



Team-Taught

Combining dual disciplines in the classroom amplifies learning for students and professors.

PAGE 14



12



22



26

FEATURES

Game for Anything 12

Annie VanderMeer '03 unpacks a career in creating video games.

& 14

Team-taught courses bring together Mac experts across disciplines to explore the terrain—and sometimes, the tensions—of complex topics.

Learning Across the Aisle 22

The new Congress to Campus program is part of the college's focus on helping students learn how to engage across difference.

Archives 101 26

The college's archival objects, and the stories that accompany them, connect the dots of Macalester's history—and you can help.

Illuminating the Legacy of Magdalena Abakanowicz 30

Dr. Joanna Inglot's book is cited as 'pivotal' for curator of Tate Modern's new exhibit.

The Art of Not Making Plans 32

Emel Sherzad '89, co-owner of the recently closed Khyber Pass Café, relishes his improvised life.

Happiness in the Nineteenth Century 34

Professor Juliette Rogers turns to France for lessons about positivity, happiness, and meaning in life.

ON THE COVER:

Art and geology? Professors and students explain what happens in the classroom when you pair one discipline with another.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: CHARLES JISCHKE



32



34

DEPARTMENTS

Correspondence 2

Sounding Board 3

1600 Grand 4

The Order of Genghis Khan, redlining research, celebrating Professor El-Kati

Class Notes 36

Books 38

Weddings 40

In Memoriam 44

Last Look 48



40

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Big Ideas

I was excited to read the faculty contributions to Erin Peterson's "The Next Big Idea" in the fall issue of the magazine. All of the innovations presented were interesting, thoughtful, and seemed possible if only they could be implemented and funded. I'm writing about Big Idea #8—"Accelerate meaningful learning through virtual reality environments," by Professor Walter Greason. Greason has a valid point when he says that experiential learning is profound. The potential of virtual reality to scaffold the acquisition and development of empathy is mind blowing, and could have social implications beyond measure.

Imagine a virtual reality where one inhabits the world of an animal in an industrial meat farm and experiences the smells, the imprisonment, the claustrophobia, the boredom, the abuse, and the fear of inevitable death. If this experience was part of a college curriculum, it could change the future of farming and the future of the American diet! We have all heard how our consumption of meat and the resources used to maintain it are the biggest factor in climate degradation. This doesn't even begin to address the moral problems with confining millions of animals and making their short lives unlivable. I applaud the idea of the debrief of the experiences as well; the experience I just imagined would be so real that it could be unnerving. I stopped eating meat after reading *The Omnivore's Dilemma* by Michael Pollan, and my meat-eating friends won't read

it. I can only imagine what an experience on a meat farm would produce in terms of behavioral changes. If we can't provide a better future for animals, how can we provide a better future for humans? We are connected in the land we inhabit, the water we drink, the air we breathe, and the emotions we feel.

Rose Rinder '86

Regarding Big Idea #2: Get the lead out (for good): I can see how a big idea, like a price-no-object crash program to replace lead water pipes might appeal to an economics professor who brings his own unlimited funds to the project. Back in the real world, where real money can be harder to obtain, a smaller, better idea might have more appeal. For example, replace lead water pipes gradually, during routine street maintenance. And continue to treat the water properly, which practically eliminates the lead-in-water problem. (Something which St. Paul, for example, does, and which Flint infamously failed to do when it tried to save money by changing its water source.)

The (real) money saved by not rapidly digging up much of a city to replace pipes which are not causing an actual problem might be better spent on other projects like, say, lead-paint removal. Or projects that are unrelated to environmental lead.

As ideas go, "We should get rid of it all," may be big. It's certainly simple. But rather than valuing the size of an idea, I'd suggest carefully studying the costs and benefits of any idea, big, small, or in between.

Steven M. Schweda '73

Title IX Reflections

I arrived at Mac in the fall of 1973 shortly after passage of Title IX. I had always been involved in athletics and was happy to be able to continue participation in college. I ran on Sheila Brewer's women's track team—the 880-yard dash (I think it's called a run now). I was always at the back of the pack but Sheila was always encouraging.

Later, I was a cheerleader for men's football and basketball teams. Pat Wiesner was in charge of the squad. In 1978, I ran my first 10K—the Bonne Bell, which Pat organized.

Both Sheila and Pat were very helpful to me through my four years of college. Participation in these athletic programs gave me comfort and confidence when I needed it. So did intramural broomball! Sheila often talked about the importance of Title IX for women's sports. I was sorry to learn she passed several years ago.

Ann Layman Scott '77

Correction

In the Fall 2022 issue's *Imagine*, Macalester: Voices of Champions piece, Sonia Meh-ta was misidentified as a staff member. She is a faculty member. We regret this error.

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Visit Mac's social media hub at macalester.edu/macsocial and join in by using the **#heymac** hashtag when you post on Twitter or Instagram.

CORRESPONDENCE POLICY

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- Tweet: @macalester using the hashtag #macalestertoday
- Mail: *Macalester Today*, Macalester College, 1600 Grand Ave., St. Paul, MN 55105

Our Global Lens: Past, Present, and Future

One of the things that most attracted me to Macalester was the college's deep and longstanding commitment to global citizenship. As a first-generation American, I was raised in an immigrant community, surrounded by people whose languages, stories, customs, and traditions added to the rich tapestry of my neighborhood. This formative experience led me to think of myself as a member of the world family, and to regard national borders as geopolitical constructs, not boundaries that determine the value or importance of people and cultures.

For decades, Macalester's emphasis on internationalism has been a differentiator among its peers. I've heard it in conversation with so many alumni: It's the major reason why you chose to join our community—and a major reason why your time on campus was transformative. For some, it was a life-changing study abroad experience. For others, it was having a roommate from another country. For others, volunteering at an organization in St. Paul that helps refugees adjust to their new lives in the US.

Compared to other colleges of similar size, we have long boasted a high percentage of international students, participation by a majority of our students in study away programs, meaningful engagement with local immigrant communities in the Twin Cities, and a tradition of excellence in research and scholarship that advances many disciplines under the broad umbrella of international studies. Ours was the first higher education institution in the US to fly the United Nations flag on campus. And it is a great source of pride that distinguished alumnus Kofi Annan '61, who was an international student at Mac, served as United Nations Secretary General.

Those commitments are not merely historical relics or legends of a bygone era. Every day, I see how internationalism is woven into our community in countless ways—and those values continue to be a differentiator for Macalester in today's higher education landscape.

It starts with our current students, who hold citizenship in ninety-six different countries, with an international cohort that's among the most diverse of any US college—including socioeconomically, because Macalester is one of few US higher education institutions that provides need-based financial aid to non-US citizens, and because of our extraordinary partnership with the Davis United World College (UWC) Scholars Program (read more about this program on page 6). In addition, our domestic students are increasingly diverse, with many being the children of immigrants.

It's also reflected in our faculty, many of whom were born and spent their formative years outside the US. They bring these perspectives to their scholarship, teaching, and advising, and to every aspect of our campus community.

It's threaded through the classroom experience, with an international general education requirement as one of our curriculum's building blocks, and numerous interdisciplinary concentrations with



Davis UWC Scholars Program Co-founder and Executive Director Phil Geier, Kudzai Dhewa '26, and President Rivera at a December banquet celebrating the thirty-four newest Davis Scholars.

global foci, including African studies; community and global health; food, agriculture, and society; and international development. Our performing arts programs include ensembles in which students learn a broad range of world music and dance. Through campus traditions like the International Roundtable, scholars and community members engage in conversation with our students, faculty, and staff on some of the most complex global issues of our time.

Outside our classrooms, dozens of student organizations focus on international issues and cultural traditions. Off campus, groups of Mac students teach English to adult immigrants with Literacy Minnesota and CLUES, and they work with the Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota, The Advocates for Human Rights, the International Institute of Minnesota, and the Binger Center for New Americans.

And, over the past several months, I've gotten a firsthand understanding of how far this global focus extends. Last fall, I met with groups of alumni in London (home to the college's largest international alumni chapter), and I'm making plans for a trip to Asia later this year. Some of our most active international chapters include Cyprus (our first official international chapter), Singapore, and Shanghai. These chapters and others have met with Mac faculty abroad, welcomed visiting Mac students in study away programs, hosted "Mac in Your City" events, and stayed connected with active group chats on platforms like WeChat and WhatsApp.

As we developed our recently approved strategic plan, Imagine, Macalester, we heard from every constituency of the college that we must continue to emphasize internationalism as a priority. It distinguishes us among small liberal arts colleges and it is an important part of our campus culture. Accordingly, the plan includes a charge to amplify our emphasis on citizenship within the wider world. Internationalism has not only been one of the college's core values throughout its history—it is a cherished commitment that is key to Macalester's future.

Our commitment to internationalism and global citizenship is as important and essential now as it ever has been. The world needs the kinds of leaders Mac produces: people who are deeply committed to work across national borders, personal differences, and ideological divides to create the world we want to see.

Dr. Suzanne M. Rivera is president of Macalester College.

1600
GRAND

PHOTO PROVIDED

Dr. Weatherford Receives Order of Genghis Khan

In November, Mongolian President Ukhnaa Khürelsükh conferred the Order of Genghis Khan, the country's highest state award, to Jack Weatherford, DeWitt Wallace Professor of Anthropology, emeritus. This award recognizes those who have made contributions to strengthening national unity, deeply studying the history and culture of Mongolia, and familiarizing other countries with Mongolian culture. Dr. Weatherford, who wrote the 2004 book *Genghis Khan and the Making of the Modern World*, became the first foreigner to receive the honor.

"It was a long day of ceremony, from a private meeting with the president, marching through a lineup of Mongolian mounted horsemen, two concerts, all the way to a late night dinner with the prime minister in his home," Weatherford says. "The president ordered that a new portrait be painted of me and hung in the government palace. My mind is a jumble now. I have no words. Mongolians have given me so much more than I have given them."

“

I HAVE NO
WORDS.

MONGOLIANS
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THEM.”

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

Following the Board of Trustees' unanimous approval of the *Imagine, Macalester* strategic plan in October, the college has been in a phase of foundational work. The visual below illustrates the plan's strategic initiatives and goals, many of which are interconnected. Please stay tuned for opportunities to be involved in this work. In the meantime, we invite you to visit the strategic plan website at macalester.edu/strategic-plan, and to send questions or suggestions to strategicplan@macalester.edu.

Imagine, MACALESTER



a signature liberal arts curriculum, grounded in a residential campus experience,
focused on our unique location in the vibrant Twin Cities, with an emphasis
on citizenship within the wider world



Curriculum

Inspire Current and Future Students

Create a Developmental Four-Year Experience

Update and Innovate Academic Pathways

Redesign the Academic Calendar to Reimagine
Our Use of Time

Amplify Opportunities for Experiential Learning



Culture

Build Meaningful Connections

Prioritize Student and Employee Well-being, and
Foster a Sense of Belonging for All

Diversify Student, Staff, and Faculty Populations

Nurture Lifelong Connections between the
College and its Students, Employees, and Alumni



Campus

Transform our Physical Environment

Create a Campus that Fosters Innovation,
Access, and Connection

Include the Broader Twin Cities Metro Area
as an Extension of Our Living and Learning
Environment

Foundational Imperatives:

Academic Distinction, Financial Sustainability, Social Responsibility, Community Well-being

1600
GRAND



YouTuber Carter Stacy '24 is *Interesting*

In the summer after his sophomore year in high school, Carter Stacy '24 (Los Olivos, Calif.) started becoming interested in history and geography. As a small passion project, he began uploading videos about topics that interested him to his 125 subscribers on YouTube.

Now, his channel, aptly named *That Is Interesting*, has some 155,000 subscribers and counting.

"In my senior year of high school, the channel blew up within a week or two," he says. "The video that took off was called '80 percent of Americans live east of this line.' I literally had drawn a line on a nighttime satellite image of the US to create this very visually stark, obvious thumbnail."

His once-small passion project became



a nearly overnight success, and soon Stacy found himself scrambling to upload more videos to keep the momentum going.

"This summer, I thought about what it would look like if I were to work on the channel full time," he says. "I made a bunch of videos and was really able to boost my viewership significantly."

Some of his most successful videos are part of his "US Explained" series. Stacy picks a single US state and makes a 35- to 45-minute mini-documentary on it, including its geographical, cultural, and historical features. He attributes the growth of his channel and popularity of the

"US Explained" videos to the new audience members drawn when they see their state reflected.

"I try to engage the audience in the process a lot because it's very helpful for me," he says. "When I'm working on a 'US Explained' video, I'll put out a call for submissions of things to include, like local quirks and things I wouldn't know, especially if I hadn't been there. I'll get hundreds of responses from people sharing with me."

Stacy studied abroad fall semester in Cape Town, South Africa, and continued to upload videos he made before leaving. While at Macalester, he took Regional Geography of US and Canada with Professor Laura Smith '94, a course that took particular interest in water in the western US. He has used some of the knowledge from that course to inform videos on water and settlement in the US.

"I've worked to build a big audience and I can teach them things in a way that's interesting and engaging for them," he says. "It's something that I'm really proud of." —Catherine Kane '26



DAVIS SCHOLARS BEGIN 'LIFE-DEFINING' JOURNEY

Since 1986, Macalester has welcomed students from the United World Colleges (UWC), a network of International Baccalaureate schools designed for students interested in gaining leadership and cross-cultural skills in a global context.

In 2004, the college began a partnership with the Davis Foundation to offer scholarships to support UWC graduates. At a December banquet, Macalester celebrated its thirty-four newest Davis UWC Scholars with a visit from Davis UWC Scholars Program Co-founder and Executive Director Phil Geier and remarks by Tonderai Chikuhwa '96, UWC alumnus and chief of staff and senior policy advisor in the United Nations' Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, who said:

"I spent four life-defining years at Macalester and beyond a shadow of a doubt, they set me on my career trajectory of international service and twenty-two years at the U.N. working at the intersection of international peace and security, and human rights."

SHELF CONSCIOUS

Ever wonder about all those books lining professors' offices? We're with you.



Asian languages and cultures professor Arthur Mitchell teaches Japanese culture, politics, and literature.

Have you read any standout books recently?

I really enjoyed a book I read about race in a Japanese context—it's written in Japanese by Ayu Majima, a historian in Japan, and the title translates to *The Melancholy of Skin Color*. Majima is the first person to talk explicitly about the inferiority complex that a lot of Japanese people have towards whiteness, or, white people.

The book relates to a project on race that I want to do on the historical development of culture in Japan. There is an element of white assimilation: they adopted the clothing, customs, and, to some extent, the language of the West to such a thorough and exhaustive extent. There was a loss of identity that went along with that assimilation. In Japan, it's often discussed in terms of westernization or modernization, but those terms paper over the core racial dynamics at play.

Any all-time favorite books?

I'm really excited about *Represent and Destroy*, by critic Jodi Melamed. It's about how many of the liberal anti-racism efforts have deflected energies away from actual anti-racist work. Melamed points to the delusion in academia that we are moving the equity needle by simply diversifying the content of our syllabi. By putting all of our energies there, we're not actually doing anything to address broader issues in the world. It's great for me because my role in academia is implicated in what she's criticizing. It's making me reflect on the type of anti-racist work I do within my classes and within my work.

What's one book you would recommend to everybody at Macalester?

I was blown away this summer by *Grading for Equity* by Joe Feldman. Even though it is geared toward high school educators, so much of what is said applies to the work that I do at Macalester. It examines the type of biases and prejudices that enter into grading practices and recommends ways to eliminate those aspects of the grading system, while also putting in place a system that creates a relationship with your students of trust and collaboration, rather than judgment and control. I'm experimenting with that this semester. —Catherine Kane '26

Whose shelf should we visit next?
Email mactoday@macalester.edu.

Celebrating Professor El-Kati

“

Sister Leslie Barlow has captured Elder El-Kati in the fire, in the pose we all know, so familiar to us who are familiar with the civil rights and Black Power movement—the pose that says, ‘I’m thinking about a better world. I’m thinking about a universe that looks different than the one I am inhabiting now. I’m thinking about empowering others and building community in such a way that when I leave the planet, people will be able to say I left it better than I found it.’”

— Dr. Yohuru Williams, 2022 El-Kati
Distinguished Lectureship in American Studies

Dr. Yohuru Williams, distinguished university chair and professor of history and founding director of the Racial Justice Initiative at the University of St. Thomas, spoke on “The Way Before Wakanda: Mahmoud El-Kati, Black Power, and the Importance of Black History.” The November event featured an unveiling of a portrait of Professor El-Kati by Minneapolis artist Leslie Barlow, with El-Kati, family members, and many alumni and friends in the audience.

El-Kati taught history at Macalester from 1970 to 2003, and is a lecturer, writer, and commentator on the African American experience.





RYAN STOPERA



• POSTCARD •

TARRAGONA, SPAIN

Xenia Sofianou '25 (Preveza, Greece), a neuroscience major, spent the fall semester studying away at the University of Tarragona, Spain, a port city in northeastern Spain's Catalonia region. She shared this update.

"Barcelona is only an hour away by train, and I get to go every weekend! The university life here is actually very different than in the US. I have a twenty-minute bus ride to campus, and I live in an apartment in the city with housemates from different countries. In the afternoons we enjoy the sunny weather and the beach, and sometimes I get the chance to practice my sailing skills!

This semester I am taking classes in microbiology and immunology in the Biochemistry Department at the University of Tarragona. I took on the challenge of taking classes that are delivered in Spanish/Catalan and so far it is going well!"

RESEARCHING REDLINING

A current student, two alumni, and a professor team up to publish research on redlining and air pollution.

Redlining—the systemic denial of financial services, including mortgages, to individuals living in certain geographic areas based on race and ethnicity—is a discriminatory practice that traces its roots to federal home ownership programs in the early twentieth century.

In July, Elizabeth Hrycyna '21, Jennings Mergenthal '21, and Saiido Noor '23, along with biology professor Mary Heskell, published the results of their research on redlining and air pollution in *Elementa: Science of the Anthropocene*.

Their article, “Satellite observations of NO₂ indicate legacy impacts of redlining in U.S. Midwestern cities,” is one of many examples of Macalester students and faculty collaborating to produce original research worthy of publication. It's likely the first time, however, that the participants never met in-person while working together.

“This project was undertaken entirely during the pandemic, with nearly all aspects occurring remotely and via Zoom, and the students were very flexible and game for taking on the additional challenges,” says Dr. Heskell.

The study originated as Hrycyna's senior honors thesis for biology with Dr. Heskell. She collaborated with the other students to help her examine how the legacy of redlining and other forms of housing discrimination affect modern-day air quality in eleven Midwestern cities.

How they did it

The project was a true interdisciplinary collaboration, as the student-researchers employed their skills in biology, history, and data science to complete the project.

By using Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) maps that delineate redlined neighborhoods, which were digitized and made publicly available by the University of Richmond's Mapping Inequality project, they quantified nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) levels across neighborhoods and cities using satellite data of air quality on Earth, compiled by Google Earth Engine.

As lead author, Hrycyna worked with Dr. Heskell to design the study, and led analyzing and visualizing the data.

“There was a lot of learning on the go,” says Hrycyna, who was new to both satellite data and geospatial analysis.

Mergenthal, a history and biology double major, focused their work on the front end of operations, focusing on data sets collected in the Twin Cities. “I made a bunch of maps, looked at tree cover and the redlining tracks, contextualizing what redlining is and how it integrates into things that still exist today,” Mergenthal says.

Noor, also a biology major and data science minor, worked on the back end of the project with data to assess urban areas' prox-



Mary Heskell



Elizabeth Hrycyna



Jennings Mergenthal



Saiido Noor

imity to major roads and highways, using statistics “to understand what biological question we're going after.”

What they found

The researchers found significantly higher NO₂ levels in many Midwestern cities' redlined neighborhoods compared to “green-lined” neighborhoods which were, and are, whiter and wealthier.

For Professor Heskell, the main takeaway was that “historic urban housing policies grounded in racism, and the associated continued government disinvestment, impact the air quality of neighborhoods—and this impact is large enough it can be detected from space.”

Mergenthal, who now works at the Science Museum of Minnesota, echoes their mentor.

“As much as some people would like to say, ‘Oh, redlining is a thing of the past, it doesn't have bearing on the present,’ it's not true,” they say.

For Hrycyna, who is now a research technician for a state natural history survey in Illinois, the collaboration and problem-solving prepared her for life after graduation. This summer, she plans to lead a key research project for the survey.

“Thanks to this experience, I feel prepared for that now,” she says. —Dennis Krolevich '26



Hip Hip Hooray for **MAC**

ATHLETICS

1. The men's and women's soccer teams both made the MIAC playoffs.
2. The women's volleyball team had its second winning season in a row.
3. Both the men's and the women's cross-country teams finished fourth in the MIAC (the best finish for men in nearly twenty years and the best finish for women in nine years).
4. The football team ended its season with three straight wins to finish 5-5 on the season.
5. Every fall team had a better record than last year and no team finished below .500.
6. Men's basketball forward Badou Ba '25 (Dakar, Senegal), a recipient of four MIAC Defensive Player of the Week awards, was featured in a January *Star Tribune* story.
7. Sophomore guard/forward Peyton Starks '25 (Ellisville, Mo.) was named MIAC Offensive Player of the Week for women's basketball on Jan. 9 after scoring 25 and 30 points in victories over St. Olaf and St. Scholastica, respectively.

► Visit athletics.macalester.edu to stream games and stay up to date.

Game for Anything

Annie VanderMeer '03 unpacks a career in creating video games.

BY ANDREW FAUGHT

As one of the narrative designers of the award-winning video game *Unpacking*, Annie VanderMeer '03 helped dream up thousands of physical items—from the mundane to the meaningful—to illustrate life's journeys through the things we carry.

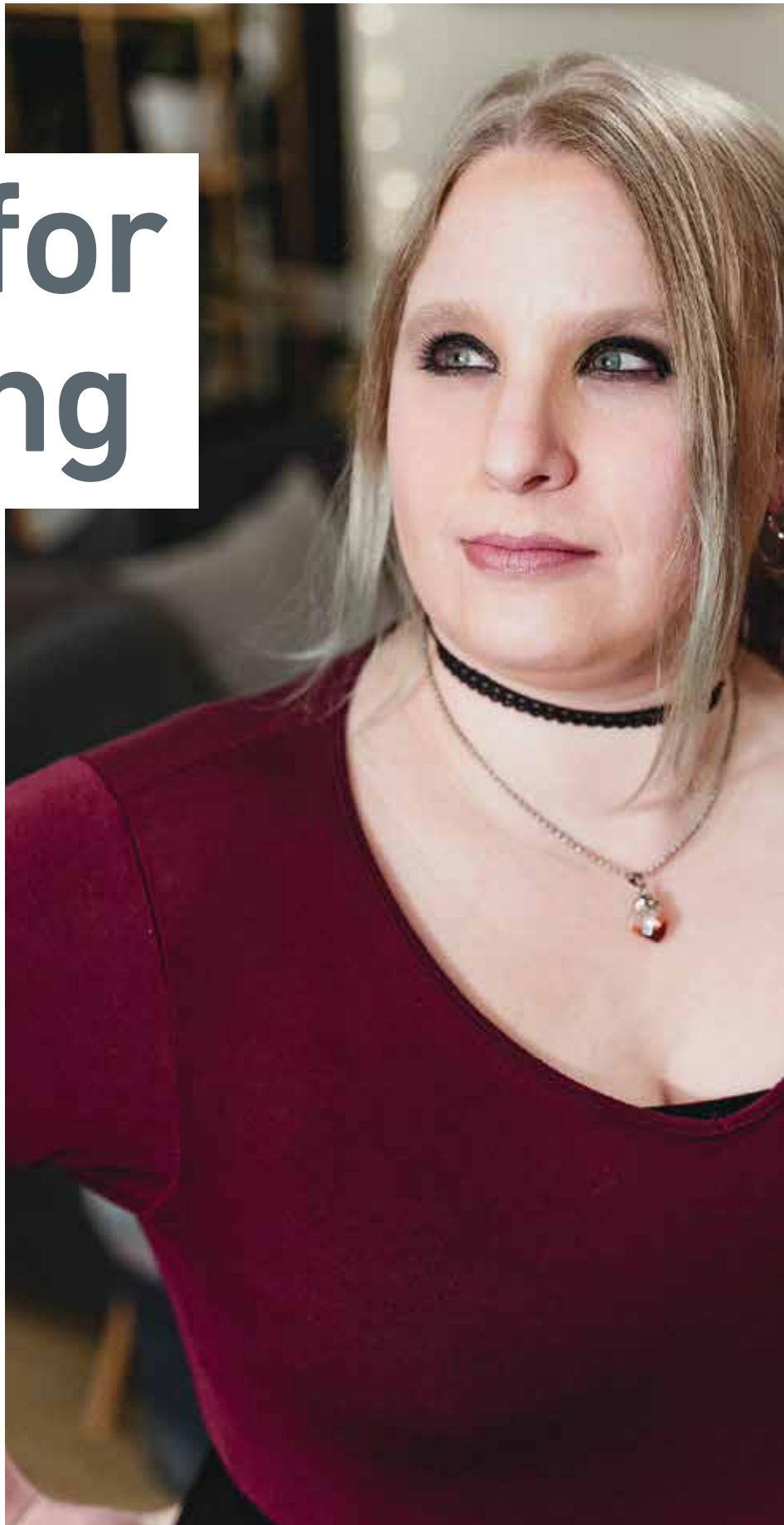
The dialogue-free game follows an unseen and unheard female protagonist between 1995 and 2015, from her childhood, to college, and on to adulthood. In thirty-five rooms, players unpack boxes of her toys, books, and memories, decorating various living spaces, while also divining clues—through objects and settings—about the character's personal journey.

"We essentially mapped out this arc of who she was and who she became," says VanderMeer, narrative lead with Digimancy Entertainment, a fully remote studio. "We're telling a story with stuff."

The experience, she adds, taps an emotional resonance in players: "While you're putting together this person's story, you naturally reflect on how your own life has gone—your moves and the stuff you've chosen to bring with you." (One scenario suggests a breakup with a love interest, as the adult character finds herself living again in her childhood room.)

Billed as a "Zen" puzzle game, *Unpacking* won the BAFTA (British Academy of Film and Television Arts) for Best Narrative, and a number of other awards. The game was created by Australian game developer Witch Beam, for whom VanderMeer was a contract employee, and released on multiple platforms in 2021.

In the past decade, developers have pioneered new ways to develop more immersive, story-based





In *Unpacking*, players pull possessions out of boxes and find a place for them in a new home.



content. *Unpacking* provides a voyeuristic thrill, and a kind of intimacy with and empathy for the unnamed protagonist, says VanderMeer, who works from Seattle.

"The modern term is you're developing a parasocial kind of connection to this person whose stuff you're putting away," she adds. "You're helping a friend move in."

The game has a deliberate pace that allows for introspection, with no requirement that the player dodge bullets or slay dragons. A single player visits living spaces in eight different years of the character's life, learning about her through her possessions. There are no rules, and it's not competitive.

"There's no way to fail," VanderMeer says. "You're not going to drop and break something. You're not going to put something in the wrong spot and the game is going to end. There are parts where you can't really finish a level, because you can't put a toaster in the bathtub, but there aren't consequences."

VanderMeer always has been a video game fanatic. Growing up in Mesa, Ariz., she played classic role-playing games on her dad's PC, and "platformer" games (in which players move through a series of environments) on consoles. Today, she enjoys "a bajillion" new titles, including the narrative-driven games *Inscription*, and *Horizon Forbidden West*.

But she never figured she'd make a career of games. Male gamers often were openly hostile toward female gamers, including VanderMeer, questioning their interest. "There was a great deal of gatekeeping from guys, insisting that you prove your knowledge and skill or be labeled a fake," she says.

There were other dissuading factors. She comes from a family of doctors and academics, and gaming didn't seem to fit the part. VanderMeer decided that she'd become an English professor.

She enrolled at Macalester because she wanted a liberal arts experience in a culturally diverse setting. She majored in English with, not surprisingly, a specialization in creative writing, but then fate intervened.

After graduation, she took a job at the electronics retailer GameStop in Irvine, Calif. She met game developers from nearby firms who came into the store on their lunch hour. After VanderMeer served as a panelist on a "sci-fi/fantasy/geek convention" at the University of California-Irvine, the roommate of a friend who worked at video game developer Papaya Studio approached her and asked if she'd be interested in writing for the company.

It turned out the writing was more in the public relations vein. But company leaders did say she could write a game story—*Taxi Driver*, designed as a "sequel" to the film of the same name.

She jumped at the opportunity, and then joined Obsidian Entertainment in 2006, helping to create the *Dungeons & Dragons* property *Neverwinter Nights 2*. After working on both big-budget "AAA" games, including *Destiny* and *Guild Wars 2*, and small-team indie titles, she was hired as narrative lead at Digimancy in August.

While nearly half of all US gamers are women, only a quarter of game developers are women, according to the market research firm NPD Group. VanderMeer says it's difficult for women, including herself, to advance into senior roles, attributing this to the industry's having long been male dominated and a continuing perception that women aren't good with tech that has carried over into games.

Throughout her career, VanderMeer has been encouraged by Stephanie Burt, who taught English at Macalester from 2000 to 2007, and advised VanderMeer's thesis on science fiction and fantasy. Burt is now a professor of English at Harvard. An award-winning poet, Burt says it's her former protégé who has given her a lesson in storytelling.

In the fantastical world of video games, VanderMeer has figured out new ways to address character and emotion, Burt says.

"How are the emotional possibilities for a character different because they can commune with cats, or merge with a laser-guided robot, or turn into a cloud?" Burt asks. "Annie is just so good at thinking about things like that."

VanderMeer tells students who are interested in gaming to focus on what excites them. "Even though I loved taking English courses at Mac, I deeply appreciated exploring other subjects. Game development is home to so many roles and disciplines—having a diversity of learning experiences helps."

While some players have questioned what *Unpacking* is all about, VanderMeer has her own reasons for enjoying the game.

"It's profoundly satisfying to open boxes and put things away—it's a weird primal thing," she says. "It's hard to not feel close to somebody when you've put away their underwear." **M**

Andrew Faught is a freelance writer based in Fresno, Calif.



Team-taught courses bring together Mac experts across disciplines to explore the terrain—and sometimes, the tensions—of complex topics.

BY ERIN PETERSON
Photos by David J. Turner

Two decades ago, associate computer science professor Getiria Onsongo '04 did a summer research project with Macalester professor Libby Shoop that changed his life.

The project, which focused on developing data exploration tools for biological data, offered Onsongo a meaningful experience in computational biology, a field that uses computational techniques to understand biological systems.

The research helped him see how he could combine his long-time interest in health care with his natural strengths in computer science—instead of being forced to choose one or the other. “It opened a path I didn’t know existed before,” he recalls. “It changed the trajectory of my whole career.”

Today, as an associate professor of computer science at Macalester, Onsongo wants to bring similar perspective-shifting moments to current students. That’s why he and biology professor Robin Shields-Cutler teamed up to teach a course in computational biology. Shields-Cutler earned his PhD studying microbiology and infectious diseases, and learned computational techniques later in his training. “It changed the way that I think about solving problems,” he says, “in part, by adding this incredible new toolbox of methods.” Now, Shields-Cutler uses these techniques in his research to study complex dynamics of the gut microbiome.

Pairing biological insights with a range of computational techniques, the course is designed to enrich students’ understanding of the rapidly expanding field, which plays a role in everything from identifying new coronavirus variants to enabling new applications of personalized medicine.

For both Onsongo and Shields-Cutler, team teaching has offered new ways to strengthen their teaching and build on each other’s expertise. Students, including Eliza King '23 (Novato, Calif.), have experienced a similar widening of possibility that Onsongo had some two decades ago. “Having two professors who are experts on the two different areas of the class is helpful,” says King, a biology major with an English minor. She hopes to use the coding and data analysis skills she’s honed from the course to pursue work linked to wildlife conservation.

While not limited to the liberal arts, team-taught courses seem ready-made for Macalester students—opportunities to pair sometimes disparate disciplines, find common vocabularies, and stretch imaginations. In a world with increasingly complex and multifaceted problems, those who find ways to bridge multiple disciplines and perspectives will be poised to make significant impact.

In the pages that follow, faculty from three co-taught courses discuss how they expand their areas of focus through team teaching—and students share the insights they’ve gleaned from the experience.

COURSE #1

Land/Water

Landscape exploration
through art and science

Geology professor Kelly MacGregor and art professor Chris Willcox teach *Land/Water*, which uses journals, sketching, scientific measurements, and prompts to investigate landscapes in Minnesota scientifically and artistically. Rola Cao '25 (Nanjing, China) is a double major in psychology and anthropology.



CHRIS WILLCOX,
professor of art,
painting

Kelly and Chris, what led you to the development of this course?

MACGREGOR: As faculty members at a liberal arts college, we're both interested in the intersection between the science and art of landscapes. Chris and I kept coming back to how both scientists and artists use field notebooks to document and explore landscapes and water around them.

WILLCOX: The more we talked about it, the more we realized how rich the interchange between our disciplines is.

MACGREGOR: Our course uses science journaling and art journaling to explore the world around us. Where are the commonalities between the practices of science and art? How can we use one to understand the other?

Rola, why did you take this class?

CAO: I spent the first nineteen years of my life in a city nurtured by the third longest river on earth, the Yangtze River. The river significantly affects the local weather, culture, and lifestyle, and I wanted to explore the topic. I also had a deeper reason that compelled me to take this course: my grandfather was a cartographer and participated in the construction of the world's biggest dam, Three Gorges, in the 1990s. He passed away during my first year of college and I couldn't see him for the very last time. I see this class as an opportunity for me to honor him, to reconcile loss, and to heal from grief through exploring the art and science of nature.



KELLY MACGREGOR,
professor of geology,
glacial geomorphology

“

The more we talked about it, the more we realized how rich the interchange between our disciplines is.”

—Chris Willcox

Kelly and Chris, tell me about a project you've done in class.

MACGREGOR: We went to the Root River in south-eastern Minnesota on an overnight trip and had students calculate water discharge to understand what the flow was like. Half of them were in hip waders and using equipment to make measurements of the channel, and they created a cross section of it.

WILLCOX: I had the other half, who were painting that same landscape. Then they swapped, so they got to experience both things.

How does having experts in two disciplines shape the classroom experience?

WILLCOX: When students are field journaling—art book-type journaling—I have them complete thoughts that start with the prompts “I notice,” “I wonder,” and “It reminds me of.” That’s very similar to how Kelly talks about constructing scientific experiments. A lot of our work is ultimately about slowing down and really noticing things.

CAO: In a traditional classroom, the voice of one professor has an irrefutable authority. But with two professors, it’s an ongoing dialogue. They often offer insights on how art and science can complement each other. Scientific cartography can benefit from artistic embellishment. Art and journaling can inspire a long-lasting curiosity about science and nature.

What do you hope students take away from this class?

MACGREGOR: I want to give students a sense of hope. As part of the class, students sat in a spot that used to be a prairie, then became a farm, and is now turning back into a prairie. I hope they can see the beauty in this change.

WILLCOX: I want students to take away a sense of wonder about the natural world that “slow looking” can inspire. Prolonged, deep looking is rewarding and a skill to be cultivated. I hope students continue to pause and truly see what’s around them, as artists do, and continue to paint and draw to develop their skills.

Computational Biology

An under-the-hood look at biological topics through a computational lens

Associate computer science professor Getiria Onsongo '04 and assistant biology professor Robin Shields-Cutler explore topics including bioinformatics and algorithms in genome analysis. Ahmed Abdalla Ahmed '23 (Omdurman, Sudan) is a computer science and environmental studies major.

Getiria, you were inspired to teach a version of this course after doing summer research on a similar topic as a student. Robin, what made you excited about team-teaching a course like this?

SHIELDS-CUTLER: I was excited to work with Getiria, and I knew that together we could teach far more deeply on both sides of this field than we could individually.

Can you give some examples of how these two fields work together?

SHIELDS-CUTLER: We use DNA and RNA sequences to understand so much about our world today, and those sequences can be massive. As one example, the coronavirus genome itself is relatively simple in biological terms—about 30,000 bases, compared to a human's 3 billion—but scientists are looking at thousands of them in real time to try to identify changes, or variants, that might be important to keep an eye on. Because of the amount of the data being analyzed, these biological problems are also, necessarily, a computational exercise.

These techniques are also important for emerging areas like personalized medicine, in which medical interventions can be tailored to individuals based on their genetics and other factors. In the class, students write computer code for algorithms that form the basis for most DNA analysis tools. They use the same kinds of tools and techniques that thousands of labs across the world are using every day.

How do two distinct viewpoints come together as part of a single course?

ONSONGO: We teach every class together. When Robin is covering heavy biology stuff, I might hop in and talk about the tools behind it. And if I'm covering mostly computer science stuff, he might jump in to talk about why a particular topic is important.

AHMED: It is cool to see how Professor Onsongo and Professor Shields-Cutler go back and forth to explain their own expertise. They show humility in yielding to each other's expertise, but also collaboration at the same time. Both ideas are integral to the scientific process.

What are the larger lessons you hope students take from their experiences in your classroom?

SHIELDS-CUTLER: There are so many buzzy topics—things like personalized medicine and your gut's microbiome—that are derived from analyses that use the kinds of algorithms that we teach in this class. We also want students to be critical consumers of the scientific information they're seeing, because there can be a lot of inaccurate or misleading information that gets published in the popular press and shared online.

ONSONGO: I also hope that students see the value of collaborating and working in teams. You might not become a biologist, but knowing some biology—and knowing a biologist!—is useful if you want to solve some types of problems. Similarly, if you are a biologist, you don't need to have a degree in computer science to incorporate computational techniques in your work. Interdisciplinarity can help you solve problems that you can't solve yourself.





GETIRIA ONSONGO '04,
associate professor
of computer science,
bioinformatics



ROBIN SHIELDS-CUTLER,
assistant professor of
biology, microbiology



WHEN TWO MINDS ARE BETTER THAN ONE

Macalester offers a range of team-taught courses every year. Here are some other recent offerings.

Video Games: Narrative Coding

Taught by: James Dawes, DeWitt Wallace Professor of English, and Bret Jackson, associate professor of mathematics, statistics, and computer science

Video games push the boundaries of storytelling and narrative design. In this course, interdisciplinary teams use hands-on projects to develop their world-building narrative techniques in an immersive visual setting.

Climate Change: Science, Economics, and Policy

Taught by: Louisa Bradtmiller, professor of environmental studies, and Sarah West, G. Theodore Mitau Professor of Economics

What are the costs and benefits of fossil fuel consumption—in the present and over the coming centuries? This course examines concepts from climate science and environmental economics to evaluate policy interventions designed to reduce fossil fuel consumption, and considers technological solutions to slow or reverse climate change.

Sound, Image, Body, Words: Writing About Art

Taught by: Mark Mazullo, professor of music, and Emma Törzs, visiting assistant professor of English

Artists, dancers, musicians, actors, writers. This is a class for anyone who wants to learn to transmute artistic experiences into words. Students look at visual art, listen to music, and watch theatrical and dance performances, and in response, they practice different modes of incorporating their reactions into creative and critical writing.



JIM LAINE,
Arnold H. Lowe Professor
of Religious Studies

COURSE #3

India and Rome

The surprising history that influences us today

Arnold H. Lowe Professor of Religious Studies Jim Laine and Harry M. Drake Distinguished Professor in the Humanities and Fine Arts J. Andrew Overman explore the relationship between empire and religion from Rome to India for the thousand years between Alexander (336 BCE) and the rise of Islam (800 CE). Claire McDayter-Hunter '25 (Lewisburg, Penn.) is a double major in geology and classical archeology.

Tell me about the idea behind this course.

OVERMAN: So much of the American academic curriculum has an emphasis on Western centers. But there are many points to the east—Syria, Iraq, Iran—that are vital. There are insights there from throughout history that can inform our own understanding of who we are and where we're heading. We want this course to be a refocusing of the curricular lens—and a recentering of the map.

LAINE: We've seen that people have often approached certain world-historical questions by starting in Mesopotamia then heading to Egypt, Greece, England, and then America in a hurry. You go north and turn left. And we think that neglects the central zone of the Eurasian landmass. I'm a specialist in India, Andy's a specialist in the Mediterranean world, and we feel like between our two zones is where a lot of world history is happening.

Can you say more about that?

OVERMAN: We talk a lot about empire and expansion in this course. But places like Alexandria and Baghdad are interesting counterweights to the imperial project: they stopped conquering. Instead, their playbook was, "We're going to bring people here because they're going to want to come here." And it worked: the great minds of the world came to them.

LAINE: In that era, if you'd wanted to go to a good hospital or get a nice suit of clothes, or even a good bottle of wine, you wouldn't have gone to France! You would head east to the old heartlands: Alexandria, Constantinople, Baghdad. Many people believe that the Western world is at the heart of everything that is modern and technological and sophisticated. But there were plenty of people much earlier on who had superior ways of looking at a lot of things—astronomy, science, math. It can be interesting for students to think about where they would have gone if they were an ambitious person in that era. You're not going to Microsoft in Seattle or Apple in Cupertino. Maybe you're going to India, where the concept of zero was perhaps invented and where our decimal system and "Arabic numerals" (the Arabs called them "Indian numerals") were in use centuries before Europeans adopted them.

How do students benefit from a team-taught class like this?

OVERMAN: We believe a valuable aspect of team teaching courses is that students in the room get to hear senior scholars engage in important questions, take each other's point of view seriously, and also disagree about some things.

LAINE: I might have one perspective, but maybe Andy has read a book that offers a different perspective. We can't all read the same books, and we have to rely on each other for corrections.

OVERMAN: When you get a couple of people with some overlapping interests and expertise—as well as local resources, like the Minneapolis Institute of Art—you can tackle some pretty big areas. You can have crucial conversations.

LAINE: And if students take a class like this early in their careers, it can reshape the way they think about what they want to study during the rest of their time at Macalester.

What do you hope students take away from your course?

LAINE: I hope they realize that they don't need to get locked into parochial narratives in the way they look at the world. I hope that they can look at the world in 800 CE and realize how complex it was. Let's also realize that the massive Chinese project called the Belt and Road Initiative, launched in 2013, had an ancient precursor in the Silk Road.

OVERMAN: I want them to know about some places, some people, and some languages that they might have never heard of and might not hear about again. I hope it sparks a curiosity in them about other parts of the world.

What did you take away from it, Claire?

MCDAYTER-HUNTER: It encouraged me to branch out, both in my readings and research. I'd never really explored using religious texts—the Gnostic Gospels and the Bible, for example—so I found it to be a little intimidating. But no academic field is an island, and the interconnected spaces between fields are where some of the most interesting work occurs. **M**



J. ANDREW OVERMAN,
Harry M. Drake Distinguished
Professor in the Humanities
and Fine Arts

“

There are insights there from throughout history that can inform our own understanding of who we are and where we're heading.”

—J. Andrew Overman

LEARNING ACROSS THE AISLE

The new Congress to Campus program is part of the college's focus on helping students learn how to engage across difference.

BY LAURA BILLINGS COLEMAN

PHOTOS BY DAVID J. TURNER



The image shows a large, modern lecture hall with a curved wooden ceiling and walls. An audience of students is seated in rows of wooden chairs, facing a stage. On the stage, two men are seated in armchairs, facing each other in a discussion. An American flag stands to the left of the stage. A large screen on the right side of the stage displays the 'CONGRESS TO CAMPUS' logo, which includes a stylized illustration of the U.S. Capitol dome. Below the logo, the screen shows 'LIVE CAPTIONS: bit.ly/mac-captions' and a QR code. To the right, it says 'SUBMIT bit.ly/m' and another QR code. The overall atmosphere is professional and academic.

CONGRESS TO CAMPUS

LIVE CAPTIONS:
bit.ly/mac-captions

SUBMIT
bit.ly/m



SAM COPPERSMITH is a former Democratic congressman from Phoenix, Arizona, who served one term from 1993 to 1995, as he sometimes jokes, during “the height of the fax machine” era. Dennis Ross, a Republican from Lakeland, Florida, spent four terms in Congress, first landing in D.C. with the 2010 midterm Tea Party sweep. A quick glance at their legislative biographies might suggest the two former lawmakers share little common ground: Coppersmith has been honored as a champion of Planned Parenthood; Ross earned an A- rating from the National Rifle Association. But on an October morning in Professor Duchess Harris’s American studies senior seminar, the pair sat side by side, fielding students’ questions, and finding occasional points of agreement.

Both know the challenges of campaigning and navigating demanding congressional responsibilities. Both have tried to serve constituents who voted against them. And both are worried that in an era of unprecedented political polarization, the next generation may not be learning to engage effectively with opposing opinions—a skill essential for the continuation of democracy.

“I’m very concerned that my generation has done a significant disservice to your generation for not teaching you the significant requirement that you be involved in the process of self-government,” Ross had explained to an audience of Macalester students and faculty gathered the day before in Mairs Concert Hall to hear the former members of Congress discuss the Supreme Court’s June *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* decision, which overturned the constitutional right to abortion.

“What brought us here,” Coppersmith said from the stage, “is the idea that we can dialogue. What we hope to do here is show that one, we can disagree in ways that maybe are productive for ourselves and for you, and second is, even though we’re going to walk away and still be 180 degrees from each other, maybe we can tease out something where we can agree, for the good of the country to move forward.”

Ross and Coppersmith visited Macalester through Congress to Campus, which aims to teach students to understand how politically charged topics look from both sides of the aisle. The initiative is the flagship program of the Association of Former Members of Con-

gress, an alliance of 800 former US senators and representatives. For the past forty years, the organization has been sending Republican and Democrat former lawmakers like Ross and Coppersmith to more than 140 colleges and universities, modeling the importance of bipartisan dialogue through classroom visits and conversational forums. This fall, with financial support from two Mac alums, Macalester began a partnership with Congress to Campus that will bring new speakers to the college for the next four years.

But the program is just one part of a growing conversation taking place at Macalester and at many other liberal arts colleges, exploring what higher education can do to help ease the fierce partisanship of the moment, and to create a campus culture that makes room for free speech and a full range of perspectives. “Around here, we sometimes refer to the ‘Mac Bubble,’” political science professor Andrew Latham says about Mac’s tight-knit campus, and typically progressive student body. While topics like solving systemic racism, protecting abortion rights, and staging an urgent response to the climate crisis may rank highly on the political agenda for the strong majority of Macalester students, the general population students will encounter after they graduate may hold vastly different viewpoints. “That’s why a liberal arts education has to prepare students for the world they actually belong to and inhabit,” Latham says. “The ‘Mac Bubble’ is not the same as the real world, so these kinds of experiences can help us to accomplish our mission, part of which is to prepare students for lives of political and civic engagement beyond this campus.”

Breaking out of the bubble

Macalester has long had a reputation for left-leaning politics. It’s an identity that also tends to reinforce itself in the admissions process. “If you take it back to the anti-Vietnam protests, Macalester is known for a certain political sensibility that attracts certain high school students to apply,” says Harris. “It would be fair to say that Macalester’s student body is disproportionate ideologically, but that’s coming out of a history that tells [progressive] students they might be a good fit.”

For nearly a decade, Latham has been teaching a class on conservative politics—but with few actual conservatives in attendance.

"There are always a few who will come into my office, close the door, and confess," he says with a chuckle, "but generally the class is filled with liberal students who are hungry to understand how the other side thinks." Student-led GOP and conservative student groups have struggled to find their footing and new members in recent years, leading to complaints from some alums and right-wing media figures that Macalester has become a "monoculture."

But today's college students as a whole lean leftward. Although 28 percent of the general population identifies as liberal, 50 percent of college students call themselves liberals, outnumbering both conservatives and moderates by two to one, according to the 2020 College Free Speech Rankings from RealClearEducation, the survey firm College Pulse, and the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression. At selective colleges like Macalester, those rates are even greater.

In fact, higher education itself has become a source of division among American voters, with white college-educated voters giving increasingly strong majorities to Democrats, as Republicans attract growing numbers of white voters without a degree. A recent poll for NBC News found that 46 percent of rising sophomores wouldn't want to room with someone who supported the opposing candidate in the 2020 election.

For many students, the freedom to explore a more progressive worldview can be a major draw. "Politics weren't the main factor in choosing Macalester, but I was definitely interested in breaking out of the conservative area where I'm from, and into a more progressive, liberal environment," says Emma Kopplin '24 (Redfield, S.D.). Starting with a first-year seminar in American studies taught by Duchess Harris, "I got the chance to have a lot of conversations I hadn't had before, and to take some missteps and to understand my own biases. I'm glad I had the space to have those kinds of experiences."

But there are times, she adds, when the pressure to agree with prevailing views infringes on free speech. "There are some conversations at Macalester that tend to get shut down, or people maybe don't say the things they're thinking because they're afraid of getting 'canceled,'" Kopplin says.



Gabe Karsh '25



Sarah Beth Hobby '24



Austin Wu '23

'More speech—not less—is vital to learning'

As she wrote in a recent column for this magazine, President Suzanne Rivera believes that "More speech—not less—is vital to learning."

That was the vision behind the Congress to Campus partnership. Macalester trustee emeritus Peter Fenn '70 P'05, who has spent his career in government and politics, recommended the three-day program to Rivera. "I've worked with Congress to Campus for some time," he says, "and it's important that students have access to those who are in the arena, and can have a civil dialogue—disagree without being disagreeable—about the issues facing the country and the world."

Latham and Harris eagerly agreed to initiate the program last spring in time for a fall 2022 campus visit. While the Association of Former Members of Congress selects the members it will send to campus, each college chooses its own discussion topic. Latham and Harris chose reproductive rights, a topic that would be relevant to college students (a 2022 BestColleges study found that two-thirds of current college students want to live and work in a state where access is legal). "But this program was put in motion pre-Dobbs," Harris said before the event. "Before we knew there would be a Supreme Court ruling, this seemed like it would be fascinating and timely. But now that we're here, I can't predict how students are going to react."

The announcement of the Congress to Campus event stirred immediate controversy. A student group met with administrators to voice concerns about the lack of student involvement in the event's planning, format, and execution. "For me it was an example of not practicing the inclusivity the college claims to value," says Bea Green '22 (Orford, N.H.), an anthropology major. "The college needs to invite more student perspectives into the creation of these events." An op-ed from Mac Weekly editor-in-chief Kamini Ramakrishna '24 (Rochester, Minn.) argued that, "Access to reproductive health care is a real and pressing issue for many Macalester students, and seeing this access debated on a public stage is guaranteed to be traumatizing for such students." More than fifty students with protest signs gathered outside the

Mairs Concert Hall prior to the event, and several more were escorted from the hall after interrupting opening remarks from former Congressman Ross.

The hour-long event was not a classic debate, but instead a question and answer session about how these two lawmakers arrived at their positions on the issue, and what they see as the future of privacy and reproductive rights.

Rivera opened the event: "It's inevitable that we will not always agree on every issue, and it's important that we learn how to engage across those differences, how to mar-

“

I got the chance to have a lot of conversations I hadn't had before, and to take some missteps and to understand my own biases. I'm glad I had the space to have those kinds of experiences.”

—Emma Kopplin '24



From left: Dennis Ross, Duchess Harris, Andrew Latham, Suzanne Rivera, and Sam Coppersmith

shal courage to have tough conversations, how to extend and receive kindness, and how to be informed and engaged voters.”

Sarah Beth Hobby '24 (South Pittsburg, Tenn.), Austin Wu '23 (Chaska, Minn.), and Gabe Karsh '25 (Evanston, Ill.), students from Macalester's forensics teams, posed questions to the two former congressmen, while Director of Forensics Beau Larsen helped to frame why free expression is critical, for both sides: "We have to know what the common arguments are, how they are formed, and why they hold appeal in order to invigorate change. In the world of forensics, we believe that dialogue is an essential means of democratic participation and that to be scholars, thinkers, teachers, lawyers, citizens, and neighbors, we cannot just know, we have to speak.”

Students who attended the voluntary event expressed a wide range of opinions on the experience. "I think it was probably a mistake to make abortion the topic, because it's not that controversial on this campus," says Karsh, a member of the Policy Debate Team. "But it's still being talked about on campus, so if the goal was to start a conversation, I think it was successful.”

Tara Weber '25 (Sun Prairie, Wis.) an American studies and Asian studies major, says that she appreciated the opportunity to hear how abortion rights opponents think and speak: "I surround myself with people who have the same worldview, and many are unwilling to listen to an opposing viewpoint. I don't think the goal is to empathize with the other side, but to understand what they're saying in order to counteract

it.” With abortion now effectively illegal in her home state, "You can't say that women's bodily autonomy is not up for debate—it shouldn't be, but it is.”

Fenn says the dialogue made him "increasingly proud of the college. It took courage for Mac to choose such a controversial topic for the first forum, but we have always been a college that doesn't shrink from diversity and difference—we continually try and embrace a society that is inclusive, and accepting, and tolerant.”

Latham and Harris say they hope they can build on the lessons learned during the inaugural Congress to Campus, invite more students into the planning process, and look for more ways to bring students into closer contact with challenging ideas, speakers, and topics. "There are relatively few in-built mechanisms that encourage students to get together and talk across differences," says Latham. Congress to Campus is just "the beginning of something, of building these kinds of moments into a general education program [that teaches] openness and engagement across these big and serious differences.” [M](#)

St. Paul writer Laura Billings Coleman is a frequent contributor to *Macalester Today*.



ARCHIVES

The college's archival objects, and the stories that accompany them, connect the dots of Macalester's history—and you can help.

101

BY HILLARY MOSES MOHAUPT '08
Photos by David J. Turner

An archives' artifacts help preserve and tell the stories that make a place both unique and representative. Macalester's archives, located on the second floor of the DeWitt Wallace Library, include photos, papers, scrapbooks, and other items that illustrate the college's nearly 150-year history.

Take, for instance, the clothing collection. Hats and shirts bearing bagpipes and Scottish Highland emblems, and letter jackets, sweaters, and scarves show how Macalester's logo has evolved over time. Other clothes reflect moments when the student experience collided with history, like an Ultimate Frisbee uniform donated by a student in 2022. The jersey features an image of an ape wearing a face mask, a reference that will help future generations of students understand what it was like to be a part of the Macalester community during that time.

As the college approaches its sesquicentennial (150th anniversary) in 2024, the archives team is making plans for collecting stories, objects, and images that document students' time on campus. We asked college archivist Megan Johnson-Saylor to provide an inside look at what's in the archives, what's missing, and how all members of the Macalester community can help the college tell a richer and more complete story.

A two-fold mission

The mission of the archives is two-fold, says Johnson-Saylor. “A big part of what we do is preserve, create access to, and maintain the permanent records of historical value.”

The other half of the mission? Preserving the stories that underlie those records. “That’s something that alumni can add,” Johnson-Saylor says. “You may not have the objects, but you may still have those stories that we can capture and preserve.”

Macalester’s archives include materials that document the school’s administration and operation, things like official committee minutes and the papers of past presidents and professors. Its papers and other items also tell the stories of Macalester’s role in the surrounding community, the efforts of student groups, and a campus life abundant with academic exploration, activism, and extracurricular adventures.

Last year, the archives team started hosting monthly evening open houses, each with a theme. Some of the themes—like nature, globalism, alternative campus publications, and music—are meant to highlight a recently acquired collection, or, conversely, to highlight a gap in the collections to help show students how they can add to the collection.

“Students are interested in how past students were organizing, what can we learn from them, and what they were doing to raise their collective student voice,” Johnson-Saylor explains.

A student who attended the music-themed open house shared that they had done an oral history with one of the members of “Dewey Decimal and the Librarians,” a former student folk group. Thanks to that open house, the student contributed the oral history to the collections, building on what the archives staff already knew about the album and the folk group. For Johnson-Saylor, connecting past and present students is an important role for the archives to play. “Everyone’s experiences are notable, even if they don’t go on to be famous.”

Some professors have built courses around specific collections, and Johnson-Saylor has spoken to classes about best practices for using archival collections in research projects. This spring, for example, an American studies methods class is using the college archives to put together a celebration of the department’s twentieth anniversary, to be shared during Reunion 2023.

Reunion planning

It’s no surprise that alumni seek out the archives when planning for major Reunion anniversaries; that’s typically when they donate their own items to the collections as well.

“The number one request we get from alumni planning for their reunions are photos and other visuals from their years at Mac,” Johnson-Saylor says.

But photos also present a big challenge for archives staff, as there is often little information about photos in the collection. “We may have just a date,



Athletic Jacket

*Approximate dates:
1943–1947. Men’s athletic
jacket in mid–1940s de-
sign. Donated by Joy Van
'48 and Ted Van '48.*



Ultimate Frisbee Uniform

*2022. Donated by Jason
Beal '22.*



Album

*1965 record album by
“Dewey Decimal and the
Librarians,” a former
student folk group. Read
an oral history with band
member Don Mackenzie
'66 at [https://digitalcom-
mons.macalester.edu/
macoralhist/](https://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/macoralhist/)*



Buttons

*1930s–1960s. Selection
of political and event
buttons.*

or an event name, or the name of one person in the photograph. Another challenge is the amount of time it takes to work with archival collections. It is a lot of digging through many boxes, and many folders, and many, many items with the hope of finding what you are looking for—and then connecting all the dots.”

Johnson-Saylor recommends planning far in advance before coming to the archives to research Reunion materials. (See the sidebar to get started.)



“Everyone’s experiences are notable, even if they don’t go on to be famous.”

—Megan Johnson-Saylor

Treasure hunts

In June 2022, the archives staff doubled to two full-time members, as Johnson-Saylor welcomed aboard archives specialist John Esh. This expansion has allowed the team to think more strategically about collecting and providing access to the collection. “We’re still in a stage of discovering what’s currently in the collection and setting priorities,” she says. “Every day is like a treasure hunt.”

Johnson-Saylor, who joined the library staff full time in November 2021, says it’s difficult to say how many items exactly are in the collection. Archives are measured in terms of linear feet, rather than number of discrete items, and, due to previously limited staffing, not every donation has been fully processed. There are thirty-eight fully processed collections complete with online finding aids—a tool that outlines a collection’s contents and its significance.

“Finding aids describe the scope and contents of the collection as a whole,” Johnson-Saylor explains. “Creating and publishing these finding aids is one of our top priorities. If researchers don’t know what we have in our collections, they can’t ask to use them!”

With two full-time staffers, there’s more potential for growth now, but there’s no fast way to process what’s already on hand. Approximately 200 paper-based collections await full processing, as well as photos, media, and copies of faculty and college publications. Johnson-Saylor estimates that the current collection takes up about half of its potential collection space.

An incomplete history

The archives are home to every issue of *The Mac Weekly*, which provides a long-running history of the college. “It’s from a very specific perspective but it’s the only thing in our collection that covers that huge span of time,” Johnson-Saylor says. The newspaper documents many major campus events over time, and has helped both the archivist team and alumni fill in the gaps and then find other resources to supplement it. “It’s helpful for us as a first pass of what was happening at a given time.”

But outside of *The Mac Weekly*, the records can be spotty in the coverage of what students have done on campus. That’s why it’s important for students and alumni alike to donate items they have saved from their experiences with student organizations, and from events, as well as publications—so that future students can see what life was like for

1926. Homecoming button. According to the Mac Weekly, buttons cost seventy-five cents and came with admission to a “big, free cafeteria supper.”



CONNECT WITH MACALESTER’S ARCHIVES

Email (archives@macalester.edu) or phone (651-696-6901) to get in touch with the archives staff, to inquire about donating items to the archives, or to schedule an appointment to visit.

All members of the Macalester community are encouraged to contact the archives staff about donating items to the archives. Items of interest include:

- Charters and other founding documents for student organizations
- Photos, video, or other media from student experiences
- Event promotion materials for student events
- Student publications

Research materials must be requested in advance, but archives staff can help you find exactly what you’re looking for. Archives staff are still finding new things in the collection on a regular basis, so reach out to them for assistance, whether or not you are coming to campus.

Learn more about what’s available in person and online by reviewing the online research guide: <https://libguides.macalester.edu/archives>

Learn more about the archives, how to visit, and what to bring: <https://www.macalester.edu/library/archives>

Search the digital catalog: <https://contentdm.macalester.edu/digital/collection/archives/search>



Scrapbooks

1946. "Canoeing with LIFE" scrapbook created by Dr. Ruth Schellberg, women's phys ed faculty member, chronicling a summer co-ed canoe trip with photos taken by a LIFE magazine photographer.

1921-1922. "A Girl's Graduation Days" scrapbook, created by Hazel Lundsten, Class of 1922.



students on campus before them. Current collections tell some of those stories through a variety of media.

Students who were on campus in the first half of the twentieth century often documented their experiences in scrapbooks. "That's not really happening anymore. Students love being able to see the day-in-the-life experience of past times," Johnson-Saylor says. One recent donation chronicled a summer co-ed canoe trip with photos taken by a photographer from *LIFE* Magazine.

And as they review collections, Johnson-Saylor and her colleagues look for opportunities to repair and protect archival materials. "Once we dug the *LIFE* scrapbook out of the archives, we needed to do some repairs, digitize the scrapbook, and put photo corners in," she explains. The plan is to create a digital project of this and other scrapbooks so that they can live in the digital collection. Alumni can help not only by donating scrapbooks that document their college years, but by also sharing the stories that go with the scrapbooks' contents.

When the Macalester button collection was reorganized, they included more recent buttons students have made to reflect activism and advocacy work on campus. Here, again, alumni stories are critical. "We might come by a button and not understand its connection to Macalester but often there's a story that explains why it's important," Johnson-Saylor says.

While the archives team is still processing the collections and getting to know its content better, one thing is clear: Previous oral history collection practices and a focus on big alumni anniversaries have meant there's an outsized representation from white students on campus before the 1970s. Johnson-Saylor hopes that increased efforts to conduct oral histories from later decades and to help current students and alumni from later years understand how and why to donate to the archives, will help ensure that the archives reflect the experiences of *all* students. In fact, in January, student leaders from several BIPOC student organizations gathered in the archives to see what currently exists and what else they can donate.

Going digital

Digital archives create another challenge. "Paper things are a lot easier to collect and keep," Johnson-Saylor explains. "With the advent of Facebook and engaging in social media, there's a gap in terms of capturing how events are happening and how communication between students is happening."

Part of the struggle is the sheer volume of what's being produced online. A coding program automatically pulls every tweet tagged with #heymac into a Google spreadsheet, and it's possible for Instagram account owners to package, download, and share every post on the account, but not all of that content is important to keep.

Donating items and stories

When someone from the Macalester community makes a donation, the archives team works with the donor to determine what rights the donor might want to retain, even as the physical rights, along with the ability to preserve and make accessible to a broader audience, are transferred to Macalester. The sidebar lists current items of interest.

Alumni often donate an item serendipitously, or because of a conversation they have had with someone else on campus, perhaps in the Alumni Engagement Office. Collecting and documenting the stories that accompany the items involves conversations with the donor and research into other collections like yearbooks or *The Mac Weekly* to confirm details and to record as much information as possible on the donor form that accompanies every donation. For instance, it was when processing a donation of canoe-trip photographs that archives specialist John Esh came across the Canoeing with *LIFE* scrapbook. It helped answer some questions but raised others, prompting another conversation with the scrapbook donor as well as additional research in the archives to help fill out the story.

The coming sesquicentennial offers opportunities for creating community and telling more of Macalester's story.

"These milestone anniversaries for the college are a great time to see how all our little pieces fit together in the big Macalester puzzle," says Johnson-Saylor, "and how important the archives are in preserving this history." 

Hillary Moses Mohaupt '08 earned a master's degree in public history and is a freelance writer based in the greater Philadelphia area.



**Dr. Joanna Inglot's
book is cited as 'pivotal'
for curator of Tate
Modern's new exhibit.**

Illuminating the Legacy of Magdalena Abakanowicz

BY JOE LINSTROTH

In 2004, Dr. Joanna Inglot, Edith M. Kelso Associate Professor of Art History, wrote one of the definitive books about the twentieth-century Polish artist Magdalena Abakanowicz. Eighteen years later, the Tate Modern, Britain's national gallery of international and contemporary art, is hosting a prominent exhibition of the artist's work. Professor Inglot, whose book, *The Figurative Sculpture of Magdalena Abakanowicz: Bodies, Environments, and Myths*, was cited as "pivotal" and "groundbreaking" by the famed curator Mary Jane Jacob, attended the November opening in London as a special guest. She explains what drew her to the sculptor and fiber artist and what the exhibition means for Abakanowicz's legacy.

Who is Magdalena Abakanowicz?

She was a renowned Polish sculptor who received worldwide recognition as one of the seminal artists in the revival of figuration in late-twentieth century sculpture. She first emerged as a pioneering fiber artist in the mid-1960s when she introduced her enormous, three-dimensional works known as Abakans, which revolutionized the prevailing Western perception of woven work as "craft" and stimulated international experimentation with fiber. She gained acclaim again in the early 1980s for her cycles of headless and hollow burlap crowds that she exhibited around the world, and which were often perceived as commentaries on life behind the Iron Curtain.

Her career took a major turn after the Venice Biennale of 1980, which coincided with the rise of the Solidarity movement in Poland, adding an important political dimension to her art. Suddenly her work was seen as a political commentary on what was going on in Eastern Europe and as a protest against Communist oppression. I show in my book, however, that Abakanowicz was misperceived by Western critics and scholars as a political artist, who often called her a leading voice of protest behind the Iron Curtain, and reveal that she was received in her own country quite differently during these turbulent times.

As a scholar, what attracted you to her and her work?

I'm a child of Solidarity and a former student activist. I was only in my first year of college when this revolution was taking place in Poland. My partner was an organizer of the Student Solidarity movement in Wrocław. When martial law was declared in Poland, he was given a one-way passport and asked to leave the country. This is how we found ourselves here in the US. When I

was a student, everyone was talking about the revolutions that were unfolding in Eastern Europe at the time. I became very interested and amazed by Abakanowicz's art, but also intrigued by why she was practically the only person from Eastern Europe and certainly from Poland that people knew here and were talking about in the art world. Eventually, I decided to zoom in on the artist and write this book.

What was she like as a person?

She had a charismatic and powerful personality. She was extremely preoccupied with her work and strove to have an international presence. She struck me as very apolitical, which surprised me because it was hard to be apolitical at that time. She was surrounded by artists and people who were deeply immersed in politics, so this became an enigma that I was trying to untangle when I was getting to know her.

I started my research by working closely with Abakanowicz, but when I began interviewing other artists, scholars, and curators in Poland, things became more complex and complicated, and I discovered many different sides of her. In America critics continued to see her as a political artist, but in Poland she was surprisingly apolitical. Although, like many others, she endured various hardships living in this part of the world after World War II and Communist rule, she also knew how to take advantage of the rewards the Communist government offered to nationally and internationally acclaimed artists, and she carefully avoided any confrontation with or critique of the regime.

During the Solidarity years and period of martial law, when most Polish artists and intellectuals mobilized against Communist rule, Abakanowicz remained silent. Her decision to keep quiet and her relatively privileged position among artists led some in Poland to see her as the favorite "export artist" under Communism, which tainted her reputation in many independent circles in Poland. Paradoxically, however, during the 1980s, her career took off again because her work was perceived abroad in the context of protest art in Eastern Europe. There was a clash of interpretations about her politics and her art that I had to figure out and deal with. In addition, she was also availed by the myth of an "outsider," a secluded artist, inspired more by nature than culture. What interested me was the context in which she existed and developed as an artist.

What does it mean that the Tate Modern is recognizing this artist now?

It means that Magdalena Abakanowicz is now firmly grounded in the history of modern art. It's a tremendous recognition for this remarkable and important artist, who managed to bridge the deep divide between the East and the West during the Cold War era.

How does it feel for you to have your work recognized eighteen years later?

It feels great. It took a really long time, but art history is a very slow discipline and there are not that many people who focused their research on Abakanowicz. I'm now organizing an international symposium about Abakanowicz to be held at the Tate Modern in May. 

The ART of Not Making Plans

BY KATE NORLANDER '91

Having filled his life with family, friends, art, music, and good food, Emel Sherzad '89 calls himself “one of the luckiest human beings on this planet. There is so much good in this world. I am lucky to be able to taste it.”

Growing up in Afghanistan, Sherzad was raised to value art and music, especially the masterful improvisation of jazz, Indian classical music, and abstract expressionist paintings.

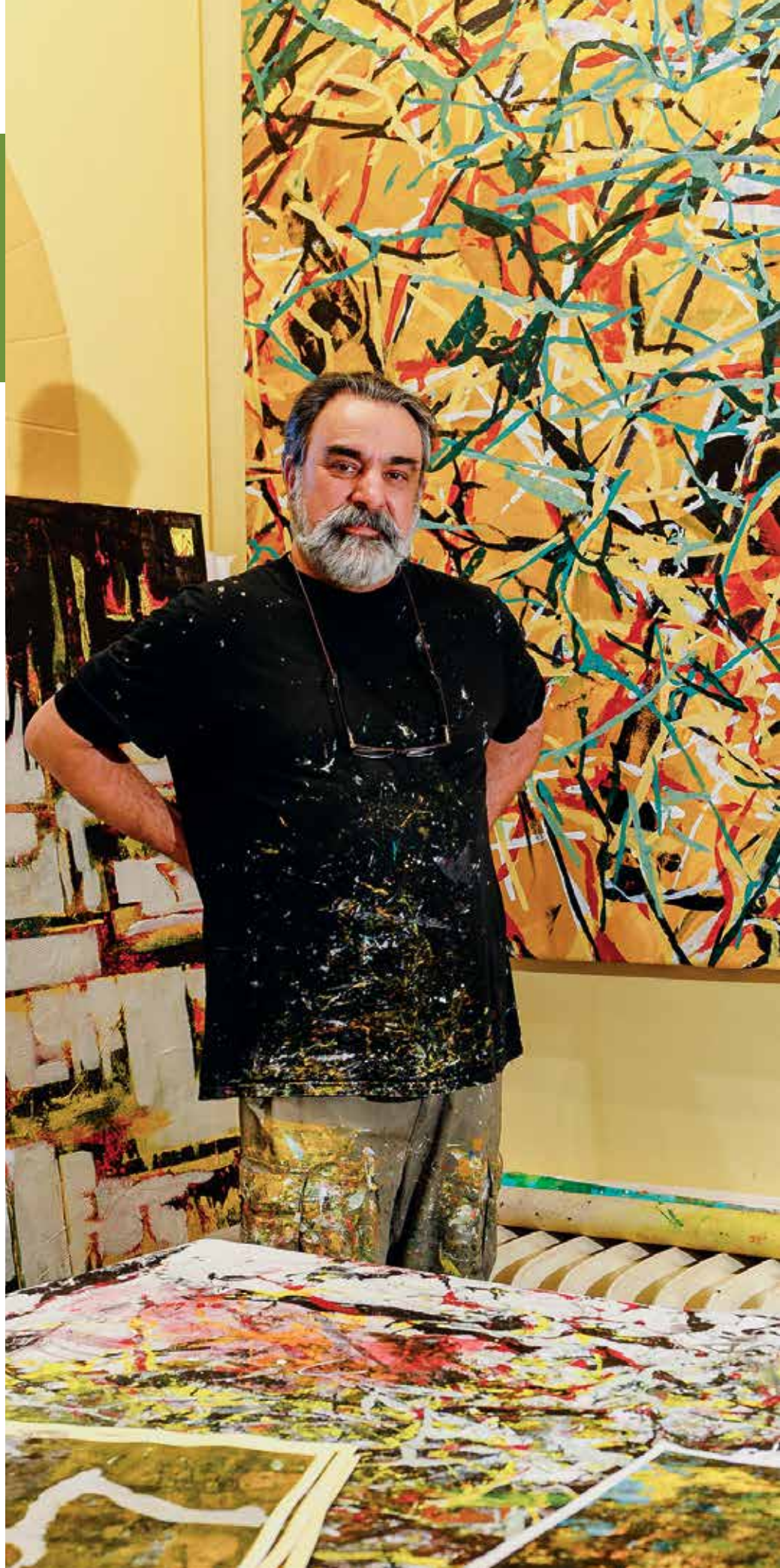
Spending seven months as a political prisoner led him to embrace improvisation as a way of life.

As a teenager, Sherzad dreamed of studying art in Paris or Rome. Then came the Communist coup of April 1978. “Some members of my family were executed. The rest of us became political prisoners,” he said. “That affected me. I thought, ‘Don’t make plans. They don’t work.’”

During his time in prison, Sherzad leaned on art and music to help him make it through the days. He smuggled a pen into the prison with him—writing utensils, books, and paper were not allowed—and then used his father’s empty cigarette packs and cartons as paper. He drew on the cartons and wrote on the packs. “I wanted to write the names of all the musicians I knew because if and when I ever got out, I would seek them out and see what they had done.”

In exile

After he was released from prison at age seventeen, Sherzad was forced into exile, which led him to Switzerland, where he finished high school with an emphasis in modern languages: French, Italian, English, and Spanish. After high school he immigrated to the United States. One of his maternal uncles, who split his time between California and Minnesota, invited





Emel Sherzad '89, co-owner of the recently closed Khyber Pass Café, relishes his improvised life.



JACK MADER

him to spend Christmas in Minnesota and encouraged him to visit the local colleges. At Macalester, he met with Jimm Crowder, then associate director of international admissions, who offered him a scholarship. He enrolled the following fall. After taking a class in Spanish literature, he decided to study Spanish and Portuguese, but he didn't discard his dream of studying art. He took a studio art class every semester.

Sherzad's dedication to regularly creating art continues. His paintings decorated the walls of Khyber Pass Café, a restaurant a block away from Macalester, which he co-owned with his wife, Masooda. During the pandemic, the couple closed the restaurant's dining room, offering takeout orders only for more than two years.

Sherzad saw an opportunity. Covering the restaurant's floor in plastic, he brought all of the tables together to create a large work surface for painting. "It was a moment of growth," he said. "Most of the time my work has no plan. If I do something that I like, usually I don't know how it happened. But this time, I explored one technique. I'm not using it exclusively, but I've made it mine."

In November, the couple announced on Facebook that they had closed the restaurant, a St. Paul fixture for thirty-seven years that introduced the Mac community and the Twin Cities to Afghani cuisine and culture. It was time to pass the baton to someone with more youthful energy.

'A little more sugar'

Before he became a co-owner of Khyber Pass, he was a customer. While at Macalester, he visited the restaurant, then located on St. Clair Avenue. Masooda, whose family owned the newly opened cafe, waited on him, and the pride with which she carried herself made him feel at home.

"I ordered some tea and asked for some sugar. She brought me some, and I asked, nicely, 'Can I have a little more sugar?' And she just gave me this look, like, 'Who do you think you are?' I thought, 'Yes, this is a real Afghan. No schmoozing at all.' I loved it."

Soon he began working there and became acquainted with Masooda's family. After graduating, he moved to Washington, D.C., to study French, Spanish, and linguistics, but he later returned to St. Paul

to marry Masooda. When she bought the restaurant from her family, Sherzad joined her in running it. They moved the restaurant to its Grand Avenue location in 2002.

The couple divided their work according to their strengths. Masooda handled the organizational details and did most of the cooking. While Sherzad also cooked, he spent most of his time in the front of the house.

"It's funny, because growing up I was really more of an introvert," he said. "The atmosphere at Macalester did something to me. I became more sociable. I fit right in with the many misfits." Welcoming guests to Khyber Pass felt natural to him. "It was a pleasure and a privilege to welcome people to the restaurant. The people who came were the kind of people I would invite to my home, and the restaurant was like an extension of my home."

Jazz conspiracist

For eleven years, until the pandemic closed its dining area, the restaurant had a tradition of Thursday night concerts. Although his only formal training in music was some sitar instruction while he was growing up, Sherzad enjoys collecting musical instruments and improvising with other musicians.

His musical knowledge led to his long-running radio show, International Jazz Conspiracy, on KFAI, a noncommercial FM station in the Twin Cities. The show has been on the air under different names for more than twenty-eight years. Sherzad describes it as "the conspiracy of winning hearts and minds, making political borders meaningless through the cross-cultural exchange that happens through music, especially jazz."

While their restaurant has closed, Sherzad and his wife are working as partners with new co-owners, who are using the space for a cocktail lounge and restaurant. This new concept will include an occasional Afghani pop-up and will feature Sherzad's paintings as part of the décor. He also will continue to paint and host his radio show. As for what's next? He'll improvise. **M**

Kate Norlander '91 is a writer and a marketing professional in higher education.

HAPPINESS

♦ in the ♦

Nineteenth Century



BY JOE LINSTROTH / ILLUSTRATION BY MÂITÉ FRANCHI

The last few years have been stressful, to say the least. Heading into this academic year, Professor Juliette Rogers recognized the need for a course devoted to positivity and how people find happiness and meaning in life. So the professor of French and Francophone studies created one, turning to the time and place she knows best: nineteenth-century France. Dr. Rogers explains what we can learn about the pursuit of happiness from French thinkers, writers, and artists who hailed from an earlier period of great change.

Why is it instructive to look at how the French search for happiness?

Generally speaking, I think the French are viewed as kind of a gloomy group. In surveys about happiness, the French consistently rank lower than their European neighbors, and even worldwide neighbors. The way that the French have thought about happiness since the revolution—and yes, it is a generalization—is very different from what we consider the norm in the United States.

Why focus on the nineteenth century?

With a lot of things happening today, we can find roots in the nineteenth century. Like now, it was also a time of great change in French thought. The French Revolution ended up a real deception and letdown. There were great ideals in 1789, but they were followed up by the Reign of Terror and then Napoleon's empire. By the 1820s, people were unhappy with what they had thought was going

to be a great new world. As a result, there was this shift in nineteenth-century France toward looking for utopian societies and a better world. That's when the search for happiness—and also a lot of the gloom and doom—began and is still reflected today, 200 years later. The French still have this idea that life could be better and it's not, but they're going to keep looking for ways to make it better.

What does the story of Cyrano de Bergerac teach about the pursuit of happiness?

Many of the film adaptations have happy endings, so the students were surprised that the original story ends tragically. But Cyrano's decision was out of desire to make Roxane and Christian happy, not himself. It was a way of changing his life for the better, but also making life for others around him better too.

Obviously the story speaks to people all over the world to this day. They know about Cyrano de Bergerac because they can see themselves feeling insecure and yet still trying to find a place and some happiness in the world. It's one of those French tales that has universal appeal.

What radical ideas were the French Socialist Utopians exploring that would make people happier?

There was a group of thinkers who wanted to create intentional communities that would focus on social well-being rather than in-



dividual liberties. For example, Étienne Cabet wanted to eliminate all private property, and this was in the 1830s before Marx and Engels. Charles Fourier eliminated all gender roles in his utopian model, so women and men could be married, but they didn't have to be. There could be same-sex marriages. There could be women and men in power. Many ideas, however, were flawed with racist, sexist, and colonialist ideas of the time.

There were intentional communities built on these theories in France, and also several important ones in the United States, including the Icarian communities in Iowa and California. They didn't last that long, but they were incredibly powerful to readers during that time.

This is the first time you've taught this course. How have the students responded?

They were fascinated to study art from this perspective, especially Impressionist paintings. The students discovered there were two kinds of Impressionists. Some who were focused on social gatherings in the countryside and leaving the city to find happiness. Then there were others who found happiness in a very urban, almost modern way, by going to cabarets and nightclubs. The students were impressed that the French could seek out happiness in different ways through these varying kinds of artistic expression. I was impressed that they saw that.

How do you encourage students to connect all this to what's relevant in their lives today?

The students write regularly in their "gratitude journals" about three things that day for which they are grateful. It's an exercise in slowing down and thinking about the small, positive things in life that make them happy.

What can we learn from nineteenth-century French thinkers that might apply to our own pursuit of happiness?

I think nineteenth-century French thought encourages us to try not to focus so much on the individual, on things like "making it" or being "successful." Instead, perhaps we should focus more on happiness for others like Cyrano did, or happiness for larger society, as in a play we read by Pierre Faubert about the Haitian revolution where the main character sacrifices his personal happiness for the good of the cause.

We can also think about the Impressionists like Berthe Moristo who left their studios in Paris and went out to the country and found beauty in everyday things like going to the beach with their kids. It's not about the grand successes. These more day-to-day, mundane activities make you happier than you would think. **M**

CLASS NOTES

1973

The Class of 1973 will celebrate its 50th Reunion June 8–11, 2023.

1975

Kristine Holmgren writes, "The death of George Floyd, the chaotic COVID catastrophe, and the rise of both crime and taxes caused me to reconsider my decision to stay in The City." She now lives with her daughter **Claire Deason Chevalier '06**, Claire's French husband, and their two children on "six acres of forest, pond, and wildlife."

Jim McIntire retired in early 2017, after serving two terms as Washington State treasurer. He then joined the board of the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board Foundation and chaired its Strategy Committee. In 2018, the SASB released official standards for companies' disclosure of environmental, social, and governance issues.

1976

During the COVID pandemic, **Chris Havens** moved to Red Bank, N.J. He continues to do office space consulting work in Brooklyn, N.Y. After a 25-year break, Christopher has returned to residential real estate and become a licensed broker in New Jersey. He has also gotten involved in local politics and governance, as well as other community activities.

1977

Ken Bernstein has been appointed to the board of Texas Health Resources, the largest

health care system in North Texas, and serves as the chair of the organization's Audit and Compliance Committee and a member of its Governance Committee. He was also elected board chair of Metrocare Services, the largest provider of mental health services in Dallas County, Texas.

1978

The Class of 1978 will celebrate its 45th Reunion June 8–11, 2023.

1980

Retired museum and nonprofit executive **Maria Holperin Terrell** lives in Richmond, Va., with her husband, William. In June, Maria spoke at a dedication ceremony in Graz, Austria, honoring her natural father, Dr. Milton Weber, the founding conductor of what is now the Wisconsin Philharmonic.

1983

The Class of 1983 will celebrate its 40th Reunion June 8–11, 2023.

1984

In September, **TJ Naim** and **Ruth Wilson** attended the Macalester men's soccer team's tie game against the University of California-Santa Cruz. They ended the day with a visit to the beach.

1988

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

Continued on page 43

CLASS NOTES PHOTO POLICY:

We publish one photo per wedding.

We welcome photos of alumni gathered together anywhere in the world and publish as many photos as space permits.

Photos must be high-resolution, approximately

2MB or greater in file size.

Email alumnioffice@macalester.edu to request a Mac banner for an upcoming wedding or other gathering.

If you have a question about your class note, call editor Julie Hessler at 651-696-6443.



Brian Bull '91 presented a half-day seminar on covering Native American and Indigenous communities to 14 journalists at the offices of *The Oregonian*. He touched upon such topics as tribal sovereignty, identity, representations in popular culture, revisiting history, and traditional foods. "It was wonderful as a member of the Nez Perce Tribe to be well received," Brian wrote.



While **Janah Boccio '96** was in Seattle with her son for the Pokémon Go Fest in July, she met up with Macalester rugby teammates **Jennifer Matter '98** and **Lempi Miller '95**, along with other alums. From left: Jennifer, Lempi, Tim Chan '95, Janah, Dan Moore, Laura Raymond '96, and Ed Lin '98. Janah reports that Lempi and Tim were also in town to "catch all the Pokémon."

MAD SCIENCE

with Caroline Duncombe '18



Caroline Duncombe '18 watched many improv shows while at Macalester, but most of her time was spent in the Chemistry Department, where she completed her major and co-chaired the Women in STEM student organization. Before moving to Seattle to begin her PhD in pathobiology at the University of Washington, she heard about a science-themed improv show in New York City.

“I thought it was a great idea to combine science and comedy, but never had the talent to be able to perform myself,” Duncombe says. “You have to think really fast.”

After ruminating on the idea for years, she teamed up with a local improv troupe, Bandit Theater, to create a science-themed show. Her show, “Mad Science,” invites Seattle-area scientists to give a short presentation on their work; then, the troupe riffs off the talk to create a twenty-minute set. “The scientists who participate love this unique opportunity to watch their work be interpreted by a professional improv team,” Duncombe says.

Audience members also get a dose of education and fun. “It’s actually a fantastic way to learn because the scientist has presented the concepts and then it’s twisted and warped into improv in a very funny way,” she says.

In her producer role for “Mad Science,” she books researchers. In one show segment, for example, she invited an atmospheric scientist to explain clouds, and a technology expert to explain the cloud. Duncombe thinks of her audience as “people who listen to Radiolab,” she says. “People who like learning, which I feel is a lot of people at Macalester, are the people who enjoy the show most.”

Starting a PhD at University of Washington during the beginning of the pandemic, she realized her research has limitations if it can’t be communicated effectively. Alongside her work on “Mad Science,” her PhD program is part bench work and part public health, a dual focus that is aligned with Duncombe’s interest in science communication.

“Learning the stories on how scientists do their work is just as important as learning about the answers they provide,” she says. —Catherine Kane '26



David Husson '14 (left), Ajuawak Kapashesit '13 (center), and Evan Friedley '13 (right) met at TCL (formerly Grauman’s) Chinese Theatre in Hollywood in November to celebrate the premiere of Ajuawak’s short film *Seeds*, which was an opening night selection in the LA Skins Fest.



Macalester roommates Maryanne Foote Law Sunde '68 (left) and Faye Bassford Bosak '68 (right) got together in September to catch up. “Much has happened in both our lives, but when we see each other, nothing has changed,” Faye wrote.



A group of Macalester classmates celebrated their 60th Reunion at the Pool and Yacht Club in Lilydale, Minn. Front row, from left: Eleanor Ostman Aune '62, Diane Dierke Salls '62, Marty Hogoboom Jacobsen '62, Julie Kaufman Rupert '62, and Linda Ohmann Bock '62. Back row: George Beske '62, Tom Hau, Ellen Carley Lillemoen '62, Jerry Meigs '57, Darlene Sackrisson Fraser '62, Jan Tungseth Beske '62, Mike Bock '61, Roger Lillemoen '62, Millie Kunard Hanson '62, Frank Farnsworth, Susan Thompson Farnsworth '62, Ron Jacobsen '62, Dick LaBree '62, Ginny Hanson LaBree '63, Jim Reissner '62, and Jean Eddy Reissner '62.

► Visit bandittheater.org/mad-science to learn more.



A. Everett Beek '06. *Ovid Fasti: Books I-III* (Liverpool University Press, 2022).



William Moseley, DeWitt Wallace Professor of Geography, and Kefa Otiso, editors. *Debating African Issues: Conversations Under the Palaver Tree* (London: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 2022).



Ebony Aya, program manager, Jan Serie Center for Scholarship and Teaching. *Let the Black Women Say Ase* (Aya Collective, 2022).



Joe Kutchera '92. *Portraits of Immigrant Voices* (Asian American Society of Central Virginia, 2022).



Heddi Nieuwsma '99. *Sweet & Swiss: Delicious and Easy Desserts from the Heart of Europe* (Helvetiq, 2023).



Magdalena Mora '13 and Claudia Guadalupe Martínez. *Still Dreaming / Seguimos soñando* (Lee & Low Books, 2022).

Illustrator Maggie Mora '13 shares some of the inspiration behind her work in this children's book.

Maggie Mora '13 never thought she'd have the opportunity to tell a piece of her family's story through a little-known time in American history. But, last year, she illustrated a book, *Still Dreaming*, that told the story of Mexican repatriation in the 1920s and 1930s through the eyes of a young boy living in Texas. The book, written by Claudia Martínez, was published in fall 2022.

At Macalester, Mora majored in English and minored in studio art. "In my junior year, I did an arts-focused study abroad program in Italy," she says. "I did an illustration course there, and our final project for that class was to create a children's book." Upon returning to Macalester, she knew she wanted to explore creative writing and visual arts.

Still Dreaming, told in English and Spanish, follows a young boy from Texas whose family is forced to leave the country by the US government during the Great Depression. As Mora worked on the book, she took inspiration from her own family's history of agricultural work in the US to inform her drawings. "I think there's a lot of stories that you can tell about Mexican Americans in the US or about immigration narratives, but this particular one about migrant farmworkers, deportation, repatriation and the cyclical nature of immigration just felt so uniquely specific to my family story," she says.

In developing the book's illustrations, Mora used the concepts of borders as creative inspiration.

"Claudia and I wanted to get at this notion that borders are fluid; they're things of our invention," she says. "I did the base illustrations in watercolor, gouache, and inks to get that sense of fluidity."

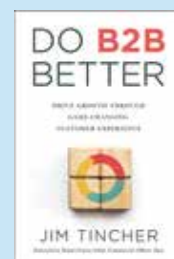
The project was also significant to Mora because she got to work with other Latin American women. "The trifecta of having a Latina author, illustrator, and editor is pretty rare in publishing," she says. "It was a really special experience for me." —Catherine Kane '26



Walter Hatch '77. *Ghosts in the Neighborhood: Why Japan is Haunted by Its Past and Germany is Not* (University of Michigan Press, 2023).



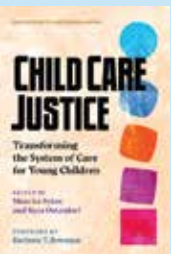
Matthew Mulcahy '90, Philip J. Morgan, John R. McNeill, and Stuart B. Schwartz. *Sea and Land: An Environmental History of the Caribbean* (Oxford University Press, 2022).



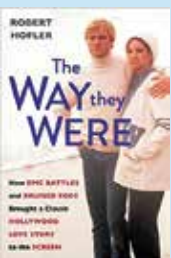
Jim Tinchler '90. *Do B2B Better: Drive Growth Through Game-Changing Customer Experience* (Wonderwell, 2022).



Brian Lozenski, associate professor of urban and multicultural education and chair of the Educational Studies Department. "My Emancipation Don't Fit Your Equation": Critical Enactments of Black Education in the US (Brill, 2022).



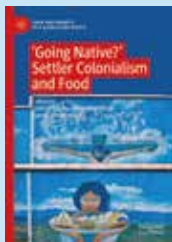
Kyra Ostendorf '95 and Maurice Sykes, editors. *Child Care Justice: Transforming the System of Care for Young Children* (Teachers College Press, 2022).



Robert Hofler '72. *The Way They Were* (Citadel Press, 2023).



Diane Michelfelder, professor of philosophy, editor. *Test-Driving the Future: Autonomous Vehicles and the Ethics of Technological Change* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2022). Political science professor **Patrick Schmidt** co-authored a chapter with **Jeremy Carp '12**.



Laura Kitchings '00 has a chapter titled "Definitions of Hawaiian Food: Evidence of Settler Colonialism in Selected Cookbooks from the Hawaiian Islands (1896–2021)" in *Going Native? Settler Colonialism and Food* (Springer Link, 2022).



Professor Macelle Mahala '01 teaches courses in the Department of Art, Media, Performance, and Design and in the Department of English at the University of the Pacific. She shares some insights about the research for her latest book with Macalester Today.

How do communities shape or influence arts performances?

Communities shape the performances that are offered in a particular ecology in a variety of ways. The artistic staff of Black theaters seek to serve their communities through their programming. For example, I write about how Cleveland's Karamu House created the piece *Freedom on Juneteenth* in the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd as a means of expressing the pain and sadness and rage people in the community were feeling, and to connect those feelings to the annual celebration of Juneteenth in a way that was soul-affirming. It was a beautiful production that was created under a very difficult set of circumstances and offered to the public for free via live stream, during the height of the pandemic. In each of my chapters I include some examples like this, how the particular history and character and needs of the Black communities in the cities I studied were reflected in the types of works that were produced there.



Macelle Mahala '01. *Black Theater, City Life: African American Art Institutions and Urban Cultural Ecologies* (Northwestern University Press, 2022).

Did anything in your research about Black theaters surprise you?

I was surprised to find very extreme incidents of racial hatred and white supremacist actions, attitudes, and systems and how these were deployed against Black theater practitioners and their institutions. I learned how theaters and their directors and actors received death threats, had their homes firebombed, were denied public performance space, were discounted, displaced, segregated, faced discriminatory pay, the list goes on. Generally, arts patrons and arts communities like to believe they are progressive and enlightened, but looking at the history of Black theater really reveals how untrue that is and how systems and expressions of white supremacy that were strongly entrenched in the past continue to operate in the present. Because of the depth of that hostility, I was even more inspired and awed by the power and perseverance of the Black folk who have created and sustained these institutions.

What do you wish more people understood about Black theater institutions?

Black theaters are vital components of urban arts ecologies. They do work that no one else can do. Attending a Black theater is an experience like nothing else. I begin the book by describing what it was like to attend a production at Kenny Leon's True Colors Theatre Company in Atlanta. To walk into a beautiful arts center built and patronized by African American county commissioners that were champions of the Civil Rights Movement and to be part of an audience engaged in celebrating the Black heritage of their city was an amazing experience. I hope my book piques people's interest in these institutions and leads more people to support them.

WEDDINGS



Rachel Fogel '16 and **Kevin Dowling '16** were married Oct. 8, 2022, in Pittsburgh, Pa. Macalester Chaplain **Kelly Stone** officiated. Joining them to celebrate were (back row, from left): **Kelly Stone**, **Justin Rasmussen '16**, **Jasmine Eddy '14**, **William Theriac '16**, and **Kari Johnson '16**. Front: **Amy McMeeking '16**, **Grace Newton '16**, and the newlyweds.



Paige Burdick Blazei '15 and **Kap Mueller '15** were married in August 2022 at a summer camp in central Wisconsin. Pictured (from left): **Jinqiao Lin '16**, **Liz Bacarella '16**, **Natalie Izzo '15**, **Taryn McGinn Valley '14**, **Hannah Walker '15**, the newlyweds, **José Caballero Ciciolli '15**, **Yulun Li '14**, and **Ken Wang '15**.



Rachel Adler '12 and **Autumn Smith** were married Oct. 10, 2022, near their home in Maine. Back row, from left: Rabbi **Noah Westreich '14** (who officiated), **Jonathan McJunkin '14**, **Benas Klastaitis '15**, **Hillary Frey '12**, **Larsen Husby '12**, **Mara Aussendorf '14**, **Mabel Kessler '12**, **Meghan Davies '12**, **Masha Kuznetsova '12**, **Autumn**, and **Rachel**.



Ashley Hung '16 married **Joseph McDonough** on Sept. 3, 2022. **Lydia Karlson '16** officiated, and **Risa Luther '16** and **Stephanie Duong '16** were members of the bridal party. Other Macalester alumni in attendance included **Andrew Becker '18**, **Ryan Daly '15**, **Linna Hung '96**, **Winter Young '16**, and **Jake Ramthun '17**.



Grace Fowler '13 and **Tony Armstrong '13** were married in Minneapolis in a ceremony officiated by Rabbi **Max Edwards '13**. Pictured: **Daimon Hardy '13**, **Hannah Anderson-Dana '13**, **Audrey Groce '13**, **Paul Runge '13**, **Megan Whitney '13**, **Eleanor Trenary '13**, the newlyweds, **Alex Juffer '13**, **Michael Costigan-Humes '13**, **Max, Dan Otte '13**, **John Birch '13**, and **Colin Jarvis '13**.



Maggie Molter '14 and **Kayla Nussbaum '13** were married July 30, 2022, at Liberty Tree Farm in Stockholm, Wis. **Ned Molter '15** was best man of honor, and "many, many other lovely Macalester humans" joined them to celebrate.



Dominic Rodgers '19 and **Autumn DeLong '20** were married Sept. 30, 2022, in Whately, Mass. Back row, from left: Macalester Choir Director **Mike McGaghie**, **Justin Wong '20**, **Jesse Crosby '20**, **Robbie Angarone '20**, and **Nathan Vinehout-Kane '18**. Front: **Karl Anuta '57**, Macalester Chaplain **Kelly Stone** (who officiated), **Jake Parsky '19**, **Allison Leopold '20**, Autumn, Dominic, **Patrick Haley '19**, **Hannah Whipple '21**, **Jasmine Davidson '20**, **Stella Matutina Ikuzwe '20**, and **Pere Letayian '20**. Kneeling: **Erin Isomura '21**, **Chloe Kahn '21**, and **Juliette Verlaque '20**.



Rachel Costello '15 and **Sam Landsberg '15** were married outside Philadelphia on Oct. 23, 2022. Back row, from left: **John Kreitzberg '15**, **Lane Holden '15**, **David Clingman '15**, **Kelsey Woida '14**, **Brian Hurlow '12**, **Mike Fausz '12**, and **Scott Hurlow '15**. Middle: **Lucy Kane '15**, **Zoya Haroon '15**, **Parker Field '15**, **Eliza Summerlin '13**, **Kadel Adelsheim '14**, **Will Kent-Daggett '15**, **Miles Margulies '15**, and **Charles McClung '12**. Front: **Will Matsuda '15**, **Molly Sir '15**, **Kathryn Anastasi '15**, and the bride and groom.

Carson Chen '15

When you use LinkedIn, Carson Chen '15 makes your results better. The senior data scientist researches how to make the best matches possible for companies and job applicants, as well as how to create the best results for LinkedIn's own engagement and success.

After majoring in economics and mathematics at Macalester, Chen spent three years as an economic consultant conducting quantitative analysis for lawyers. Eager for a more long-term position, he became intrigued by doing data science for a product, rather than a client, running experiments that would "anticipate what users would do differently with a new version and seeing if it makes a product better." He earned a master of science in analytics at Northwestern University and started working at LinkedIn in 2020. Chen shared some of the lessons he's learned in his career journey.

Focus on the skills, not the title

When I graduated, data science wasn't commonly understood. Now the industry has settled on what data science means and why data scientists are needed, but at that time it wasn't clear. I really like to explain things quantitatively. I want to see a problem that's happening, understand it using quantitative methods and logical reasoning, see what's causing it and what can we do to improve it. That's what I went for at Mac. As data science became more formalized in institutions, in companies, and in schools, my career path was natural because what I did in math and economics was totally related.

Cultivate your intuition

In data science, you need to have intuition to know whether a problem is worth studying or not. Once you start a study, it takes a lot of time. The result may go as you wish or it may go in a totally different direction. People with great foresight know areas of opportunity. This is something I'm still trying to figure out, and it's not really a science but an art. To work on a problem is difficult, but to know whether a problem should be worked on or not is a next-level thing that can make the most out of your efforts.

Ask yourself, "What am I?"

In my career, I like the approach of thinking "What am I?" in terms of my interests, abilities, and past experience. I've been very flexible with the directions I can go, but very firm on what type of things I want to do. I wasn't led by something like, "Now data science is the hottest job and everyone should do it." I know where my strengths lie and



where my interests lie. I'm enjoying the process and enjoying what I've been doing. I've always been going in the right direction, but I didn't force myself for the sake of career progress.

Seek the 95 percent answer

In the business world you don't have maximum time to work on one thing. There is always a stopping point. There may be something you can still explore, but it's actually a good time to stop because the return on investment to go deeper might not be that great. You can get a final answer, but you can get a 95 percent answer that's actually going to have the maximum impact with the level of input you have and then embark on another area. This has taken some time for me to realize.

Communicate, communicate, communicate

With a lot of things, half is how well you do it, and half is how well you ensure people understand what you do. Most people don't get the gist of it, so you need to make sure that is addressed. Always presume that what you have communicated has been under-communicated.

The future is brighter than you think

If you are just about to graduate, or new to the job market, remember that your career is a long process. I was an international student and finding a job was very difficult and could be depressing. Anticipate the difficulty, but believe that Macalester has set you up for success. Believe in your own ability and passion. The only thing you are lacking is experience, but you can do a lot of things much better than experienced people in the industry. Our education has prepared us for challenges in the workplace. The beginning might be hard, but the future is bright.



Raynise Cange '14 and Will Gordon '10

The co-chairs of the Scots Pride celebration want to see you at Reunion, June 8-11.

What are your day jobs?

Raynise: Digital producer and campaigner

Will: Dean of students at Hiawatha Academies

Why are you co-chairing this event?

Raynise: I believe queer people across generations should have a celebration of our experiences while we were at Macalester.

Will: While understanding we're still dealing with the pandemic, we want to extend an invitation to have some in-person community. Some people were able to flourish the last few years, but there was lots of change and lots of loss. One thing I've always appreciated in being a member of the Macalester community is our ability to find comfort, inspiration, joy, or purpose in each other. In thinking about what it looks like to celebrate and reflect in community, creating space(s) where that can happen is at the forefront.

Why is volunteering at Mac important to you?

Will: Macalester is a wondrously complicated place—a true microcosm of the world we live in. It has given me a lot: a home when I didn't have one, a world-class education, chosen family, purpose, and the tools to not only understand the world, but my role in it. Being able to revisit a critical touchpoint in my life with people I've shared that with, regardless of class year, is a constant reminder of what's possible.

Raynise: It is one of the ways alums can shape the future of the college.

Anything else you would like to add?

Raynise: Coming back to Mac is fun and you get to do it with a lil' "we're queer, we're here" flair.

Will: Reunion is better when you're there. Yes, you! So join us!

Want to volunteer? Visit macalester.edu/alumni/volunteer to learn more.

Continued from page 36

1989

Genevieve Ehlers Drutchas and her partner, Richard Drutchas, operate Bee Haven Honey Farm in Worcester, Vt. The commercial beekeeping business won the Center for Honey Bee Research's International Black Jar Honey Contest, claiming the 2022 grand prize for the "world's best-tasting honey."

1993

Arun Baheti has been appointed to the board of Coro Southern California, an organization dedicated to strengthening the democratic process by preparing individuals for effective and ethical leadership. Arun is also a co-author of the article "Why We Should Rethink Credit Checks for Job Candidates" in the *Chronicle of Philanthropy*.

The Class of 1993 will celebrate its 30th Reunion June 8-11, 2023.

1998

The Class of 1998 will celebrate its 25th Reunion June 8-11, 2023.

2003

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

2006

Anna Everett Beek released her first book, a translation of and commentary on Ovid's poem *Fasti*, with Liverpool University Press in December 2022. "It is full of stories from classical myth and lush descriptions of Roman landmarks," Anna wrote.

2008

The Class of 2008 will celebrate its 15th Reunion June 8-11, 2023.



Mary Moriarty '86, who was elected Hennepin County Attorney in November, recently met with President Rivera on campus. Rivera tweeted, "Her courageous work to reimagine our justice system is an inspiring example of Mac's values in action."

2009

Jillian Scudder has been promoted to associate professor of physics and astronomy at Oberlin College one year ahead of the nominal schedule.

2011

Julia Brown's band, Barrel Flash, released their first album, *A Guide to Dancing Alone*, on streaming platforms on Nov. 4, 2022. She looked forward to a release show the following day at the Urban Growler in St. Paul.

2013

After five years on California's Central Coast, **Oana Alexan Katz** and her husband, Jordan, moved to Chicago in August. Oana looked forward to starting the graduate program in Spanish at Northwestern University.

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

2018

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

1941

Harriet Swanson Washburn, 102, died Aug. 11, 2022. She served in the US Navy at the end of World War II, taught physical education in Minnesota and California, started a middle-school counseling program, and retired in 1980 as head counselor at Milpitas High School. Washburn also worked in the marketing department at the Bank of Stockton. She is survived by two grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

1948

Don Stevenson, 97, died January 5, 2022. He served with the Army Air Force in the Pacific Theater during World War II. After a three-year stint as an intern instructor at Macalester, Stevenson taught English at San Diego City College and served as inaugural chair of San Diego Mesa College's English Department. He also taught for a year at West London College in a Fulbright exchange teaching position. Stevenson is survived by three children and five grandchildren.

1949

Doris Briese Forsys, 95, of St. Paul died Sept. 16, 2022. She is survived by three children, nine grandchildren, and 14 great-grandchildren.

Margaret Schneider Steinkraus, 94, died Nov. 6, 2022. She is survived by two children and sisters Janice Schneider Morris '52, Carol Schneider Marshall '63, and Roberta Schneider Riebe '55.

1950

Gwen Peterson Grady, 93, died Sept. 7, 2022, in Bloomington, Minn. She worked as a librarian at the Minneapolis *Star and Tribune*. Grady is survived by two sons and eight grandchildren.

Emmanuel C. Milias, 91, of Shrewsbury, Mass., died Oct. 31, 2022. He worked as a research and development specialist at Norton Co. for 30 years and

held a number of patents. Milias also was a founding member of the Hellenic Arts Society and served as a chapter president and district chairman of Greek Orthodox Youth of America.

Betty McLeod Wenger, 94, died Nov. 26, 2022. She worked as a dietitian's assistant at Mary Greeley Medical Center in Ames, Iowa, from 1974 to 1987. Wenger also volunteered with the Cub Scouts, the Campfire Girls, and Meals on Wheels, and was a member of Macalester's Alumni Association. She is survived by her husband, Donald, three children, five grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren.

1951

Jane Martin Hertig, 92, died Sept. 17, 2022. A self-taught nutritionist, Hertig lectured with Weight Watchers and owned and operated two Diet Center franchises before devising her own weight loss program, Creative Weight Control. She also served as a Republican Party state convention delegate. Hertig is survived by five children, 11 grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren, and a sister.

Raymond L. Johnson, 93, died Nov. 20, 2021.

1952

John C. Barnum, 92, of Colby, Kan., died Sept. 14, 2022. After his ordination as a Presbyterian minister in 1955, he served as a mobile minister and organized a parish in Montana. Barnum later served with several churches in Colorado and Kansas, retiring in 1997. He is survived by his wife, Shirley, two sons, seven grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Raymond A. Stassen, 92, of Elkader, Iowa, died Sept. 25, 2022. He was a Navy veteran and instructor in Macalester's English Department. After pursuing graduate studies in speech pathology and audiology at the University of Minnesota, Stassen began a 30-year career during which he directed clinical

audiology programs at teaching hospitals in Minneapolis, New York City, and Newark, N.J. He is survived by his daughter, Martha L. A. Stassen '81, and Martha's mother, Marilyn Nelson Stassen-McLaughlin '52.

1953

Marilyn Mead Palmer, 90, of East Grand Forks, Minn., died Sept. 18, 2022. She taught in Austin, Minn., for three years and in East Grand Forks for 38 years. Palmer is survived by a daughter.

William J. Snyder, 91, of Hutchinson, Minn., died Nov. 2, 2022. He served with the US Army in Germany until 1955. During his 38-year career as an educator, Snyder taught high school, coached football, was an assistant principal and principal, and served as president of the Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals. After his retirement in 1993, he was a volunteer instructor with the AARP's defensive driving program for 15 years. Snyder is survived by his wife, Helen, a daughter, two sons, three grandchildren, and a great-granddaughter.

1954

Robert E. Cottor, 90, died Nov. 7, 2022. After working as a general practitioner in Stillwater, Minn., he completed training as a child psychiatrist in 1966. Cottor and his second wife were partners in a joint professional practice in Phoenix in which he specialized in family therapy, consulting for healthcare organizations, and collaborative care. He also co-founded the Institute for Creative Change and Ryan House, a nonprofit offering pediatric palliative care. Cottor is survived by his wife, Sharon, four children, and five grandchildren.

Natalia Shebalin Kusubov, 89, died April 17, 2022.

Barbara Hill Wieman, 93, died Sept. 16, 2022. She worked at Dayton's Department Store, led estate sales, sold real estate, and opened an antique

store. Wieman is survived by three children (including John Patnode '76 and Maude Patnode Dornfeld '82), 10 grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren, and a great-great-grandson.

1955

Earl P. Holdridge, 90, of Minneapolis died Oct. 29, 2022. He taught high school in Minnesota, oversaw the state's Montessori teacher training program, and launched an Amsoil business in 1973. He also developed an "open space" learning concept that was deployed in various schools and organizations, including the Southside Men's Meeting, which Holdridge co-founded in the early 1980s. He is survived by his wife, Lou, two sons, two granddaughters, and five great-grandchildren.

Hugh C. Meier, 90, died Oct. 4, 2022. He spent his entire career at the 3M Company. Meier is survived by five children, 12 grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren, and brother Tom Meier '56.

1956

James L. Erickson of Roseville, Minn., died Nov. 1, 2022. He helped lead the opening of New York University's Loeb Student Center in 1959 and taught business education at St. Paul TVI for 25 years. Erickson is survived by four children, seven grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

John G. Kalbrener, 88, died Sept. 21, 2022. While serving with the Army in Germany in the late 1950s, he wrote copy for the Army News Service. Kalbrener also directed multimedia and broadcast services for the University of Minnesota and served as a regional reporter for newspapers and radio stations in the Upper Midwest. He is survived by a son, a grandson, a sister, and a brother.

Doris Archer Nelson, 85, of Edina, Minn., died Aug. 28, 2022. She is survived by three children, six grandchildren, and a great-granddaughter.

Howard D. Peet, 92, died Nov. 19, 2022. He served aboard a destroyer picket ship during the Korean War and taught at North Dakota State University for 23 years. Peet later coauthored numerous language arts textbooks, including Houghton Mifflin's Wordskills series. He also collaborated on online college courses offered through NDSU and published "Little Jasper" children's stories in *Parents and Children Together* magazine. Peet is survived by a daughter, a son, eight grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

1957

Jacelyn J. Banbury, 83, of The Villages, Fla., died June 29, 2019. She is survived by a sister and brother.

1958

Nancy Tripp Wilson of Stillwater, Minn., died January 31, 2021. At various times she was a social worker, a newspaper reporter, and a librarian. She also served as a foster parent for many children and was an officer with the US branch of Servas, an or-

ganization that promotes peace, goodwill, and understanding. She is survived by five children, seven grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. Her husband, Viktor Wilson '58, passed away in 2022.

1959

Evelyn Adey Remsberg, 83, of Willmar, Minn., died May 22, 2020. She was a pediatric nurse at Fairview Riverside Hospital and also worked at Renville County Hospital, Rice Memorial Hospital, Willmar Regional Treatment Center, and Renville County Public Health. Remsberg is survived by her partner, Tom Weeks, three children, six grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren, and a brother.

June M. Young, 86, died Oct. 11, 2022, in St. Paul.

1961

Garry G. Blunt, 84, of Rockville, Md., died Nov. 19, 2022. He launched a State Farm Insurance agency in Washington, D.C., in the early 1970s and retired after 40 years in the

business. Blunt is survived by two children, five grandchildren, and two sisters.

Walter "Skip" E. Otto, 83, of Depew, N.Y., died Oct. 6, 2022. Following his ordination, he served churches in Iowa, Minnesota, and New York, and was a chaplain at the Buffalo Psychiatric Center. Otto is survived by a daughter, a son, seven grandchildren, and a sister.

Barbara A. Sigurdson, 81, of Plymouth, Minn., died July 16, 2021. She retired as an elementary schoolteacher in Robbinsdale, Minn., in 2000, and was named a Minnesota Teacher of the Year. Sigurdson is survived by a brother.

1962

Mary Jonell Lockhart Kristensen died August 5, 2022, in Kerteminde, Denmark. Her death came just a few days after a regular Zoom visit with classmates Kay Andrist Aaker '62, Martha Gillespie Tiede '62, and Sandra Nabben Nyvall '62. She is survived by a son, a daughter, and a brother.

1963

John C. Van Straaten, 81, died Aug. 28, 2022, in Tucson, Ariz. He worked in the investment industry for 43 years, raised funds to found the Rochester Art Center, and supported the Arizona State Museum in Tucson. Van Straaten is survived by his wife, Linda, two sons, four grandchildren, and a brother.

1964

Charles A. Bassford, 78, died Oct. 6, 2020. He served as an officer in the Navy during the Vietnam War and later practiced law, specializing in senior housing. Bassford is survived by his wife, Alice, a son, two grandchildren, and sister Faye Bassford Bosak '68.

Julia M. Hoats, 80, died Sept. 8, 2022, in Palatine, Ill. She taught physical education at several schools in Palatine and held leadership roles with the National Education Association, the Illinois Education Association, and her local teachers' union. Hoats is survived by two sisters.

A LITTLE BIT OF MAC, WHEREVER YOU ARE

From book clubs to trivia challenges to museum visits, there are so many ways to connect with alumni in cities around the US and worldwide. Seventeen alumni regional chapters help foster those communities through online and in-person programs.

GET INVOLVED:

- Join your chapter for events—or organize a gathering in your city.
- Log in to Mac Direct and join a regional chapter group: macalester.edu/macdirect.
- Don't have a chapter in your area but want to plan an event? Contact Alumni Engagement at alumnioffice@macalester.edu.

macalester.edu/alumni/groups



IN MEMORIAM

Ann Sherrill James, 80, died Nov. 4, 2022. She retired from SAIC in Idaho Falls, Idaho. She is survived by her husband, Steve, a daughter, and two brothers.

Karen F. Ryding, 80, of Plymouth, Minn., died May 20, 2022. She taught first grade in Minnetonka, Minn., for 34 years, and taught for a year in Nottingham, England. Ryding is survived by a brother.

1965

Karen Hallback Main, 79, died Nov. 21, 2022, in Duluth, Minn. She was a senior public health advisor for the State of Kentucky, assistant dean at the University of Kentucky Medical School, and director of public health for Goodhue County, Minn. Main also published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* and lectured at Harvard and Brandeis Universities. She is survived by a sister and two brothers.

Susan Bell Miller, 79, died May 29, 2022, in Winona, Minn. With

her husband, Miller launched a senior care home in Portland, Ore. She also served as vice-moderator of the Presbyterian General Assembly in 1981. Miller is survived by three children, six grandchildren, a great-grandchild, a sister, and a brother.

Gary A. Ridge, 79, died Sept. 14, 2022, in Owatonna, Minn. He served with the US Army in Vietnam from 1969 to 1970 and was later a major in the Army Reserves. Ridge also taught mathematics and coached football and track and field in Owatonna, retiring as the high school's activities director after 31 years with the district. He is survived by his wife, Glenda, two daughters, four grandchildren, and a sister.

1966

James W. Pratt, 78, of River Falls, Wis., died Nov. 11, 2022. He was a professor at the University of Wisconsin–River

Falls, where he taught marketing communication. The American Forensic Association recognized Pratt in 2018 for distinguished service to forensics and subsequently renamed the award after him. He is survived by his wife, Ila Brown-Pratt, two sons, and sister Linda Pratt Owen '62.

Robert K. Whalen, 78, of Huntington Beach, Calif., died Aug. 24, 2022. After retiring as chief executive officer of Baltica Reinsurance, Whalen pursued a career in education. He taught inner-city students in New Jersey and retired in 2018 after 11 years at St. Agnes R.C. School in St. Paul. Whalen is survived by his partner, Julie Tilgner Ramphal '66, a son, a granddaughter, and two sisters.

1967

David L. Eldridge, 78, of Robbinsdale, Minn., died recently. He is survived by two brothers.

Judy Sparrow Gordon, 77, died Oct. 9, 2022. She is survived by a daughter, two grandchildren, a sister, and a brother.

1968

Polly Parrish Gordon of Edinburgh, Scotland, died Oct. 12, 2022. She worked as a secretary in Macalester's English Department. Gordon is survived by her daughter, Marjorie Dana-Levine '88, and former husband, Richard Dana '68.

Sharon D. Mitchell, 76, of Bloomington, Minn., died Sept. 20, 2022. She taught art in the Minneapolis Public Schools. Mitchell is survived by a brother.

Daniel K. Peterson, 76, of Edina, Minn., died Oct. 22, 2022. He worked as an investment broker at Piper Jaffray, where he won the Bobby Piper Award numerous times in recognition of his community service. Peterson served with the Minnesota State Arts Board, the Citizens League,



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the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and park boards in Minneapolis and Edina. He is survived by his wife, Nancy, three grandchildren, and two sisters.

1971

Bruce L. Gaarder, 73, of St. Paul died Aug. 4, 2022. He is survived by his wife, Alice, and two brothers (including Neal Gaarder '73).

1973

Frank R. Miller, 71, died April 5, 2021. He is survived by his sister, Cynthia Nelson Miller '75.

Donna Regguinti, 68, of Deer River, Minn., died Dec. 27, 2019. After retiring from a 20-year career with the US Postal Service, she worked as a substitute teacher. She lived on the Leech Lake Reservation and loved jingle dress dancing on the powwow trail. Regguinti is survived by four children, 15 grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, two sisters, two brothers, and special friend Richard Parker.

1975

Gordon J. Petersen, 69, of Milwaukee, died Sept. 6, 2022. He is survived by a daughter and two brothers.

1978

Douglas E. Anderson, 66, died March 9, 2022. He retired from Transco/Williams after 35 years. Anderson is survived by two children and three siblings.

1980

Skye K. Richendrfer, 64, died Nov. 20, 2022. He played with the Grade 1 Simon Fraser University Pipe Band through the 1980s and did well in British Columbia Pipers Association solo competitions. Richendrfer was founder and executive director of the Celtic Arts Foundation in Mount Vernon, Wash., and served two terms as Mount Vernon's mayor. He received Macalester's Distinguished Citizen Award in 2015. Richendrfer is survived by his

wife (and college sweetheart), Sally Childs Richendrfer '79, whom he married the day after he graduated.

1981

Maryam Williams, 70, of Maplewood, Minn., died Dec. 25, 2021. She retired as a 911 supervisor in 2017, after many years with Minneapolis' Emergency Communications Center. Williams is survived by a son, six sisters, and a brother.

1985

Clarice L. Duma, 58, died Nov. 7, 2020. After working in government and nongovernmental organizations in Minnesota and California, Duma moved to Johannesburg in her native South Africa. There she worked at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, served in the Gauteng provincial government as chief of staff of the Office of the Premier, and was managing director of the business and management consultancy Como Blue. Duma also held positions with the South African Human Rights Commission and the National Department of Tourism. She is survived by her father and three sisters (including Babs Adams-Duma '88).

1987

Paul A. Seasholtz, 60, of Eden Prairie, Minn., died Sept. 4, 2022. He worked as a database administrator for Sportsman's Guide. He is survived by his wife, Ann Dolman Seasholtz '87, a daughter, a sister, and his mother.

1991

Cathy A. Rasmussen, 53, of Marshall, Wis., died Oct. 21, 2022. A leader in regenerative medicine, Rasmussen worked for Stratatech and served as executive director of the Forward BIO Institute at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. She also advocated for women in the biohealth and biotechnology fields with Women in Biohealth. Rasmussen is survived by her

// OTHER LOSSES



Thaddeus W. Wilderson, a pioneering psychologist and longtime Macalester staff member and administrator, died Oct. 1, 2022, at the age of 86. In 1969, he began his 31-year career at Macalester as a staff psychologist, later becoming director of psychological services, director of multicultural affairs, and associate dean. He was a proponent of the

Expanded Educational Opportunities program, instituted the college's annual Alumni of Color Reunion, and headed the MACCESS summer program, which encouraged underrepresented youth to attend college.

Wilderson also opened a child and family psychology practice in St. Paul that provided counseling, substance abuse treatment, home visitation, and other mental health services for clients who would otherwise have had difficulty accessing such help. He served on the board of the Minneapolis Urban League and received the John M. Taborn Award from the Minnesota Psychological Association and the Minnesota chapter of the Association of Black Psychologists in 2019 in recognition of his contributions as a psychologist of African descent. Wilderson is survived by his wife, Beverly, three daughters (including Troy Wilderson '87 and Dina Wilderson '90), a son, five grandchildren, and five siblings.

Broderick "Rick" Grubb '73 spoke at Wilderson's homegoing ceremony, held at Macalester, in October. Describing Wilderson as "a wonderful human being and a true gentleman," he continued, "I and so many others like me are thankful for our time spent with Thad because we learned how to handle problems and adversity by remembering his words and watching how he managed similar issues. He had a knack for listening without judging. Some say that was because of his training. I say that it was because of who he was. He was an uncommon man who never lost the common touch."

husband, Mark, her parents, and a brother.

1999

Nicole A. Kahn, 45, died Oct. 21, 2022. Through her music therapy practice, she worked at senior living facilities, a hospice house, and activity centers for young adults with developmental disabilities in the Cleveland area. Kahn also worked at the Cleveland Sight Center as an assistive technology specialist. She is survived by her husband, Mark Poorman, her parents, and a brother.



Interim

The first academic year that Macalester began offering an interim term with curriculum specifically designed for the one-month January break between semesters was 1963-1964. Interim term was adopted to provide opportunities to explore new fields and approaches to education. Some interim offerings included travel nationally or internationally, while others were independent projects or internships. Macalester continued to offer a January term through the mid-1990s.



What are your memories of interim, intersession, or J-term?

Share them with us at archives@macalester.edu!

Pictured above, January 1966 off-campus field trips included a course in desert biology. Macalester students conducted field and laboratory studies at the University of Arizona Desert Biology Station, in Superior, Arizona.

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Hot pockets. At November's Macathon, the college's annual overnight innovation and creativity contest, Team Anteaterz took first place and a \$1,000 prize with a product that extends pockets in women's clothing. The team included Yvonne Moreira-Andrade '25, Kiara Garcia '25, Adley Schwartz '25, Finn Veerkamp '25, Ronan Manning '25, and Morgan Niven '24.