newcomb is survived by three daughters (including Andrea Nebel ’02) and Christina Newcomb Dahlheimer ’02, two grandchildren, a sister, and a brother.

1969
Marjorie Cline Holland, 75, of Hastings, Mont., died July 23, 2022. Holland is survived by her children, four grandchildren, and five siblings.

1970
Benjamin P. Ahles, 74, of Mechanicshurg, Pa., died Aug. 12, 2022. He served in the U.S. Army, worked in community mental health, and advocated for the homeless. Ahles is survived by his husband, Richard; his mother, four daughters, and 12 grandchildren.

1971
Gail Buchanan Estes, 73, of Lafayette Hill, Pa., died Aug. 6, 2022. She worked as a museum sales manager, a sales assistant with Pfizer Pharmaceuti- cal psychologist with several organizations, and was launching a private practice in 1993, serving clients in Bala Cynwyd, Pa., and the western suburbs of Philadelphia. She is survived by her husband, Michael, two sons, and four grandchildren.

1972

Susan R. Hubler, 81, died May 15, 2022. In Rancho Palos Verdes, Calif. She worked as a medical writer at UCLA Kellogg Ear Institute in Los Angeles and also wrote for numerous other organizations.

James E. Jenson, 81, died June 30, 2022. In Omaha, Neb. During his 50 years of active duty in the U.S. Air Force, Jenson was sta- tioned in London and Thailand and at several locations in the United States. After retiring from the military, he worked as a civil servant for 25 years. Jenson is survived by his wife, Susan Viola Jenson ’83, a daughter, two sons, six grandchildren, four sisters, and two brothers.

Kenneth P. Goodrich, Macalester’s provost from 1971 to 1973, as well as Aug. 10, 2022. He was 88. Goodrich was chair of Macalester’s Psychology Department from 1963 to 1965. In 1992, he served the college as dean of academic affairs and dean and director before becoming provost. He also worked at several other institutions, including the University of Pennsylvania, University of Wisconsin, Syracuse University, and Ohio Wesleyan University. Goodrich is survived by four children (including Karen Goodrich ’92), six grandchildren, and a brother.

Douglas R. Holland, 82, died April 16, 2022. He was an artist director and associate artistic director of the Riverside Shakespeare Company in New York City from 1980 to 1991, with more than 250 credits as a director and producer. He also worked in many films and television shows.

1973
David C. Billingsley, 67, died June 28, 2022, in Pleasant Grove, Ala. He worked for the Minnesota Power Company and was a self-employed hair care and liquor store en- terprise. Billingsley was also a social worker in the Veterans Affairs hospital system. He is survived by his wife, two children, five grandchildren, three sisters, and three brothers.

Ann W. McIntosh, 71, died June 8, 2022. McIntosh was one of the first employees of the Minnesota Power Company. She is survived by her partner, Douglas Myhra.

Timothy Oman died April 16, 2022. He was an artistic director and associate artistic director of the Riverside Shakespeare Company in New York City from 1980 to 1991, with more than 250 credits as a director and producer. He also worked in many films and television shows.

1974
David D. Dubois, 70, died July 22, 2022, in St. icy, Minn. He created art in various media, including sculpture, metal, wood, clay, paint, and pencil. Dubois is survived by his wife, Susan, two sons, and three grandchildren.

1975
Brooks P. Holton, 69, of Austin, Minn., died July 23, 2022. He worked for Dr. Najarian in the University of Minnesota’s Department of Dermatology. He is survived by his wife, Carol; his son, Anthony; and four grandchildren.

1976
Charles M. Babcock, 68, died June 27, 2022, in Los Angeles. She was community coordinator and director at the Huntington Library and worked in arts administration for numerous organizations, including the Mu- seum of London, Wall Center, Santa Ana, Calif., the Los Angeles Opera, and Billabong. Babcock also served on the board of directors of the Bank of Elk River, her family’s Minnesota-based credit union. She is survived by two children and five siblings.

1980
Marcy J. Meyers, 63, died June 9, 2022. She managed the soundstage at Prince’s studio in Paisley Park, and later worked on the recording studio of the Minneapolis area. Meyers is survived by an older sister.

1981
Ellen Heinrichs Norby, 57, died Oct. 19, 2021. She worked with more than 10,000 pediatric pa- tients during her more than 30-plus years with Queen City Pediatrics in Northfield. She is survived by her spouse, Conrad Norby ’81, and three children.

2003
Erdal N. Honfakhli, 42, died Aug. 6, 2022, in Rochester, Minn. After three years as a research scientist with the International Trade Commission in Washington, D.C., he began working for the Office of the President as a trade negotiator covering Africa, Asia, and Indonesia. As head of the Generalized System of Preferences and Mongolia, the weapons industry. He worked for the Office of the President as a trade negotiator for the Office of the President as a trade negotiator covering Africa, Asia, and Indonesia. As head of the Generalized System of Preferences and Mongolia, the weapons industry. He worked for the World Trade Organization in 2002. He is survived by his wife, Esther, two sons, his parents, sister Ingvild, and an older sister.

2007
Jennings Mergenthal ’21 St. Paul, Minn. What is your favorite Mac memory? I re- ally enjoyed the International Roundtable. The speakers were always interesting, but I really enjoyed the student sessions. It was a great opportunity to see what other students were passionate about and it always provided fascinating discussions. I facilitated three sessions, one of which was an early version of an Indigenous land mapping project that I’ve continued to work on.

Burke Strickland ’69 Houston, Texas How do you use the alumni network as an alum? Early on, I benefitted from conversations with alumni from the 1940s and 1950s who shared their perspectives on adapting to the world of work while up- holding Mac’s core values. Over the years, I’ve also continued meeting with alumni as I travel to other cities, including attending alumni events, online dinners, and other events.
HONOR YOUR MACALESTER EXPERIENCE WITH A PLANNED GIFT

It’s true: You know another Macalester graduate when you meet one. Your experience at 1600 Grand was a unique time in life. You can create that feeling for someone else by including Macalester in your estate plans. By sharing your intentions, you’ll become a member of the James Wallace Society. All planned gifts, no matter the size, make a difference.

For more information, contact Theresa Gienapp, director of planned giving, at 651-696-6087 or visit macalester.edu/plannedgiving.

“How Scottish is Macalester?”

Despite the Scottish origins of Mac’s founders and early students, Scottish traditions at Mac weren’t widely embraced until the 1930s. Macalester athletics began using the nickname “Scots” or “Scotsmen” in the mid-1930s. The 1936 Biennial yearbook featured a kilt-clad puppet, Sandy “Mac” Alester, to introduce the section titles. The year 1939 brought Scotch songs and kilted cheerleaders to athletic games and an inaugural Founders Day celebration which encouraged attendees to wear plaid clothing.

Inspired by the 1957–58 cheerleader uniform redesign and the pieces of the Pipe Band and Highland Dancer uniforms in our collections, we dug through the Archives to find other highlights of Macalester’s Scottish identity including photos, newspaper clippings, correspondence, and event publicity documenting the Bagpipe Band, MacAlister Clan membership, the Scottish Country Fair and even Mac’s first mascot, a Scottish terrier. Our Archives are available by appointment.

Email archives@macalester.edu to research in our collections, view the display, or donate materials from your time at Macalester.
Students explored more than one hundred student and community organizations at the annual Involvement Fair in September.